

# Deuteronomy 1 Commentary

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Source: Ryrie Study Bible

## Deuteronomy

Dt 1:1-4:43	Dt 4:44-26:19				Dt 27:1-34:12		
Moses' First Discourse	Moses' Second Discourse				Moses' Third Discourse		
Historical Review	Legal Exposition				Prophetical Promises		
Looking Back 40 Years	Looking Up What God Expected of Israel				Looking Ahead What God Will Do for Israel		
Recapitulation of Wanderings	Rehearsal of Israel's Law				Ratification of Israel's Covenant		Historical Appendices
Remembrance of the past	Commandments for the Present				Dt 27:1-30:20 Blessing and Cursing		Dt 31:1-34:12 Death of Moses
Take Heed Don't forget	Ten Commands	Related Commands			Two Choices Affecting the Future		Moses' Parting Words
Dt 1:1-4:43 Looking Back	Dt 4:44-11:32 Exposition of Decalogue	Dt 12:1-16:17 Ceremonial Laws	Dt 16:18-20:20 Civil Laws	Dt 21:1-26:19 Social Laws	Dt 27:1-28:68 Ratification of Covenant	Dt 29:1-30:20 Terms of Covenant	Dt 31:1-34:12 Moses' Song, Blessing, Death
<b>Plains of Moab</b>							
<b>ca. 2 Months</b> <b>Moses: Author</b> (Except Dt 34)							

**Key Words (NAS95):** Heart (49x/45v), Love (24x/23v), Listen (31x/31v), Obey/obedient (15x), Observe (26x), Keep (32x/30v), Purge (remove) the evil (10x/10v), Remember (15x), Forget/forgotten (13x), Command (-ed, -ment, -ments) (127x, 98v), Covenant (27x/26v), Bless/blessed/blessing (50x/45v), Life (19x/15v), Curse(s)/cursed/cursing (34x/32v), Death (23x/19v), Fear (25x/25v), Carefully (8x), Shall not (128x/116v), LORD spoke (9x), LORD will (34x/34v), LORD your God (279x/239v), Lord our God (22x/21v), Nation(s) (46x/41v), Circumcise (Dt 10:16, Dt 30:6).

Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy three times in His temptation in the wilderness [Mat 4:1-11; Dt 8:3; Dt 6:16; Dt 6:13,14; also Dt 10:20].

### Key Verses:

- Dt 6:5+ - "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."
- Dt 7:9+ - "Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments."

**Henrietta Mears** writes that "You will come to appreciate the full force & magnetic beauty of Deuteronomy only as you read its pages....**Nothing in literature matches the majesty of its eloquence. Nothing in the OT has any more powerful appeal for the spiritual life. No book in all the Word of God pictures better the life that is lived according to God's will & the blessings showered upon the soul who comes into the richness & fullness of spiritual living along the rugged pathway of simple obedience...If you want a taste of heaven on earth, become familiar with Deuteronomy.**" ([What the Bible is All About](#))

**J Sidlow Baxter** - The Hebrew name for this fifth writing of Moses was Haddebharim, that is, "the Words" - this name being taken from the opening verse of the book: "these be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan in the wilderness ..." This name sufficiently marks off its special character from the more definitely historical and legislative books which have preceded it. The history and legislation of the earlier books are reviewed in Deuteronomy, but only as the basis for the words of admonition which are now recorded. In the truest, deepest, and profoundest sense, Deuteronomy is a book of words; for never were wiser or weightier words uttered.

Our own title, "Deuteronomy," is taken from the Greek, deuterios (second) and nomos (law) - the title which the **Septuagint (Lxx)** translators gave to the book when they translated the Old Testament into Greek, somewhere about the third century B.C. In Deuteronomy we have a second giving of the Law, or, rather, a new expounding of it to the new generation of Israel who had grown up in the wilderness and were needing to have the Law repeated and expounded to them before their entering into Canaan. Deuteronomy is not the giving of a new Law, but an explication of that which was already given.

**A Book of Transition** - Deuteronomy is a book of transition. It marks a transition in a fourfold way. First, it marks the transition to a new generation; for with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, and Moses himself, the old generation which came up from Egypt and was numbered at Sinai, had passed away, and a new generation had grown up. Second, it marks the transition to a new possession. The wilderness pilgrimage was to give place to the national occupancy of Canaan. Third, it marks the transition to a new experience, to a new life - houses instead of tents, settled habitation instead of wandering, and, instead of the wilderness diet, the [milk and honey](#) and corn and wine of Canaan. Fourth, it marks the transition to a new revelation of God - the revelation of His love. From Genesis to Numbers the love of God is never spoken of but here, in Deuteronomy, we have the wonderful words: "Because He loved thy fathers, therefore He chose their seed" (Dt 4:37); "the Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you" (Dt 7:7-8); "the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them" (Dt 10:15); "the Lord thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the Lord thy God loved thee" (Dt 23:5).

While speaking of the transitional nature of Deuteronomy, it is interesting to mention that just as the Old Testament begins with five historical books - Genesis to Deuteronomy, so the New Testament begins with five historical books - Matthew to Acts; and there is a striking parallel between The Acts of the Apostles, the fifth book of the New Testament, and Deuteronomy, the fifth book of the Old. The Acts, like Deuteronomy, marks a great transition. It marks the transition from the distinctive message of the "Gospels" to that of the epistles. Like Deuteronomy, it marks the transition to a new generation - a re-generation in Christ. Like Deuteronomy, it marks the transition to a new possession - a spiritual Canaan with "all blessings in the heavenlies, in Christ." Like Deuteronomy, it marks the transition to a new experience - a new birth, a new life, a new dynamic, in the Holy Spirit. Like Deuteronomy, it marks the transition to a new revelation of God - the revelation given in the Church epistles of "the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God," namely, the Church; so that now "there might be known, by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph 3:10).

But what is equally striking is that both Deuteronomy, the fifth book of the one group, and Acts, the fifth book of the other group, are books in which God gives His people a second chance. What is Deuteronomy? It is deuterios nomos, the second giving of the Law. Before the new generation is committed to Joshua's charge, Moses, at God's command, rehearses the Law to them. What is the book of the Acts? It is the second offer of the Kingdom of Heaven to the Jews, first at the capital, to the Jews of the homeland, and then through the empire, to the Jews of the dispersion. Of this we shall say more later; but it is well to have it in mind even now. ([Explore the Book- J. Sidlow Baxter - recommended](#))

**Paul Van Gorder** - If we were to write one word across this book to state its theme, it would be **obedience**." The significant promise and ominous warning are seen in Deuteronomy 11:26-28, which sums it all up. The book of Deuteronomy may be comfortably divided according to the addresses of Moses. Deuteronomy shows with unmistakable clarity the inflexibility of the law and the necessity of complete subjection to the Word of God. As Romans 3:19 declares, "Now we know that whatever things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Christ is the fulfillment of the law. He is the only Israelite to obey God totally in the promised land. He alone kept the letter of the code that was set forth in Deuteronomy. The Lord Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy three times in His temptation in the wilderness [cp. Mat 4:1-11; Deu 8:3; 6:16; 6:13,14; also 10:20]. **Surely, a book so valuable to the Savior in such a time must also be valuable to us!**

But where do you find Christ pictured in the book of Deuteronomy? Ada Habershon in The Study of Types lists 67 types and 13 contrasts between Moses and Christ. The Lord Jesus is seen in a twofold way in the book of Deuteronomy: by prophecy and by type. These words of Moses are recorded in Deuteronomy 18:15, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken." After the Lord Jesus fed the 5,000 in Galilee, the people said, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world" (John 6:14). Shortly before the stones were hurled that crushed out the life of Stephen, that godly believer [quoted Moses] about Jesus. "This is that Moses who said unto the children of Israel, A Prophet shall

the Lord, your God, raise up unto you of your brethren, like me; Him shall ye hear" (Acts 7:37). Stephen indicated that Jesus Christ is the One of whom Moses spoke.

**Christ Pictured in the Life of Moses**-- The Scripture says that our Lord was a prophet "like unto Moses." Please consider the following points as you study Deuteronomy. -- Both Moses and Christ...

- (1) were goodly children [Ex 2:2; Heb 11:23; Luke 2:52].
- (2) refused a kingdom (Heb 11:26a) [Mat 4:8-10].
- (3) were the object of a king's wrath [Heb 11:27; Acts 4:27].
- (4) acted for the joy of the reward [Heb 11:26b] (Heb 12:2).
- (5) were called out of Egypt [Mat 2:13-15].
- (6) were rejected at first by their brethren [Ex 2:14; John 1:11]
- (7) made the sea obey them [Ex 14:15,16,21; Mark 4:39-41].
- (8) had people who wanted to stone them [Num 14:8-10; John 10:31-33].
- (9) delivered a parting blessing to Israel [Dt 33:26-29; Mat 23:37-39]
- (10) had their resurrection contested (Jude 1:9; Mat 17:3; 28:12-18).
- (11) [are] associated in the song of eternity (Rev 15:3).

**Van Gorder** goes on to write - "we see striking similarities to the death and resurrection of our Lord.

- (1) Moses went up to die (Dt 34:1). Christ ascended to Calvary [John 19:17,18].
- (2) Moses was alone, except for God (Dt 34:6). Christ's followers forsook Him [Mat 26:56].
- (3) The Lord talked to him (T 34:4) [Heb 1:8-12].
- (4) Moses' faculties were unimpaired (Dt 34:7). Christ remained in control until His death [John 10:17,18]
- (5) What a funeral! Moses died "according to the word of the Lord" (34:5); literally, "at the mouth of the Lord." Christ dismissed His own spirit when the work was completed [Mat 27:50; Jn 19:28-30].
- (6) This is not the last we see of Moses. He stood with Christ and Elijah on the mount of transfiguration, 1500 years later [Mat 17:1-3]. Evidently, the devil tried to hold the body of Moses so that he could not appear with the Lord Jesus (Jude 1:9). Death could not hold our Savior [Acts 2:24]. ([OT Reflections of Christ - Deuteronomy](#))

THE PENTATEUCH SUMMARIZED						
BOOK	KEY IDEA	THE NATION	THE PEOPLE	GOD'S CHARACTER	GOD'S ROLE	GOD'S COMMAND
Genesis	Beginnings Ruin	Chosen	Prepared	Powerful Sovereign	Creator	"Let there be!"
Exodus	Redemption	Delivered	Redeemed	Merciful	Deliverer	"Let My people go!"
Leviticus	Worship	Set Apart	Taught	Holy	Sanctifier	"Be Holy!"
Numbers	Wandering	Directed	Tested	Just	Sustainer	"Go in!"
Deuteronomy	Renewed Covenant	Made Ready	Retaught	Loving Lord	Rewarder	"Obey!"
Source: <a href="#">Talk Thru the Bible</a>						

**Deuteronomy 1:1 These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel across the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel and Laban and Hazeroth and Dizahab.**

- **across the Jordan:** Nu 32:5,19,32 34:15 35:14 Jos 9:1,10 22:4,7
- De 33:2 Ge 21:21 Nu 10:12 12:16 13:3,26 1Sa 25:1 Hab 3:3
- **Hazeroth:** Nu 11:35 33:17,18
- [Click to see Multiple Bible Versions on this verse](#) - to go to next verse click arrow (➤) at top of page
- **Background** - [John MacArthur Introduction to Deuteronomy - Author, Date, Background](#)
- **Background** - [Chuck Swindoll's Introduction to Deuteronomy](#) - Listen to his [overview of Deuteronomy](#)
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **MOSES' FIRST DISCOURSE—APPROACHING THE LAND (Chaps. 1–4)**

- Deuteronomy 1:1-5 Introduction
- Deuteronomy 1:6–46 describes the journey from Horeb to Kadesh.
- Deuteronomy 2 continues from Kadesh to Heshbon.
- Deuteronomy 3 describes the conquering of Transjordan.
- Deuteronomy 4 is Moses' exhortation to obedience.

#### **MOSES' SECOND DISCOURSE—PURITY IN THE LAND (Chaps. 5–28)**

#### **MOSES' THIRD DISCOURSE—COVENANT FOR THE LAND (Chaps. 29, 30)**

#### **MOSES' LAST DAYS—DEATH OUTSIDE THE LAND (Chaps. 31–34)**

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### **Moses 3 Sermons in Deuteronomy**

Here is a simple outline of Deuteronomy

#### **Deuteronomy 1-4 Looking Back – Review of 40 yr.**

- Spies sent – Deut 1:19-41
- Wanderings & Defeat of Sihon the Amorite, king – Deut 2
- Defeat of Og, Land division, Moses forbidden to enter – Deut 3
- Obedience Commanded, Love the Lord – Deut 4
  - The intent and purpose of the law (Deuteronomy 4:1-8)
  - A review of the giving of the law (Deuteronomy 4:9-14)
  - An exhortation to proper conduct (Deuteronomy 4:15-24)
  - The prediction of dispersion (Deuteronomy 4:25-31)
  - The privilege of the chosen people (Deuteronomy 4:32-40)
  - The selection of the cities of refuge (Deuteronomy 4:41-43) (J. Hannah)

#### **Deuteronomy 4:44 through Deuteronomy 26 Looking Up – What God Expects (Review of the Law)**

- Commandments, feasts

#### **Deuteronomy 27-34 Looking Ahead – What God Will Do**

- Blessings & Curses

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Here is another division of Deuteronomy based on the introduction to each section:

- Deut 1:1. “These are the words”— The Past (Deut 1–4)
- Deut 4:44. “This is the law”— The Ten Commandments (Deut 5)

- Deut 6:1. "This is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments"— Laws for the Present (Deut 6–28)
- Deut 29:1. "These are the words of the covenant"— The Future Covenant Renewal (Deut 29–32)
- Deut 33:1. "This is the blessing"— Blessing for the Future (Deut 33–34)



Route of Israel from Gulf of Aqabah to East of Jordan  
(Source: NIVSB)

**THOUGHT** - As you read and study Deuteronomy keep the NT passages below in mind and you can be assured your time in this wonderful Old Testament book will be fruitful and practical...

Romans 15:4-6+ For whatever was written in earlier times (aka the OLD TESTAMENT) was written for our instruction ([didaskalia](#)), so that ([hina](#) - see purpose clauses) through perseverance ([hupomone](#) - pray for it - God gives it as an answer to prayer see Ro 15:5 and Col 1:9-11+ especially Col 1:11) and the encouragement ([paraklesis](#) - HOLY SPIRIT IS OUR [parakletos](#) > [PARACLETE](#)) of [drawn from] the Scriptures we might have (present tense - as our lifestyle, continually have) **hope** ([elpis](#) - not "hope so" but "hope sure" = absolute assurance God will do good to us in the future!). 5 Now may the God who gives **perseverance** ([hupomone](#)) and **encouragement** ([paraklesis](#)) grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, 6 so that ([hina](#) - see purpose clauses) with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:6+ Now these things (OLD TESTAMENT) happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved (ARE YOU CRAVING ANYTHING OTHER THAN GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, HOLINESS, GODLINESS?)

1 Corinthians 10:11+ Now these things (OLD TESTAMENT) happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

**James Gray** in his introduction to Deuteronomy notes that "A secondary name for Deuteronomy might be "The book of review." The word comes from two other Greek words, deuter, which means "the second," and nomos, "law," the second law, or the repetition of the law. And yet your reading of the book has made it clear that it is more than a repetition of the law. In the first place, it repeats, or reviews, the history of the previous journeyings, and when it comes to renewing the law it adds certain things not mentioned previously (Deuteronomy 29:1). Compared with the other books also, it is characterized by a rather warm and oratorical style, and is more spiritual and ethical in its tone. The one great lesson it contains is that of obedience grounded on a known and recognized relationship to God through redemption." (Synthetic Bible Studies)

**J Vernon McGee** - Moses is reviewing the journeys of the children of Israel and interpreting a great deal of what had taken place. All of that generation is now dead, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua. He is preparing the new generation to enter the land, and rehearsing the experiences of their fathers so that they might profit from them rather than repeat the failures.

**Brian Bell - Why this book?** - Because of memory lost. 1. Ever hear of the story about the 3 absent-minded sisters who lived together, Anabelle, Mabel, & Gladys? a) Anabelle announced she was going upstairs to take a bubble bath. She filled the tub, got one leg in & forgot if she was getting in or getting out. She called Mabel to help. b) Mabel started up the stairs, making it to the landing, & then couldn't remember if she was going up or coming down. It was Gladys' time to help. c) Gladys shaking her head lamented, "those 2 sisters of mine, if they didn't have me to help them remember they wouldn't make it through the day. I'm glad I'm not like that, knock on wood." She wrapped twice on the coffee table, then responded looking in the direction of the front door, "Come in!" 2. We all forget at times. Sometimes it can paralyze us & keep us from moving ahead. a) \*To get where we need to go, we need to remember where we've been. b) \*That's why the Israelites needed the Book of Deut. It reminded them of their past & prepared them for their future. 3. This new generation of desert wanderers were about to enter the Promise Land. a) But before they could move ahead, they needed to recall & emblazon on their minds & hearts the precious heritage God had given them. b) As they would reflect on God's Faithfulness they would build faith for the future. C. Ps.103:1-5 Forget not all his benefits. ([Sermon](#))

**John Phillips** has an interesting introduction - John Bunyan, in the second part of Pilgrim's Progress, tells how Christiana and her



boys, having belatedly set off to follow Christian on his pilgrimage to the Celestial City, come within sight of that dreadful valley where, some time before, Christian had so desperately fought with the fiend Apollyon. Responding to a question put by young Samuel, Mr. Greatheart, the companion of Christiana and her boys, replies: "*Your father had that battle with Apollyon at a place yonder before us, in a narrow passage just beyond Forgetful Green. And indeed, that place is the most dangerous place in all these parts.*" In one of his books, F. W. Boreham relates this incident to the book of Deuteronomy and suggests that, in view of the nature of Deuteronomy, a better title would be "The Dangers of Forgetful Green," For the book of Deuteronomy consists of a series of addresses by Moses warning the Israelites, whom he was soon to leave, of the dangers of forgetfulness. "Beware lest ye forget," he said again and again. "Thou shalt remember." These two warnings run like a refrain from page to page of Deuteronomy. "Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen" (4:9). "Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God" (4:23). "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt" (5:15). "Then beware lest thou forget the Lord, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage" (6:12). "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness" (8:2). "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments" (8:11). "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth" (8:18). "Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness" (9:7). "Remember what the Lord thy God did unto Miriam" (24:9). "Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way" (25:17). ([Exploring the Scriptures](#))

**John MacArthur** - The English title "**Deuteronomy**" comes from the **Greek Septuagint** (LXX) mistranslation of "**copy of this law**" in Dt 17:18 as "**second law**," which was rendered *Deuteronomium* in the Latin version (Vulgate). The Hebrew title of the book is translated "**These are the words**," from the first two Hebrew words of the book. The Hebrew title is a better description of the book since it is not a "second law," but rather the record of Moses' words of explanation concerning the law. Deuteronomy completes the five-part literary unit called the [Pentateuch](#). Moses has been traditionally recognized as the author of Deuteronomy, since the book itself testifies that Moses wrote it (Dt 1:1, 5; 31:9, 22, 24). Both the OT (1 Ki 2:3; 8:53; 2 Ki 14:6; 18:12) and the NT (Acts 3:22, 23; Ro 10:19) support the claim of Mosaic authorship. While Dt. 32:48–34:12 was added after Moses' death (probably by Joshua), the rest of the book came from Moses' hand just before his death in 1405 B.C. ([Introduction - Deuteronomy](#))

**Note** that the **Deuteronomy 1:1** parallels the last verse of **Numbers 36:13+**

These are the commandments and the ordinances which the LORD commanded to the sons of Israel through Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho.

**Meredith Kline** - Ancient suzerainty treaties began with a preamble in which the speaker, the one who was declaring his lordship and demanding the vassal's allegiance, identified himself. The Deuteronomic preamble identifies the speaker as Moses (v. 1a), but Moses as the earthly, mediatorial representative of the Lord (v. 3b), the heavenly Suzerain and ultimate Sovereign of this covenant. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

**These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel** - As they say you can "take it or leave it!" Either Moses is the author or he is not. The inspired Word says he is the author of this book, so that settles it for me. No "[higher criticism](#)." No [Documentary Hypothesis](#)! No theory that this is the work of a later [redactor](#)! Moses wrote it!

**All Israel** in Deuteronomy - 13x in 12v - Deut. 1:1; Deut. 5:1; Deut. 11:6; Deut. 13:11; Deut. 21:21; Deut. 27:9; Deut. 29:2; Deut. 31:1; Deut. 31:7; Deut. 31:11; Deut. 32:45; Deut. 34:12

The phrase **Moses spoke** occurs 4x (Dt 1:1, 1:3, 4:45, 31:30) and in this context represents the last words Moses ever spoke. The last words of any man are always potentially worth hearing because the speaker is not likely to waste time with trivial or frivolous issues (This is why 2 Timothy is such a special epistle, for it represents the last recorded words of the great Apostle Paul and thus deserves our very close attention.) Most of Deuteronomy represents speeches by Moses and since these are his last words we all do well to pay close attention to words of this great man Moses, who was more humble than any man on the face of the earth (Nu 12:3+).

**Illustration** - Review magazine once documented that one-third of all references and quotations in America's political writings come from the Bible. And the book of the Bible most frequently cited by Americans during the founding era of our nation was Deuteronomy. ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Meredith Kline on these are the words** - With this introductory formula the extra-biblical treaties began. The site of the covenant renewal ceremony to which Deuteronomy witnesses was the Jordan area in the land of Moab (Dt 1:1a, 5a; cf. Dt 4:44-46). The time was the last month of the fortieth year after the Exodus (Dt 1:3a), when the men of war of that generation had all perished (Dt 2:16), the conquest of Trans-Jordan was accomplished (Dt 1:4; 2:24 ff.), and the time of Moses' death was at hand. It was especially this last circumstance that occasioned the renewal of the covenant. God secured the continuity of the mediatorial dynasty by requiring of Israel a pledge of obedience to his new appointee, Joshua (cf. Dt 31:3; Dt 34:9), and a new vow of consecration to himself. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

**John Trapp** on **these are the words** - And surely he spake much, if he spake, as some cast it up, this whole Book in less than ten days' space. Certain it is that he spake here, as ever, most divinely, and like himself, or rather beyond himself - the end of a thing being better, if better may be, than the beginning thereof, {Ecc 7:8} as good wine is best at last; and as the sun shines most amiably when it is going down. This book of the law it was that the king was to write out with his own hand, {Dt 17:18-19} that it might serve as his manual, and attend him in his running library. This was that happy book that good Josiah lighting upon, after it had long laid hid in the temple, melted at the menaces thereof, and obtained of God to die in peace, though he were slain in battle. This only book was that silver brook, that precious [purling](#) current, out of which the Lord Christ, our Champion, chose all those three smooth stones, wherewith he prostrated the Goliath of hell in that sharp encounter. {Mt 4:4; Mt 4:7; Mt 4:10+} And surely, if Cicero could call Aristotle's "Politics," for the [elegancy](#) of the style, and for the excellency of the matter, *aureum flumen* (golden river) orationis; and if the same author durst say that the law of the twelve tables did exceed all the libraries of philosophers, both in weight and worth; how much rather is all this true of this second edition of God's law, with an addition.

**Gotquestions.org** - Moses is identified in the book of Deuteronomy as the author (Deuteronomy 31:9, 24), and Jesus often quoted from Deuteronomy, confirming Mosaic authorship (Matthew 19:8, citing Deuteronomy 24:1-4).

Note the phrase **all Israel** - Used 12 times - Deut. 1:1; Deut. 5:1; Deut. 11:6; Deut. 13:11; Deut. 21:21; Deut. 27:9; Deut. 29:2; Deut. 31:1; Deut. 31:7; Deut. 31:11; Deut. 32:45; Deut. 34:12. **Jack Deere** explains the importance of this phrase writing "Its frequent occurrence emphasizes the unity of Israel which was brought about by God's mighty deliverance of the nation from Egypt, and by her acceptance of His covenant at Sinai. They were uniquely God's people, the only nation on earth that had as its "constitution" the Word of God. Moses' words, then, had a special importance for every Israelite." ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#)) **John MacArthur** adds that **all Israel** "emphasizes the unity of Israel, and the universal applications of these words." ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**Across the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel and Laban and Hazeroth and Dizahab** - **Across the Jordan** means on the eastern side of the Jordan River ([click map](#) above to see the **plains of Moab** just to the northwest of [Mt Nebo](#) which is the site Israel camped prior to entering the Promised Land). The exact location of most of these place names is uncertain (see note below).

**THOUGHT** - Don't miss the import of the record of all these locations, most of which are unknown to us today. The point is that they were not unknown to God. He knew exactly where His chosen people were. And the application is that God still knows all about us, the way we take each day, whether we are in the wilderness or in the land of Canaan. And He knows all of our needs (and our greeds). This is both comforting and convicting (depending on where you are "journeying!")

**Believer's Study Bible** on [Arabah](#) ("the plain") - "The plain opposite Suph," i.e., Arabah, refers generally to a barren district and specifically to the Jordan valley, in part or in whole, extending from Mount Hermon or Lake Galilee to the Gulf of Aqabah. Wadi-el-Arabah is still the name for the segment beginning immediately at the southern tip of the Dead Sea.

In Numbers 33:48-51+ we read "They (ISRAEL) journeyed from the mountains of Abarim and camped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho. 49 They camped by the Jordan, from Beth-jeshimoth as far as Abel-shittim in the plains of Moab.

**Kline** on **Paran** - At Paran, on the southern border of Canaan, however, Israel had rebelled, refusing to enter the land (Num 12:16 ff.), and so that generation was sentenced to die in the wilderness. Now their children had arrived via the Arabah route from "Suph" (presumably the Gulf of Aqabah) for an eastern approach to Canaan through the land of Moab. Both the direction of approach to Canaan and the length of the wanderings spoke of a history of covenant breaking and of postponed inheritance. There is, thus, an interesting contrast between the preamble's look south from Moab into the past of failure and curse and Moses' closing look north from Moab into Israel's future of fulfillment and blessing (Deut 34:1-4).

[Arabah \(Wikipedia\)](#) - The old meaning, which was in use up to the early 20th century, covered almost the entire length of what today is called the [Jordan Rift Valley](#), running in a north-south orientation between the southern end of the [Sea of Galilee](#) and the northern tip of the [Gulf of Aqaba](#) at [Aqaba-Eilat](#). This included the [Jordan River Valley](#) between the [Sea of Galilee](#) and the Dead Sea, the Dead Sea itself, and what today is commonly called the Arava Valley. (See [Map and article on Arabah](#)).

**NET Note** - **Suph** - This place is otherwise unattested and its location is unknown. Perhaps it is Khirbet Sufah, 4 mi (6 km) SSE of Madaba, Jordan. ([Deuteronomy 1](#))

**NET Note** - **Paran** is the well-known desert area between Mount Sinai and Kadesh Barnea (cf. Num 10:12; 12:16). (See [Paran](#) in Holman Bible Dictionary)

**NET Note** - **Tophel** refers possibly to etl-Tlāfileh, 15 mi (25 km) SE of the Dead Sea, or to Dabīlu, another name for Paran. See H. Cazelles, "Tophel (Deut. 1:1)," VT 9 (1959): 412-15.



