

Clough Deuteronomy Session 8

Deuteronomy 2:24-3:11 - First Holy War Victory Surprises-Doctrine of Holy War

Fellowship Chapel; 1 Dec 09

... and we remember the promises that we have talked that capsule the theology of the testing that Moses and the 2nd generation are going to go through, the 1 Corinthians 10:13, it's on your handout, that "no testing has taken you, but such as is common to man, but God is faithful who will not allow you to be tested above that which you are able." Romans 8:28, "All things work together for good, to them that are the called according to His purpose." And then we have the promise of 1 Thessalonians 5:18 which is "in everything give thanks," and Philippians 4:6-7, "Be not anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God shall keep your hearts and mind.

Father, we thank You for our time tonight, for the freedom in our country to meet together, unlike millions of our brethren tonight who dwell in lands where the dark powers of darkness and Satan have conspired to deprive them of their freedom. We ask that your Holy Spirit illuminate our hearts to the Word of God tonight for we ask it in our Savior's name, Amen.

We're looking at the slide here that is the one that was shown several times about testing, just to review, we have a people in this test, in the wilderness, that they have failed test 3, that was the first generation, remember, and then they are going to have to go into another test and that's useful for us to remember this failure. The New Testament remembers this failure. This was a historic failure. And so the question then is whenever we face disaster and failure, which we will, then can we recover. And that's the test here, in the diagram test number 4, am I going to trust the Lord with the consequences of a bad choice. And remember, the first generation didn't, and they tried to rectify and escape from the consequences of their bad decisions by some human gimmick, and they failed and many thousands of them lost their lives in that grand experiment. So that's a lesson we want to benefit from.

And then if you follow on the handout tonight, again we want to go back to the argument of the book because these books, particularly the law, seems to, when you read it, skip around, and they'll be editorial notices in it and then one chapter kind of goes into another one and sometimes it doesn't flow. And when you see that happen as you're reading it, it can be very confusing. So this is why we have outlines, to get the flow of the book. The Holy Spirit doesn't think discontinuously, He thinks in a continuity. And if you read a book or you read a discussion and it seems jumpy to you and it hops around, the chances are that you still aren't mastering the argument of the book. And some books are very hard to master.

But in Deuteronomy, in this section, Moses has one thing in mind and that his argument he wants to strengthen, going back to those four promises, the concept of those four promises, he basically wants to strengthen the belief that God is in control of testing, because the point is that this generation is going to have to come up and redo test 3; test 3 was going

into the land and beginning a holy war, a conflict. And the first generation failed but the second generation is going to have to go back to the starting line and do it again. So after defeat it's harder to do that because they've not got a heritage of defeat. The first time they had no heritage of defeat, they just went into defeat. But now they've got to come from behind and as any team will tell you, it's hard after the other side scores, now you've got to overcome that. So that's what Moses is doing here, he's trying to overcome the fear, the sense of defeat, exasperation, frustration, of that generation. But they are going to have to go back and do test 3 again, which is the entrance into the land.

And so he constructs this argument, and as you see in the outline there, Deuteronomy 2 so far, verses 1-23, gives a series of reviews, it's a capsule summary histories, all of which are part of Moses' strategy to change the mental attitude. And he does that, as you remember, by looking at Edom, he looks at Moab and Ammon; he takes three cases. All three of these cases were people who were relatives of Abraham, and they had been given, by God, their real estate. And the people had to understand that God gave them that real estate, they were not to fight, they were not to go into a war with it, they were to go around and respect what God had done to those people. And then speaking of what God had done for the people He had done more than just give them the land. What God had also done in all three of those cases was He enabled those people to defeat giants. And we said, if you look at the text in Deuteronomy 2, there's notation that's obviously put there by whoever was the writing prophet that compiled this after the death of Moses, and apparently from that editorial note after they had already begun to conquer the land, you have that little notice.

Turn to Deuteronomy 2, let's recall those because they are put into the text, as the Holy Spirit inspires the text He led these editors to put in this notation. And in the... at least in my translation, I don't know about your translation, but I think most of the translations put these editorial remarks in brackets or in a parenthesis. So, for example, you see in Deuteronomy 2:10, "(The Emim had dwelt there in times past, a people as great and numerous and tall as the Anakim. [11] They were also regarded as giants like the Anakim, but the Moabites called them Emim. [12] The Horites..." and so forth and so forth, there's one of those little notices about the fact that they had driven out giants. Now if you think about it, what has that got to do with the flow of the story, and why is there editorial notice there in 2:10, 11, 12 talks about Esau, and then when you get down to verse 20, when it's talking about the third area, lo and behold what do we see, another editorial notice. So you've got to ask yourself, what are the editorial parentheses doing there in the text. Well, all three of those notices are talking about giants and they're talking about defeated giants; they're talking about a people who had been given some blessings by God, part of Abraham's family, but they certainly, as I pointed out in the handout, they had no eternal land grant, they had no Shekinah presence of God in their midst; they had no dramatic exodus experience. Yet in spite of that, all three of these peoples were able to defeat the giants in their land.