**NET Note** - **Laban**. Perhaps this refers to Libnah (Num 33:20).

**NET Note** - **Hazereth**. This probably refers to ĀAin Khadra. See Y. Aharoni, The Land of the Bible, 199–200.  
11 )

**NET Note** - **Dizahab** - Perhaps this refers to Mina al-Dhahab on the eastern Sinai coast.

#### Related Resources:

- [How did Moses write Deuteronomy if it records his death? | GotQuestions.org](#) - **Excerpt** - "Beyond reasonable question, Moses wrote Deuteronomy very near the end of his life. It is likely that Joshua, as Moses' successor as leader of Israel, wrote the account of Moses' death. Other theories include Ezra as the author of Deuteronomy 34 or the seventy elders who served under Moses (see Ex 24:9)."

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#### John Phillips - Outline of Deuteronomy ([Exploring the Scriptures](#))

- I. The History of Israel—The Backward Look (Dt 1-3)
    - A. The Journey Reviewed—Horeb to Kadesh (Dt 1)
      - 1. **Trekking to Kadesh (Dt 1:1-19)**
      - 2. **Trembling at Kadesh (Dt 1:20-45)**
      - 3. **Tarrying at Kadesh (Dt 1:46)**
    - B. The Journey Resumed—Kadesh to Beth-peor (Dt 2-3)
      - 1. Conquering the Land East of Jordan (Dt 2:1-3:17)
        - a. Victory over the Giants Possible (Dt 2:1-23)
        - b. Victory over the Giants Proven (Dt 2:2-3:17)
      - 2. Contemplating the Land West of Jordan (Dt 3:18-29)
        - a. Moses Speaks to Israel (Dt 3:18-20)
        - b. Moses Sees the Inheritance (Dt 3:21-29)
  - II. The Holiness of Israel—The Inward Look (Dt 4-11)
    - A. Moses Speaks about the Law (Dt 4-6)
    - B. Moses Speaks about the Lord (Dt 7-8)
    - C. Moses Speaks about the Land (Dt 9-11)
  - III. The Heritage of Israel—The Forward Look (Dt 12-30)
- Laws concerning:
- A. Purity in the Land (Dt 12-14)
  - B. Property in the Land (Dt 15)
  - C. Piety in the Land (Dt 16:1-17)
  - D. Positions in the Land (Dt 16:18-18:22)
  - E. Protection in the Land (Dt 19-20)
  - F. Persons in the Land (Dt 21-25)
  - G. Priorities in the Land (Dt 26)
  - H. Permanence in the Land (Dt 27-30)
- IV. The Hero of Israel—The Upward Look (Dt 31-34)
    - A. Moses the Statesman (Dt 31)
    - B. Moses the Singer (Dt 32)
    - C. Moses the Seer (Dt 33)
    - D. Moses the Saint (Dt 34)

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Admittedly, the numerous names of locations in this passage are difficult to identify with certainty almost 3500 years later, but surely God records the details for a reason. **C H Mackintosh** explains

"The whole position is described with a minuteness which shows how thoroughly God entered into every thing that concerned His people. He was interested in all their movements and in all their ways. He kept a faithful record of all their encampments. There was not a single circumstance connected with them, however trifling, beneath His gracious notice. He attended to every thing. His eye rested continually on that assembly as a whole, and on each member in particular. By day and by night He watched over them. Every stage of their journey was under His immediate and most gracious superintendence. There was nothing, however small, beneath His notice; nothing, however great, beyond His power. Thus it was with Israel in the wilderness of old,

and thus it is with the Church now—the Church as a whole, and each member in particular. A Father's eye rests upon us continually, His everlasting arms are around and underneath us day and night. "He withdraweth not His eyes from the righteous." He counts the hairs of our heads, and enters, with infinite goodness, into every thing that concerns us. He has charged Himself with all our wants and all our cares. He would have us to cast our every care on Him, in the sweet assurance that He careth for us. He most graciously invites us to roll our every burden over on Him, be it great or small. All this is truly wonderful. It is full of deepest consolation. It is eminently calculated to tranquilize the heart, come what may. The question is, Do we believe it? are our hearts governed by the faith of it? Do we really believe that the almighty Creator and Upholder of all things, who bears up the pillars of the universe, has graciously undertaken to do for us all the journey through? Do we thoroughly believe that "the Possessor of heaven and earth" is our Father? and that He has charged Himself with all our wants from first to last? Is our whole moral being under the commanding power of those words of the inspired apostle, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Alas! it is to be feared that we know but little of the power of these grand yet simple truths. We talk about them, we discuss them, we profess them, we give a nominal assent to them; but with all this, we prove, in our daily life—in the actual details of our personal history, how feebly we enter into them. If we truly believed that our God has charged Himself with all our necessities—if we were finding all our springs in Him—if He were a perfect covering for our eyes and a resting-place for our hearts, could we possibly be looking to poor creature-streams, which so speedily dry up and disappoint our hearts? We do not and cannot believe it. It is one thing to hold the theory of the life of faith, and another thing altogether to live that life. We constantly deceive ourselves with the notion that we are living by faith, when in reality we are leaning on some human prop, which sooner or later is sure to give way."

Is it not so? Are we not constantly prone to forsake the Fountain of living waters, and hew out for ourselves broken cisterns, which can hold no water? And yet we speak of living by faith! We profess to be looking only to the living God for the supply of our need, whatever that need may be, when, in point of fact, we are sitting beside some creature-stream and looking for something there. Need we wonder if we are disappointed? How could it possibly be otherwise? Our God will not have us dependent upon aught or any one but Himself. He has, in manifold places in His Word, given us His judgment as to the true character and sure result of all creature-confidence. Take the following most solemn passage from the prophet Jeremiah: "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited." And then mark the contrast—"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is: for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit" (Jer. 17:5–8). (read Macintosh's entire discourse - [Deuteronomy 1](#))

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**Norman Geisler - DEUTERONOMY 1:1—How could Moses have written this when biblical criticism claims it was written many centuries later?**

**PROBLEM:** According to this verse, "these are the words which Moses spoke." However, many biblical critics claim that Deuteronomy was written in the third century B.C., many centuries after Moses' time.

**SOLUTION:** There are many arguments that support the claim that Moses wrote the Book of Deuteronomy.

1. First, there is the repeated claim of the book that "these are the words of Moses (Dt 1:1; 4:44; 29:1). To deny this is to claim the book is a total fraud.
2. Second, Joshua, Moses' immediate successor, attributed the Book of Deuteronomy to Moses, exhorting the people of Israel to "observe to do ... all the law which Moses ... commanded" (Josh. 1:7).
3. Three, the remainder of the OT attributes Deuteronomy to Moses (cf. Judges. 3:4; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; Ezra 3:2; Neh. 1:7; Ps. 103:7; Dan. 9:11; Mal. 4:4).
4. Fourth, Deuteronomy is the book of the Law most quoted in the NT, often with words like "Moses truly said" (Acts 3:22), "Moses says" (Rom. 10:19), or "it is written in the law of Moses" (1 Cor. 9:9).
5. Fifth, our Lord quoted the Book of Deuteronomy (Dt 6:13, 16) as the authoritative Word of God when He resisted the devil (Matt. 4:7, 10), and He also directly attributed it to the hand of Moses, saying, "**Moses said**" (Mark 7:10) or "**Moses wrote**" (Luke 20:28).
6. Sixth, the geographical and historical details of the book display a firsthand acquaintance such as Moses would have had.
7. Seventh, scholarly studies of the form and content of Near Eastern covenants indicate that Deuteronomy is from the period of

Moses (see Meredith Kline, *Treaty of the Great King*, Eerdmans, 1963).

8. In addition to all of this, the apparent references within the book to a later period are easily explained (see comments on Deut. 2:10–12). Of course, the last chapter of Deuteronomy, being about Moses' death (chap. 34) was probably written by his successor Joshua, in accordance with the custom of the day ([When Critics Ask](#))

## Deuteronomy 1:2 It is eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea.

- **by the way:** De 1:44 2:4,8 Nu 20:17-21
- **to:** Lev 2:14 9:23 Nu 13:26 Nu 32:8 Jos 14:6
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Horeb (Jebel Musa) via Mount Seir to Kadesh

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE!

It is eleven days' journey from [Horeb](#) by the way of [Mount Seir](#) to [Kadesh Barnea](#) - [Horeb](#) is another name for Mt Sinai ([see 2 possible locations on map](#) and [note on location of Mt Sinai](#)). The mention of **11 days journey** (from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea is about 140 to 150 miles but which actually took them several months) is a sad preview of Israel's subsequent rebellion at [Kadesh Barnea](#) (read this sad story in Numbers 13:1-33+ and Nu14:1-45+) and their failure to believe God's promises of the promised land.

**THOUGHT** - Beloved, their failure to walk by faith cost Israel 38 years of walking by sight forced to continually look at a dry, hot wilderness, a constant reminder of their sin of unbelief. Sin has consequences. We can choose our sin, but we cannot choose our consequences (cf 40 days punished with 40 years! - Woe! Nu 14:34+). Do not be deceived (Gal 6:7-8+), but heed the warning sounded loudly by Israel's unbelief! (1 Cor 10:6, 11+) **Israel's problem was not the distance to their destination, but the distance of their hearts from God!** Merrill adds "The journey of faith may be difficult, but it is direct. The journey of unbelief is interminable!" ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

**Jack Deere** adds "The warning was implicitly sounded: do not be slow to believe God again. Unfortunately for Israel, they never fully heeded this warning. As Stephen pointed out centuries later (Acts 7:39, 51+), the Israelites had always been slow to believe God." ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Eugene Merrill** on [Horeb](#) - "[Horeb](#)" is the name for **Mount Sinai** favored by Deuteronomy, occurring nine times as compared to a single instance of "Sinai" (Deut 33:2, a poetic section). Sinai, however, is the usual name in Exodus (13x versus 3x for Horeb) and Numbers (12x and none, respectively). [Mount Seir](#) is simply a way of describing the entire land of Seir or Edom. The reason for pointing out that the distance from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea is an eleven-day journey (ca. 140 miles) is no doubt to give some idea of the ruggedness of that terrain and of the difficulties Israel had experienced in reaching the present place and moment of covenant renewal. On the other hand, eleven days would contrast sharply with the forty years of wandering necessitated by Israel's wilderness rebellion (Num 14:34). ([New American Commentary – Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

**David Guzik** - The journey from Mount Horeb to [Kadesh Barnea](#) only took eleven days. But from Kadesh Barnea (the threshold of the Promised Land) back to Kadesh Barnea (back to the threshold of the Promised Land) took forty years. ([Deuteronomy](#))

The [HCSB Study Note](#) adds "Forty years had passed since Israel's exodus from Egypt. Though the journey from Horeb (Sinai) to Kadesh-barnea was normally 11 days (Dt 1: 2), Israel, because of its sin, had spent 40 years on the not-much-longer route from Egypt to Moab (Dt 2:7; Dt 8:2,4; Nu 14:33). [Holman Bible Editorial Staff (2018). The HCSB Study Bible. B&H Publishing Group. Retrieved from <https://app.wordsearchbible.lifeway.com>]

**THOUGHT** - Dear reader, are you wandering around in circles (so to speak) in a "wilderness" today? Perhaps you have disobeyed God in some critical area of your life. Ask God to show you if you have at some point have left your first love (Rev 2:4+). Then remember, repent and return as Jesus warned the church at Ephesus (Rev 2:5+) We need to remember that when we study the Old Testament, the nation of Israel is often a sad picture of the fallen flesh and we have the same fallen flesh as Israel! So we do well to not just **read** about Israel's mistakes, but to **heed** the warning of their mistakes, for "these things happened to them as an example ([tupos](#)), and they were written for our instruction ([nouthesia](#) - admonition, warning), upon whom the ends of the ages have come." (1 Cor 10:11+, cf 1 Cor 10:6+) Do you need to make a "course correction" in

your life journey? If the Word and the Spirit are clearly telling you to make a correction, confess and repent, make an "about face." How sad for 38-40 years to pass by and only then to realize that you had missed out on God's best for your life because of stubborn, willful disobedience. Israel paid a high price for their rebellion!

**Life Application Study Bible** - Your spiritual pilgrimage may be lengthy, and you may face pain, discouragement, and difficulties. But remember that God isn't just trying to keep you alive. He wants to prepare you to live for service and devotion to him.

**C H MacIntosh - Eleven days**, and yet it took them forty years! How was this? Alas! we need not travel far for the answer. It is only too like ourselves. How slowly we get over the ground! What windings and turnings! How often we have to go back and travel over the same ground, again and again. We are slow travelers because we are slow learners. Our God is a faithful and wise, as well as a gracious and patient Teacher. He will not permit us to pass cursorily over our lessons. Sometimes, perhaps, we think we have mastered a lesson and we attempt to move on to another, but our wise Teacher knows better, and He sees the need of deeper ploughing. He will not have us mere theorists or smatterers; He will keep us, if need be, year after year at our scales until we learn to sing. ([Deuteronomy](#))

#### NET Bible Technical Notes -

- **Horeb** is another name for Sinai. "[Horeb](#)" occurs 9 times in the Book of Deuteronomy and "Sinai" only once (Dt 33:2). "Sinai" occurs 13 times in the Book of Exodus and "Horeb" only 3 times. ([Horeb](#) - 17x in 17v in Bible (note most uses in Deuteronomy) - Ex 3:1; Ex 17:6; Ex 33:6; Dt. 1:2; Dt. 1:6; Dt. 1:19; Dt. 4:10; Dt. 4:15; Dt. 5:2; Dt. 9:8; Dt. 18:16; Dt. 29:1; 1 Ki. 8:9; 1 Ki. 19:8; 2 Chr. 5:10; Ps. 106:19; Mal. 4:4)
- **Kadesh Barnea**. Possibly this refers to in Qudeis, about 50 mi (80 km) southwest of Beer Sheba, but more likely to in Qudeirat, 5 mi (8 km) NW of in Qudeis. See R. Cohen, "Did I Excavate Kadesh-Barnea?" BAR 7 (1981): 20-33. ([Kadesh Barnea](#) 10x in 10v - Num. 32:8; Num. 34:4; Deut. 1:2; Deut. 1:19; Deut. 2:14; Deut. 9:23; Jos. 10:41; Jos. 14:6; Jos. 14:7; Jos. 15:3)
- **Mount Seir** is synonymous with **Edom**. "By way of Mount Seir" refers to the route from Horeb that ended up in Edom Cf. CEV "by way of the Mount Seir Road"; TEV "by way of the hill country of Edom." ([Seir](#) in Deuteronomy -Deut. 1:2; Deut. 1:44; Deut. 2:1; Deut. 2:4; Deut. 2:5; Deut. 2:8; Deut. 2:12; Deut. 2:22; Deut. 2:29; Deut. 33:2)

#### **Related Resources:**

- [Kadesh-barnea](#) - 10x in OT - Nu 32:8; Nu 34:4; Dt. 1:2; Dt. 1:19; Dt. 2:14; Dt. 9:23; Jos. 10:41; Jos. 14:6; Jos. 14:7; Jos. 15:3
- [What is the significance of Mount Horeb in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the significance of Kadesh Barnea in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Deuteronomy 1:3** In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses spoke to the children of Israel, according to all that the LORD had commanded him to give to them,

- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passages:**

Numbers 20:1+ Then (SECOND GENERATION - 40th YEAR AFTER LEAVING EGYPT) the sons of Israel, the whole congregation, came to the wilderness of Zin in the first month; and the people stayed at [Kadesh](#). Now Miriam died there and was buried there.

Numbers 33:38+ Then Aaron the priest went up to Mount Hor (SEE [MAP OF HOR VERY CLOSE TO KADESH-BARNEA](#)) at the command of the LORD, and died there in the fortieth year after the sons of Israel had come from the land of Egypt, on the first day in the fifth month.

### **THE DATE OF THE BEGINNING OF DEUTERONOMY**

Having established the location (the **WHERE**) in the previous verse, Moses now describes the **WHEN** and the **WHAT** (what he spoke).

**MacArthur** - The years of divine judgment (Nu 14:33-34+) were ending. ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month** - This is the only exact date given in Deuteronomy. So we are now at the end of the 40th year, the end of the wilderness wanderings. This time is two and one-half months before the Passover of Joshua (Josh 4:19; 5:10) and about 6 months after Aaron died (Nu 33:38). This is **Shebat** the fifth month of the civil and eleventh of the religious year, on the Hebrew Calendar (see [Hebrew Calendar](#)) which would have been in the rainy months of **January and February**.

**Forty years** - Dt 1:3, Dt 2:7, Dt 8:2, 4, Dt 29:5 (cf **forty days and nights** - Dt 9:9, 11, 18, 25, 10:10)

**Eugene Merrill on forty** - As well as describing literal periods of time (as here), the number **40** is also of unusual symbolic value in the Bible, its main significance having to do with trials or testings (see Dt 25:3; Ge 7:12, 17; Nu 13:25; 14:33, 34; 1 Sa 17:16; 1 Kgs 19:8; Ps 95:10; Ezek 29:12, 13; Jonah 3:4; Matt 4:2; Mark 1:13). It is also a way of describing an era, a generation, or a time of reigning, perhaps the ideal in these cases (Gen 25:20; 26:34; Ex 24:18; Josh 14:7; Jdg 3:11; 5:31; 8:28; 13:1; 1 Sa 4:18; 2 Sa 2:10; 5:4; 1 Kgs 2:11; 11:42). ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

**Eugene Merrill** - Since the conquest of Canaan under Joshua commenced at Passover (Josh 5:10) in the first month of the religious calendar, Moses' address, death, and succession all took place in two months or so. ([New American Commentary – Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

**Doug McIntosh** has an interesting note on the date of Moses' address to the children of Israel - Since the exodus from Egypt is specified as occurring 480 years before the construction of Solomon's temple (see 1 Ki. 6:1), the exodus date can be placed at about 1446 B.C., and the conquest forty years later in 1406 B.C. Although it is commonly asserted, on the basis of archeological evidence, that the exodus took place around 1290 B.C., the internal biblical evidence for the earlier date is quite consistent. For example, Jephthah the judge later explained how Israel had been in the region east of the Jordan River for three hundred years (Jdg. 11:26). Since by common consent the judgeship of Jephthah took place about 1106-1100, the information in Judges fits perfectly with that of 1 Kings 6:1, confirming a date of about 1406 for the beginning of the conquest. ([Holman Old Testament Commentary – Deuteronomy](#))

**John Grant** - The crossing of the Jordan took place on the 10th day of the 1st month ([Nisan](#)) of the year (Josh 4:19) and the Passover was kept at Gilgal on the 14th day of that month (Josh 5:10). The time scale from the beginning of Deuteronomy to the keeping of the Passover across the Jordan was, therefore, **two and a half lunar months** (the months of the Jewish calendar are lunar months)—the eleventh month, the twelfth month, and the first fourteen days of the first month. As Israel mourned for Moses for thirty days (Dt 34:8) before crossing the Jordan the events recorded in Deuteronomy took place in the last weeks of Moses' life, the maximum possible period being between the first day of the eleventh month and the sixth or seventh day of the twelfth month. ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**THOUGHT** - Moses, like any sensitive spiritual leader, does not dare speak unless God speaks. By ourselves we have nothing to say. Without Him, we cannot speak. Without us, He will not speak. To address a congregation without any assurance that we bring a divine message is the height of arrogance and folly. When we are convinced that God is who He says He is—the light of the world—then we will be compelled to speak. Amos expressed this well when he said, "The LORD God has spoken! Who can but prophesy?" (Amos 3:8). A similar logic lies behind Paul's statement, "since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke,' we also believe and therefore speak" (2 Cor. 4:13). The "spirit of faith" to which Paul refers is the conviction that God has spoken. If we are persuaded that God has spoken, like Moses we also must speak. (John Maxwell - [Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Moses spoke to the children of Israel, according to all that the LORD had commanded him to give to them-** To the **children of Israel** (surprisingly the only use of this exact phrase in the OT!) makes me wonder how Moses could be heard by the multitude. **Matthew Henry** writes "A great auditory, no question, he had, as many as could crowd within hearing, and particularly all the elders and officers, the representatives of the people." In any case he was heard by all. Note the phrase **according to all...** which describes the authority of all Moses wrote. Moses was a man and probably had some thoughts of his own to share, but he set those aside and spoke the Words of God, which alone have and give life to the hearer (cf Heb 4:12+, Dt 32:47+, 1 Pe 1:23+, Jn 6:63, Ps 119:50, et al). Moses spoke under the inspiration of God as attested by the Lord Jesus in referring to the Pentateuch concerning the words of Moses declared "have you not read that which was spoken to you by God?" (JESUS WAS SAYING THE WORDS THEY READ IN THE OT, RECORDED BY MOSES WERE ACTUALLY SPOKEN BY GOD! MOSES WAS HIS "PROPHET" HIS "MOUTHPIECE" SO TO SPEAK [pun intended!]) (Mt 22:31, cf Lk 16:29+) And recall that Peter explained that "no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." (2 Peter 1:21+) So when we read Moses' words, these are in effect God's Words as Paul wrote "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." (2 Ti 3:16-17+) It follows that



as we read God's inspired words spoken by and recorded by Moses, these timeless truths will enable us to "be adequate ([artios](#)), equipped ([exartizo](#) in the perfect tense - equipped at a point in time and remaining in that state) for every (not *some* but "all" without exception) good work (What is a "good work?)."

[Life Application Study Bible](#) - The 40 years of wilderness wandering come to an end in this book. The events of Deuteronomy cover only a week or two of the 11th month of the 40th year (1:3). The 12th and last month was spent in mourning for Moses (Dt 34:8). Then the Israelites entered the Promised Land the first month of the 41st year after the Exodus (Joshua 4:19).

**Robert Neighbour** - It is a wonderful thing to open the Bible and to know that we have before us the very words which God spoke to Moses and to other Prophets.

I am reminded of Moses words toward the end of this great book...

He said to them, "Take to your heart (cf Ps 37:31, memorize the word!) **all the words** with which I am warning you today, which you shall command your sons to observe carefully (YOU CANNOT PASS ON WHAT IS NOT IN YOUR HEART!), even **all the words** of this law (DON'T LEAVE ANYTHING OUT). 47 "For (Vital term of explanation!) it (WHAT IS "IT?") is not an idle (vain, empty, worthless; Lxx = [kenos](#)) **WORD** for you; indeed it (WHAT IS IT?) is **your life**. And by this **WORD** you will prolong your days in the land, which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess." (Dt 32:46-47+)

**Deuteronomy 1:4** after he had defeated Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei.

- Dt 2:26-37 Dt 3:1-11 Nu 21:21-35 Jos 12:2-6 13:10-12 Ne 9:22 Ps 135:11 136:19,20
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Israel Defeats Og and Sihon (ESV Study Bible)  
(Click to Enlarge)

## DEFEAT OF SIHON AND OG PREVIEWS "COMING ATTRACTIONS"

This is an important historical milestone, for these past fulfilled promises were somewhat like a pledge or down payment assuring that God would fulfill His promises to enable Israel to conquer the Canaanites. Israel had to do the fighting, but God provided the power and victory. They were 100% responsible and at the same time were 100% on God's sovereign power and provision to attain the victory. This is the same pattern we see in the victorious Christian life in the New Testament - See the "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)"

**After** - Time expression. In other words the address of Moses is **after** the events here described. The new generation needed to be



reminded of God's great power and provision over strong enemies so that their faith might be undergirded to go in and possess their possession even though their adversaries were strong and numerous. And so the fact that Israel defeated these two pagan kings on the **EAST** side of the Jordan (1) validated Israel's right to possess their land in ["Transjordan"](#) and (2) demonstrated that, if they were obedient, they could defeat their enemies on the **WEST** side of the Jordan and possess their land. So not only did these victories over strong enemies encourage the next generation of Israel, but they discouraged the pagans and resulted in one pagan turning to Yahweh, Joshua 2:10 recording the words of Rahab the harlot "For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and **what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.**"

**THOUGHT** - Do you have any "Sihon or Og" (so to speak) victories in your past which you could use to encourage other saints who are doubting the truth that they can have victory in the spiritual battles in which they are engaged? If so, share them, and even the act of sharing will serve as a reminder to yourself of the awesome power of our "great and mighty God, the LORD of Sabaoth (of Armies)" (Jer 32:18+), the One we are privileged to worship and serve.

**POSB** - A fresh grasp and consciousness of God's power and guidance were needed. The people needed a new work of God's Spirit in their hearts and lives. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**Sihon** and **Og** are only briefly mentioned here but their defeats are described in much greater detail in Moses' exposition in subsequent chapters. **Merrill** explains that "A full account of these campaigns appears in Numbers 21:21-35+, and Moses reiterates them in Deuteronomy 2:26-3:11+. For now, the intent is simply to note that all the Transjordan was under Israel's domination—from Bashan in the north to the Amorite territory in the south—and that the stage is now set for the conquest of Canaan and possession of the Promised Land." ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

**He had defeated** (smitten) **Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon** - Who is "HE" in the phrase "**he had defeated**?" This is undoubtedly a reference to Yahweh (see "delivered" in Dt 2:30-33, 36+), for although Israel fought the battle, ultimately the battle is the Lord's and it is He Who gave them (and us!) the victory (cf Dt 20:1, Dt 21:10, 1 Sa 17:47, 2 Chr 20:15-17, 2 Chr 32:7-8, Ps 46:7, 118:6, Isa 43:2). As David later wrote "Who is the King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle." (Ps 24:8)

**THOUGHT** - Are you in a battle? Remember Who is on your side! (cf 1 Jn 4:4+)

For more on Sihon's defeat see comments on detailed description in Dt 2:26-37. See also comments on Sihon's defeat in Nu 21:21-31. [See Map showing defeat](#) of Sihon and Og.

**John Trapp** - If Samson had not turned aside to see the lion, that not long before he had slain, he had not found the honey in the carcass. {Jdg 14:8} So, if we recognise not our dangers, deliverances, and achievements, we shall neither taste how sweet the Lord is, nor return Him His due praises. To true thankfulness is required, (1.) Recognition; (2.) Estimation; (3.) Retribution. See them all in Ps 116:3, 7, 12+

**And Og the king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei** ([see map above for locations](#)) - As Yahweh had done with Sihon, He again delivered over Og into the hand of Israel (Dt 3:2-3) For a full account of the defeat of **Og** see Dt 3:1-11 (commentary) and Nu 21:32-35 (commentary).

#### Related Resources:

- [Map showing defeat](#) of Sihon and Og.
- [Who was Sihon, king of the Amorites?](#)
- [Who were the Amorites? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who was Og king of Bashan? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Deuteronomy 1:5** Across the Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses undertook to expound this law, saying,

- **to expound this law:** De 4:8 Dt 17:18,19 31:9 32:46
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Numbers 22:1+ Then the sons of Israel journeyed, and camped in the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan opposite Jericho.

Deut 4:44+ (BEGINNING OF SECOND DISCOURSE) Now this is the law which Moses set before the sons of Israel;

## MOSES EXPOSITS EAST OF THE JORDAN

In this next section Moses will review the mighty acts of God (Dt 1:5-3:29) beginning with Israel's first attempt to enter the promised land (Dt 1:5-46).

**Across the Jordan in the land of Moab** - In the area known as [Transjordan](#), on the east side of the Jordan River. The mention of [Moab](#) recalls that this was the very place Israel had sinned against God as described in Numbers 25:1-18+ (cf Nu 25:9+ with Paul's warning to the Corinthians and to us in 1 Cor 10:8+). What is the point? Moses is about to expound the law which was to be obeyed and he is doing so in the very place that Israel had disobeyed, which should have served as a poignant (even painful) reminder and warning of the consequences of disobedience.

**John Maxwell** adds that "This sermon is delivered at a place where God's people had previously failed (Nu 25:1-3ff). They are surrounded by reminders of their earlier disobedience to God. Imagine the emotional war raging within their minds. Moses continues to exhort the people because they need assistance in making their decision to cross over into the Promised Land."

**Grant** "Moses is about to bring before the people is not merely the reminiscences of an old man." but they are reminders to the next generation of God's faithfulness.

**Matthew Henry** makes a good point - The place where they were now encamped was in the plain, in the land of Moab, where they were just ready to enter Canaan, and engage in a war with the Canaanites. Yet he discourses not to them concerning military affairs, the arts and stratagems of war, but concerning their duty to God; for, if they kept themselves in his fear and favour (I LIKE THAT ORDER - FIRST, FEAR OF GOD, THEN FAVOR FROM GOD), He would secure to them the conquest of the land: their religion would be their best policy. The time was near the end of the fortieth year since they came out of Egypt. So long God had borne their manners, and they had borne their own iniquity (Numbers 14:34), and now that a new and more pleasant scene was to be introduced, as a token for good, Moses repeats the law to them. Thus, after God's controversy with them on account of the golden calf, the first and surest sign of God's being reconciled to them was the renewing of the tables. There is no better evidence and earnest of God's favour than his putting his law in our hearts, Psal. 147:19, 20.

**George Santayana** said it this way "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Moses wanted to make sure they did not repeat the past failures of their fathers! This is exactly why NT believers are charged to remember/know the history of Israel, for as Paul wrote "these things happened as examples for us, so that (purpose clause) we would not crave evil things as they also craved." (1 Cor 10:6+).

**Moses undertook to expound this law, saying** - **Undertook** includes the idea of choosing to act, showing willingness and being pleased to act. In effect Moses made up his mind to **expound** the law. The Hebrew word for **expound** is translated in the Septuagint with the verb **diasapheo** (used in Mt 13:36+) which literally means to make thoroughly clear, clarifying that which is obscure, making it quite clear. It includes the ideas of "to dig deeply" or "to mine." Moses would "mine" out the priceless treasures of God Word and make them so clear that the next generation would have absolutely no excuse if they did not obey (they would be guilty of wilful disobedience)! God wanted His children to clearly understand what He had done in the past to prepare their hearts and minds for what He would do and could do in the future (if they obeyed) as they crossed the Jordan into Canaan.

**John MacArthur on to expound** - To make clear, distinct, or plain. The purpose of the book was to make the sense and purpose of the law clear to the people as they entered the Land. It was to be their guide to the law while living in the Land. Moses did not review what happened at Horeb (Sinai), which is recorded by him in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers (cf. Ex 20:1-Nu 10:10), but rather gave Israel instruction in how to walk with God and how to fulfill God's will in the Land and be blessed. ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**John Trapp on Moses undertook to expound** - And he was not long about it. A ready heart makes riddance of God's work; for being oiled with the Spirit, it becomes lithe and nimble, quick of despatch.

**Pulpit Commentary on expound** - The Hebrew word (פָּדַח) signifies primarily to cut or dig, then to cut or dig out so as to make evident, to declare, to make plain. What Moses set himself to do, then, was not to publish a new law, but to make plain to the people the Law already promulgated, to set forth clearly and pointedly what they were required by the Law to be and to do. This explains more fully the "spake" (דָּבַר) of Dt 1:3 This exposition of the Law was designed specially for the sake of those who, at the time the Law was first promulgated, either were not born or were incapable of understanding it (Grotius). The expression used by Moses plainly indicates that this book was not intended to furnish a second code of laws different from the former, but simply to explain and enforce what had before been enjoined. ([Deuteronomy Exposition](#) )

**Expond** (0874)(**baar**) means to make distinct or plain. Some sources think baar originally meant "to dig or hew," and then came to be used figuratively to denote "engraving information" (so to speak) on the minds of people. The idea is give an account and clarify the meaning of something through discourse. **TWOT** = "This verb occurs only in the Piel stem. It describes writing on tablets of stone made clear and distinct (Deut 27:8) or some writing upon tablets which is legible at a hurried glance (Hab 2:2+). In figurative use the verb means to make clear by explaining (Deut 1:5)." **Jack Deere** adds that "The word **expound** is significant for it means that Moses did all he could to make God's Word clear to the Israelites. The word **baar** is used only here and in Dt 27:8 (where it is rendered by the adverbs "**very distinctly**") and in Habakkuk 2:2+ ("**inscribe**" Lxx = **grapho**). Basically the verb means "to dig" (e.g., to dig a well; "well" is similar word *beēr*)." As noted above the Septuagint of Dt 1:5 uses **diasapheo** (dia = intensifies + sapheo = to manifest) (used in Mt 13:36+) which means to manifest fully.

**NIDOTTE** on **baar** - This verb denotes making something clear. It is used, in conjunction with כָּתַב, write, of inscribing words clearly: Moses in Deut 27:8 instructs the Israelites to inscribe "all the words of this law" on stones to be set up on Mount Ebal; Habakkuk is told to inscribe on stone tablets a vision of coming judgment on the Babylonians (Hab 2:2+). The verb is used on its own at Deut 1:5, where it is said that Moses "began to expound this law." The verb is thus linked in the OT to law-giving and revelation. In Deuteronomy the two uses of the verb underscore the idea that the Israelites are accountable for their response to God's law (cf. Dt 4:5–8+; Dt 11:26–32+; Dt 30:11–16+; etc.): they have heard it clearly set out, and it is, furthermore, publicly accessible to them in the form of a written witness. In Habakkuk the inscribing of the message of judgment suggests its certainty (cf. Hab 2:3): once written, the judgment will not be revoked. The vb. is, therefore, used in different contexts from related words in the OT (מְלִיץ, interpreter, official, #4885; פִּשֵּׁר, interpret, #10599; #7354, פִּתְרָה, and with a different nuance: the emphasis is on the clarity of the message given, not on the act by which a mysterious dream or riddle is made clear. ([NIDOTTE](#))

**Law** is the famous Hebrew word **torah** from the verb **ayah** which means to teach and is related to another root sharing the same spelling "to shoot an arrow". The instruction of Yahweh may be compared to archery in the sense that the "arrow" of God's teaching (laws, commandments, statutes) is aimed at the heart of His children with the goal of prompting pursuit of His holiness. In this context **Law** refers to the Book of Deuteronomy, not the entire Pentateuch.

**Jack Deere** makes an excellent point about the meaning of the word **law** - In the course of these speeches Moses sought in various ways to instill an obedient spirit in his audience. He used the threat of judgment, the promise of reward, and appeals to God's graciousness to seek to accomplish that goal. The word translated **Law** actually means "instruction," not merely a body of laws in the modern sense. **It is instruction in how to walk with God.** ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#)) (Bolding added)

**Constable** adds that "The English term "**law**" has negative connotations, but the Hebrew *torah*, used here (v. 5), is positive. The Torah is more instruction than prohibition. Here the whole of Deuteronomy is in view. "What the man and woman lost in the Garden is now restored to them in the Torah, namely, God's plan for their good." [18] ([Deuteronomy 1](#))

**This law** was (not new but repeat of previous law) expounded to give Israel clear divine guidelines which were to be obeyed in order to insure they would enjoy the blessing of the Promised Land they were going in to possess. The timeless principle is that obedience to God brings blessings from God. For Israel the blessings were a LAND, but for believers today the blessings are a LIFE, one which Jesus referred to as "abundant life" (Jn 10:10). Are you living the ABUNDANT LIFE in Christ? Obedience (enabled by the Spirit, not by legalism) to God is the path to the blessed life in Christ (cf 1 Sa 15:22b, Lk 11:28+).

**Gary Hall** - It was this full revelation of the will of God that Moses now set out to make plain. That is why we find in Deuteronomy more than legal regulations. It contains historical recapitulation, exposition, encouragement, warning, and profound theological reflection.

**Edward Woods** adds "**this law** was not just information. It was to be taught to each generation (Dt 6:20-25), so that Israel might know how to live before the Lord within the land. As such, it stands as a *witness* against Israel's rebellious and idolatrous nature, both *before* and after Moses' death (Nu 31:24-29). ([Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries – Deuteronomy](#))

**Illustration** - Charles L. Allen, in his autobiography *What I Have Lived By*, relates the story of a conductor who was making his last run before retirement. A man asked him how he felt about this final trip on the passenger train. He replied, "It seems like I have spent my life trying to help people get home." Moses would have understood. (John Maxwell)

**Deuteronomy 1:6** "The LORD our God spoke to us at Horeb, saying, 'You have stayed long enough at this mountain.

- **Horeb:** De 5:2 Ex 3:1 Ex 17:6
- **You have:** Ex 19:1-2 Nu 10:11-13
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Summary of Moses first discourse (Deuteronomy 1-4)

- Deuteronomy 1:1-5 Introduction
- Deuteronomy 1:6–46 describes the journey from Horeb to Kadesh.
- Deuteronomy 2 continues from Kadesh to Heshbon.
- Deuteronomy 3 describes the conquering of Trans-Jordan.
- Deuteronomy 4 is Moses' exhortation to obedience.

#### Related Passage:

Numbers 10:11+ Now in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth of the month, the ([Shekinah glory](#)) **cloud was lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony** 12 and the sons of Israel set out on their journeys from the wilderness of Sinai. Then the cloud settled down in the wilderness of Paran. 13 So they moved out for the first time according to the commandment of the LORD through Moses.

### CHARGE AT MT SINAI BREAK CAMP! MOVE OUT!

Deut 1:6-46 begins the HISTORICAL PROLOGUE, reviewing the past promises of God to Israel. He begins with **Horeb**, not Egypt for it was at Mt Sinai that God made a covenant with the people and the people in effect became a nation Israel.

**Warren Wiersbe** - A grasp of history is important to every generation because it gives a sense of identity. If you know who you are and where you came from, you will have an easier time discovering what you should be doing. A generation without identity is like a person without a birth certificate, a name, an address, or a family. If we don't know our historic roots, we may become like tumbleweeds that are blown here and there and never arriving at our destination. A father took his young son to the local museum to help him better understand what life was like before he was born. After looking rather glumly at some of the exhibits, the boy finally said, "Dad, let's go someplace where the people are real." Like that bored little boy, many people have the idea that the past is unreal and unimportant and has no bearing on life today; and like that little boy, they are wrong. The cynic claims that all we learn from history is that we don't learn from history, but the mature Christian believer knows that A.T. Pierson was right when he said, "**History is His story.**" The Bible isn't a boring museum where everything's dead. It's a living drama that teaches us about God and encourages us to obey Him and enjoy His blessings (Ro 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:1–12). No book is more contemporary than the Bible, and each new generation has to learn this important lesson. ([Be Equipped](#))

**Meredith Kline** has an interesting comment relating to Deuteronomy as similar to [suzerainty treaties](#) - The preamble in the international suzerainty treaties was followed by a historical survey of the relationship of lord and vassal. It was written in an I-thou style, and it sought to establish the historical justification for the lord's continuing reign. Benefits allegedly conferred upon the vassal by the lord were cited, with a view to grounding the vassal's allegiance in a sense of gratitude complementary to the sense of fear which the preamble's awe-inspiring identification of the suzerain was calculated to produce. When treaties were renewed, the historical prologue was brought up to date. All these formal features characterize Deut 1:6-4:49. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

**The LORD our God spoke to us at Horeb** (Mt Sinai) , saying, '**You have stayed long enough at this mountain** - Note the phrase "**the LORD our God**," which emphasizes His unique relation to Israel, which was established at Mt Sinai when Israel agreed to obey the [Mosaic Covenant](#) (cf Ex 24:3, 7+). Yahweh was not the God of the Canaanites but the God of Israel and Israel was like His "Wife" by covenant (Jer 31:32+, cf Hos 2:19, Isa 54:5-6) Keep in mind that Dt 1:6-18 is "looking back" to the past, giving the second generation a context to help understand who they were and why they were on the verge of entering the Promised Land. Israel had been **at this mountain**, Mt Horeb (Mt Sinai) for about 11 months (compare Ex 19:1+ with Nu 10:11+) and during that time the [Mosaic Covenant](#) was ratified (Ex 24:3, 7+) and the Tabernacle was established that Jehovah might dwell among His people (Ex 25:8+) Israel was now prepared for the next step in their spiritual journey, the possession of the Promised Land.

**LORD our God** in Deuteronomy - 22x in 21v (most uses in any OT book) - Deut. 1:6; Deut. 1:19; Deut. 1:20; Deut. 1:25; Deut. 1:41; Deut. 2:29; Deut. 2:33; Deut. 2:36; Deut. 2:37; Deut. 3:3; Deut. 4:7; Deut. 5:2; Deut. 5:24; Deut. 5:25; Deut. 5:27; Deut. 6:20; Deut. 6:24; Deut. 6:25; Deut. 29:15; Deut. 29:18; Deut. 29:29 Note that the related description **LORD your God** occurs 279x in 239v! ([See note](#) on verse 10)

**Numbers** records this same event, but Deuteronomy 1:6-8 fills in details not given in the Numbers account

Now in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth of the month (SECOND YEAR AFTER COMING OUT OF EGYPT), the cloud was lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony; 12 and the sons of Israel set out on their journeys from the wilderness of Sinai. Then the cloud settled down in the wilderness of Paran. 13 So they moved out for the first time according to the commandment of the LORD through Moses. (Nu 10:11-13)

**THOUGHT** - YOU HAVE STAYED LONG ENOUGH AT THIS MOUNTAIN - "Galatians 4 and Hebrews 12 symbolically identify Mount Sinai with the Old Covenant of works and law. For the Christian today, it is important to spend some time under the law as a tutor (Galatians 3:24-25), so we know the holy character of God and our need for a Savior. But God never intended the Christian to live their spiritual life at Mount Sinai. The believer must move on in faith to the Promised Land." (David Guzik [Deuteronomy](#))

**John Maxwell** - God did not want His people to sit and become satisfied. Their task was to continue moving until they saw and possessed the land. Phillips Brooks once said, "Sad is that day for any man when he becomes absolutely satisfied with the life that he is leading, the thoughts that he is thinking, and the deeds he is doing. Then there ceases to be a desire to do something greater for God than ever before." Those words apply to this story. God's people were not brought out of Egypt only to remain in the wilderness. During the Civil War, the Confederate Army was approaching the lines of battle. Night fell, stopping them just a short way from their destination. Quickly they began setting up their tents, preparing for a night's rest. Walking among his soldiers, the commanding officer continually exhorted them, saying, "**Don't drive those stakes too deep; we're moving up in the morning.**" **That is what God is saying to Israel. He is telling them not to get comfortable. We could apply this advice to our spiritual lives today.** It's too easy to become complacent in our personal journeys with the Lord. It's too easy to settle for less than His best. Like Israel, we need to "see ... the land" and not forget God's plan for us and the potential within us. ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**John Trapp** - **Long enough.** The law is not for men to continue under, but for a time till they be fitted for Christ. {Gal 3:16-25} Humbled they must be, and hammered for a season; sense of misery goes before sense of mercy.

**Warren Wiersbe** - Why did the Lord have the Jews tarry so long at Sinai? **He wanted to give them His law and teach them how to worship.** The Lord didn't give Israel His law to save them from their sins, because "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16+). Under the Old Covenant, people were saved by faith just as sinners are today (Ro 4:1-12; Gal. 3:22; Heb. 11). The law reveals the sinfulness of man and the holy character of God. It explained what God required of His people if they were to please Him and enjoy His blessing. The civil law allowed Israel to have an orderly and just society, and the religious laws enabled them to live as the people of God, set apart from the other nations to glorify His name. The Law also prepared the way for the coming of Israel's Messiah (Gal. 4:1-7), and the various tabernacle furnishings and ceremonies pointed to Jesus. ([Be Equipped](#))

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**Norman Geisler** - DEUTERONOMY 1:6ff—How could any from the former generation be present when they all died in the wilderness?

**PROBLEM:** According to Numbers 26:64-65, all the unbelieving generation of Israelites died in the wilderness, with "not a man of those who were numbered by Moses" remaining to go into the Promised Land. However, when Moses spoke to the people at the end of the wanderings he referred repeatedly to their being witnesses to what happened before the wanderings (cf. Deut. 1:6, 9, 14; 5:2, 5; 11:2, 7).

**SOLUTION:** First of all, in Deuteronomy, Moses is addressing the nation as a nation and, therefore, may not be making a distinction between individuals in the earlier period as opposed to those in the later period. Second, there were a large number of women present who had personally remembered the things to which Moses referred. Third, both the Levites and those who were under 20 years of age before the 40 years were exempt from the general pronouncement that none of the men would enter the Promised Land (Num. 26:64). So also were Joshua and Caleb, who had been faithful spies (Num. 32:12). So there were plenty of people present who could witness to what Moses was saying, even though a whole generation of men (above the age of 20) had perished in the wilderness, as God had said. ([When Critics Ask](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:7** **Turn** and **set** your journey, and **go** to the hill country of the Amorites, and to all their neighbors in the Arabah, in the hill country and in the lowland and in the Negev and by the seacoast, the land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates.

- To the hill country of the [Amorites](#): Ge 15:16-21 Ex 23:31 Nu 34:3-12 Jos 24:15 Am 2:9
- in the [Arabah](#): De 11:11 Jos 10:40 11:16,17



- **the great river, the river Euphrates:** De 11:24 Jos 1:4 2Sa 8:3 1Ch 5:9 18:3
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Genesis 15:16-21+ "Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete." 17 It came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. 18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates: 19 the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite 20 and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Rephaim 21 and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite."

Exodus 3:8+ "So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with [milk and honey](#), to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.

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## GOD COMMANDS ISRAEL TO GO TO THE PROMISED LAND

**Turn** (break camp) **and set your journey, and go** - NET - "Get up now, resume your journey, heading for..." "It is time to break camp and move on. Go to the hill country (Dt 1:7NLT). Israel had been camped for 11-12 months at Mt Horeb (Sinai) (compare Ex 19:1+ with Nu 10:11+). Yahweh then issued 3 commands for the nation to move out from Mt Horeb (Sinai). The first is a command to **turn** which is translated in the Septuagint with [epistrepho](#) commanding the nation to literally turn around. One gets the picture of the nation focused on the mountain (Horeb), and Yahweh commanding them to turn around so that they could move out from the mountain to the Promised Land. They needed a fresh vision, specifically God's vision. Their perspective was no longer to be the mountain but the Promised Land.

**THOUGHT** - Yahweh's commands remind me of the God's commands to believers to get a "fresh perspective," a heavenly vision instead of an earthly vision, Paul writing "Therefore if (SINCE) you have been raised up with Christ, **keep seeking** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your mind** ([present imperative](#) - keep setting your mind) on the things above, NOT on the things that are on earth." (Col 3:1-2+) In Php 3:20-21+ Paul writes that "our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; Who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself." (See discussion of [Vertical Vision](#))

**Set** ([nasa](#)) is the same verb used in Nu 10:12 ("Israel **set out** [[nasa](#)] on their journeys") when Israel initially departed from Mt Horeb (Sinai). The idea of **set** ([nasa](#)) is of pulling up the tent pegs (cf Isa 33:20) in preparation for "moving" one's tent and property to another place; thus it lends itself naturally to the general term of "**journeyed**." (**THOUGHT** - Dear follower of Christ, don't set your "tent pegs" too deeply in this fallen world for it is not your home and you will soon leave for home. Be ready!) **Set** ([nasa](#)) is used repeatedly (42 times!) in Numbers 33 (translated "**journeyed**" in Nu 33:3,5-37,41-48). The last use of **set** ([nasa](#)) in Numbers 33 is in Numbers 33:48+ which says Israel "**journeyed** ([nasa](#)) from the mountains of Abarim and camped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho." In sum, Numbers 33 summarizes the movement of Israel from Mt Sinai to their present site in the plains of Moab, where Moses now gives this first discourse. **Set** in the Septuagint is the verb [apairo](#) which is a command in the [aorist imperative](#) commanding Israel to "go on a journey, depart, leave." ([apairo](#) is also used to translate all the uses of [nasa](#) in Nu 33:3,5-37,41-48)

**Go** in the Septuagint is the verb [eisporeuomai](#) which literally means to go in, and this to enter into an area, in this case a command to enter into the Promised Land. Obedience will bring blessing. Disobedience will bring disappointment!

Moses then mentioned the topological divisions of the Promised Land, beginning in the north and moving toward the south. These boundaries were also described in Nu 34:1-15+. Lebanon to the north marked the northwestern boundary on the coast. The northeast boundary of the Promised Land was the [Euphrates River](#). This is the land Yahweh had promised to Abraham when he cut covenant with him (SEE [Abrahamic versus Mosaic Covenants](#)) Moses recording that

On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram (LATER CHANGED TO ABRAHAM), saying, "To your



descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates: 19 the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite 20 and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Rephaim 21 and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the Jebusite." (Genesis 15:18-21+)

**Jack Deere** comments that "These boundaries (Dt 1:7; cf. Dt 11:24; Ex. 23:31) go beyond the territory that Israel ever actually possessed. Though David's and Solomon's empires extended to the **Euphrates River** (cf. 2 Sa 8:3; 1 Ki 4:21), many of the peoples in that territory were subjects only by paying tribute; they were not conquered by Israelites **so the land was not fully possessed by them** ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Eugene Merrill** has an additional note - The command to occupy the land as far as the **Euphrates** is in line with the promises to the patriarchs (Ge 15:18) and Moses's previous statements to Israel (Exod 23:31; cf. also Deut 11:24; Josh 1:4). Historically, David may have controlled Aram as far as the Euphrates (2 Sam 8:3), and Solomon certainly did (1 Kgs 4:21, 24; 2 Chr 9:26; Ps 72:8). Eschatological texts speak of Messiah's dominion extending to the Euphrates (Zech 9:10). The territorial assignments of the tribes under Joshua are, however, limited to Palestine proper (Josh 13:8-19:48), and Israel in the end times also seems to find its primary locus there (Ezek 47:13-48:29). Palestine, thus, will be the center of a future messianic kingdom, which will extend secondarily as far as the Euphrates. ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

The borders of the Land were now specified and described the Land as from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Euphrates River in the east, from the land in the south the Negev to Lebanon in the north. The promised land would include most of modern Palestine and Syria!

**To the hill country of the [Amorites](#)** (see "Related Resources" below) - **Eugene Merrill** says that "The **“hill country of the Amorites”** refers to the interior of Canaan (PRESUMABLY THAT PART WEST OF THE JORDAN) and the Transjordan (THIS IS EAST OF JORDAN), an area inhabited by the Amorites since at least 1800 B.C." Nu 13:29 described "the Amorites are living in the hill country." ([New American Commentary – Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

**And to all their neighbors in the [Arabah](#)** - The [Jordan rift valley](#) ([SEE AREA BETWEEN SEA OF GALILEE AND DEAD SEA](#)) which extends southward and includes the [Arabah](#) (to the south of the Dead Sea in the map above)

**In the hill country and in the lowland and in the [Negev](#)** (Negeb) - **The lowland** is the Hebrew word [Shephelah](#). Enlarge the map above to see this region. Just to the south is the [Negev](#), the dry wasteland stretching south from Beersheba to the wilderness of Zin.

**And by the seacoast, the land of the [Canaanites](#), and Lebanon** - See the coastal plain on the map above. This area extends from Egypt to Lebanon.

**Merrill** - The "land of the Canaanites" speaks of the valleys and plains, especially those of Jezreel to the north, that remained in Canaanite control well into the time of the Israelite judges (Judg 4:1–3). ([New American Commentary – Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

**As far as the great river, the river [Euphrates](#)** - Here we see a clear description of the Land promised to Israel.

#### Related Resources:

- [Who were the Amorites? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Who were the Canaanites? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**Deuteronomy 1:8 'See, I have placed the land before you; go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to give to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to them and their descendants after them.'**

- **which:** Ge 12:7 Ge 13:14-15 Ge 15:16-18 Ge 17:7-8 Ge 22:16-18 Ge 26:3-4 Ge 28:13-14
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passages:** These passages all repeat God's promise in the [Abrahamic Covenant](#)

Genesis 12:7 The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.

Genesis 13:14-15 The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Now lift up your eyes and look

from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; 15 for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever.

Genesis 15:16-18 "Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete." 17 It came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. 18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:

Genesis 17:7-8 "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. 8 "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

Genesis 22:16-18 and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

Genesis 26:3-4 Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. 4 "I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed;

Genesis 28:13-14 And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. 14 "Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

## **THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT: GOD PROMISES ISRAEL THE LAND**

**See** ([raah](#)) is a command (in Septuagint it is idete in [aorist imperative](#) = "Just do it!" "Do not delay!") which conveys a sense of urgency. **Look** (NET) or **Behold** (ASV) it is time to make a decision. Remember this Moses' review was the command initially given to the rebellious generation now dead, but it repeated here in order to arrest the attention of the second generation so they don't make the same mistake!

**Eugene Merrill** - Occupation of the land was not an option but an edict. In two staccato-like commands, Yahweh had said "go in" and "occupy"! Justification for the people's taking this mandatory action was the fact that the land was already theirs by promise to the patriarchs (Gen 15:18-21; 17:9; 26:3-4). No permission was needed from its occupants nor was any apology to them expected as a result of conquest, for they were squatters on land already belonging to Israel by divine oath (1:8). (([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#)))

**I have placed the land before you go in and possess** ([yarash](#)) **the land** - **I have placed** = "I have already given the land." (NET) NLT has "I am giving all this land to you!" Yahweh had given the first generation of Israelites three more very specific commands. As the next phrase says Jehovah had made a promise to give **the Land** to the descendants of the patriarchs, the original recipients of the covenant promises. (See the [Related Passages](#) above). In the Septuagint the verb **placed** is translated with [paradidomi](#) which conveys the meaning of giving something (or someone) over to the power of another. In this context [paradidomi](#) describes God's deliverance of the pagan occupants of the Promised Land being given over to the power of the Israelites. Recall the promise in Genesis 15:16+ that "Then in the fourth generation they (ISRAEL) will return here (PROMISED LAND), for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete." In other words the pagans were not innocent, but had been given over 400 years to fill up their sins and that time had come to fruition.

**Merrill** - Yahweh the Great King owns all the earth, and it is his to bestow upon his peoples as he wishes. His people, therefore, were not about to take the land of other people but to receive the land as a gift from its divine owner, coming into their own rightful claim as vassals who work the royal estate of the Lord their God (cf. Dt 1:39; 3:20; 10:11; Josh 1:15; 21:43). ([New American Commentary – Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

**John Trapp** - **Go in and possess it** - God was ready, but they were not ripe for such a mercy. So {2Chr 20:33} the high places were not taken away; for the people had not yet prepared their hearts for such a reformation: the work was entangled and retarded

by their unfitness. See Isa 59:2.

The command to **possess** is repeated "**See**, the LORD your God has placed the land before you; **go up, take possession**, as the LORD, the God of your fathers (REFERS ESPECIALLY TO ABRAHAM, ISAAC, JACOB), has spoken to you. Do not fear or be dismayed.' (Dt. 1:21)

**Possess the land** -Deut. 1:8; Deut. 3:20; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 9:23; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 11:8; Deut. 11:31; Deut. 16:20;

**Take possession** - Deut. 1:21; Deut. 2:24; Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:22; Deut. 33:23;

As noted below **yārash** is a **key word in Deuteronomy** and this repetition clearly emphasizes the fact that God desires His people to take possession of their possessions which He has promised to give them. That was true of Israel in the OT and is just as true of believers in the NT! Are you growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ so that you might be more and more able to possess your precious possessions in Christ?