So what is the argument? The argument is that the second generation that Moses is talking to, trying to encourage, they have those assets; they've got the very presence of God, they've got the ark, they share the destiny

of the Exodus, they have an eternal land grant coming to them. Now with all those extra assets, surely they ought to be able to handle the giant problem. So, in fact, there's only a very few giants they are actually going to encounter here. But the point is that it's an argument from the greater to the lesser, and it reinforces that 1 Corinthians 10:13 truth that we all need from time to time, and that is: "There is no testing taken us, but such as is common to man." There are other believers, and this is why biographies are so useful in church history, to realize when you read these biographies of Christians that have gone through the same kind of trials that you have, that I have, and they've been successful.

And this is why oftentimes God will put you in a trial, put me in a trial, where we encounter something, a very particular kind of trial, and as 2 Corinthians says that's so that you can comfort others with the comfort that you have received in your trial, and why oftentimes it's not the pastor or it's not the deacons or it's not the elders, it's oftentimes is just the ordinary person in the congregation that has the greatest impact on someone in the middle of a trial because they went through the trial. And of course if you were in the Thanksgiving service you heard a good example of that, where we were talking about the one family whose little child had had their leg chopped off with a mower and un-be-knownst to them and the whole congregation, lo and behold there is another person in here whose child had its leg chopped off with a mower. And there is an example of how a test in one person's life can benefit someone else. And there is an example of how a test in one person's life can benefit someone else.

And what Moses is saying is that the test that those three kinds of people had, those three people, were less than... they met those tests with less assets than the second generation has. So this is how the argument is working, and it also shows something else that I wanted to point out here because we get the idea that law is bad from Galatians and from New Testament epistles. But we forget that those epistles are written against people who were misusing the Law. The Pharisees had utterly destroyed the whole impact of the Law. So what we're doing in Deuteronomy is you're going to see a little different picture of what the Law is. Here is the original version. And you'll notice that the Law hasn't figured too prominently yet in the book of Deuteronomy, so far. What is happening here is that these people are being challenged to a faith test and this should tip us all off that the theology behind the Law is one of faith; that people have to trust Jehovah in order to be enabled to keep the Law. And they understood that, Old Testament believers understood grace and they understood faith. They operated under a legal system that made them, or obligated them to do certain things. But the point was that faith is not absent here.

Now we want to look at something else, let's see if we have it on the back of the handout; yeah, the second slide there was just a depiction of the theology of thanksgiving and the theology of complaining and that was just to reiterate the sense of this test, the sense of what was going on in the mental attitude.

And that mental attitude has to be changed, so that's why Moses is going after that.

Okay, now we're going to come to the third... no we won't, because if you have the handout you'll see that now you'll see there's a diagram of the outline in the first part of that handout. That's to show you how what we're going to do tonight starts into what we call "holy war," and from Deuteronomy 2:24 to 3:11 we have the first encounter with actual holy war, and it starts in 2:24, "Rise, take your journey, and cross over the River Arnon." And it's here where we have to think about: What about genocide? And if you've been a Christian for more than six weeks in a hostile environment you've been thrown this canard about the Bible, it has cruelty, it has bloodshed... yes it does, frankly. And the Bible does have holy war and it does have genocide in it.

So the question now is, well, what do we do with genocide? So I want to, in your outline, I'm going to go through all of those eight points on genocide. These are things that is another example of the fact that what appears at first glance to be a big problem and an embarrassment to the faith turns out if we will just persist, persevere, and say Lord..., you know, God thinks consistently, He's the standard of holiness, He's the One who loves, He's the One of grace, so what about genocide. So we need to think about genocide because the opponents of the Christian faith certainly give it a lot of thinking and we want to go through this to just it before we actually get into the text tonight. So we're going to take a few moments to go through some of the points about holy war.

To start with, if you'll turn to Deuteronomy 20 we're going to anticipate covering this, which we'll cover it later in more detail, but tonight I want to just take you to chapter 20 because this is the area inside the Torah that controls the military policies involved in war, both genocidal war and non-genocidal war. And this is one of those (quote) "hard places" in the Bible. But I want you to observe something as you look at the text. First of all, in chapter 20 it talks about when you go to battle against you enemy, [1] "and see horses and chariots more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God is with you," so that whole first section deals with military attitudes and preparation for combat. In verse 5 it talks about that the commanding officers are supposed to do, to weed the ranks of people who are going to just flake out. And then finally it goes down to verse 10, and verse 10 gives you this first strategy. There are two strategies involved here. In verse 10 it says, "When you go near a city to fight against it, then proclaim an offer of peace to it." Now this is not talking about cities in the land because cities in the land, in verse 16, is a different policy. I want you to observe that; there's a careful distinction, as we've seen so often. When we're talking about Edom, Moab, Ammon, the policies toward these people were very distinct, very particular. The law is surgically precise.