**Jack Deere** - So from Abraham on to the nation at Moses' time each Israelite was to realize that he stood in the line of God's inviolable promise. The command to "take possession" (which occurs 18 times in Deut.: 1:8, 21, 39; 2:24; etc.) directed Israel's attention to more than the land. They were to be encouraged to fight for the land, realizing that it was already given to them through the Lord's covenantal faithfulness. This emphasis on the "land" is unusually strong in Deuteronomy, for this word occurs almost 200 times. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Which the LORD swore (shaba) to give to your fathers (Dt 1:35+), to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to them and their descendants after them** -See [Abrahamic Covenant](#). Moses repeatedly alludes to the Abrahamic Covenant in this book - Dt 1:35; Dt 4:31; Dt 6:10, 18, 23; Dt 7:8, 12; Dt 8:1, 18; Dt 9:5; Dt 10:11; Dt 11:9, 21; Dt 13:17; Dt 19:8; Dt 26:3, 15; Dt 27:3; Dt 28:11; Dt 29:13; Dt 30:20; Dt 31:7, 20-23; Dt 34:4). Note that **Yahweh swore** which means His promise was permanent and He would never change His mind (cf Ps 110:4+). Israel will one day inherit this land fully in the Millennial reign of Christ. Yahweh as the sovereign Ruler had bound Himself to give the Land to Israel, but now Israel was given the responsibility to possess their possessions. Notice the phrase **their descendants after them** which would emphasize that these promises of **the Land** clearly applied to this second generation of Israel and should serve to encourage them to boldly go in and possess their possessions!

**THOUGHT** - This same pattern of God's provision and our responsibility applies to Christians today. For example Paul says we have been blessed with "every spiritual blessing in the Heavenly places in Christ" (Eph 1:3+) and Peter says God has "granted us His precious and magnificent promises" (2 Peter 1:4+), but we must lay hold of those priceless blessings and promises by faith. This is not simply "name it, claim it" by believing it, but is more accurately laying hold by a faith that obeys. Our obedience does not merit it, but is evidence that we truly believe God. See [Obedience of faith](#) - Ro 1:5, 16:26. It follows that if you are living in disobedience to God's Word, you can hardly expect to be enjoying His blessings and promises.

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the Abrahamic Covenant? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are the covenants in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the Palestinian Covenant? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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**Possess (03423)(yārash)** to take possession of, inherit, dispossess, to drive out. Possession of the land was directly connected to a person's relationship with the Lord; breaking the covenantal relationship led to dispossession. But even in exile, Israelites awaited the day when they would repossess the land (Jer. 30:3).

**Complete Biblical Library** - The verb **yārash** is an especially important word in contexts dealing with Israel's conquest of and possession of the land of Canaan. Cognates include Aramaic, Ugaritic, Old South Arabian, and Akkadian. The Moabite stone inscription uses wyrs: "And Omri took possession of all the land of Mahdeba." Yārash means "to take possession of" or "to possess." Another meaning is "to inherit," "to be an heir."

The first meaning, "to take possession of," is most commonly used in connection with possessing land, specifically, the Promised Land. Yahweh first announced "possession" of the land in the context of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 15:7f). Although similar usage continues in Leviticus (20:24) and Numbers (13:30; 14:24; 21:24f), yārash in the sense of covenant land possession is a key theme in Deuteronomy. "Go in and possess the land," the Lord commanded (Deut. 1:8, 21, 39; 11:31; 17:14). The phrase, "where you are going to possess it," with reference to the land, recurs in Deuteronomy and Joshua (Deut. 4:5, 14, 26; Josh. 1:11, 15;

12:1; 13:1; 21:43; 23:5). Emphasis on the idea of "possessing" the land continues in Judges (11:21-24; 18:9).

Likewise, the prophets and post-exilic Books allude to Israel's covenant right of possession. Jeremiah predicted a coming repossession of the land (Jer. 30:3), as did Isaiah (Isa. 61:7; 65:9), while Ezekiel (Ezek. 33:24ff) and Amos (Amos 2:10) looked to past land inheritance. Habakkuk described the coming invasion of Babylonian armies to "possess" the land (Hab. 1:6). After the Babylonian exile, Nehemiah's prayer alluded to God's earlier covenant promises of land possession (Neh. 9:15, 22ff).

Yārash also refers to possessing fields (1 Ki. 21:15f, 18f), cities (Josh 19:47; Judg. 3:13) and houses (Ezek. 7:24; Neh. 9:25). The only occurrence of yārash in the Piel theme speaks of the locust or cricket "possessing" (devouring) Israel's produce as a consequence of the people's disobedience (Deut. 28:42).

The idea of "possessing" implies "dispossessing" someone else. In conquest, one nation succeeds another; thus, capturing territory divests another nation of its possession of the land. This usage is common in both the Qal (Deut. 2:12, 21f; 9:1; 11:23; 12:2, 29; Num. 21:32; Ezek. 36:12; Amos 9:12; Obad. 17) and Hiphil (Josh. 13:13; 14:12; 16:10; 17:13; Judg. 1:29-33). Kings notes that the Lord drove out nations for Israel, only to see his people adopt the idolatrous practices of those nations (1 Ki. 14:24; 21:26; 2 Ki. 16:3; 17:8; 21:2; see also Exo. 34:24; Deut. 4:38). In the Niphal stem, to "be dispossessed" is to become poor: "do not love sleep, lest you become poor" (Prov. 20:13; Gen. 45:11; Judg. 14:15; cf. Prov. 23:21; 30:9).

In a legal sense, the right of possession passed from one generation to the next and so constituted "inheritance." Because they were without a son, Abraham and Sarah looked to Eliezer, a servant, as an "heir" (Gen. 15:3f). Jeremiah spoke of Israel's lack of national heirs (49:1; cf. Lev. 25:46; 2 Sam. 14:7). The Lord cautioned his people not to intermarry with idolatrous nations in order to leave the good land as an inheritance for their children (Ezra 9:12).

**John Hartley - Possession and Covenant** - In Israel's history the root takes on its double force, to inherit and to dispossess, in relationship to the covenant. God made a covenant with Israel that they would become his own special people (e.g. Ex 19:5f.). A major benefit on Israel's side was the promise of an inheritance, namely a land where they could develop into a holy nation (Genesis 15:8; Exodus 6:8). Israel, however, became a people in Egypt before they occupied a land. Therefore to become a nation they had to gain possession of a land. They left Egypt, agreed to the covenant at Sinai and then proceeded to take Palestine as their possession. However, forty years passed between Sinai and the first successful attempt at conquest.

**View of Taking Possession of the Land Found in Deuteronomy** - The book of Deuteronomy was composed in the light that the people after the long years in the wilderness were about to begin their conquest. Consequently the highest number of occurrences of yārash appear in Deuteronomy. The program of conquest described in Deuteronomy emphasizes that the people had to live according to the law given at Sinai in order to have God's help in conquest (Deut. 6:17ff.). Above all they had to be sure to live justly (Deut. 16:20). Thereby God obligated himself to help them defeat the nations and to possess the land (Deut. 12:29). However, before God could act it was imperative that the people come to the land. I.e. they had to respond in faith expecting God to overcome their enemies by placing their lives in jeopardy on the battlefield. In other words, they had to present themselves to receive the promise. As long as they were obedient, God would go before them to dispel the inhabitants even though they were greater and mightier than Israel (Deut. 7:1; Deut. 11:23; Deut. 31:3; Psalm 44:2f. [H 3f.]). Deuteronomy anticipated that God would drive out the inhabitants in spectacular ways if needed, such as sending "hornets" among the nations (Deut. 7:20). Here there was the crucial balance between the act of God and the responsive participation of the people, both of which were necessary to accomplish God's purpose (Deut. 9:3). There was no doubt that it was God who gave them the land and the victory to possess it; yet they had to respond by actively participating in the taking possession for the plan of God to be realized. Further God acted through his people, but also through nature and circumstances so that the outcome accomplished was the best.

There was a fully moral basis to the conquest. Genesis says Abraham could not possess the land because the sin of the Amorites was not yet complete (Genesis 15:16). Leviticus 18:24-30 teaches that the morality of a people either allows them to occupy a land or else causes the land to expel them. The reason Israel possessed Canaan by dispossessing the Amorites was that the sin of its inhabitants abounded to the point that God no longer allowed them to occupy that land. In such a light Israel became the means of God's judgment on these nations (Deut. 9:1-5; Deut. 18:12). Just as later Assyria was God's rod to punish Judah (Isaiah 10:5f.) Israel was not allowed to dispel the Amorites because Israel was larger, or more noble than they, but rather solely under the sovereignty of God did Israel serve as his instrument of judgment and solely under his love did they become the recipients of the inheritance (Deut. 4:37f.). There is a definite theological pattern

established here. Covenant results in inheritance, but one must come to the inheritance to obtain it. And he must be willing to face all opponents in obtaining the inheritance. Yet in reality it is God who defeats the opponents and allows the inheritance to be gained.

[An additional justification may be found here even on the secular plane, in that Canaan in the 15th-14th centuries was nominally a part of the Egyptian empire just then losing its grip. The Israelites had paid in bitter service in Egypt for every cubit of land the Lord gave them in Canaan! r.l.h.]

After possessing the land by expelling and destroying its inhabitants, the Israelites were to settle in it and establish a way of life based on obedience to the love of God (Deut. 11:31f.). For this way of life to be realized the law was given to them for a possession (Deut. 33:4). As long as this lifestyle would be maintained the land would be theirs forever (1 Chron. 28:8). Their ownership of the land was eternal, but their right to occupy it depended on their obedience to God. If they turned from God and followed abominable pagan practices, they lost the right to live there. Yet as long as they were obedient to God, he allowed them to continue their occupation of the land by helping them to overcome their enemies (e.g. 2 Chron. 20:5-17). ([Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#))

**Yarash** - 204 verses and is a **key word in Deuteronomy** - Deut. 1:8; Deut. 1:21; Deut. 1:39; Deut. 2:12; Deut. 2:21; Deut. 2:22; Deut. 2:24; Deut. 2:31; Deut. 3:12; Deut. 3:18; Deut. 3:20; Deut. 4:1; Deut. 4:5; Deut. 4:14; Deut. 4:22; Deut. 4:26; Deut. 4:38; Deut. 4:47; Deut. 5:31; Deut. 5:33; Deut. 6:1; Deut. 6:18; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 7:17; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 9:1; Deut. 9:3; Deut. 9:4; Deut. 9:5; Deut. 9:6; Deut. 9:23; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 11:8; Deut. 11:10; Deut. 11:11; Deut. 11:23; Deut. 11:29; Deut. 11:31; Deut. 12:1; Deut. 12:2; Deut. 12:29; Deut. 15:4; Deut. 16:20; Deut. 17:14; Deut. 18:12; Deut. 18:14; Deut. 19:1; Deut. 19:2; Deut. 19:14; Deut. 21:1; Deut. 23:20; Deut. 25:19; Deut. 26:1; Deut. 28:21; Deut. 28:42; Deut. 28:63; Deut. 30:5; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 30:18; Deut. 31:3; Deut. 31:13; Deut. 32:47; Deut. 33:23

**Remainder of uses of yarash** - Gen. 15:3; Gen. 15:4; Gen. 15:7; Gen. 15:8; Gen. 21:10; Gen. 22:17; Gen. 24:60; Gen. 28:4; Gen. 45:11; Exod. 15:9; Exod. 34:24; Lev. 20:24; Lev. 25:46; Num. 13:30; Num. 14:12; Num. 14:24; Num. 21:24; Num. 21:32; Num. 21:35; Num. 24:18; Num. 27:11; Num. 32:21; Num. 32:39; Num. 33:52; Num. 33:53; Num. 33:55; Num. 36:8;

**Uses in Joshua** - Jos. 1:11; Jos. 1:15; Jos. 3:10; Jos. 8:7; Jos. 12:1; Jos. 13:1; Jos. 13:6; Jos. 13:12; Jos. 13:13; Jos. 14:12; Jos. 15:14; Jos. 15:63; Jos. 16:10; Jos. 17:12; Jos. 17:13; Jos. 17:18; Jos. 18:3; Jos. 19:47; Jos. 21:43; Jos. 23:5; Jos. 23:9; Jos. 23:13; Jos. 24:4; Jos. 24:8;

**Uses in Judges** - Jdg. 1:19; Jdg. 1:20; Jdg. 1:21; Jdg. 1:27; Jdg. 1:28; Jdg. 1:29; Jdg. 1:30; Jdg. 1:31; Jdg. 1:32; Jdg. 1:33; Jdg. 2:6; Jdg. 2:21; Jdg. 2:23; Jdg. 3:13; Jdg. 11:21; Jdg. 11:22; Jdg. 11:23; Jdg. 11:24; Jdg. 14:15; Jdg. 18:7; Jdg. 18:9;

1 Sam. 2:7; 2 Sam. 14:7; 1 Ki. 14:24; 1 Ki. 21:15; 1 Ki. 21:16; 1 Ki. 21:18; 1 Ki. 21:19; 1 Ki. 21:26; 2 Ki. 16:3; 2 Ki. 17:8; 2 Ki. 17:24; 2 Ki. 21:2; 2 Chr. 20:7; 2 Chr. 20:11; 2 Chr. 28:3; 2 Chr. 33:2; Ezr. 9:11; Ezr. 9:12; Neh. 9:15; Neh. 9:22; Neh. 9:23; Neh. 9:24; Neh. 9:25; Job 13:26; Job 20:15; Ps. 25:13; Ps. 37:9; Ps. 37:11; Ps. 37:22; Ps. 37:29; Ps. 37:34; Ps. 44:2; Ps. 44:3; Ps. 69:35; Ps. 83:12; Ps. 105:44; Prov. 20:13; Prov. 23:21; Prov. 30:9; Prov. 30:23; Isa. 14:21; Isa. 34:11; Isa. 34:17; Isa. 54:3; Isa. 57:13; Isa. 60:21; Isa. 61:7; Isa. 63:18; Isa. 65:9; Jer. 8:10; Jer. 30:3; Jer. 32:23; Jer. 49:1; Jer. 49:2; Ezek. 7:24; Ezek. 33:24; Ezek. 33:25; Ezek. 33:26; Ezek. 35:10; Ezek. 36:12; Hos. 9:6; Amos 2:10; Amos 9:12; Obad. 1:17; Obad. 1:19; Obad. 1:20; Mic. 1:15; Hab. 1:6; Zech. 9:4

**David Howard** has an excellent discussion of the ideas inherent in possess, possession especially in the context of the book of Joshua...

**“To inherit, possess; drive out, dispossess” (yrš) in Joshua.** The root yrš is fairly common in the Old Testament, occurring about 230 times as a verb, meaning “to inherit, possess” or “to drive out, dispossess,” and twenty-six times in four noun forms, meaning “inheritance, possession.” It is found especially often in Deuteronomy and Joshua, which is not surprising, given these books’ focus on the issue of God’s gift of the land and its inheritance or possession by Israel. It occurs most frequently in Deuteronomy (seventy times) and is found in Joshua thirty times. The analysis below focuses on the two most important verb stems: the basic stem, usually called the qal, and the hiphil stem, which usually has a causative meaning (although yrš in the hiphil means “to drive out, dispossess,” which is not a causative meaning).

**yrš as “to inherit, possess.”** Throughout the Old Testament, the meaning of the basic stem involves the legal inheritance, or transfer, of family leadership and property (e.g., Gen 15:3–4; Num 27:11) and also the

inheritance of territory (e.g., Deut 2:12; Josh 1:15; Judg 11:23–24). The inheritance sometimes is passively received (e.g., Gen 15:3–4; Lev 25:46; 2 Sam 14:7), but most commonly, referring to territory, it is something to be actively taken (e.g., Gen 15:7–8; Deut 11:31). When territory was taken, peoples were dispossessed (e.g., Deut 2:21–22; 12:29), in which case their lands became that which their conquerors inherited (Deut 12:24).

In Joshua all the occurrences of *yrš* in the basic stem refer to Israel's actively taking possession of the Canaanites' land, and the NIV appropriately translates *yrš* as "take possession" or "occupy" in most instances. Two references illustrate the active nature of the verb: (1) "When Joshua was old and well advanced in years, the LORD said to him, 'You are very old, and there are still very large areas of land to be taken over (*yrš*)' " (Josh 13:1); (2) "So Joshua said to the Israelites: 'How long will you wait before you begin to take possession (*yrš*) of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you?' " (Josh 18:3).

*yrš* as "to drive out, dispossess." In the hiphil verb stem, the meaning of *yrš* primarily involves displacing or ejecting someone from his property or territory in order to be able to possess it for oneself (e.g., Num 32:21; Deut 4:38a; Jdg 2:21). In almost every case, God is the subject of the verb, indicating that he would do the driving out. Deuteronomy 9:4–5 is a key text showing this: "After the LORD your God has driven them out before you, do not say to yourself, 'The LORD has brought me here to take possession [*yrš*, *qal*] of this land because of my righteousness.' No, it is on account of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is going to drive them out [*yrš*, hiphil] before you. It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession [*yrš*, *qal*] of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God will drive them out [*yrš*, hiphil] before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

In Joshua, several references show God working in exactly this way, driving out Israel's enemies (3:10, 10; 13:6; 23:5a; 23:9). In other passages, Moses (Josh 13:12), Caleb (Josh 14:12; 15:14), and the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (Josh 17:18) drove out peoples and possessed their land, with God's help. Joshua instructed those lying in wait to ambush Ai that they should rise up and take possession of the city (Josh 8:7). In a negative sense, several times in Joshua, we read that the Israelites did not—or could not—drive out the Canaanites from various parts of the land (Josh 13:13; 15:63; 16:10; 17:12, 13 [2x]), and once, Israel was warned that God would not drive out the nations before them unless they kept themselves pure and did not intermarry with the Canaanites and worship their gods (Josh 23:13).

A number of passages in the Old Testament include a wordplay that uses both the major stems of *yrš* (*qal* and hiphil). This wordplay illustrates both sides of the idea that God drove out the Canaanite peoples (*yrš*, hiphil) so that his own people could take possession (*yrš*, *qal*) of God's gift of the land. Good examples of this are Deut 9:4–5 (quoted above), and Judg 11:23–24: "So then the LORD, the God of Israel, dispossessed [*yrš*, hiphil] the Amorites from before his people Israel; and are you to take possession [*yrš*, *qal*] of them? Will you not possess [*yrš*, *qal*] what Chemosh your god gives you to possess (*yrš*, hiphil)? And all that the LORD our God has dispossessed [*yrš*, hiphil] before us, we will possess [*yrš*, *qal*]" (RSV). In Joshua, this wordplay is found once: "The LORD your God will push them back before you, and drive them out [*yrš*, hiphil] of your sight; and you shall possess [*yrš*, *qal*] their land, as the LORD your God promised you" (Josh 23:5).

**Distribution.** The distribution of usage of *yrš* in the Book of Joshua is instructive as well. *yrš* is found primarily in the second half of the book (twenty-four of thirty-three occurrences). This should not be surprising, given that the primary focus in the second half of the book is the land distribution.

**Summary.** In sum, both the *qal* and hiphil forms of *yrš* reinforce the idea that Israel's inheritance was **alegal transaction, a transfer of property that was a gift from God: what God gave, Israel inherited as a possession**. We have already seen earlier that God was the ultimate source of the gift of the land to Israel, and in several significant passages, the giving and the inheritance are linked. That which God gave, Israel was to receive by taking possession of it. Typical are the following: "Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession [*yrš*] of the land the LORD your God is giving [*ntn*] you for your own" (Josh 1:11b); "So the LORD gave (*ntn*) Israel all the land he had sworn to their forefathers, and they took possession of it (*yrš*) and settled there" (Josh 21:43). ([Joshua: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture Volume 5 The New American Commentary](#))

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**Swore** (07650) (**shaba** from **sheba** = seven) to swear, to take an oath, to make or swear an oath, swearing to someone, thus putting oneself under obligation to someone. "In general, **shāva'** is employed in mainly these contexts: **covenant making**, where the parties involved made vows, **oaths or promises** to one another (Deut. 4:31; 1 Sa 20:42); **oath taking**, which was a serious



transaction in Israel and involved a person's taking upon himself (and possibly others) **a curse** if that person did not carry out his oath faithfully; **vow making**, which was solemn and not to be broken (cf. Nu 30:2)." ([CBL](#))

**Complete Biblical Library** - Shāva' (Shaba) is used only once in the Qal (simple) stem describing a man who has put himself under a vow (Num. 30:2). It was used most often in the Niphal stem to indicate "to swear," with some various shades of meaning depending upon the grammatical context. Shāva' is used to indicate "swearing to someone," that is, putting oneself under obligation to someone.

Abraham was enjoined by Abimelech "to swear" to him by God (Gen. 21:23) that he would not deal falsely with Abimelech or Phicol (cf. 1 Sam. 20:42; 1 Ki. 1:17). Abraham responded by asserting that he would bind himself with an oath to deal with them honestly (v. 24). The idiom using the Niphal stem of shāva' plus the noun for "oath" built upon the same stem (HED #8095) is found in 26:3. The person making an oath would swear by something, for example, his soul or life. A solemn oath could be sworn "by the life of Yahweh," that is, "as Yahweh lives" (1 Sam. 19:6). Shāva' could be used "to urge or adjure with an oath" (2 Sam. 21:17). Used with the preposition 'al (HED #6142), "concerning" an oath or the act of swearing concerning any particular issue could be expressed (Gen. 24:9).

In the causative stem, the word takes on the meaning of "making someone swear by," as when Abraham's chief servant recounted how Abraham had caused him to swear an oath (v. 37). The word is employed in this stem to "adjure or charge" someone to do something (SS 2:7; 5:8; 8:4). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Baker** - In the passive reflexive stem ([Niphal Stem](#)), the verb means to swear, to take an oath. Abimelech and Phicol asked Abraham to swear his kindness and integrity to them and their descendants (Ge 21:23; Jdg. 21:1; 2 Sa 21:2). The Lord swears by Himself, since there is nothing greater to swear by. God swore to multiply and bless Abraham's descendants (Ge. 22:16; Jer. 22:5). God also swore an oath to Abraham personally (Ge 24:7; Ex. 13:11). God swore by His holiness to lead Israel into captivity (Amos 4:2). In the causative stem, the verb means to make, to cause someone to take an oath: Abraham made his servant swear an oath to get Isaac a wife from Abraham's own people (Ge 24:37). A wife suspected of adultery was forced to take an oath affirming the proposed curse on her if she were found guilty (Nu 5:21). Saul had ordered the people to take an oath not to eat honey or food while they were engaged in battle with the Philistines (1 Sa 14:27; 1 Ki. 18:10). In this stem, the word can mean to charge someone or to adjure that person. David's men adjured him not to go into battle with them again (2 Sa 21:17; 1 Ki. 22:16). The land of Canaan became the Promised Land the Lord gave to His people based on His oath. He brought them into the land as He had promised by oath to their fathers (Ex. 13:5; Dt. 1:8, 35; 6:10; Josh. 1:6; Jdg. 2:1; Jer. 11:5). ([The Complete Word Study Dictionary – Old Testament](#))

**NIDOTTE - Rules for oath-taking.** The taking of oaths was a serious matter. Num 30:2, 9, 10–11, [3, 10, 11–12] was emphatic in stating that all oaths and vows must be fulfilled, with one exception—fathers and husbands had the power to cancel the vows and oaths of their daughters and wives, as long as they did so on the same day they learned of them. Independent women such as widows and divorcees were under no such restrictions. The importance of keeping one's word was also implicit in the very form of the oath, for every oath-maker invoked a curse upon himself/herself in the event that the oath was broken. **Significance.** The making of oaths as a religious institution was widespread and of considerable importance in Israel, because everyone from the lowliest peasant to the strongest king could call on the name of God to validate his or her word. Oaths could be made to affirm a statement of fact (1 Sam 20:3), to attest one's innocence (Exod 22:11 [10]), to assure certain behavior (Gen 24:37; 50:24), to confirm a peace treaty (Josh 9:15), to express one's loyalty or love to another person (1 Sam 20:17; Neh 6:18), or even to demonstrate one's commitment to God (2 Chron 15:14). Israel believed that God himself had made oaths to his chosen people in order to underscore the surety of his word (Gen 24:7; 26:3; Exod 13:11). **P-B Rabbinic writings** such as the Mishnah reveal that, in time, the boundaries between oaths and vows grew increasingly vague. Even a casual reading of the tractates Nedarim and Šebu'ot makes it clear that the rabbis made little real distinction between the two. The effective power behind the making of oaths was also watered down by a myriad of casuistic circumstances that were introduced to void oaths and make them no longer binding. ([NIDOTTE](#))

**Vine** - Often "to swear or to take an oath" is to strongly affirm a promise. Thus, Joshua instructs the spies concerning Rahab of Jericho: "Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as ye sware unto her" (Josh. 6:22). David and Jonathan strongly affirmed their love for each other with an oath (1 Sa. 20:17). Allegiance to God is pledged by an oath (Isa 19:18). Zephaniah condemns the idolatrous priests "that worship and that swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham [the Ammonite god]" (Zeph. 1:5). In making and upholding His promises to men, God often "swears" by Himself. To Abraham after

his test involving His command to sacrifice his son Isaac, God said: "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee ..." (Ge. 22:16-17; cf. Isa. 45:23; Jer. 22:5). God also "swears" by His holiness (Amos 4:2). **The root for "to swear"** and the root for **"seven"** are the same in Hebrew, and since the number seven is the "perfect number," some have conjectured that "to swear" is to somehow "seven oneself," thus to bind oneself with seven things. Perhaps this is paralleled by the use of "seven" in Samson's allowing himself to be bound by seven fresh bowstrings (Judg. 16:7) and weaving the seven locks of his head (Judg. 16:13). The relationship between "to swear" and "seven" is inconclusive. ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

**Shaba - 175v** - adjure(6), curse(1), exchanged oaths(1), made a covenant(1), made an oath(1), promised on oath(1), promised them by oath(1), put the under oath(1), put them under oath(1), solemn(1), solemnly swear(1), strictly put(1), swear(40), swearer(1), swearing(1), swears(6), swore(62), sworn(41), take an oath(2), take the oath(1), take oath(1), takes(1), took an oath(3), took the oath(1), under oath(3), used(1), vow(1), vowed(6).