So in verse 10 and following it's giving the policy, the military policy toward cities that would be involved in warfare with Israel. "When you go near a city to fight against it, proclaim an offer of peace to it. [11] And it shall be that if they accept your offer of peace, and open to you, then all the people who are found in it shall be placed under tribute to you, and serve you. [12] But if the city will not make peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. [13] And when the LORD your God delivers it into your hands, you shall strike every male in it with the edge of the sword. [14] But the women, the little ones, the

livestock, and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you shall plunder for yourself; and you shall eat the enemies' plunder which the LORD your God gives you. [15] Thus you shall do to all the cities which are very far from you, which are not of the cities of these nations." Now that's provoked war, that's not that they're going out looking for a fight.

Now in verse 16, totally different. This is a principle in the Hebrew language called charem, it's spelled like harem, except it's a hard "h." "But of the cities of these peoples which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance," that is within the boundaries of the land, those cities, "you will let nothing that breathes remain alive," that's tough stuff... this is total genocide, leave nothing that breathes alive, [17] "But utterly," and that's charem, "you will utterly destroy them: the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, the Jebusite, just as the LORD your God has commanded you, [18] lest," purpose clause, "lest they teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods, and you sin against the LORD your God."

Now they never finished holy war; it fizzled. And what was the subsequent history of Israel? Did they or did they not get infiltrated with the religion of the people. And what happened as a result of them getting infiltrated with the religions of the people? What happened to Israel? They were exiled, finally, and they suffered because they did not adhere to these two military policies.

Now we have to say okay, I understand the policies, I'm not sure I really appreciate why God had Israelites have to do this, and I'm sure there were some of them that wondered the same thing. In fact, we know that because in the book of Joshua there is a couple that saved some things and you have all kinds of problems from that.

So let's go to point 2 in the doctrine of holy war and that is the mental preparation. Earlier in this 20th chapter you said, with the officers talking to the people and so forth, preparing them mentally for this conflict, and you see Gideon using that, the same policy, you cannot have... and this goes for sports teams, you cannot have any kind of a trial situation people that are going to spread their defeatism to other people. It's better to have a small group of people that are with you mentally than it is to have people and have a bunch of people who complain, who are fussing, who are afraid, that spreads through the whole group and so this second point was its mental preparation. We want to come back to that, it's an important point because that theologically is where we're going to take this eventually. So watch out for that little thing, the mental preparation.

Third, remember that the battle is God's. It is not Israel's battle to start with, it is God that is waging war and to see this very graphically turn back to the book before Deuteronomy to Numbers 10. The presence of God was the ark; remember, you had the cherubs and you had the fire, the holy fire of God on the top of that ark. Now when they went forward, Numbers 10:35-36, look at what happens. Here is a picture of why the war is not the Jew's war, it is Yahweh's war. And in verse 35 it says, "So [it was], whenever the ark set out, Moses said:" and he's looking at the ark, so God's presence is localized; yes, God is omnipresent and He's everywhere, but in the Theophany on top of this ark, whatever it was, that

was the localized presence of God. By "localized presence" I mean like Solomon in the temple, he said when people have a problem they pray to the temple, that was the local... it would be like Jesus Christ sitting there. So, "Rise up, O LORD!" Now he's looking at the ark when he's saying his. "So it was when the ark set out, Moses said: 'Rise up, O YAHWEH! Let Your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate You flee before You.'" And you see this again around Jericho when they take the ark and the priests come around the land. It is not the Jew's battle.

So now we have, theologically zooming in on this, we have to ask another question, why is God having a war, what's His problem, why is God forcing, as it were, His people into a genocidal war. And then it says in verse 36, at the end of the battle, "And when it rested, [he said]: 'Return, O LORD, to the many thousands of Israel.'" So it's like a departure of Yahweh from the camp, out against the enemy and then he comes back into the camp, and it physically is going on with the ark. So that's one picture of Yahweh doing the fighting.

There is another picture, if you'll turn to Joshua 5; this is just prior to the Jericho campaign and Joshua is reconnoitering, doing some intel gathering around the site of the future battle. And in Joshua 5:13, as he is doing some intelligence, spying, "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and beheld a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, 'Are You for us or for our adversaries?'" This turns out to be God Himself, this is the angel of the Lord and Joshua is challenging him as a sentry would in the military, "are you for or us or against us?" That throws out the challenge.

And verse 14, "He said, 'No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.'" This is the CINC of the army, C-I-N-C, Commander in Chief, I have come as "the commander of the army of the LORD," so here is Joshua, Joshua was not the commander. You see the point here is, that's what all this little story is telling us, Joshua, in one sense he's the general, but clearly it's the angel of the LORD in verse 14 who is the real commander. "And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, 'What does my LORD say to His servant?'" So there's the chain of command. So right away chain of command is established here. [15] "Then the Commander of the LORD's army said to Joshua, 'Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy.'" Now what would that have reminded Joshua of? Sinai.

So it's very clear who this mysterious CINC Israel is. He is none other than the angel of Jehovah. So that's a second thing about point 3 in the doctrine of holy war; that is, that it is Yahweh's battle, not Israel's. And if you want to see it in the New Testament you have to look at no other than Revelation 19 when the Lord Jesus Christ comes back and it talks about His bloody garments. By the way, who do you suppose the angel of the Lord was here? It was actually a preincarnate theophany of the Son of God. So that's our third point in the doctrine of holy war: Genocide was God's order and it was God's battle.

So now we go to point 4, this genocidal holy war was revelatory of God's Holiness and Power. Remember the refrain from the Exodus story where over and over again God would ask Moses to go and bring on a plague; and then

He would usually add somewhere in that little story, he'd say "that Pharaoh may know who I am." So the genocidal war here is revelatory of God's holiness and power. Now that offends people and in one sense you can understand how people can be offended by this. But if we stare it in the face, of what God is doing here, ordering the complete annihilation of men, women, children, and animals, obliterate the whole thing in this war, which by the way, means there is no booty left over for Israel. So again, it's another sign of the fact that this is not Israel's war, it is God's war.

Point 5, the genocide is upon those who have a culture totally rejected God, and it includes the women and the children. Now we have to deal with this because in non-holy war there's a distinction between the men who could potentially be the next army and the women are saved and the children are saved, but in charem that is not the case, entire family structures are destroyed. This is very sobering because it tells you something about how God looks at human society. We have a picture here and it's a little different than people are used to seeing in the gentle Jesus, meek and mild story. Genocide upon those who have as a culture rejected God, and includes the men and the women and the children.

Now on the next slide that I would show you is on the back part of your handout and it's by Andy Woods, who is a PhD from Dallas and also, his JD, he is a lawyer and he thinks on these things. He wrote a paper, a very fascinating paper on Canaanite genocide, as a lawyer, and as a Christian, and one who is a theologically trained lawyer. And that is that: "The rationale for this command lies in the old adage, 'the apple does not fall far from the tree.' The children simply would have imitated the sin and character of their parents. Kaiser," who is an Old Testament theologian, "asks, 'If the women and children had been spared in those profane Canaanite nations, how long would it have been before a fresh crop of adults would emerge just like their pagan predecessors?' This imitation by children of their parents explains why God placed a curse on Ham's descendants because of Ham's sin. 'These descendants were not cursed because of what Ham did: they were cursed because they acted as their ancestor had.'"

Now there are some things about that truth we want to just kind of pull away from. On the positive side, what that also shows you is the powerful influence that parents can have on their children, and the influence parents can have on their children can be for good or for evil. And in God's case, when a culture goes down, like this culture did, and to give you a sense of how far down it went, turn back to Genesis 15, when God spoke to Abraham, and He was telling him what was going to happen, and it says in Genesis 15:16, this is all the way back to Abraham, all the way back to the original covenant, and He gives you why this is taking place, and He says, "Abraham, as far as you, you're going to go to your father's in peace, you'll be buried in a good old age. But, in the fourth generation, they shall return here," because Abraham was at the land then, "for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete." Now there's the little theological point; God allows iniquity to run loose up to a point, and then that's it, and something's going to happen. And the reason that God does that is because if He didn't, everything would be contaminated. So God will step into the situation. So keep that in mind as we come down to other points in this doctrine of holy way. Remember again we are

dealing with something profoundly different than most people think when they think of what is moral and what is ethical. This is a challenge to morals and ethics.

So let's go to point 6, and that is that the war that is going on is actually with the principalities and powers behind human societies, Daniel 10 is a good example; we won't go there in the interest of time tonight, but remember, that's the prayer when Daniel is praying and the angel comes to him and says it took me three weeks to get to you. Now what's going on? I mean, what's with the air space around Iran? But that's what the deal was; the most powerful angel, one of the most powerful angels in God's kingdom could not penetrate the geography of Persia for three weeks. Now we can't see what's going on but clearly the revelation of Daniel is saying that behind countries are principalities and powers. In fact, that's what principalities and powers mean, it means human rulers. But the Bible uses it a second way; it takes a term, nouns, that would normally be used of social leaders, political leaders, and then it attributes them to spiritual leaders behind those leaders. So Daniel, in this prayer, gets a revelation that his delayed prayer for twenty-one days had nothing to do with Daniel, it had to do with what's going on around Daniel. So behind this genocidal war there's something else going on. There's a war profoundly clashing that we can't hear, that we can't observe, we can't sense because we are human beings, we are not part of that invisible world so we never can see this kind of stuff, but it is going on and the Bible insists that this is part of the explanation, a profound part of the explanations of good and evil that we see that we can't seem to put together. The picture is not complete for us.