**Shaba is a key word in Deuteronomy** - Deut. 1:8; Deut. 1:34; Deut. 1:35; Deut. 2:14; Deut. 4:21; Deut. 4:31; Deut. 6:10; Deut. 6:13; Deut. 6:18; Deut. 6:23; Deut. 7:8; Deut. 7:12; Deut. 7:13; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 8:18; Deut. 9:5; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 10:20; Deut. 11:9; Deut. 11:21; Deut. 13:17; Deut. 19:8; Deut. 26:3; Deut. 26:15; Deut. 28:9; Deut. 28:11; Deut. 29:13; Deut. 30:20; Deut. 31:7; Deut. 31:20; Deut. 31:21; Deut. 31:23; Deut. 34:4;

**Remainder of uses of shaba** - Gen. 21:23; Gen. 21:24; Gen. 21:31; Gen. 22:16; Gen. 24:3; Gen. 24:7; Gen. 24:9; Gen. 24:37; Gen. 25:33; Gen. 26:3; Gen. 26:31; Gen. 31:53; Gen. 47:31; Gen. 50:5; Gen. 50:6; Gen. 50:24; Gen. 50:25; Exod. 13:5; Exod. 13:11; Exod. 13:19; Exod. 32:13; Exod. 33:1; Lev. 5:4; Lev. 6:3; Lev. 6:5; Lev. 19:12; Num. 5:19; Num. 5:21; Num. 11:12; Num. 14:16; Num. 14:23; Num. 30:2; Num. 32:10; Num. 32:11; Jos. 1:6; Jos. 2:12; Jos. 2:17; Jos. 2:20; Jos. 5:6; Jos. 6:22; Jos. 6:26; Jos. 9:15; Jos. 9:18; Jos. 9:19; Jos. 9:20; Jos. 14:9; Jos. 21:43; Jos. 21:44; Jos. 23:7; Jdg. 2:1; Jdg. 2:15; Jdg. 15:12; Jdg. 21:1; Jdg. 21:7; Jdg. 21:18; 1 Sam. 3:14; 1 Sam. 14:27; 1 Sam. 14:28; 1 Sam. 19:6; 1 Sam. 20:3; 1 Sam. 20:17; 1 Sam. 20:42; 1 Sam. 24:21; 1 Sam. 24:22; 1 Sam. 28:10; 1 Sam. 30:15; 2 Sam. 3:9; 2 Sam. 3:35; 2 Sam. 19:7; 2 Sam. 19:23; 2 Sam. 21:2; 2 Sam. 21:17; 1 Ki. 1:13; 1 Ki. 1:17; 1 Ki. 1:29; 1 Ki. 1:30; 1 Ki. 1:51; 1 Ki. 2:8; 1 Ki. 2:23; 1 Ki. 2:42; 1 Ki. 18:10; 1 Ki. 22:16; 2 Ki. 11:4; 2 Ki. 25:24; 2 Chr. 15:14; 2 Chr. 15:15; 2 Chr. 18:15; 2 Chr. 36:13; Ezr. 10:5; Neh. 5:12; Neh. 13:25; Ps. 15:4; Ps. 24:4; Ps. 63:11; Ps. 89:3; Ps. 89:35; Ps. 89:49; Ps. 95:11; Ps. 102:8; Ps. 110:4; Ps. 119:106; Ps. 132:2; Ps. 132:11; Eccl. 9:2; Cant. 2:7; Cant. 3:5; Cant. 5:8; Cant. 5:9; Cant. 8:4; Isa. 14:24; Isa. 19:18; Isa. 45:23; Isa. 48:1; Isa. 54:9; Isa. 62:8; Isa. 65:16; Jer. 4:2; Jer. 5:2; Jer. 5:7; Jer. 7:9; Jer. 11:5; Jer. 12:16; Jer. 22:5; Jer. 32:22; Jer. 38:16; Jer. 40:9; Jer. 44:26; Jer. 49:13; Jer. 51:14; Ezek. 16:8; Ezek. 21:23; Dan. 12:7; Hos. 4:15; Amos 4:2; Amos 6:8; Amos 8:7; Amos 8:14; Mic. 7:20; Zeph. 1:5; Zech. 5:3; Zech. 5:4; Mal. 3:5

## Related Resources:

- American Tract Society [Oath](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Oath](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Oath](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Oath](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Oath](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Oaths](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Oaths](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Oaths](#) [Oath](#)
- King James Dictionary [Oath](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Oath](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Oath \(2\)](#) [oath](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Oath](#)
- Webster Dictionary [Oaths](#) [Oath](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Oath](#)
- 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica [Oath](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Oath](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Oath](#)

- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Oath Oath \(2\)](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Oath](#)

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## Rob Morgan - To Their Descendants

For a hundred years before the establishment of the modern state of Israel, Christians worked alongside Jews in advancing Zionism, but nothing created more sympathy for the rebirth of the Jewish nation than reports emerging after World War II of the Holocaust. Still, President Harry Truman, aware of impending Arab-Israeli conflict, was reluctant to recognize the new state. On May 12, 1948, several advisors gathered with him to discuss the issue. Secretary of State [George C. Marshall](#) was against recognition, warning that the Jews faced war on every side. But to Marshall's dismay, Clark Clifford, Truman's political advisor, urged the president to recognize Israel at once. "I don't even know why Clifford is here," Marshall grumbled. "This is not a political meeting." "He is here," Truman said, "because I asked him." Clifford made his case calmly and persuasively. He reminded the men of the 6 million Jews murdered by the Nazis, and of the survivors with nowhere to go. A separate Jewish state was inevitable, Clifford said. And then he quoted Deuteronomy 1:8—See, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land which the Lord swore to your fathers—to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—to give to them and their descendants after them. Marshall became so angry he threatened to vote against Truman in the next election, bringing the meeting to an icy close. But two days later, the nation of Israel was born, and President Harry Truman became the first head of state to afford it official recognition. Later, when Israel's Chief Rabbi, Isaac Herzog, visited the White House, he told Truman, "**God put you in your mother's womb so that you would be the instrument to bring the rebirth of Israel after 2000 years.**" "I thought he was overdoing things," said an observer, "but when I looked over at the president, tears were running down his cheeks." ([From this Verse](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:9 "I spoke to you at that time, saying, 'I am not able to bear the burden of you alone.**

- **I am not:** Ex 18:18 Nu 11:11-14,17
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## Related Passage:

Exodus 18:13-26+ It came about the next day that Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from the morning until the evening. 14 **Now when Moses' father-in-law ([JETHRO](#)) saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?"** 15 Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God. 16 "When they have a dispute, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor and make known the statutes of God and His laws." 17 Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you are doing is not good. 18 "You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people who are with you, for the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. 19 "Now listen to me: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God, 20 then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk and the work they are to do. 21 "Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. 22 "Let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. 23 "If you do this thing and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace." 24 So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said. 25 Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. 26 They judged the people at all times; the difficult dispute they would bring to Moses, but every minor dispute they themselves would judge.

Numbers 11:11-17+ **So Moses said to the LORD, "Why have You been so hard on Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the burden of all this people on me? 12 "Was it I who conceived all this people? Was it I who brought them forth, that You should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom as a nurse carries a nursing infant, to the land which You swore to their fathers'? 13 "Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep before me, saying, 'Give us meat that we may eat!' 14 "I alone am not able to carry all this people, because it is too burdensome for me. 15 "So if You are going to deal thus with me, please kill me at once, if I have found favor in Your sight, and do not let me see**

my wretchedness.” 16 The LORD therefore said to Moses, “Gather for Me seventy men from the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and their officers and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you. 17 “Then I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit who is upon you, and will put Him upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you will not bear it all alone.

**Jack Deere** points out that "The recording of these events (Dt 1:9-18) is not incidental or parenthetical to Moses' discourse. The concern shown in the choice of wise and respected men (v. 15; cf. v. 13) and the command for fairness (judge fairly, v. 16) and absolute impartiality in judgment (v. 17; cf. 16:19; Prov. 18:5; 24:23) made it clear that the point of the Conquest was for Israel to establish righteousness and holiness in the Promised Land and ultimately in the entire world (cf. Deut. 28:1, 9-10, 13). It took faith for Israel to conquer the land, but it also took faith for them to administer justice in the land, for here too they would encounter opposition. ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

There is another reason that Dt 1:9-18 is significant and is not just a parenthetical digression. What's the context? Moses has just been talking about God's covenant promise to give the Land to Israel and now seems to switch to speak about administrative affairs, but in so doing he actually points out that God has already been faithful to part of the Abrahamic Covenant (to make them more than the stars of the sky), which will only serve to undergird the certainty that He will keep His promise to give Israel the Land. Recall the Abrahamic Covenant promises that passed down to Isaac...

“Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants **I will give all these lands** (THE PROMISE OF THE LAND), and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. 4 “I will **multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven** (THE PROMISE TO MULTIPLY THE DESCENDANTS), and **will give your descendants** (THE GENERATION MOSES IS PRESENTLY ADDRESSING) all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; (Ge 26:3-4)

**I spoke to you at that time, saying, 'I am not able to bear the burden of you alone**- This statement by Moses is not found in the Exodus account (see [above](#)). The explanation of this burden is God's faithfulness to multiple the nation as the stars of the heavens. There were simply too many people for Moses to govern.

**Grant** - It is clear that the appointment of judges refers to the events of Exodus 18 when Moses heeded the advice of Jethro, his father-in-law, before the Law was given. The expression "at that time" may be thought to indicate that this was a further appointment, immediately after the command of the Lord to leave Horeb, or that it simply was at variance with the account of Exodus. Keil comments, however, "The expression *at that time* ... is not at variance with this ... (it) expresses the order of thought and not of time. For Moses did not intend to recall the different circumstances to the recollection of the people in their chronological order, but arranged them according to their relative importance in connection with the main object of his address".([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**Utley on at that time** - This is a recurrent phrase in Deuteronomy. The first four chapters are a review of YHWH's gracious acts on Israel's behalf. This idiom is a way of denoting a past act (cf. Deut. 1:9; Deut. 1:16; Deut. 1:18; Deut. 2:34; Deut. 3:4; Deut. 3:8; Deut. 3:12; Deut. 3:18; Deut. 3:21; Deut. 3:23; Deut. 4:14; Deut. 5:5; Deut. 10:1; Deut. 10:8; Deut. 26:3). ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**Earl Kalland on at that time** - בַּעֵת הַהִיא (*baet hahiw* "at that time") occurs eleven times in the first address, the historical prologue (Dt 1:9, 16, 18; 2:34; 3:4, 8, 12, 18, 21, 23; 4:14), and five times in the other addresses (Dt 5:5; 9:20; 10:1, 8; 32:35). The time of Dt 1:9, 16, 18, and Dt 4:14 preceded the departure from Horeb. The other occurrences in the first address relate to the time of the conquest of Transjordan. The later occurrences concern experiences at Horeb relative to the giving of the law, except Dt 32:35, where reference is made to the time when the foot of the disobedient will slip. This latter passage was the basis for Jonathan Edwards's famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." *Baet hahiw* appears occasionally in other OT historical books, and in some of the prophets it refers either to the past or to the future. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 3: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

**John Maxwell** comments that "The inability of some leaders to delegate work is often a big stumbling block to progress. Many leaders fail to delegate because they have an exaggerated estimate of their own ability—the “no-one-can-do-it-as-well-as-I-can” attitude. Unfortunately, they fail to recognize the abilities of their subordinates." ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:10** 'The LORD your God has multiplied you, and **behold**, you are this day like the stars of heaven in number.

- **your God:** De 10:22 28:62 Ge 15:5, 22:17 28:14 Ex 12:37 32:13 Nu 1:46 1Ch 27:23 Ne 9:23
- **you are this day:** Ge 15:5-6
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Genesis 15:5-6/genesis-15-commentary#15:5+ And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and **count the stars, if you are able to count them**." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." 6 Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Genesis 26:4 "I will multiply your descendants **as the stars of heaven**, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed;

Deuteronomy 10:22+ "Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons in all, and now the LORD your God has made you as **numerous as the stars of heaven**.

Deuteronomy 28:62+ "Then you shall be left few in number, whereas you were as **numerous as the stars of heaven**, because you did not obey the LORD your God.

### EVIDENCE OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO KEEP COVENANT

If the second generation doubted God's ability to fulfill His covenant promises regarding the Land, all they had to do was look at the fact that they were **like the stars of heaven in number!**

**Rod Mattoon** - Doubt and disbelief despise the things of God. Doubt despises morality, the Word of God, decency, honesty, prayer, church, tithing, soul-winning, and Jesus Christ. When you forget God, you tend to focus on your circumstances. When you leave God out of the picture, nothing seems possible. Without God, the picture looks dark and black. This is why people say, "The grave ends it all. There is no God or Heaven." This is why they feel so hopeless. Some folks say, "Live it up!" When they do, they still feel "down" and hopeless. When you measure your life, trials, struggles, and difficulties by your own strength, you will be overwhelmed by the smallest of problems. You will sound like Israel, "We are not ABLE!" Beloved, realize that God is able even though we are not. He helps us with our battles. But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. Romans 8:37<sup>+</sup>

**The LORD your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are this day like the stars of heaven in number** - As noted this truth was affirmation of the faithfulness of God to keep His covenant. This would serve to encourage the second generation to go in and take possession of the Land relying fully on God's covenant promise.

**Behold** (02009) **hinneh** is an interjection meaning behold, look, now; if. "It is used often and expresses strong feelings, surprise, hope, expectation, certainty, thus giving vividness depending on its surrounding context." (Baker) **Hinneh** generally directs our mind to the text, imploring the reader to give it special attention. In short, the Spirit is trying to arrest our attention! **Spurgeon** reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

**Jack Deere** - The nation's growth thus proved both God's intention and ability to fulfill His original promises to Abraham. [Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Utley on stars of heaven** - Other parallel phrases used to portray uncountable numbers (cf. Gen. 16:10) of Israelites are: "dust of the earth" (cf. Gen. 13:16; 28:14; Num. 23:10); and "sand of the sea" (cf. Gen. 22:17; 32:12). All of these from a man who was childless until age 100 (i.e., Abraham)! In Deut. 1:28 the Israelites who are more numerous than the stars and they are afraid of the inhabitants of Canaan because of their: (1) numbers (2) size (3) walled cities. What irony! ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

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**LORD your God** - 279x in 239v in Deuteronomy - **Deere** suggests that this phrase is so common "no doubt to affirm to Israel that her God is not some dead pagan god but is Yahweh, the living Lord who made a covenant with her."



Deut. 4:4; Deut. 4:10; Deut. 4:19; Deut. 4:21; Deut. 4:23; Deut. 4:24; Deut. 4:25; Deut. 4:29; Deut. 4:30; Deut. 4:31; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 4:40; Deut. 5:6; Deut. 5:9; Deut. 5:11; Deut. 5:12; Deut. 5:14; Deut. 5:15; Deut. 5:16; Deut. 5:32; Deut. 5:33; Deut. 6:1; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 6:5; Deut. 6:10; Deut. 6:13; Deut. 6:15; Deut. 6:16; Deut. 6:17; Deut. 7:1; Deut. 7:2; Deut. 7:6; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 7:12; Deut. 7:16; Deut. 7:18; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 7:20; Deut. 7:21; Deut. 7:22; Deut. 7:23; Deut. 7:25; Deut. 8:2; Deut. 8:5; Deut. 8:6; Deut. 8:7; Deut. 8:10; Deut. 8:11; Deut. 8:14; Deut. 8:18; Deut. 8:19; Deut. 8:20; Deut. 9:3; Deut. 9:4; Deut. 9:5; Deut. 9:6; Deut. 9:7; Deut. 9:16; Deut. 9:23; Deut. 10:9; Deut. 10:12; Deut. 10:14; Deut. 10:17; Deut. 10:20; Deut. 10:22; Deut. 11:1; Deut. 11:2; Deut. 11:12; Deut. 11:13; Deut. 11:22; Deut. 11:25; Deut. 11:27; Deut. 11:28; Deut. 11:29; Deut. 11:31; Deut. 12:4; Deut. 12:5; Deut. 12:7; Deut. 12:9; Deut. 12:10; Deut. 12:11; Deut. 12:12; Deut. 12:15; Deut. 12:18; Deut. 12:20; Deut. 12:21; Deut. 12:27; Deut. 12:28; Deut. 12:29; Deut. 12:31; Deut. 13:3; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 13:5; Deut. 13:10; Deut. 13:12; Deut. 13:16; Deut. 13:18; Deut. 14:1; Deut. 14:2; Deut. 14:21; Deut. 14:23; Deut. 14:24; Deut. 14:25; Deut. 14:26; Deut. 14:29; Deut. 15:4; Deut. 15:5; Deut. 15:6; Deut. 15:7; Deut. 15:10; Deut. 15:14; Deut. 15:15; Deut. 15:18; Deut. 15:19; Deut. 15:20; Deut. 15:21; Deut. 16:1; Deut. 16:2; Deut. 16:5; Deut. 16:6; Deut. 16:7; Deut. 16:8; Deut. 16:10; Deut. 16:11; Deut. 16:15; Deut. 16:16; Deut. 16:17; Deut. 16:18; Deut. 16:20; Deut. 16:21; Deut. 16:22; Deut. 17:1; Deut. 17:2; Deut. 17:8; Deut. 17:12; Deut. 17:14; Deut. 17:15; Deut. 18:5; Deut. 18:9; Deut. 18:12; Deut. 18:13; Deut. 18:14; Deut. 18:15; Deut. 18:16; Deut. 19:1; Deut. 19:2; Deut. 19:3; Deut. 19:8; Deut. 19:9; Deut. 19:10; Deut. 19:14; Deut. 20:1; Deut. 20:4; Deut. 20:13; Deut. 20:14; Deut. 20:16; Deut. 20:17; Deut. 20:18; Deut. 21:1; Deut. 21:5; Deut. 21:10; Deut. 21:23; Deut. 22:5; Deut. 23:5; Deut. 23:14; Deut. 23:18; Deut. 23:20; Deut. 23:21; Deut. 23:23; Deut. 24:4; Deut. 24:9; Deut. 24:13; Deut. 24:18; Deut. 24:19; Deut. 25:15; Deut. 25:16; Deut. 25:19; Deut. 26:1; Deut. 26:2; Deut. 26:4; Deut. 26:5; Deut. 26:10; Deut. 26:11; Deut. 26:13; Deut. 26:16; Deut. 26:19; Deut. 27:2; Deut. 27:3; Deut. 27:5; Deut. 27:6; Deut. 27:7; Deut. 27:9; Deut. 27:10; Deut. 28:1; Deut. 28:2; Deut. 28:8; Deut. 28:9; Deut. 28:13; Deut. 28:15; Deut. 28:45; Deut. 28:47; Deut. 28:52; Deut. 28:53; Deut. 28:58; Deut. 28:62; Deut. 29:6; Deut. 29:10; Deut. 29:12; Deut. 30:1; Deut. 30:2; Deut. 30:3; Deut. 30:4; Deut. 30:5; Deut. 30:6; Deut. 30:7; Deut. 30:9; Deut. 30:10; Deut. 30:16; Deut. 30:20; Deut. 31:3; Deut. 31:6; Deut. 31:11; Deut. 31:12; Deut. 31:13; Deut. 31:26;

**Deuteronomy 1:11 'May the LORD, the God of your fathers, increase you a thousand-fold more than you are and bless you, just as He has promised you!'**

- make you: 2Sa 24:3 1Ch 21:3 Ps 115:14
- and bless you: Ge 15:5 22:17 26:4 49:25 Ex 32:13 Nu 6:27 22:12
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A PRAYER FOR EVEN GREATER INCREASE

**May the LORD, the God of your fathers, increase you a thousand-fold more than you are and bless you, just as He has promised you! - A thousand-fold** is a Hebraism for an extremely large number. Notice this prayer mentions the past, the present and the future.

**Utley** - "increase you a thousand-fold" This is obviously an idiomatic phrase. The number 1,000 was a multiple of ten (times 3) and, therefore, a symbol of greatness or numerousness (cf. Ps. 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8). Here is a list of hyperbolic usages from NIDOTTE, vol. 1, p. 417:

1. the work of God in blessing, Deut. 1:11; Job 42:12; Ps. 144:13
2. military blessing, Josh. 23:10
3. military curse for unbelief, Deut. 32:30; Isa. 7:23; 30:17; Amos 5:3
4. enduring sovereignty of God, Ps. 90:4
5. God's covenant promises, Deut. 7:9; Ps. 105:8
6. God's wrath vs. God's love, Exod. 34:7; Deut. 5:9-10
7. blessing of being in God's temple, Ps. 84:10 ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:12 'How can I alone bear the load and burden of you and your strife?'**

- De 1:9 Ex 18:13-16 Nu 11:11-15 1Ki 3:7-9 Ps 89:19 2Co 2:16 3:5
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## INCREASED POSTERITY BRINGS INCREASING PROBLEMS

**How can I alone bear the load and burden of you and your strife** (quarrels, lawsuits)? - The irony is that God's faithfulness to multiply the nation created a load and burden for Moses and yet Moses prayed for increasing growth. The verb for **bear** ([nasa](#)) was often used of difficult, back-breaking labor. And the Septuagint translates **load** ([torach](#)) with the word [kopos](#) which describes exhausting physical or mental exertion toil to the point of becoming weary.

**Deuteronomy 1:13 'Choose wise and discerning and experienced men from your tribes, and I will appoint them as your heads.'**

- Take: Heb. Give, Ex 18:21 Nu 11:16,17 Ac 1:21-23 6:2-6



- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Choose wise and discerning** (understanding, discretion - [bin/biyn](#)) **and experienced** (well-respected) **men from your tribes, and I will appoint them as your heads** - Here Moses tells them to choose, but in Exodus 18:25+ it says Moses chose them ([see Geisler below](#)). **Wise** (חֲכָמִים hakamim ; Septuagint = [sophos](#)) means they knew how to apply knowledge (i.e., they did not just possess "head knowledge!"). **Eugene Merrill** adds that "In the Old Testament, "wise" ([khakam](#)) is more descriptive of godliness than of intellect. **Discerning** ([bin/biyn](#) *nebonim*; Septuagint = epistemon = knowledgeable in a way that makes one effectual in the exercise of such knowledge) means those who have discernment and so are able to judge matters. **Experienced** is the Hebrew word [yada](#) meaning to know supporting the idea that these men were well known and thus respected. **Merrill** adds that "Literally, then, these were "known men" or, in the modern idiom, "known quantities." There were no secrets here, no coverups that someday would be exposed. They were solid citizens." ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

**Reformation Study note** - A reference to Ex. 18:24–26 where Moses took the good advice of Jethro, his father-in-law. During the year at Mount Sinai, Moses, under God, organized the nation's judicial system, military power, and worship (ED: TABERNACLE AND PRIESTHOOD)..

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**Norman Geisler** - DEUTERONOMY 1:13—Did Moses appoint the judges or did the people?

**PROBLEM:** Exodus 18:25+ declares that "Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people." However, here Moses told the people to choose their own judges (Dt. 1:13).

**SOLUTION:** Both are correct, as is indicated only two verses later, where it says Moses "took the heads of your tribes ... and made them heads [judges] over you." (Dt. 1:15). The people had chosen their leaders and Moses appointed these as their judges. So it is proper to speak of either Moses or the people as choosing the judges. ([When Critics Ask](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:14 "You answered me and said, 'The thing which you have said to do is good.'**

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**You answered me and said, 'The thing which you have said to do is good'** - The people liked Moses' plan (actually originally Jethro's plan).

**Deuteronomy 1:15 "So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and appointed them heads over you, leaders of thousands and of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, and officers for your tribes.**

- **I took:** De 16:18 Ex 18:25,26
- **made:** Heb. gave, Eph 4:11
- **over thousands:** Nu 31:14 1Sa 8:12 17:18 22:7
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATORS AND COMMANDERS

**So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced**(well-known, respected) **men, and appointed them** - See Geisler's [note above](#). Moses repeats the qualifications of wise and experienced or of good reputation, which recalls the NT requirements for overseers of "**above reproach**" (1 Ti 3:2, Titus 1:7). **Appointed** means they were given to serve as leaders. Note that a leader was to be chosen from each tribe so that each tribe was represented.

**THOUGHT** - Just as Israelites needed qualified leaders, believers today need qualified leaders to go before them in their journey to the ultimate "Promised Land." Does your church appoint **wise and experienced men** or are they chosen because of their charisma, popularity, large donations or business acumen? Sadly, I have too often seen the appointment of leaders based on the latter "attributes" to the detriment of the church! Another sad trend I have noticed among some of the young reformed churches is a tendency to appoint younger leaders with almost complete exclusion of older, **wise and experienced men** who have walked with Jesus longer than some of the young leaders have even been alive! Any church is less than it could be for

ignoring the wisdom and experience of these older saints.

**John Maxwell** adds - Moses felt that a leader could be defined as one who knows the way (understanding), goes the way (experience), and shows the way (credibility). He understood that a leader was not necessarily an extraordinary man, but an ordinary man committed to an extraordinary God. Therefore, the selection of men who qualified to fill this role was not a matter to be taken lightly. Personally, I feel that this is an area where the church today often falls sadly short. After assuming the senior pastorate at Skyline Wesleyan Church in San Diego, my first goal was to disciple the leadership (both professional and lay) within the congregation. This was my most important ministry to the church. Weekly I talked with key men and women, had sharing with them biblical leadership principles and helping them to apply these truths to their lives and the ones for whom they had responsibility. The results were overwhelming. Not only was I proclaiming God's Word from the pulpit, but it was being modeled in the pew. ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Merrill** adds that "The idea is that men already known for leadership skills—as well as being wise, discerning, and of good reputation—became leaders in a different capacity. Leadership is not an office; it's a gift."

**Heads** (administrators) **over you, leaders** (commanders) **of thousands and of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, and officers for your tribes** - First leaders need to be identified and then they need to be organized. "There was a wise organizational structure devised for the people. The people were broken down into groups of thousands, hundreds, and tens. Some leaders were to serve as commanders and tribal leaders. As commanders they led the people into battle. As tribal leaders they governed the affairs of the tribe. Note that other leaders were apparently chosen to serve as judges of legal matters that arose between the people." ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**Earl Kalland** - The use of the word "**commanders**" (Dt 1:15NIV) and the size of the groups—thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens—suggest a military arrangement; but neither the Exodus narrative nor this one speaks of military matters. Moreover, the current need was for assistant judges, not for military men as commanders and tribal officials. It is not clear in this context, however, whether commanders and tribal officials are the same men. ([The Expositor's Bible Commentary – Volume 3: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:16** "Then I charged your judges at that time, saying, 'Hear the cases between your fellow countrymen, and judge righteously between a man and his fellow countryman, or the alien who is with him.'

- **charged:** De 27:11 31:14 Nu 27:19 1Th 2:11 1Ti 5:21 6:17
- **Hear:** De 16:18,19 Ex 23:2,3,7,8 Lev 19:15 2Sa 23:3 2Ch 19:6-10 Ps 58:1 Joh 7:24
- **the alien:** De 10:18,19 24:14 Ex 22:21 23:9 Lev 24:22
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## EQUAL JUSTICE FOR ALL

**Then I charged** (admonished) **your judges at that time-** **Judges** is [shaphat](#) which is not typical of the modern concept of judge (as in a court of law), but is much more inclusive -- to function as ruler or governor.

**saying, 'Hear the cases between your fellow countrymen, and judge righteously between a man and his fellow countryman, or the alien who is with him** - Listen fairly! Judgment was to be righteous, absolutely true and without bias (and without bribes) whether the person was a native Israelite or an alien. **Righteously** ([tsedeq](#)) refers to a right relation to an ethical or legal standard, adherence to a norm, in this case the divine standard, thus true to God's own character.

**John Trapp** on **hear the cases** - Hear them out. In the Forum of Rome the accuser had six hours allotted him to accuse, the accused had nine hours to make his answer

**ESV Study note** on **alien** - Aliens were non-Israelites who resided in the land and accepted Israelite rule and law but did not own land and were hence vulnerable to oppression. Deuteronomy consistently upholds the equal rights of aliens and Israelites (e.g., Dt 10:19; 14:29; 16:11, 14; 24:14, 17, 19-21; 26:11-13; 27:19).