Let's move now to point 7, this to me is the key, and you want to get this down because this puts the whole thing together. Genocide in the Bible, and remember the genocide in the Bible is strictly limited; what have we just seen three examples of before we got to this point in Deuteronomy? They had to bypass Edom and leave them alone; they had to bypass Moab and leave them alone; they had to bypass Ammon and leave them alone. So the genocide was circumscribed to a certain group of people, the Amorites and those other peoples associated with the Amorites whose iniquity had been completed. Genocide in the Bible is revelation of a new ethics, it's the ethics of final judgment; it's when grace ends and justice is complete.

There are people crying for justice, and I have to laugh sometimes, some of these liberals always yak-yakking about social justice. I don't think you want to see total justice. If you want to see what total justice looks like, look at genocide, because you're talking about a holy God and sinful creatures who have defied Him. You want justice? I don't think so. And here is Meredith Kline who has addressed this, I think, in the most complete way in his book, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*.

"If Israel's conquest of Canaan were to be adjudicated before an assembly of nations acting according to the provisions of common grace," notice, "that conquest would have to be condemned as unprovoked aggression and, moreover, an aggression carried out in barbarous violation of the requirement to show all possible mercy even in the proper execution of justice...." Notice the word "common grace," that's what we operate under in history right now, we're under a period in history of common grace, "common" meaning that God exercises grace to believer and unbeliever

alike, He sends the rain on the just and the unjust alike, like He sends the sun on the just and the unjust alike; that's common grace. And by those principles the world is currently running, in the sense that people have this genuine ethical idea of common grace. And what Dr. Kline says, if this genocide in Deuteronomy, and in Numbers, and in Joshua, if that were "adjudicated before an assembly of nations" today, it would have to be condemned; the Bible would have to be condemned by the standards we operate under.

Continuing the quote: "The unbeliever is the believer's," and watch this, this is a very tightly worded statement, "The unbeliever is the believer's neighbor today;" this is very sobering, "but the reprobate is not the neighbor of the redeemed hereafter," let's go through that slowly again so it sinks in, "the unbeliever is the believer's neighbor today, but the reprobate is not the neighbor of the redeemed hereafter for the reason that God will set a great gulf between them. God, whose immutable nature it is to hate evil, withdrawing all favor from the reprobate, will Himself hate them as sin's finished products." What did we say in Genesis? The Amorites iniquity has not yet been full. "And if the redeemed in glory," now listen to this, and think about this; some of you struggle because I know you've had family, friends and family relatives who you know are unbelievers who died, and you feel very sorry for them because you feel close to them; well, what happens in eternity when you know where they are, how could you be perfectly content in eternity knowing, for example, that your mother is in hell, and you think about... how do you mentally adjust to that. Well, here's what Dr. Kline says: "...if the redeemed in glory are to fulfill their duty of patterning their ways after God's, they will have to change their attitude toward the unbeliever from one of neighborly love to one of perfect hatred, which is a holy, not a malicious passion."

These are hard things, these are hard words; this is not to say that God is a God that just hates people arbitrarily; this is not arbitrary hatred, this is hatred... and by the way, it's not hatred in the sense of oh, there's a bad person so I'm going to hate him; that's not it at all. There's lots of good people that God would hate. The fact is that have they or have they not submitted to the authority of God and accepted grace? These people don't get there in the final hour of their confirmed iniquity just by an accident; they get there through a series of choices that they have made in their human lives to reject, to reject, to reject, to reject, God-more grace, reject, more grace, reject, reject, reject, and then God says that's it, it's all over. I mean, it happens when people die, grace ends when you die, there's once then judgment. So this is not foreign to anything else.

But in this case, what is foreign, what is strange, beginning in Deuteronomy, we can go back to that passage now, with this in mind now I think we can grasp some of the gravity of the text. With this in mind what's unusual is that these people are pushed into death through genocide, so their grace is shut down for them. And you can say oh gee, what about the poor people... well, there's a book written in the Scriptures that kind of shows you, there's a little narrative, of course, in Joshua or Rahab, she was a Canaanite, and yet she's apparently saved, and she marries, she marries Caleb, so who's that, what's that about? It's to simply show you that if these people had trusted and had responded

to the Lord they would not be wiped out. It's the same thing with another book written about... called the book of Ruth, Ruth is a Moabitess, and yet Ruth is accepted. Why is that? Because she trusts the Lord. The genocide is against those who do not trust the Lord. And it turns out statistically that this probably was 98% of culture that had rejected God.

So in Deuteronomy 2:24 we have the first part of this narrative and we'll quickly cover the two campaigns, the Sihon campaign from chapter 2, beginning in verse 24, on through 2:37. Now we want to get the map here because we need to get our terrain in mind. We're dealing with a military situation and maps are useful for that. This is a relief map I got when I was in Israel many, many years ago, produced by the Israeli army and you can see, obviously it has all kinds of elevation in it because that's what military guys think about, and this is the north end of the Dead Sea. Let's get our bearings here; here is Jericho, the purple line is the Jordan River; there's the edge, they're going to come across and the first thing is going to hit Jericho. Why are they going to hit Jericho? Because Jericho is a military strong point. So if they're going to penetrate they're going to have to come up the road and they don't want their forces to be attacked and vulnerable to counter moves by the people in the fortified installation of Jericho. So Jericho has got to go. But before they can get there, they're over here, which, by the way, to give you kind of a modern thing, Amman, the capital of Jordan, is right there, and that is, of course, named after Ammon, the Old Testament tribe, so here, today, this is all Jordan here.

Well, they're coming up north and they're skirting around because remember, here is the northern end of the Moabites. And so they are going to encounter all this territory here and they've got the bad guys up in here. And one of these bad guys is Sihon. So in Deuteronomy 2:24 it says, "Rise, take your journey, and cross over the River Arnon. I have given into your hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to possess it, and engage him in battle." So now there's the command to begin the war, "engage him in battle. [25] This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the nations under the whole heaven, who hear the report of you, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of you." Remember that holy war is revelatory of the nature of God. Now when you see in the text of verse 25, "the dread" shall be upon you, that should remind you of an actual report by Rahab, because Rahab said... what were the two things that they dreaded, that they heard. Well, the first one was Egypt, but that was far away; Rahab is right here, the battle is going to be right across the river, so you'd better believe that when the people on the west side of the Jordan see what's going on on the east side of the Jordan they get the message.

[26] "And I sent messengers from the Wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon king of Heshbon, with words of peace," which of the Deuteronomy policies is he following? The policy, the first one, which was the policy toward the... I've got it reversed in the notes, policy 2 with policy 1, it should be reversed, policy 1 is the one that you exercise toward people not in the land, remember, you send messengers out and that's what he does. But God had said, in verse 24, that I have hardened his heart, so that he's going to reject that, and then he's going to possess the land because God says that this guy is going to reject it, so now we're going to follow policy number 2, again there's a mistake there in the notes on 2:24. So he sent

messengers, and you notice the text, verses 27, 28, what does that sound like, for those of us who have read the earlier part of Deuteronomy 2? Doesn't that sound like the same message that they gave Edom, they gave Moab, they gave Ammon? I'm offering to move through your territory but we're going to pay any damages that we do, we're going to pay for our food, we're going to pay for our water, so this is a gracious offer.

Now there's something about Sihon that we have to know that is not in Deuteronomy but it is in Numbers, so if you'll hold the place and go back to a parallel passage in Numbers 21 you'll see why they switched strategies from the first one to the second one. In Numbers 21:26 we have what actually happened prior to that message from Moses. In Numbers 21:26, "For Heshbon was the city of Sihon, king of the Amorites," now look at the little clause here in Numbers 21:26, "For Heshbon was the city of Sihon, who had," look what he had done, "who had fought against the former king of Moab and taken all his land from his hand, as far as the Arnon." On the map this is the Arnon Valley, you can kind of tell by the brown on the map it's quite a little valley, it's no small brook here. So what the bad guy had done, he... an Amorite apparently had come over from here, had gone down, and he knocked Moab south of this river valley. So what had he done to the land that God gave the Moabites? He had taken that land. So now Israel is going to retake that land. You take Moab's land, I'm going to take it back from you. So that's what's going on here, and that's why now coming against Sihon they invoke the charem principle of holy war.

[Deuteronomy 2:30] "But Sihon, king of Heshbon, would not let us pass through, for the LORD your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that He might deliver him into your hand, as it is this day." Now people have a problem with this passage, like they have with Romans 9 and they have Romans 9 because Romans 9 talks about God hardening hearts, and we have all the Exodus where God hardened Pharaoh's heart. But if you look at these stories, how that hardening occurs, is by God showing His glory. It's kind of a paradox here. God hardens hearts of those who reject Him by giving them more light, not less. The more light that Pharaoh had, the more information that he had, the more demonstrations that he had of God's character made him reject more and more and more. So by exposing people who go on negative volition toward to God to more revelation is how God hardens their hearts.

And we see that again and again in Scripture. So more light... Isaiah, for example, you know, when he's giving that commission, it's interesting what God says, go blind them You say what? What kind of a commission does God give Isaiah to go blind everyone? He blinds them by preaching the Word of God to them. And it's interesting that in Isaiah there's only that one section in Isaiah 53 that talks about the glory of the Messiah as crucified, as the suffering one. And what had happened is even culturally the Jews had hardened their heart for Messiah by Jesus' time they picked up all of Isaiah's glorious Messiah and forgot about Isaiah 51. So theology can be very tricky here. But the point is that God is hardening hearts by giving revelation. So "the Lord said to me," verse 31, "'See, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you. Go possess it, may inherit his land.'" So that's the signal, in verse 31, that they can go in and once they capture this area, now they've had a gift, this wasn't part of the original deal for the Holy Land, this is an extra gift. So now whereas the boundary used to be up here, Israel can occupy all this;

it's extra real estate. [32, "Then Sihon and all his people came out against us to fight at Jahaz."]