**Deuteronomy 1:17** 'You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not fear man, for the judgment is God's. The case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.'

- **shall not:** De 10:17 16:19 Lev 19:15 1Sa 16:7 2Sa 14:14 Pr 24:23 Lu 20:21 Ac 10:34,35 Ro 2:11 Eph 6:9 Col 3:25 Jas 2:1,3,9 1Pe 1:17
- **shall hear:** Ex 23:3,6,7 1Sa 12:3,4 Job 22:6-9 29:11-17 31:13-16 Ps 82:3,4 Pr 22:22,23 Jer 5:28,29 Am 5:11,12 Mic 2:1-3 3:1-4 7:3,4 Jas 2:2-4,5
- **shall :** 1Ki 21:8-14 Job 31:34 Pr 29:25 Jer 1:17 Mt 22:16 Mk 12:14 1Th 2:4
- **the judgment:** 2Ch 19:6
- **the case:** De 17:8-10 Ex 18:18,22,26
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 10:17 "For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God **who does not show partiality nor take a bribe**.

1 Timothy 5:21 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.

James 2:4 have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?

Leviticus 19:15 'You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor nor defer to the great, but you are to judge your neighbor fairly.

Job 13:10 "He will surely reprove you If you secretly show partiality.

Psalms 82:2 How long will you judge unjustly And show partiality to the wicked? Selah.

Proverbs 24:23 These also are sayings of the wise. To show partiality in judgment is not good.

Proverbs 29:27 An unjust man is abominable to the righteous, And he who is upright in the way is abominable to the wicked.

Malachi 2:9 "So I also have made you despised and abased before all the people, just as you are not keeping My ways but are showing partiality in the instruction.

### JUDGMENT TO BE WITHOUT PARTIALITY O FEAR

**You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike-** The judge was to show no **partiality** regardless of the persons wealth or social status. The Hebrew of **show partiality** ([nakar](#)) was meant to acknowledge faces (Lxx has epiginosko + prosopon = to know face - see related Greek word [aprosopoleptos](#) [albeit not used here]). In other words they judge was not to let the bold, daring countenances of the rich or mighty induce them to give an unrighteous decision. And similarly they were not to let the abject look of the poor man induce them either to favor him in an unrighteous cause, or to give judgment against him at the demand of the oppressor. The prime example of no partiality is God Himself (Dt 10:17+).

**Eugene Merrill** - The Hebrew idiom here for "to be partial" is "to recognize faces." That is, when a judge holds court, he is not to say, "Oh, I know him, so I must treat him with special favor." Rather, as the Hebrew so pungently puts it, "As the small, so the great" (1:17, lit.). In God's community the ground is level at the courthouse. ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

**THOUGHT** - Decision-making is a job for the courageous. Too many leaders tend to make decisions that are based on general acceptance rather than on rightness. The larger the number of people involved in any given decision, the greater the pressure for conformity. Sometimes the easiest way out is to make no decision. This is the coward's route which can be disastrous to the morale and direction of the followers. A right decision is like a sharp knife that cuts clean and straight. There may be some pain, but the healing process will be free of infection. Indecision is like a dull knife that hacks and tears and leaves ragged edges behind it. If and when the wound heals, an ugly scar will remain as a reminder. (Maxwell)

**You shall not fear man, for the judgment is God's-** The [buck stops](#) with God, not the judge. Judge boldly and with courage, doing so in dependence on and in the authority of God. They were not to be afraid of the consequences of their judgment including threats against them (as powerful people are prone to do!). Moses explains that the reason is because it is not their judgment but God's so the parties could take their case to Yahweh if they were not satisfied! And mark it down that judges are accountable to God and God alone! America is filled with judges that seem to seek advancement of their political agenda instead of seeking God's justice, and as a famous pastor once said in a sermon there will be [Pay Day, Some Day](#)! And as someone else has said "Without fair and equal

justice, a people cannot long survive!" Woe!

**ILLUSTRATION** - Abraham Lincoln, like Moses, understood the motivation that subordinates receive when the top man is willing to assume responsibility for others. He demonstrated this truth immediately following the Battle of Gettysburg. Lincoln sensed an opportunity to end the war by driving hard against Lee's army as it retreated. A swift, daring attack might do it. As commander-in-chief of the army, he ordered General Meade to pursue. A friendly note in the president's handwriting accompanied the official orders. It said, "The order I enclose is not on record. If you succeed, you need not publish the order. If you fail, publish it. Then, if you succeed, you will have all the credit of the movement. If not, I'll take the responsibility." With that kind of loyalty, Lincoln instilled confidence in his generals. They would go the extra mile for him. (John Maxwell)

**John Trapp** - Saith Chrysostom: A faint hearted judge doth easily pervert justice. A man of courage he must be, a Coeur-de-lion, another Cato, a quo nemo unquam rem iniustam petere audebat, of whom no man ever durst desire anything unjust. This Solomon symbolised by the steps of his throne adorned with lions; the Athenian judges, by sitting in Mars Street.

**Kline on the judgment is God's** - This reason for righteous administration of justice was at the same time a reminder of the [theocratic](#) nature of the Israelite kingdom, a reminder that God was the Lord who was making covenant anew with them that day. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

**The case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it** - Some cases must be referred to a higher authority. Moses was the chief and final judge. The appointment of lower judges served to significantly decrease the number of cases he had to adjudicate. In any event the buck stopped with Moses who was willing to "take the heat."

**Deuteronomy 1:18 "I commanded you at that time all the things that you should do.**

- De 4:5,40 12:28,32 Mt 28:20 Ac 20:20,27
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **MOSES SUMMARIZES ISRAEL'S PREPARATION TO ENTER PROMISED LAND**

**I commanded you at that time all the things that you should do** - Moses is in essence summarizing the nation's experience at Mt Sinai regarding the things Israel was commanded to carry out. Or as another has said God gave 10 commandments, not 10 suggestions, things to do no things to think about!

**John Maxwell** quips "What more could the people ask than a God who is faithful and a leader who is responsible? Now the people must be obedient." ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:19 "Then we set out from Horeb, and went through all that great and terrible wilderness which you saw on the way to the hill country of the Amorites, just as the LORD our God had commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-barnea.**

- **through**: De 8:15 32:10 Nu 10:12 Jer 2:6
- **we came**: De 1:2 Nu 13:26
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **Related Passages:**

Numbers 10:11-12+ Now in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth of the month, the cloud was lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony; and the sons of Israel set out on their journeys from the wilderness of Sinai. Then the cloud settled down in the wilderness of Paran.

Deuteronomy 1:7 'Turn and set your journey, and **go to the hill country of the Amorites**, and to all their neighbors in the Arabah, in the hill country and in the lowland and in the Negev and by the seacoast, the land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates.

Deuteronomy 8:15+ "He led you through the **great and terrible wilderness**, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint.

Deuteronomy 32:10+ "He found him in a desert land, And in **the howling waste of a wilderness**; He encircled him, He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye.

Jeremiah 2:6 "They did not say, 'Where is the LORD Who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, Who led us through the wilderness, Through a land of deserts and of pits, Through a land of drought and of deep darkness, Through a land that no one crossed And where no man dwelt?'

### John Maxwell's Scripture Outline for Deuteronomy 1:19–46

- The Land is Seen (1:19–21)
- The Land is Searched (1:22–25)
- The Rebellion of the People (1:26–33)
- The Response of the Lord (1:34–40)
- The Reaction of the People (1:41–46)

## MT SINAI TO KADESH-BARNEA

In this next section Dt 1:19-46 Moses reviews the tragic failure of Israel at Kadesh Barnea. Note that the first generation got off to a good start obeying God's clear command to move out from Horeb (Mt Sinai). But as most of us have experienced, a good start does not guarantee a good finish! The commencement of this journey is recorded in Numbers 10:11 and its end in Numbers 13:1-2.

**John Maxwell** introduces this last section - THE BEST IS YET TO COME - There is a wonderful life attainable by every person—our "promised land." This life represents God's best for us. Whether or not we reach it depends totally on our obedience to the Lord. Our "promised lands" never come cheaply! We never accidentally arrive at them, and we always face barriers traveling to them. We may cover the same ground several times and bump into the same obstacle more than once. Only when we've learned to successfully follow God through the twists and turns of life will we be able to quicken our forward pace. Booker T. Washington said, "Success should be measured not so much by the position one has reached in life as by the obstacles which one has overcome while trying to succeed." ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Meredith Kline** gives us the context of Dt 1:19-40. - Over against the covenant faithfulness of the Lord (cf. Dt 1:6-18) there had been the infidelity and disobedience of Israel. The fact that the Lord was renewing his covenant against this background of the vassal's past rebellions further magnified his grace and goodness (cf. introductory comments on II. Historical Prologue). The particular sin of the people of Israel recalled on the eve of their conquest of Canaan was their refusal to advance into Canaan when they were first commanded to do so, some thirty-eight years earlier. For the original account, see Numbers 13; 14. ([Wycliffe Bible Commentary on Deuteronomy](#))

**Then we set out from Horeb** (Mt Sinai) **and went through all that great and terrible** (fearful- [yare](#)) **wilderness which you saw on the way to the hill country of the Amorites, just as the LORD our God had commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-barnea** - The final destination was the **hill country of the Amorites**. Moses has already recorded that "It is eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh-barnea." (Dt 1:2) The journey from Horeb to Kadesh is summarized in this one verse as one that was through a **great and terrible wilderness** (Dt 8:15, 32:10). It was great in its vast expanse. It was terrible because it struck fear in the hearts of the Israelites (Hebrew for terrible is the verb yare meaning to fear. Septuagint has phoberos meaning causing or inspiring fear and thus formidable and frightful! Used in heb 10:31+). This journey is described in detail in Nu 11:1-12:16+ which included Israel's complaining, God's sending quail, then a plague, Miriam and Aaron's rebellion and God punishing her with leprosy, and finally in Nu12:16 "the people moved out from Hazeroth and camped in the wilderness of Paran (Kadesh-Barnea being in the northern part of the wilderness of Paran)." After traveling northward for about 140 miles (and 11 days) from Horeb, the nation of Israel **came to Kadesh-barnea** (with its pastures and oasis) which should have been the "launching point" for the invasion of the Promised Land, but instead it proved to be the "low point" in the history of Israel and would be the main site of camping of the nation for the next 38 years (Dt 2:14).

**POSB** - (**ED: ALTHOUGH IT WAS NOT ALL SANDY DESERT SOME OF IT SURELY WAS**) The dry desert sat upon a waterless plateau of limestone. One can just imagine how thirsty, dusty, and uncomfortable the people became as they marched along with perspiration dripping down their faces into their eyes and soaking their clothes. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Deuteronomy](#))

**Grant** adds an interesting note - The Tabernacle, with the exception of the holy vessels, was carried on six covered wagons (Nu 7:1-9) and each loaded wagon must have been of considerable weight. Travelling over a sandy surface, such as is found in a desert, would not have been possible. Nevertheless, the wilderness was certainly a barren area. ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

It is interesting to consider that God brought Israel first through a **great and terrible wilderness** an experience which in theory

should have served to create in the nation a desire for the land of [milk and honey](#), the Promised Land. Not only that but the wilderness time allowed Israel to experience God's lovingkindness and provision for them as "He encircled him (ISRAEL), He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye." (Dt 32:10) As **Deere** says "Both motivations—hunger for the land and confidence in God's love and power—were necessary if they were to accomplish the goal ahead of them."

**THOUGHT** - This begs the question regarding our spiritual journey (which may currently be in the wilderness), as to whether we are confident in our Father's lovingkindness and supernatural power to enable us to finish the race He has set out for us to run (Heb 12:1-2+). May our Father grant each of us such a supernatural confidence and trust in His power and provision that on that day when our feet prepare to leave this earth we may confidentially proclaim like Paul "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith, in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing." (2 Ti 4:7-8+) In Jesus' Name. Amen.

**Grant** adds an excellent observation that in this **great and terrible wilderness** Israel "would come to know the guidance and preservation that the Lord gives when difficult circumstances are encountered. They were about to enter the Land and face the difficulties of overcoming enemies. They had seen His hand at work as they left Egypt and as He guided them through this "great and terrible wilderness". The [manna](#) continued to come, their needs were all met, and despite the barrenness of the surrounding terrain they were able to take their flocks through. Although they did complain (Nu 11:1-6+), this was not a difficult pathway due to their disobedience; it was a difficult pathway due to their obedience in following the cloud. **The lesson applies today. It must not be assumed that difficulties faced by Christians are due to their disobedience. Be slow to discern that chastening hand of God in the lives of others, but be very quick to discern it in one's own life.** ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**Eugene Merrill** - There is no reason to doubt that Kadesh Barnea was to be only a stop along the way and that the penetration of Canaan would be from the south, precisely the route followed by the twelve explorers (cf. Dt 1:22–25; Num 13:21–24). The later entry from the east and by way of Jericho was undertaken only because all other options had been closed because of Israel's disobedience (cf. Deut 2:1; 40; together with Num 14:25; 21:4). ([New American Commentary – Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

**Wilderness** ([04057](#)) [midbār](#) means wilderness or desert. midbār is used to describe three types of country in general: pastureland (Joshua 2:22; Psalm 65:12 [H 13]; Jeremiah 23:10), uninhabited land (Deut. 32:10; Job 38:26; Proverbs 21:19; Jeremiah 9:1), and large areas of land in which oases or cities and towns exist here and there. In short midbar can refer to sparsely populated, generally dry regions, ranging from dry deserts to open grazing lands. In the present context **wilderness** "should not be understood as a sandy desert or impenetrable thicket. Rather, it describes a steppe-land where some pasturage is usually possible (see 1 Sa 17:28 cf. Jer 2:2; 3:2). However, compared to the lush garden spot of the Egyptian delta from which they had come, the Israelites viewed the interior of the Sinai Peninsula as great and terrifying." (Merrill)

**Kadesh Barnea** - 10x - Num. 32:8; Num. 34:4; Deut. 1:2; Deut. 1:19; Deut. 2:14; Deut. 9:23; Jos. 10:41; Jos. 14:6; Jos. 14:7; Jos. 15:3. "The Old Testament locates it between the [Wilderness of Paran](#) and the [Wilderness of Zin](#) (Nu 13:3-21 ,Nu 13:3-21,13:26 )." ([Holman Bible Dictionary](#))

#### Related Resource:

- G. I. Davies, "[The Wilderness Itineraries: A Comparative Study.](#)" *TynBul* 25 (1974): 46–81;

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#### QUESTION - [What is the significance of Kadesh Barnea in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** **Kadesh Barnea** is a region located in the Desert of Zin that is mentioned numerous times in the Old Testament. It was located somewhere along the border of Edom and Israel, southwest of the Dead Sea. Kadesh Barnea, sometimes simply called Kadesh, is connected to many significant events in Israel's history, specifically in the Pentateuch. The name *Kadesh Barnea* is thought to mean "the holy place of the desert of wandering."

Kadesh Barnea served as a place of combat in the book of Genesis when Abraham fought the Amalekites there (Genesis 14:7). It is ironic that the very place where Abraham experienced victory over the Amalekites is where the Israelites later failed to believe that God would give them victory in acquiring the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 9:23). The account in Genesis also includes Hagar's meeting with the Angel of the Lord "between Kadesh and Bered" after she was mistreated by Sarah (Genesis 16:14).

Kadesh Barnea seems to have been a regular camping spot for the Israelites throughout their years of desert wandering (Numbers 13:26; 20:1, 14; 33:36). It was at Kadesh that Miriam died and was buried (Numbers 20:1).



Two significant events that occurred at Kadesh Barnea were the Israelites' faithless refusal to possess the Promised Land (Numbers 13:32–33) and their opposition to Moses at not having enough water (Numbers 20:2–5). These two events, marked by unbelief, grumbling, and disobedience, directly affected Moses, Aaron, and the Israelites.

The men who had left Kadesh Barnea to scout out the Promised Land, except for Caleb and Joshua, failed to believe that God could give them possession of Canaan (Numbers 14:30; Joshua 14:7). Instead, they insisted that the people of Canaan, who included the [Nephilim](#), were too powerful for them to fight. The ten scouts bringing the evil report persuaded the people that the land would be impossible to acquire (Numbers 13:32–33). Because of their failure to believe, the Israelites had to wander in the desert for another 38 years, waiting until all those who were 20 years and older died, so that the next generation could take possession of the land (Numbers 14:29; Deuteronomy 2:14).

Years later, Moses and Aaron were also denied entrance into the Promised Land because of their disobedience to God at Kadesh Barnea. God had instructed Moses to speak to the rock to bring forth water for the grumbling Israelites, but he disobeyed by striking the rock twice (Numbers 20:12). Because the Israelites had failed to believe and obey the Lord, their arrival into the land “flowing with milk and honey” was postponed until Joshua led the younger generation out of the wilderness by the command of the Lord.

In the desert of wandering, the Israelites experienced plagues, death, and testing. The Israelites failed the tests that took place in Kadesh Barnea, and that remained etched in their memory forever. Their unbelief led to the postponement of entering Canaan and claiming God's blessings (Psalm 95:8–11; Hebrews 3:7–19). May we not follow the unbelief of those who did not trust God to fulfill His promises. When times of testing come, may we display the faith that Joshua and Caleb had in trusting God at Kadesh Barnea. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**Deuteronomy 1:20** "I said to you, 'You have come to the hill country of the Amorites which the LORD our God is about to give us.

- **to the hill country:** De 1:7,8
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### SO CLOSE BUT SO FAR

**I said to you, 'You have come to the hill country of the [Amorites](#)** - I said to you refers to the first generation, the parents of those Moses was actually addressing at this time and they were not in the hill country but on the plains of Moab, east of the Jordan River. **You have come to the hill country** means that the nation was now at the southern border of the Promised Land. They could stand on the hills and their eyes could behold what Yahweh had promised as a possession to their patriarchs.

**Which the LORD our God is about to give us** - We clearly see God's sovereignty over His creation in this passage, for all the land belonged to Yahweh. And so Moses reminds them that it was the **LORD our God** Who gave the promise that they would possess the Land. Note the phrase **about to give us** communicates that it was about to become a reality! God's sovereignty and human responsibility are intimately intermingled from Genesis to Revelation and here we see that God gave but Israel had to take. It would prove to be so close but yet so far because of Israel's rebellion!

**THOUGHT** - One cannot help but wonder if we are at times in our life so close to receiving God's blessing but the realization of that blessing is prevented by our disobedience. Just thinking out loud.

**A B Simpson** applies **You have come to the hill country** - This represents the crisis hour in our Christian life when the soul comes face to face with the question of entire consecration and entering into the fullness of Christ's blessing. It is a moment that never will come again, and on which the issues of a lifetime hang. Happy are they who stop not to reason and compromise, but literally go up at once and possess it. (ED: While I am not sure I totally agree, there is no doubt that there are crucial times in our life that affect the course of our life for the rest of our life.)

**Deuteronomy 1:21** '**See**, the LORD your God has placed the land before you;**go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has spoken to you. Do not fear or be dismayed.**'

- **Do not fear** : De 20:1 Nu 13:30 Nu 14:8-9 Jos 1:9 Ps 27:1-3 46:1,7,11 Isa 41:10 Isa 43:1,2 Lu 12:32 Heb 13:6

### Related Passages:

Numbers 13:30+ Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it."

Numbers 14:6-9+ Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, of those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, "The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the LORD is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us—a land which flows with [milk and honey](#). 9 "Only do not rebel against the LORD; and **do not fear the people of the land**, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them."

Deuteronomy 31:8+ "The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be **dismayed** ([chathath](#)) ."

## MOSES EXHORTATION - GO UP AND TAKE POSSESSION

**See...go...take** - Simple words which if they had been obeyed would have brought glorious victory and bountiful blessings (then and now). The problem was they stopped at the first command "**See**." That is, they went into the land and **SAW** the obstacles and forgot that obstacles are opportunities for our God to show Himself mighty in their (our) behalf.

**See** - **See** is a word that is given to arrest their attention, like saying "Pay attention!" "Listen up!" "Don't miss what I am about to declare!" And this similar to what Moses had spoken in Dt 1:8 "**See**, I have placed the land before you; **go** in and **possess** the land which the LORD swore to give to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to them and their descendants after them." The word **see** is a bit ironic because as noted above Israel could literally **see** the Promised Land from their current position at Kadesh Barnea. Sadly they saw with physical eyes but not with eyes of faith!

**The LORD your God has placed the land before you; go up, take possession** - NIV has " the LORD your God has given you the land (Dt 1:21NIV). The verb **has placed** or has given is in the **perfect tense** indicating it happened in the past and is still true. Thus Moses speaking in the past tense (**has placed**) expresses how certain he was of the fulfillment promise, speaking as if it had already been fulfilled. In his mind it was as we might say in French, a [fait accompli](#). All Israel had to do was receive the promise in faith in God's Word.

In the Septuagint the phrase **before you** is literally "before your face," which was certainly true for Israel could see the promised Land by looking northward.

**The LORD your God** should have been an encouraging Name to them. This is the same God Who had delivered them from Egypt by the Passover and the opening of the Red Sea and Moses says this same God is YOUR GOD! By His sovereign power and decree He placed the Land before Israel, so they couldn't miss it and go into the wrong land! But they had to exercise Human Responsibility (go...take). They had to walk out in faith, not by sight, totally trusting the Word of Jehovah. Of course as the story unfolded, they choose instead to walk out by sight (of their great enemies) and not by faith (in their great God)! Faith believes God and shows it believes by obeying. Israel disobeyed and showed they did not truly believe God!

**As the LORD, the God of your fathers, has spoken to you-** God has given His Word of promise. He is faithful and His Word could be trusted. Their possession was guaranteed by the sure promise of God Himself. They had the choice to either believe or not believe, which is the same choice all of us continually face.

**Warren Wiersbe** - It has well been said that **faith is not believing in spite of evidence—that's superstition—but obeying in spite of circumstances and consequences**. How much more evidence did the people need that their God was able to defeat the enemy and give them their land? Hadn't He defeated and disgraced all the false gods of Egypt, protected Israel, and provided for them on their pilgrim journey? God's commandment is always God's enablement, and to win the victory, His people need only trust and obey. ([Be Equipped](#))

**John Maxwell** - Every great accomplishment begins with vision. We have to see it before we can seize it. Our vision is the picture of what we can be one day. Yet Moses realized vision is not enough—it must be combined with venture. Vince Abner said, "It is not enough to stare up the steps; we must step up the stairs." Therefore Moses exhorted the people to **"go up and possess"** the land (v. 21). This great leader also understood that many people see the obstacles but not the objective. Not wanting this to happen, he added, **"Do not fear or be discouraged"**. All great leaders look beyond the obstacles to the objective. Napoleon saw Italy but not

the Alps. George Washington saw the Hessians at Trenton. A man of smaller stature would have seen the Delaware River choked with ice. These men were each committed to a goal. If they had to endure hardships to reach their goals, so be it. Their final destinations were worth the inconvenience of getting there. Often the Christian community feels that the ability to see an obstacle is the mark of maturity and insight. Usually, problems are the easiest things to see. The sad truth is that many of us look for problems, then use them as an excuse to stay right where we are. God wants men and women who see beyond the difficulties and who give encouragement to those facing challenges. ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Do not fear** ([yare](#)) **or be dismayed** ([chathath](#)) - (See this repeated in Dt 1:29+) - Fear God and you will not fear men! Yahweh encouraged them, for He knew the task to them was daunting from a human perspective and that they would be prone to **fear** and **be dismayed** if they took their eyes off of (invisible) Jehovah and instead looked at their (visible) adversaries. The task was humanly **IM**possible but it was **HIM**-possible, because God is the God of the IMPOSSIBLE and "not is to difficult for Him" (Jer 32:17+). And beloved, He is the same today as He was yesterday (Heb 13:8+), and He is sufficient for whatever humanly impossible task He has called you to undertake. "See...go...possess" it trusting in His power and provision.

**Rich Cathers** - Don't be afraid. Keep in mind, God will say the same thing 40 years later, but by that time they're ready to listen.

**Fear** and **dismay** are frequently found in the OT - (Deut 31:8; Josh 8:1; 10:25; 1 Sa 17:11; 1 Chr 22:13; 28:20; 2 Chr 20:15, 17; 32:7; Jer 23:4; 30:10; 46:27; Ezek 2:6; 3:9). **Merrill** says they "create a stock expression conveying the idea, in the positive, of complete confidence in the Lord and his ability to save." ( [Ibid](#))

The instruction **do not fear** is instructive, because Israel had just been brought safely through a **great and terrible** (fearful) **wilderness**. They had just experienced the power and provision of Jehovah to conquer their fear of the desert. With the background of this positive experience Yahweh says **do not fear** the adversaries in the Land you are going to possess. However, they quickly forgot God's past deliverances and as the story unfolds they begin to fear moving forward (aka "faithless fear"). In addition they failed to heed the instruction to not be dismayed. They subsequently became **dismayed**, for **dismayed** means to be caused to lose enthusiasm or resolution, becoming disillusioned and discouraged.

**Fear is a major theme in Deuteronomy** - The fear of man brings a snare, but he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted. (Pr 29:25)

- **Negative - do not fear men** - Dt 1:17 Dt 1:21 Dt 1:29 Dt 3:2 Dt 3:22 Dt 7:18, 19, Dt 11:25, Dt 18:22 Dt 20:1 Dt 20:3 Dt 28:60 Dt 31:6, Dt 31:8
- **Positive - fear God** = Dt 4:10, 5:29, 6:2, 13, 24 Dt 8:6 Dt 10:12, 20, Dt 13:4, 11, Dt 14:23, Dt 17:13, Dt 17:19, Dt 19:20 Dt 21:21 (Dt 25:18) Dt 28:10, Dt 28:58 Dt 31:12, 13

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**ILLUSTRATION** - A shoe salesman was sent to a remote part of the country. When he arrived, he was dismayed because everyone went around barefooted. So he wired the company, "No prospect for sales. People don't wear shoes here." Later another salesman went to the same territory. He too immediately sent word to the home office. But his telegram read, "Great potential! People don't wear shoes here!" The Promise land! The covenant keeping God made a promise to Abraham which was about to be fulfilled. **Oh, so close!**

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## Not Fear but Faith

The Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them. Numbers 14:9

Today's Scripture: Numbers 13:25–14:9

"My husband was offered a promotion in another country, but I feared leaving our home, so he reluctantly declined the offer," my friend shared with me. She explained how apprehension over such a big change kept her from embracing a new adventure, and that she sometimes wondered what they missed in not moving.

The Israelites let their anxieties paralyze them when they were called to inhabit a rich and fertile land that flowed "with milk and honey" (Ex. 33:3). When they heard the reports of the powerful people in large cities (Num. 13:28), they started to fear. The majority of the Israelites rejected the call to enter the land.

But Joshua and Caleb urged them to trust in the Lord, saying, "Do not be afraid of the people in the land" for the "Lord is with us" (14:9). Although the people there appeared large, they could trust the Lord to be with them.

My friend wasn't commanded to move to another country like the Israelites were, yet she regretted letting fear close off the opportunity. What about you—do you face a fearful situation? If so, know that the Lord is with you and will guide you. With His never-failing love, we can move forward in faith. By: Amy Boucher Pye ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Loving Father, may I not let my fear stop me from following You, for I know that You will always love me and will never leave me.

Fear can paralyze but faith propels us to follow God.