[33] "And the Lord our God delivered him over to us; so we defeated him, his sons, and all his people. [34] We took all his cities at that time, and we utterly destroyed the men, women, and little ones of every city; we left none remaining." And that's the vocabulary, again, of charem. [35, "We took only the livestock as plunder for ourselves, with the spoil of the cities which we took."] And continuing, [36] "From Aroer, which is on the bank of the River Arnon, and from the city that is in the ravine, as far as Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us;" all these cities, "the Lord our God delivered all to us. [37] Only you did not go near," notice the fine text here, see, there's a detail, a sensitivity in the text to geographical boundaries. This isn't the first time we've run into this, but look at verse 37, "Only you did not go near the land of the people of Ammon--anywhere along the River Jabbok, or to the cities of the mountains, or wherever the Lord our God had forbidden us." So they did not dare, after they had triumphed here, they didn't say oh gee, you know, we've got all this control, we've got high ground here, why don't we just go down and zap Moab while we're at it. Wrong; at least that's not what God told them to do.

Then, that's one guy defeated, so now we've gotten rid of Sihon. Now, we want to look at another map here. Now we're going to go further north; this is the Sea of Galilee. So the other place is way down here, so they've come all the way up this area; by the way, this area is called Transjordan, that's the other side of the river. And for modern politics, this area right here is called the Golan Heights, and the reason why Israel today does not want to give up the Golan Heights, in spite of our administration and the world's at large, is because before when they let the Syrians control this area they put artillery pieces right along here, up on this high ground, and blasted the Jewish farms over here, because it's a high ground. You don't give high ground to people who are going to shoot you. So Israel is not going to give up the Golan Heights, you can bet your last dollar, without guarantees that that Golan Heights isn't going to be armed again and they're going to have to go through what they did in 1947, what they did in 1956, what they did in 1966, same old thing, the Jordanians and the Syrians get their guns and shoot the Jewish farms here.

But going back centuries, what they're doing now is they're coming north, look how far they are coming here; they are coming all the way up to this place which is Mount Hermon, the source of the Jordan River. This is a long way away from that Arnon Valley, so the next campaign that you see here in chapter 3, and we'll finish tonight with verse 11, this takes up the whole northern end of Transjordan.

[Deuteronomy 3:1] "So then we turned and we went up the road to Bashan," that sounds like a little casual stroll in verse 1, and I showed you the map because it wasn't a casual stroll, it was many miles, that little comment in verse 1 means many, many miles north. And they ran into this guy, "Og, the king of Bashan, came out against us; he and all his people, to battle at Endrei. [2] And the LORD said to me, 'Do not fear him, for I have delivered him and all his people and his land into your hand, and you'll do to him what you did to Sihon,[king of the Amorites, who dwelt at

Heshbon," not this guy is another Amorite, and you'll notice there's no peace delegation going because as of chapter 2, in the Sihon campaign, charem policy, strategic policy number 2 is not the operational military order of the day and the army is under the control of that strategy right now. So they're not changing.

[3] "So the LORD our God also delivered into our hands Og, king of Bashan, with all his people...." Now look at all the inventory of what they conquered, because this is all valuable assets for this new nation. "So the LORD our God also delivered into our hands Og, king of Bashan, with all his people, and we attacked him until he had no survivors remaining," that's the charem principle. [4] And we took all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we did not take from them," how many cities does it say, "sixty cities, [all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan]." This is no small deal here, this is a lot of territory. We call it... their cities would be our towns, but not notice what it says, "all the region of Argob, [5] All these cities, [were fortified with high walls, gates, and bars, besides a great many rural towns]," why do you suppose verse 5 is in there? Why is that important to the overall argument of what Moses is doing with the people. The cities were fortified, they had high towers. They are being encouraged that they've done it, you guys, you're starting to get the picture here, you're doing it, you're successful, you are trusting the Lord, you're actually seeing the Lord answer prayers, you're seeing the Lord through this, observe what's happening, you guys can do it, you're moving out, you're doing a great job.

[6] And we utterly destroyed them, as we did to Sihon, king of Heshbon, we destroyed the men, women and children of every city, [7] But all the livestock and the spoil of the cities we took as booty [for ourselves]," so that would not be allowed under a pure strategy 2 operation, but because apparently these cities technically were not in the land they weren't technically under that booty rule. [8] "And at that time we took the land from the hand of the two kings," this is a summary statement, "of the Amorites who were on this side of the Jordan," it's "this side" because Moses is on this side when he's talking, "from the River Arnon to Mount Hermon." See on the map, I showed you the River, Arnon, down in the south part of the Dead Sea, and on this map we're looking at Mount Hermon on the north end. We took all that area, [10] "all Gilead, and all Bashan," a large area.