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#### Related Resources:

- [How To Handle Fear-Pt 1](#)
- [How to Handle Fear-Pt 2](#)
- [How To Handle Fear-Pt 3](#)
- [How to Handle Fear-Pt 4](#)

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**Dismayed** (discouraged) (02865) (chathath) basically refers to breaking or shattering like a boe (Jer 51:56) or ground cracked by drought (Jer 14:4). This idea of shattering is used figuratively of God shattering nations (Isa 7:8). It can also mean to fright or terrify (Isa 30:31, Job 7:14) **Standing in awe** of God's Name (Mal 2:5). Summary - to be shattered, be dismayed, be broken, be abolished, be afraid. In Hiphil to cause to be dismayed, to terrify, to shatter.

**Vine** - The word is used approximately 50 times in the Hebrew Old Testament and occurs for the first time in Deut. 1:21 as Moses challenged Israel: "Do not fear or be dismayed" (rsv, neb, "afraid"; kjv, jb, "discouraged"). As here, ḥātat is often used in parallelism with the Hebrew term for "fear" (cf. Deut. 31:8; Josh. 8:1; 1 Sam. 17:11). Similarly, ḥātat is frequently used in parallelism with "to be ashamed" (Isa. 20:5; Jer. 8:9). An interesting figurative use of the word is found in Jer. 14:4, where the ground "is dismayed [kjb, "chapt"]", for there was no rain." The meaning "to be shattered" is usually employed in a figurative sense, as with reference to the nations coming under God's judgment (Isa. 7:8; Isa. 30:31). The coming Messiah is to "shatter" or "break" the power of all His enemies (Isa. 9:4). ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

**NIDOTTE** - 1. With regard to fear, נִדֹּתֶה is common in a prohibition from a deity. The double prohibition, "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged" (אֲלֵ-תִיכָא וְאֲלֵ-תִפְרָחֶיךָ or אֲלֵ-תִפְרָחֶיךָ וְאֲלֵ-תִיכָא) occurs 12x. The principle behind such a prohibition is the sure promise of God's presence in reality: "The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged" (Deut 31:8; cf. Josh 1:9; 1 Chron 28:20). Similarly, the reality of God's presence is associated with the bestowal of prosperity and security upon his people, "Do not fear, O Jacob my servant; do not be dismayed, O Israel. I will surely save you out of a distant place, your descendants from the land of their exile. Jacob will again have peace and security, and no one will make him afraid" (Jer 46:27; cf. Deut 1:21; 1 Chron 22:13; Jer 30:10). The reality of God's presence assures success in battle; even more Yahweh himself is fighting for his people, "You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you" (2 Chron 20:17; cf. Josh 8:1; 10:25; 2 Chron 20:15; 32:7). Similar prohibitions using נִדֹּתֶה occur in Isa 51:7; Jer 1:17 (2x, q. and hi.); 10:2; 23:4; Ezek 2:6; 3:9. **If the sure promise of Yahweh's presence is of great comfort to his people, then the lack thereof indeed becomes a reason for great terror to his enemies:** " 'Their stronghold will fall because of terror; at the sight of the battle standard their commanders will panic,' declares the LORD, whose fire is in Zion, whose furnace is in Jerusalem" (Isa 31:9; cf. 31:4). On the other hand, the enemies of Yahweh are known to be a source of terror for the people of God during periods of weakness and defeat (1 Sam 17:11; Job 31:34, hi.). Thus far נִדֹּתֶה has been used to express the negative aspect of terror, typically associated with fear. It is, however, on one occasion used to depict the positive aspect of reverent awe associated with wonderment, the object of which is the living God: "My covenant was with him, a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name" (Mal 2:5, ni.). **2. The root נִדֹּתֶה is also used to characterize a terrible condition or dreadful situation.** In such instances it is most frequently employed to describe the destruction associated with war and battle in the context of judgment. The translation "shattered" is typically chosen to express this nuance: "Raise the war cry, you nations, and be shattered! Listen, all you distant lands. Prepare for battle, and be shattered! Prepare for battle, and be shattered!" (Isa 8:9; cf. 1 Sam 2:10; Isa 7:8; 30:31; Jer 48:1, 20; 49:37; 50:2; 51:56; Obad 9; Hab 2:17). The idea of extensive and even total devastation lies behind the use of נִדֹּתֶה in this context. Thus, any word or phrase expressing such an idea may be appropriately applied. The effects of famine are described by the same term (Jer 14:4). People are devastated in their spirit when confronted with a hostile force of superior capability: "Their people, drained of power, are dismayed and put to shame" (2 Kgs 19:26; cf. Isa 20:5; 37:27). ([NIDOTTE](#))

**Andrew Bowling** - The basic idea is "to be broken" from which other abstract and secondary ideas are derived such as "be abolished" or "be in panic." Four ranges of meanings are attested for this word and its derivatives: 1) literal breaking, 2) abstract destruction, 3) demoralization, and 4) terror. Both Qal and Niphal forms of the verb are stative. Both may refer either to being broken or to derived ideas such as fearing or being demoralized. They can be slightly distinguished in that the secondary significance of the Qal form refers to the broader idea of demoralization or dismay in general while the Niphal form has clearly assumed the meaning of "to fear." For the Qal form, literal breaking is indicated in describing the "cracked" condition of land under drought (ASV Jeremiah 14:4; RSV "dismayed"). The "destruction" of Misgab (Jeremiah 48:1, RSV "fortress" for "misgab") may preserve the root meaning. However, most of its usages refer to secondary meanings. It describes the terror or panic of military leaders whose courage has been broken (Isaiah 31:9). With the broader meaning of demoralized," usually translated "dismayed," it may describe defeated nations (Isaiah 20:5; Jeremiah 48:20, 39), gods of defeated nations (Jeremiah 50:2) or classes of people (Jeremiah 8:9). In harmony with its meaning, the typical parallel for the Qal form of this verb is *bôsh* "to be ashamed" as in most examples cited above. Demoralization, stemming from frustration, may be expressed by this verb as applied to Job's three friends after they gave up arguing with Job (Job 32:15). The Niphal signifies breaking or destruction in reference to people: Ephraim is shattered (Isaiah 7:8), and God's enemies will be broken to pieces (1 Samuel 2:10). However, God's righteousness shall never be broken (Isaiah 51:6). The meaning "to fear" is several times attested in passages where the Niphal parallels other terms for "fearing." It describes the terror of the Hebrew army at Goliath's challenge (1 Samuel 17:11) and it appears in the negative command not to fear (Deut. 1:21; Joshua 8:1). Like other verbs of fearing (cf. *yārē'* and *pāḥad*) it can refer to awe or reverence as in revering God's name (Malachi 2:5). Other derived stems develop the meanings noted above. The Piel is causative, "You terrified me" (Job 7:14; note: most authorities regard the Piel of Jeremiah 51:56 as a textual error and translate it passively or statively, "bones are broken"). The Hiphil is causative, meaning "to break" (Isaiah 9:4 [H 3]; "hast broken") and "to terrify" (Job 31; Job 34; note also the difficult passage, Habakkuk 2:17). ([Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#))

**Complete Biblical Library** Chāthath occurs fifty-six times in the OT, the majority of those being in the prophets (thirty-seven). The central concept it presents in Semitic thought is "to be broken." From that concept, derivative abstractions and related ideas are conveyed, for example; "to be afraid" or "to be beaten down." Hebrew employs the verb exclusively to mean "to be terrified" or "to be dismayed." "To be dismayed" includes two ideas: fear and despair.

The word has a rich history in the Semitic language system. In Akkadian, *hatu* means "to crush or strike down the land of an enemy through disease." The root, *ht*, appears in the Ugaritic epic, *Kirta*, and gives the idea of being "broken." Related roots are found in Arabic, all denoting "brokenness" or "death"; Jewish Aramaic, "break"; and Syriac, as the stem is a Hebrew loan word in the latter two languages. These latter two languages in fact borrow from the Hebrew term.

Grammatically, chāthath occurs in various types of verbs (Qal, Niphal, Piel and Hiphil) roots. The Niphal form indicates "destruction" or "breaking" with respect to people (cf. Isa. 7:8; 1 Sam. 2:10). Demoralization, or dismay, in the form of fear is also present in this root (e.g., Deut. 1:21; Josh. 1:9; 8:1; 1 Sam. 17:11, where the army of the Israelites was terrified at Goliath's arrogant challenge).

The occurrence of chāthath in the Piel and Hiphil denote causation. Job 7:14 reads "You terrified me with dreams," i.e., "You caused me to be afraid." The Hiphil means "to break" and "to terrify" (Isa. 9:4; Jer. 1:17).

#### Gesenius - חָתַת

(1) prop. to break (kindred to other onomatopoetic roots, פָּתַשׁ, פָּתַשׁ, פָּתַת; see Niphal, Piel, Hiphil. In Kal only

(2) intrans. to be broken, specially to be broken down with fear, to be confounded. (Many verbs which signify breaking are applied to fear, as שָׁבַר Job 41:16 Arab. فَشَرَ, فَشَرَ. Schult. Opp Min. p. 93. As those who are seized with great terror or fear strike their knees together as if they were broken, fie brechen zusammen.) Job 32:15; Isaiah 20:5, 37:27 Jeremiah 8:9, 14:4 48:1, 20 Jeremiah 48:20, 39 Jeremiah 48:39, 50:2, 36 Jeremiah 50:36. Often connected with the verb בָּשׁ.

Niphal חָתַת (which is identical in form with Piel and Niphal of the verb נָחַת), fut. יִחַת, pl. יִחַתוּ.

(1) pass. of Kal No. 1, to be broken, of a dominion, Isaiah 7:8 of justice, or the salvation of God, Isaiah 51:6.



(2) i.q. Kal No. 2, to be broken down with fear, to be confounded. Often with the synonym נִבָּא, as Deuteronomy 31:8, לֹא תִחַת, לֹא תִיכָא “fear not, neither be confounded;” Deuteronomy 31:8; Joshua 1:9, 8:1 10:25. Followed by מִפְּנֵי before the person, Jeremiah 1:17; Ezekiel 2:6, 3:9 מִן before the thing, for fear of which one flies (compare מִן No. 2, a), Isaiah 30:31, 31:4 Jeremiah 10:2. To the former, as to sense, belongs Malachi 2:5, מִפְּנֵי שְׁמִי נִחַת הוּא “and he feared my name,” stood in awe of it.

Piel

(1) intrans. (but with an intensitive power) to be broken (as a bow), Jeremiah 51:56.

(2) causat. of Kal No. 2, to frighten, Job 7:14.

Hiphil הִחַת fut. יַחַת, with suff. יִחַתְנִי, once יִחַתְנָה Habakkuk 2:17, for יִחַתְנָה (see Lehrg. p. 369), rarely like regular verbs הִחַתְתִּי Jeremiah 49:37.

(1) to break, to break to pieces, Isaiah 9:3.

(2) to frighten, to put to shame, Jeremiah 1:17, 49:37 Job 31:34. (Arab. أَخَشَّ to be terrified, put to shame.)

**Chathath** - 48v - been shattered(3), break(1), cracked(1), dismay(1), dismayed(26), frighten(1), shatter(1), shattered(9), stood in awe(1), terrified(8), wane(1). Deut. 1:21; Deut. 31:8; Jos. 1:9; Jos. 8:1; Jos. 10:25; 1 Sam. 2:10; 1 Sam. 17:11; 2 Ki. 19:26; 1 Chr. 22:13; 1 Chr. 28:20; 2 Chr. 20:15; 2 Chr. 20:17; 2 Chr. 32:7; Job 7:14; Job 21:13; Job 31:34; Job 32:15; Job 39:22; Isa. 7:8; Isa. 8:9; Isa. 9:4; Isa. 20:5; Isa. 30:31; Isa. 31:4; Isa. 31:9; Isa. 37:27; Isa. 51:6; Isa. 51:7; Jer. 1:17; Jer. 8:9; Jer. 10:2; Jer. 14:4; Jer. 17:18; Jer. 23:4; Jer. 30:10; Jer. 46:27; Jer. 48:1; Jer. 48:20; Jer. 48:39; Jer. 49:37; Jer. 50:2; Jer. 50:36; Jer. 51:56; Ezek. 2:6; Ezek. 3:9; Obad. 1:9; Hab. 2:17; Mal. 2:5

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**C H Spurgeon - Faith's Checkbook - Deuteronomy 1:21 Go and Take Your Property** -THERE is a heritage of grace which we ought to be bold enough to win for our possession. All that one believer has gained is free to another. We may be strong in faith, fervent in love, and abundant in labor; there is nothing to prevent it. Let us go up and take possession. The sweetest experience and the brightest grace are as much for us as for any of our brethren. Jehovah has set it before us; no one can deny our right; let us go up and possess it in His name. The world also lies before us to be conquered for the Lord Jesus. We are not to leave any country or corner of it unsubdued. That slum near our house is before us, not to baffle our endeavors, but to yield to them. We have only to summon courage enough to go forward, and we shall win dark homes and hard hearts for Jesus. Let us never leave the people in a lane or alley to die because we have not enough faith in Jesus and His gospel to go up and possess the land. No spot is too benighted, no person so profane as to be beyond the power of grace. Cowardice, begone! Faith marches to the conquest.

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## Trust Tally

See, the Lord your God has given you the land. . . . Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Deuteronomy 1:21

Today's Scripture: Deuteronomy 1:21–33

Before my husband and I surrendered our lives to Christ, we seriously considered divorce. But after committing to love and obey God, we recommitted to each other. We sought wise counsel and invited the Holy Spirit to transform us individually and as a couple. Our heavenly Father continues to help us develop healthy communication skills. He's teaching us how to love and trust Him—and one another—no matter what happens.

Yet, even as we head toward celebrating our twenty-fifth anniversary, I occasionally forget everything God has done in and through our trials. Sometimes, I struggle with a deep-seated fear of the unknown—experiencing unnecessary anxiety instead of relying on God's track record.

In Deuteronomy 1, Moses affirmed the Lord's reliability. He encouraged the Israelites to move forward in faith so they could enjoy their inheritance (v. 21). But God's people demanded details about what they'd be up against and what they'd receive before committing to trust Him with their future (vv. 22–33).

Followers of Christ are not immune to succumbing to fear or anxiety. Worrying about what difficulties we may or may not encounter can keep us from depending on faith, and may even damage our relationships with God and others. But the Holy Spirit can help us create a trust tally of the Lord's past faithfulness. He can empower us with courageous confidence in God's trustworthiness yesterday, today, and forever. By: Xochitl Dixon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, thank You for affirming that we don't need to know everything that lies ahead when we know You. We know You never change.



God's past faithfulness proves His everlasting dependability.

**Deuteronomy 1:22** "Then all of you approached me and said, 'Let us send men before us, that they may search out the land for us, and bring back to us word of the way by which we should go up and the cities which we shall enter.'

- We will send: The people proposed this measure through unbelief; Moses, mistaking their motive, approved of it; and God, being justly displeased, permitted them to follow their own counsel, which proved injurious to them only through their sin and folly. Nu 13:1-20
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Exodus 3:8+ "So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a **good and spacious land**, to a **land flowing with milk and honey**, (Nu 13:27) to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.

**Then** - This word marks sequence (see [expression of time](#) - [then](#)) and what a crucial sequence in this context! Jehovah has just commanded Israel to **go** and **possess** by faith that obeys. But they vacillated, took their eyes off of the God of the Impossible and began to ponder the potential problems of the impossible task that lay before them. And they made a crucial mistake. Be careful when you seek to compromise with God's clear commandments.

**THOUGHT** - You say, then why did God allow them to send spies? We need to be aware of the principle that if we refuse to obey the clear instructions of God and seek our will and way, God may just allow us to experience the fruit of our desires. And the result is as they say usually not "pretty." One recalls a perfect example when Israel was grumbling that they had no meat, and finally God sent meat (quail) but followed with a devastating plague. (Read Numbers 11:1-33, noting especially Nu 11:33+, cf Ps 78:30-31, Ps 106:14-15). In Exodus 16:11-13, the Lord had graciously supplied quail when the people complained, and He did not rebuke them for questioning Him. Now, however, there was no excuse for their lack of faith. He had also given them the law since that first experience, and they had covenanted to obey it. Thus discipline was doubly justified at this point. The psalmist described their sin this way - "They craved intensely in the wilderness, and **tempted** God in the desert (put Him to the test)." (Ps 106:14)

**A B Simpson** - While, on the superficial view, this looks plausible enough as a human proposition, yet as a people supernaturally led by the very hand of God, such a resort to mere human wisdom was inconsistent and dangerous. If the Lord was to lead them what need had they of man's counsels? And if the Lord had told them what the land was, how dared they question it even sufficiently to try to find it out by human wisdom? And yet, even Moses was caught in the snare, and admits in his address, "The idea seemed good to me" (1:23). He even went to God and obtained the divine permission for this arrangement. God Himself allowed it to test their faith and show the folly of leaning on human understanding and the mistake which even the best of men are sure to make when they fail to act upon the simple principles of obedience and faith.

Note that they had the command to **go** and they also had been told the land was **good** (Ex 3:8), so why did they need to go check it out unless they did not totally believe God's promise to give it to them?

**All of you approached me and said, 'Let us send men before us, that they may search out the land for us, and bring back to us word of the way by which we should go up and the cities which we shall enter** - A reading of Nu 13:2+ might suggest this was God's plan, but clearly the sending of a search party to spy out the land was not His original plan, nor was it Moses' plan, but it was the people's plan. Notice the words **bring back to us word of the way by which we should go up and the cities which we shall enter** which seem to be plausible. This may explain why Moses agreed and affirmed their plan. Before an army went to battle, it would not be unreasonable to attempt to get a "lay of the land." And yet in this case it was eminently unreasonable, simply because God had already given Israel the "green light!" No reconnoitering was required. The only thing required to assure Israel complete victory and conquest was OBEDIENCE to Yahweh's crisp, clear commands!

**Wiersbe** - This is the approach any army would use—it's called "reconnaissance"—but Israel wasn't just "any army." They were God's army and the Lord had already done the "[reconnaissance](#)" for them. From the very beginning, God had told Moses that Canaan was a good land flowing with milk and honey, and He even gave the names of the nations living in the land (Ex. 3:7-8; see Gen. 15:19-21). Surely the people knew that the will of God would not lead them where the grace and power of God could not keep them. ([Be Equipped](#))

**John Trapp** on **let us send men before us** - Thus empty man will be wiser than God, though "the foal of a wild donkey is born a man." {Job 11:12} It was unbelief that prompted them to this practice: for "they could not enter because of unbelief." (Heb 3:19+) Carnal policy serves the worldling, as the ostrich's wings, to make him outrun others upon earth, but helps him never a whit towards heaven.

**John Grant** has several observations on this surprising turn of events noting first that "there had been no such spies sent ahead of them on the journey to Kadesh. Clearly that journey, rather than confirm to them that the Lord was with them, had weakened their trust in Him. No spying mission should have been contemplated. It revealed a lack of faith on the part of Israel. Indeed, the Lord had already "espied" out the Land for them (Ezek 20:6) and He would not send them in if failure were a certainty. There were two reasons why the Lord allowed the spying mission to go ahead. First, if the suggestion had been turned down, the refusal by the Lord could have been used by the people as an excuse for not entering the Land. They could have argued that they had not been allowed to gather the information necessary for a successful campaign. He is removing any excuse for disobedience. How great is His grace to this people, and there is no expression of His anger at what they propose. Second, in allowing them to see the enemies they would meet the Lord was testing their faith in Him. He was not hiding from them the enormity of the task that lay ahead, but was putting their trust in Him to the test. The vital point at issue was, "Had they learned the lessons taught them since leaving Egypt?". It may seem strange to hear that "the saying pleased" Moses well. Surely he would have seen what lay behind the request. Yet there is no indication here that he did so. The Numbers account may, however, throw further light on the circumstances. The fact that the Lord said to Moses, "Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan", may indicate that Moses had brought the matter before Him and that this was the answer that he received. Although the request of the people seemed to indicate a positive approach to entering their inheritance, he knew them well enough to read their hearts. The agreement of the Lord to the proposal would, therefore, hearten him. There is a salutary lesson in this for those who follow the Lord today. If something is desired greatly and He gives it to us, it may not necessarily be for our good. If our heart has been set to achieve the goal or to acquire the possession, He may allow us what we wish, but this will not be to our benefit. Requests to Him must be based on faith in Him and with a genuine desire to submit to His will when it is revealed. ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**J Vernon McGee** - Here we go again! We must have a board or a committee to go in and search out the land. God had already searched it out! God had said it was a land of milk and honey. Sure, there were giants in the land, but God had said that He would take care of them. The people wanted a board; Moses wanted a board. Look what happened. This was the reason they were turned back into that awful wilderness. The basic problem is unbelief. God had said it was a good land. The spies looked it over and agreed that it was a good land. But they said there were giants in the land. God had said that He would take care of the giants because He would enable Israel. They did not believe God. Many times the Christian today finds himself confronted by giants in his life. I'm sure that as a child of God you have found yourself in giant country. Believe me, it is difficult to know how to handle a giant when you are just a pygmy yourself. God has given us the same promise that He is able to handle the giants for us. It is wonderful to know that. It is not our circumstances on the outside which are our real problem. It is the circumstance on the inside of us, the unbelief in our hearts, which is the cause of our problems.

**Deuteronomy 1:23 "The thing pleased me and I took twelve of your men, one man for each tribe.**

- Nu 13:3-33
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passages:**

Numbers 13:1-3 - Then the LORD spoke to Moses saying, 2 "Send out for yourself men so that they may spy out the land of Canaan, which I am going to give to the sons of Israel; you shall send a man from each of their fathers' tribes, every one a leader among them." 3 So Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran at the command of the LORD, all of them men who were heads of the sons of Israel.

### **MOSES CHOOSES TWELVE SPIES**

**The thing pleased me and I took twelve of your men, one man for each tribe** - Even God's choice servants can make some decisions they surely regret! This is one of those enigmatic passages regarding which we wish we had more information. Why did it please Moses? Moses had seen Jehovah come through for Israel time and again. Why would one need any more assurance than the sure word of the faithful God? The question that puzzles me most is whether Moses sought the counsel of Jehovah after the people made their request? Some think Nu 13:1-2 suggests he did, but that is not clear. The text simply does not say, and we will

have to wait until Heaven to ask Moses! Clearly, God had spoken and given His good and acceptable and perfect will to go in and possess. He had offered no "Plan B," but here the people and Moses settle for an "addendum" to "Plan A."

**Wiersbe** on God's not prohibiting them from sending spies - God knows how weak we are, so He sometimes accommodates Himself to our condition (Ps. 103:13-14; Judges 6:36-40). However, doing God's permissive will isn't quite the same as obeying His "good, acceptable and perfect will" (Rom. 12:2). When God lets us have our own way, it's a concession on His part that should make us walk in fear and humility. Why? Because there's always the danger that we'll become proud and self-confident and start telling God what to do! Doing God's express will is the safest course because God never makes a mistake. Sometimes our desires and God's concessions combine to produce painful disciplines. ([Be Equipped](#))

Notice that it was Moses who choose the **twelve**, so clearly he would have chosen not the timid and fearful, but the bold and fearless men from each tribe. I have no doubt he thought these were good men who would definitely bring back a good report.

**John Grant** has an interesting note on **twelve of your men** - The unique place of the tribe of Levi is recognised, however, in that no one was selected from that tribe. The Levites would have no inheritance in the land, no portion of it would be given to them. The number was made up to twelve by the inclusion of one from the tribes descended from the two sons of Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh....Israel now stood on the brink of a great disaster, the cause of which lay entirely in their hearts. It is sobering to consider what they lost by their lack of trust. If they had marched into the Land, with the cloud to guide and the Ark in their midst what mighty victories would have been won. The fall of Jericho, thirty-eight years later, is an example of a display of the power of God that this generation never saw. Having been delivered at the Red Sea from the mightiest armies on earth, without the loss of one life, they had seen on the sea shore (Ex 14:31) the evidence of the mighty power of their God. What He had done with the Egyptians He could do with the nations of Canaan. Failure to follow Him always leads to loss! ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:24** "They turned and went up into the hill country, and came to the valley of Eshcol and spied it out.

- Nu 13:21-27 Jos 2:1,2
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Numbers 13:21-23+ So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as [Rehob](#), at Lebo-hamath. 22 When they had gone up into the Negev, they came to Hebron where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmi, the descendants of Anak were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) 23 Then they came to the valley of [Eshcol](#) and from there cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes; and they carried it on a pole between two men, with some of the pomegranates and the figs.



JOURNEY OF SPIES - Click to enlarge  
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## THE TWELVE TURN TOWARD THE HILL COUNTRY

They turned and went up into the hill country, and came to the valley of [Eshcol](#) and spied it out - The valley of Eshcol means "cluster of grapes" and is near Hebron (Nu 13:22-23) and to this day is known for its excellent grapes.

**Deuteronomy 1:25** "Then they took some of the fruit of the land in their hands and brought it down to us; and they brought us back a report and said, 'It is a good land which the LORD our God is about to give us.'

- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Carrying Cluster of Grapes

### INITIAL REPORT: "A GOOD LAND"

**Then** - Conjunction marking sequence. They spied and now brought evidence that spoke for itself as to the quality of the Land.

Numbers 13:27+ Thus (ALL 12 SPIES) they told him, and said, "We went in to the land where you sent us; and it certainly does flow with [milk and honey](#), and this is its fruit.

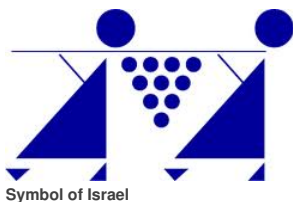
**Jack Deere** points out that "Moses did not explicitly mention the second half of the spies' report here, but their description of the land's inhabitants was so terrifying that almost all the people were discouraged (Nu 13:28-33). ([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**They took some of the fruit of the land in their hands and brought it down to us; and they brought us back a report and said, 'It is a good land which the LORD our God is about to give us** - Here Moses seems to leave out the negative report (although he does allude to it later in Dt 1:28) and focuses on the positive report from Joshua and Caleb. Note the fact that 12 men could go into hostile territory and return unharmed should have also been an encouragement that the dangers were no insurmountable! But such was not to be the case.

Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, of those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, "**The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land.** (Nu 14:6-7)

**Good land** - Num. 14:7; Deut. 1:25; Deut. 1:35; (Dt 3:24 = "good hill country") Deut. 4:21; Deut. 4:22; Deut. 6:18; Deut. 8:7; Deut. 8:10; Deut. 9:6; Deut. 11:17; Jos. 23:13; Jos. 23:15; Jos. 23:16

**John Grant** - The spies "in their hands" brought this back. In Numbers the detail is given of one bunch of grapes, cut down in the valley of Eschol, requiring two men to carry it, and of pomegranates and figs. They handled the fruit of the Land; they bore its weight; they felt its texture; they saw its beauty; they smelled its fragrance. It was with them every step of the journey back to Kadesh, and when they arrived there they were able to show the people fruit that had never been seen at Horeb or on the journey from there. It was a token of what they would be able to enjoy, part of the inheritance that the Lord had prepared for them. This land was not like Egypt, fertile in two strips of land on the banks of the Nile, dependent on the annual flood, the failure of which would cause shortage of food. This land was different and they saw that the description, "a good land and a large ... a land flowing with [milk and honey](#)." (Ex 3:8) was no exaggeration. Surely such a sight would encourage them to go in and possess these riches. The advice given here by Caleb (Num 13:30) and supported by Joshua (Num 14:6-9), that it was a good land urged them to proceed as the Lord had commanded them. ([What the Bible Teaches](#))



Symbol of Israel

The text says **they took some of the fruit of the land in their hands and brought it down to us**- The text in Numbers 13:23 says they **cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes; and they carried it on a pole between two men** A single cluster of grapes was so large it needed to be carried by two men! Even today in Israel clusters grow as large as twelve to twenty pounds! As Thomas **Constable** - explains "A huge cluster of grapes carried on a pole between two men has long been a symbol of the land of Israel. This figure illustrates the great agricultural productivity of the land. It still is a popular symbol of modern Israel today (see depiction above) and is the logo of the Department of Tourism." Is it not a bit ironic that the symbol for tourism actually derived from "tourists" who decided not to come into the Land of Israel!