Now we've noticed in the past of this chapter there would be an editorial comment about giants; now notice what happens here, verse 11. "For only Og, king of Bashan, remained of the remnant of the giants. Indeed, his bedstead was an iron bedsteads. (Is it not in Rabbah of the people of Ammon?) Nine cubits is its length and four cubits its width, according to the standard cubit." A cubit is the distance from your hand to your elbow, roughly eighteen inches; this is a cubit. This is the world's first king size bed, and if you fork out the dimensions, he must have had big sheets because that sucker was 13 feet long and 6 feet wide; that's how big this guy was. And because people would doubt that there could ever be a guy like this, what do you see in the text that lets you know that something was done about this bed to encourage people. They kept it, as an evidence; do you want to go see the bed, don't trust me, go down to Ammon and it's there in the museum. So that's the evidence that this is

not a little Bible story for Sunday School. This is part of history and these are the true facts of history and they are there for our encouragement.

In fact, there was a legend, a Jewish legend and we... you know, we're not saying this is inspired of God, but it lets you know that centuries and centuries ago the Jewish rabbis kept these stories, they must have used them to illustrate these reports, and one of the legends about King Og was that on the morning of the battle, it was foggy, Moses comes out, he looks over at the city, he's doing reconnoitering, you know, he didn't have his binoculars I guess, but whatever, and as the fog was breaking on the city he noticed there was a tower there, what he thought was a tower, and he turns to his lieutenants and says guys, you know, in the briefing last night you didn't tell me about a fortified tower on the wall. Towers on the wall, by the way, changed the way you attacked. That's why you go to the penitentiaries today they have towers with guards in them. Towers are important when we're dealing with a military operation. So Moses is a little upset that his boys missed seeing the tower. Well, the sun comes up and the fog burns off, it's Og sitting on the wall. So that's just a legend of the guy's size, it was preserved for years in Jewish legend.

We want to conclude tonight with some principles. And I've summarized those on the handout, and that is, first glimpsing into the lives of Old Testament believers: these people walked BY FAITH and they needed the faith, notice it wasn't works or human merit that made this come off right. The only way this stuff could come off was for their mental attitude to be such that boy, this is a helpless situation, we're going up against this, we're outnumbered, they've got fortified cities, we don't, it's easier to defend a fortified city than it is to attack a fortified city, you need a ratio of soldiers, the offense to the defense force, so hey, you know, what are we doing here? So faced with that, the battle is up here, that's where the battle is, and these people had to learn that.

Number 2 is these tests are designed to bring us up to maturity, but they are also designed because God has decreed that we exercise dominion of some sort. And Israel, Israel's destiny was to create a theocracy on earth as a historic testimony to the human race, but we in the church age also have a destiny, and the destiny of the Church is to grow the body of Christ to completion, and in growing the body of Christ to completion it is going to involve spiritual counterattack. And this is why in Ephesians 6, what do we have? The breastplate of righteousness, it talks about armaments. Why is he talking about armaments in Ephesians 6, which by the way, language borrowed from holy war in Isaiah, what's the deal in Ephesians 6? It's talking about the fact that this unseen world around us hates us as it hated Christ. John the apostle, in his epistle, says "Marvel not that the world hates you, if it hated Jesus."

If we're identified with Jesus in a fallen world, we are going to be targets and this is why you can't be a lackadaisical believer and live your life on the basis of two and a half verses of the Scripture. You have to have a strong theology and you have to have the assurance that history is on our side and you get that only from looking at the Scriptures; not from spending 25 hours a week watching the boob tube. You get that only through the Scriptures because that is the true story of history. The Church's destiny is to finish building the body of Christ

and the gates of hell shall not prevail. And when the body is finished the next operation is going to happen. Now why that happens we don't know, apparently Jesus Christ is not ready to break the scroll, take the seals of the scroll, until the redemption has been finished, because the hymn in Revelation 5 says, "Thou has," past tense, redeemed us out of every tribe and nation.

So when that redeeming process is finished, apparently God needs man power for the future millennium or something, but whatever the struggle is that's going on, it involves Satan, it involves angelic beings, we can't see any of it, the only thing we know is, just like believers, we have to go on what the Word tells us to do and that is to trust the Lord, to be sure we confess our sins, to be sure we are in fellowship, so that we can handle these kinds of struggles, because there is a holy war going on now. It's not against people though, the holy war now is against the principalities and powers. See, they're damned; the fallen angels are damned and the fallen angels have zero, ZERO chance of any redemption. We are dealing with desperate creatures because all they can do is fight a holding action, and they will fight that holding action until the end because the longer they can hold off the end of history, the longer they can go on. So living the Christian life is not some little pleasure couch, and this is why we want to go back to the Word of God and inculcate in us an imprecatory attitude toward principalities and powers.

Paul says, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood," it's not that we hate people, but it not to say we do not hate the principalities and powers that rule this world. That's why there are imprecatory psalms in the Scriptures. Why are those hatful psalms? To develop a mental attitude, a fighting mental attitude.

Father, we thank You...