**Deuteronomy 1:26 "Yet you were not willing to go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God;**

- Nu 14:1-4 Ps 106:24,25 Isa 63:10 Ac 7:51
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Numbers 13:28+ - **Nevertheless**, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there. "Amalek is living in the land of the Negev and the Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites are living in the hill country, and the Canaanites are living by the sea and by the side of the Jordan."

### REBELLION AGAINST GOD'S COMMAND

**Yet** - (NKJ = "**Nevertheless**") A sad term of contrast - "good land" (Dt 1:25) in sharp contrast to their bad attitude (rebellion) (Dt 1:26). Recall that terms of contrast often mark a "change in direction" and in this case the change was from "go in and possess" to stay put and panic. In fact this is the same "contrast" word used in Nu 13:28+ when the 10 spies quickly changed a "good report" (Nu 13:27) to a bad report declaring "**Nevertheless**, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there." **Wiersbe** comments that "The ten spies described the glories of the land, and then added, "**Nevertheless** ..." This word is usually a sign of unbelief."

The eyes of faith when fixed on Christ  
Give hope for what's ahead,  
But focus on life's obstacles  
And faith gives way to dread.  
—DJD

**David Guzik** comments - Essentially, the ten spies and all Israel said, "We went into the land of Canaan and found it to be a wonderful land, just as the Lord said it would be. God's word was true on that point. **Nevertheless** (essentially saying, 'despite all that'), we don't believe God when He says He will enable to overcome the enemies of the land and to possess it." **Nevertheless!** Despite the fact we have seen that God's word is true, we will not trust Him for great things in the future. This is a terrible testimony. ([Deuteronomy](#))

**THOUGHT** - Despite all the positive aspects. Despite the fact that what they saw about the goodness of the land was exactly what Yahweh had promised it would be like. **Nevertheless** is a strong term of contrast in this context. Yes the land is fruitful BUT it is fortified. It is fruitful BUT impregnable according to their natural, human logic. If our mind is not renewed by God's Word, we begin to think worldly thoughts. God's Word had already given them a sure promise, but they either forgot God's Word or despised God's Word, always a dangerous thing to do!

**You were not willing to go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God** Note that the **command** to GO IN and POSSESS the Land is repeated in Dt 1:8+ and Dt 1:21+. They deliberately, defiantly defied the clear command of God to



possess the land (Nu 14:1-9). He had not given them any "exceptions" to this command, such as if you find big walls or big people don't go in and possess it.

**ESV Study** note points out that "Moses does not repeat all the details of what the spies said, particularly their "bad report" (Nu 13:32+), or describe Caleb's positive minority report.

**Rebelled** (04784)(**marah**) means to be contentious, rebellious, and openly defiant to an authority by not obeying commands. Most of the uses of **marah** refer to rebellion by Israel or Judah against Jehovah. There is repeated focus on Israel's rebellion in the wilderness after being set free from slavery in Egypt (Nu 20:10, 24; 27:14; Deut 1:26, 43; 9:7, 23), summed up by the statement "You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day I knew you." (Deut 9:24)

**Marah** in Deuteronomy (8 times) - Deut. 1:26; Deut. 1:43; Deut. 9:7; Deut. 9:23; Deut. 9:24; Deut. 21:18; Deut. 21:20; Deut. 31:27;

**Warren Wiersbe** makes an interesting point that "There's a difference between **unbelief** and **doubt**. **Unbelief** is a matter of the will; it causes people to rebel against God and say, "No matter what the Lord says or does, I will not believe and obey!" **Doubt**, however, is a matter of the heart and the emotions; it's what people experience when they waver between fear and faith (Mt. 14:31; Jas 1:5-8). The doubter says, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" God seeks to encourage doubters and help them believe, but all He can do with rebels is bring judgment. At Kadesh, He decreed that the nation would wander for the next thirty-eight years (they had already been in the wilderness two years) until all the people twenty years and older had died. Then He would take the new generation—the children and teenagers whom the leaders said would be devoured by the enemy—and lead them into the land where they would conquer the enemy and claim their inheritance. ([Be Equipped](#))

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### Spurgeon - The report of the spies

Every unguarded word you use, every inconsistent act, puts a slur on Christ. The world, you know, does not find fault with you—they lay it all to your Master. If you make a slip tomorrow, they will not say, "That is John Smith's human nature;" they will say, "That is John Smith's religion." They know better, but they will be sure to say it; they will be sure to put all the mischief at the door of Christ. Now, if you could bear the blame yourself you might bear it manfully; but do not allow Christ to bear the blame—do not suffer his reputation to be tarnished—do not permit his banner to be trampled in the dust. Then there is another consideration. You must remember, if you do wrong, the world will be quite sure to notice you. The world carries two bags: in the bag at the back they put all the Christian's virtues—in the bag in front they put all our mistakes and sins. They never think of looking at the virtues of holy men; all the courage of martyrs, all the fidelity of confessors, and all the holiness of saints, is nothing to them; but our iniquities are ever before them. Please do recollect, that wherever you are, as a Christian, the eyes of the world are upon you; the Argus eyes of an evil generation follow you everywhere. If a church is blind the world is not. It is a common proverb, "As sound asleep as a church," and a very true one, for most churches are sound asleep; but it would be a great falsehood if anyone were to say, "As sound asleep as the world," for the world is never asleep. Sleeping is left to the church. And remember, too, that the world always wears magnifying glasses to look at Christians' faults.

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### Deuteronomy 1:26-33 Carry Me!

You saw how the Lord your God carried you, as a man carries his son. —Deuteronomy 1:31

Kelsey's daddy was reading to her, just as he did nearly every night before she went to sleep. She had picked the zoo book, and to her active imagination it was as if she and Daddy were there. She looked happily at the pages with the giraffes, zebras, and elephants. But when they got to the page with the grizzly bears, she said, "You would have to carry me." She said the same thing when she saw the gorillas on the next page. Curious, her dad asked her why he would have to carry her. "Because I'd be scared," came her straightforward reply.

When the Israelites saw that the fierce [Amorites](#) and Anakim were in the land ahead of them, they were afraid. So Moses, reminding them of how God helped them in the wilderness, said, "You saw how the Lord your God carried you." He would carry them again.

We can be certain that the Lord will do the same for us when we are afraid. When the scary times come, when we are called on to do the hard things life demands, God will lift us up and carry us along. He gives us His strength in Christ.

Is there something frightening in your life? Are there some difficult things you know you have to do? Ask your heavenly Father to see you through. He will hold you in His loving arms and carry you.

Beneath His watchful eye  
His saints securely dwell;



That hand which bears all nature up  
Shall guard His children well.  
—Doddridge

With God's arms beneath us, we need not fear what lies before us

**Deuteronomy 1:27 and you grumbled 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.**

- **The Lord hated us:** De 9:28 Ex 16:3,8 Nu 14:3 21:5 Mt 25:24 Lu 19:21
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passages: Grumbling**

Deuteronomy 9:28+ 'Otherwise the land from which You brought us may say, "Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which He had promised them and **because He hated them He has brought them out to slay them** in the wilderness."

Exodus 15:24+ So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

Exodus 16:2-3+ The whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. 3 The sons of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the LORD'S hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." (see Ex 16:7-12)

Exodus 17:3+ But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, "Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"

Numbers 14:2+ All the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron; and the whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! (cf Nu 14:27, 29, 36)

Numbers 16:41+ But on the next day all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You are the ones who have caused the death of the LORD'S people."

1 Cor 10:10+ Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

### **GRUMBLING AGAINST GOD**

**John Maxwell** summarizes this next section - Verses 27, 28, and 29 highlight the reasons the children of Israel "nevertheless ... would not go up" (v. 26). (1) They forgot the past (v. 27). (2) They were discouraged by the present (v. 28). (3) They were fearful of the future (v. 29). ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

Beware of discouragement for in the case of Israel discouragement soon led to darker thoughts of God, and they dared to say, "The LORD hates us!"

**and you grumbled 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** - **Grumbled in your tents** suggest at first the grumbling was a private problem, but it soon became a public problem **Grumbled** is [ragan](#) and in the Septuagint is [diagogguzo](#) in the imperfect tense depicting this as a repeated action against God (You can hear them in private, not in public -- grumble..grumble...grumble! But there was a "low rumbling" in the camp that night from all the grumbling! cf Ps 106:25+). Note how grumbling led to belief in lies, lies that God hated them and sought to destroy them, utter nonsense! God had said clearly go in and take possession, not go in and be defeated. Israel is a perfect illustration of walking by sight not faith, which quickly led to unbelief and then to blatantly false accusations of the same God Who had delivered them from the hand of the Egyptians! Paul was correct when he wrote "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption," (Gal 6:7-8+) The nation was sorely deceived and were reaping the perverted thinking that comes with personal corruption ([phthora](#) = decay, depravity)!

**THOUGHT** - Notice that one disastrous effect of fountless **fear** is that it often gives rise to uncalled for **unbelief** with the disastrous effect that the "leaven" of unbelief of the ten soon permeated all two million

(except for two)!

*"How easy it is to interpret the difficulties of life  
as a sign of God's displeasure or even his rejection."*

-- Eugene Merrill

**Wiersbe** - At Kadesh-Barnea, on the border of Canaan, the people of Israel foolishly forfeited their opportunity to enter the Promised Land and claim their inheritance. This tragic failure has made the name "**Kadesh**" a synonym for defeat and lost opportunity. Israel's downfall at Kadesh is a reminder to us today that it's a dangerous thing to trifle with the will of God. You may end up spending the rest of your life wandering around, just waiting to die. In spite of what some of our hymns declare, Canaan is not a picture of heaven. Certainly there won't be any battles in heaven! Rather, Canaan is a picture of the inheritance God has planned for each of His children today, the work He wants us to do, and the places He wants us to occupy. Paul called it "good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10NKJV<sup>+</sup>). The Lord has a perfect plan for each of His children, but we can claim these blessings only by faith and obedience. Like the people of Israel centuries ago, many believers today walk by sight and not by faith, and therefore they fail to enjoy the good things God has for them. They can't say with David, "The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; yes, I have a good inheritance" (Ps. 16:6NKJV). (Be Counted)

**Bob Utley** - In this verse the people are impugning the motives and nature of God (e.g., Dt 9:28). They had forgotten all of the wonderful promises and provisions of God during their trek from Sinai to Kadesh and had started focusing on their present situation, which they viewed as devastating ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**Constable** succinctly summarizes their sin -The Israelites **doubted** God's goodness, **denied** His word, and **disobeyed** His will (**ED**: This sounds like a repeat of the scenario in Genesis 3:1-24+).

**THOUGHT** - One sin will take a person to hell, but there are some sins which are worse than others. Some sins result in consequences that can't be undone in this lifetime and will have live changing, even devastating effects! Think about Israel's grumbling. They had grumbled from the moment God delivered them out of slavery, and yet for the most part those episodes of grumbling were not devastating. But now they grumbled one time too many and it cost them 40 years of wilderness wandering and thousands and thousands dead in the desert! Beloved, we all need to be wary of presumptuous sins, because we do not know when a sin may result in devastating consequences that we will have to live with the rest of our lives. I think for example of a spouse being tempted to have an affair and finally capitulating, only to suffer lifelong consequences (and regret) as a result of a momentary stupid sin! I know a man who by his own admission knew God was calling him into ministry at a young age. But he was a successful engineer working at NASA and involved in putting men into outer space. He choose to stay with NASA and turned down the call of God on His life. By his own admission, his next 50 years were filled with deep regret at his momentary decision to refuse to "enter in to the Promised Land," which God had prepared for him. Beware of grumbling against Jehovah!

**Grumbled** ([07279](#))(**ragan**) means to murmur, gossip, complain or whisper In Proverbs, **rāgan** occurs four times as a participle substantive meaning "informer," "slanderer," "gossip" (i.e., "one who murmurs or whispers"). A slanderer separates close friends (Pr. 16:28). The slanderer's words dig deep into one's self (and thus injure a person; Pr 18:8; 26:22). When a gossip is not present, a quarrel will die down (Pr 26:20). The future redemption of Israel at the end of this age will be marked by those who **criticize**, but **ultimately will accept instruction** (Isa. 29:24).

7v - Deut. 1:27; Ps. 106:25; Prov. 16:28; Prov. 18:8; Prov. 26:20; Prov. 26:22; Isa. 29:24.

Ps 106:24-26<sup>+</sup> Then they despised the pleasant land; They did not believe in His word, 25 But **grumbled** (**ragan**) in their tents; They did not listen to the voice of the LORD. 26 Therefore He swore to them That He would cast them down in the wilderness.

**Eugene Merrill** on **hate** - The word "**hate**" (sin'ah), in covenant contexts such as this, means not so much to harbor negative emotional feelings as to express rejection (NIDOTTE 3.1257; cf. Moran 1963). "**To love**" indicates choice, acceptance, and election, whereas "**to hate**" suggests non-choice (cf. 7:6-11; Mal 1:2-3; Ro 9:13). Israel here interprets Yahweh's command to go up into the land as tantamount to facing certain annihilation; therefore, they thought, he must not have chosen them to be his people after all. ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

They did not believe His word, but complained. — Psalm 106:24-25

Today's Scripture: Psalm 106:6-25

Most of us do our share of complaining, but few of us see it for what it is. Although we condemn some sins in others, we tolerate our own murmuring as nothing more than a negative attitude. But in the Scriptures, God condemns it as a grievous sin. One example of its seriousness is found in Numbers 13 when Israel refused to enter the Promised Land, objecting that the people were stronger than they were (vv.26-33).

Psalm 106:24-25 lists three sins that kept the Israelites in the wilderness: They “despised” the blessings of the Promised Land, they “did not believe” God’s word that all would be well there, and they “did not heed” His voice of direction. Instead, they sat in their tents and “complained.”

God wanted to bless His people, yet they preferred to hang on to the barren familiarity of the wilderness. So God did not allow any of that generation to enter the land. Author Ian Thomas warns today’s grumblers: “Ignoring what you need, you will begin to clamor for what you want, and if you are not careful—God will give it to you!”

If you’re a grumbler, ask God to change you. It’s a sad thing to impoverish yourself with what you think you need, when He is longing to bless you with His best! By: Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When things go wrong, I would not be a grumbler,  
Complaining, seeing everything as grim;  
For when I think of how the Lord has blessed me,  
I cannot help but give my praise to Him.  
—Hess

God always gives his best to those who leave the choice with him.

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### Thorns or Roses?

Two boys were eating some grapes. One of them remarked, “Aren’t they sweet!” “I guess so,” the other replied, “but they’re full of seeds.” Wandering into a garden, the first boy exclaimed, “Look at those big, beautiful red roses!” The other commented, “They’re full of thorns!” It was a warm day, so they stopped at the store for a soft drink. After several swallows, the second youngster complained, “My bottle’s half-empty already.” The first quickly responded, “Mine’s still half-full!”

Many people are like the negative-thinking boy in this story. They always look at life through dark glasses. Like the children of Israel in today’s Scripture, they complain and grumble when they should be praising the Lord for His gracious provision. But thank God, not everyone is like that. There are people who concentrate on the bright side and are radiant, happy, and grateful. They are realistic about the somber side of life, but they don’t pout and fret.

You can overcome negative thinking. No matter who you are or what your circumstances, there’s always much to be grateful for. Think about God’s love for you. Praise Him for His providential care. Then, instead of complaining about thorns, you’ll be thankful for the roses. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Some folks see so many thorns,  
They scarce can see one rose,  
While others count two blossoms  
For every thorn that grows.  
—Garrison

Instead of grumbling because you don't get what you want,  
be thankful you don't get what you deserve.

**Deuteronomy 1:28** 'Where can we go up? Our brethren have made our hearts melt, saying, "The people are bigger and taller than we; the cities are large and fortified to heaven. And besides, we saw the sons of the Anakim there.'"

- **made our hearts melt**, De 20:8 \*marg: Ex 15:15 Jos 2:9,11,24 \*marg: Jos 14:8 Isa 13:7 Eze 21:7
- **The people**: De 9:1,2 Nu 13:28-33

- **we saw:** De 9:2 Jos 11:22 15:14 Judges 1:10,20 2Sa 21:16-22
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Numbers 13:31-33+ But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for **they are too strong for us.**" 32 So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is **a land that devours its inhabitants**; and all the people whom we saw in it are **men of great size.** 33 "There also we saw the [Nephilim](#) (the sons of Anak are part of the [Nephilim](#)); and **we became like grasshoppers in our own sight**, and so we were in their sight."

## HOW TO DISCOURAGE AN ENTIRE NATION

**Where can we go up?** - NET = "What is going to happen to us?" At first reading this suggests that the grumblers may have experienced a change of heart. But when we compare the parallel passage in Numbers 14:4 where "they said to one another, "Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt," it seems clear they had no change of heart. And the following context (people are bigger, etc), would support this interpretation of their question. As **Merrill** says "It seems best to take their question, then, as a rhetorical question, one that demands or expects the answer that there was no longer hope of claiming the land of promise." ([Ibid](#))

**Our brethren have made our hearts melt** - NET = "Our brothers (10 of 12) have drained away our courage." NLT = "Our brothers have demoralized us with their report." "Our brothers have discouraged us." (CSB) "Our brothers have made our hearts feeble with fear." Ten spies emphasized the obstacles instead of the opportunities and concluded that Israel was too weak to conquer the enemy. They walked by sight and not by faith. The people of the land were giants, the city walls were high, and the men felt like grasshoppers! Unbelief blinds you to God's greatness and magnifies your own weakness.

The phrase **have made our hearts melt** occurs commonly in of war (Dt 20:8; Josh 2:11; 5:1; 7:5; 2 Sa 17:10; Isa 13:7; 19:1; Nah 2:10; Ezek 21:7). The sad irony is that the same expression was used by Rahab the harlot declaring "When we heard it, **our hearts melted** and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. , and more particularly with references to the enemies of the Lord who are terrified at his coming." As **Merrill** says "Ironical indeed is that Israel, on the verge of conquest as the army of the Lord, should itself lose heart." ([Ibid](#))

We are continually faced with a series of great opportunities  
brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems."

--John Gardiner

They now offer three excuses which utterly demoralized the entire nation of Israel.

**Saying, "The people are bigger and taller than we - Bigger** presumably means "bigger" in number (NET = "more numerous" )

**The cities are large and fortified to heaven** - NET = "Defenses appear to be as high as heaven." "Fenced to heaven." (YLT) Note how their unbelief exaggerated the obstacle (fenced to heaven), making the cities seem even more impregnable than they actually were. The irony is they forgot that their God was in Heaven and could easily "scale" the fences to heaven! When we are fearful we tend to exaggerate the things we are fearful of much like Israel did.

**Bob Utley** - From archeology we have found evidence about some of these cities. Lachish was a southern Amorite city which had a wall 29 feet thick. The walls of these cities had an occasional raised turret or tower. One can understand how the Israelites were overwhelmed when they saw these cities ("fortified" BDB 130, KB 148, Qal PASSIVE PARTICIPLE means "inaccessible"). This hyperbole "**fortified to heaven**" is used in the same metaphorical sense as the names of the Ziggurats in Babylon (cf. Ge 11:4). ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**And besides, we saw the sons of the Anakim there-** NLT = "We even saw giants there-- the descendants of Anak!" Giant numbers of people, giant walls and giants discouraged the people.

**THOUGHT** - Beloved, that same principle pervades the pages of Scripture. God gives us promises, but we must lay hold of them by faith and obedience (genuine faith obeys!) This is why Paul said we have to fight the good fight of faith (1 Ti 6:12+). The Christian life is not a playground, but a battleground. Yes, the battle is the LORD'S, but He is still calling us as good soldiers to suffer hardship (2 Ti 2:3+) and fight for our possessions (don't misunderstand - for even then it is not to fight that we might "earn" or "merit" them for they are still ALL bestowed by His infinite grace. He simply wants us to manifest our faith in our good fight).

**Simpson** - They did not question the merits of the land but their cowardly hearts were afraid of the perils of the way.

Note that even in the face of all the discouraging words of the 10 spies, there was an overwhelmingly encouraging word from 2 of the spies, Caleb and Joshua...

Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for **we will surely overcome it.**" (Nu 13:30)

**Comment** - Isn't it interesting that Caleb saw the same land as the other ten spies, yet he said go while the others screamed no? Why the difference? We see things not as they are but as we are. I once developed a leadership lecture entitled, "Your Problem Is NOT Your Problem." The thesis was that although we all have problems, we do not all respond to them the same way. Examples of this truth are numerous. Some people who stay married have greater problems than others who seek divorce. Some people who are happy have heavier burdens than others who are sad. It is a major mistake when we focus on the problems instead of the possibilities! This is what happened with the spies. Ten saw the barriers; two saw the blessings. Ten saw giants; two saw God. Ten saw fortified cities and their faith crumbled; two possessed faith and saw the fortified cities crumble. Two said, "The best is yet to come"; ten said, "The best is not to come." (John Maxwell - [Preacher's Commentary](#))

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### Utley's SPECIAL TOPIC: TERMS USED FOR TALL/POWERFUL WARRIORS OR PEOPLE GROUPS

These large/tall/powerful people are called by several names:

1. Nephilim (BDB 658)—Gen. 6:4; Num. 13:33
2. Rephaim (either BDB 952 or BDB 952 II)—Gen. 14:5; Deut. 2:11, 20; 3:11, 13; Josh. 12:4; 13:12; 2 Sam. 21:16, 18, 20, 22; 1 Chr. 20:4, 6, 8
3. Zamzummin (BDB 273), zuzim (BDB 265)—Gen. 14:5; Deut. 2:20
4. Emim (BDB 34)—Gen. 14:5; Deut. 2:10–11
5. Anakim (sons of Anak, BDB 778 I)—Num. 13:33; Deut. 1:28; 2:10–11, 21; 9:2; Josh. 11:21–22; 14:12, 15 ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

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### Rod Mattoon - People today have a "nevertheless" attitude toward God.

- I know I shouldn't live this way, BUT.....
- I know God answers prayer, BUT.....
- I know the tithe belongs to the Lord, BUT.....
- I know I should serve the Lord, BUT.....

Israel failed to consider the "God Factor." When a person is focused on their problems or obstacles, he fails to see the Lord.

- Where will I get the money to pay this bill?
- How will I get well?
- What am I to do with my kids, wife, or husband?
- How will I solve this problem?
- I know the Lord can solve my problem, BUT....

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### Question - [Who were the Anakim / Anakites?](#)

**Answer** - The Anakim/Anakites were a formidable race of giant, warlike people (Deuteronomy 2:10, 21; 9:2) who occupied the lands of southern Israel near Hebron before the arrival of the Israelites (Joshua 15:13). The Anakim's ancestry has been traced back to Anak, the son of Arba (Joshua 15:13; 21:11), who at that time was regarded as the "greatest man among the Anakim" (Joshua 14:15).

The name "Anakim" most likely means "long-necked," i.e., "tall." The Hebrews thought them to be descendants of the [Nephilim](#), a powerful race who dominated the pre-Flood world (Genesis 6:4; Numbers 13:33). When the twelve Israelite spies returned from exploring the Promised Land, they gave a frightening report of "people great and tall" whom they identified as the sons of Anak (Deuteronomy 9:2). The Israelites, seized with fear and believing themselves to be mere "grasshoppers . . . in their sight" (Numbers 13:33), rebelled against God (Deuteronomy 1:26–28) and refused to enter the land God had promised them.

The Israelites were exhorted by Moses (Deuteronomy 1:19) not to fear the Anakim, but they refused to trust God's promises (Deuteronomy 1:32–33). As a result, God became angry (Deuteronomy 1:34–39) and prohibited the "evil generation" from entering

the Promised Land; Joshua and Caleb were the only exceptions (Deuteronomy 1:35-36). Because of their fear of the Anakim and their rebellion against God, the children of Israel were forced to wander for another 38 years in the wilderness.

During the conquest of Canaan, Joshua expelled the Anakim from the hill country, and Caleb finally drove them out of Hebron completely. However, a small remnant found refuge in the cities of Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod (Joshua 11:22). Many Bible scholars speculate that the Anakim's descendants were the Philistine giants David encountered (2 Samuel 21:15-22), including Goliath of Gath (1 Samuel 17:4-7). [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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### Only a Scarecrow

"He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." - 1 John 4:4

Like the children of Israel in today's Bible reading (Numbers 13:17-33), Hannah Hurnard, author of "Hinds' Feet on High Places," was once paralyzed by fear. Then she heard a sermon on scarecrows that challenged her to turn her fear to faith.

The preacher said, "A wise bird knows that a scarecrow is simply an advertisement. It announces that some very juicy and delicious fruit is to be had for the picking. There are scarecrows in all the best gardens... If I am wise, I too shall treat the scarecrow as though it were an invitation. Every giant in the way which makes me feel like a grasshopper is only a scarecrow beckoning me to God's richest blessings." He concluded, "Faith is a bird which loves to perch on scarecrows. All our fears are groundless."

Hannah testified that this humble parable has encouraged her to walk along some frightening but fruitful pathways more times than she could number.

What is your scarecrow today? Difficult circumstances? Personal inadequacy? Uncertainty? The enemy of your soul wants to keep you away from the place of God's blessing. Perch on your scarecrow by faith, start singing, and expect an abundant feast! -- J E Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](http://OurDailyBread.org))

So let us trust Him in our troubles,  
For He is loving, kind, and wise;  
And most often trials and troubles  
Are but blessings in disguise.  
-- Jarvis

When you fix your eyes on God, your fears will vanish.

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### Do You See Giants?

My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land.  
—Numbers 14:24

Today's Scripture: Numbers 13:17-30

The 12 spies who were sent out by Moses scouted the land of Canaan for 40 days. When they returned, all but Joshua and Caleb gave this pessimistic report: "We were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight" (Num. 13:33).

These faithless ones saw only difficulties and defeat. Yes, the giants were great, but wasn't their God greater? How could they so easily forget the way God led them through the wilderness?

The 10 spies who were filled with doubt died in the wilderness. We know that Joshua led the people into the Promised Land. But what about Caleb? God blessed him and brought him into the land too because he had a different spirit and followed Him wholeheartedly (14:24).

Think for a moment of two balloons. One is filled with carbon dioxide and cannot rise. The other balloon is filled with helium and immediately goes up. So too, if our hearts are filled with doubts and fears, we will not be able to rise in faith to do what God wants us to do.

We need more Calebs—willing to follow the leading of the Lord because they are filled with His Holy Spirit. Are you a Caleb of faith, or are you among the doubters who always see the giants of difficulty? —Henry G. Bosch (ODB Editor 1956-1981) By: Henry G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](http://OurDailyBread.org))

Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,



And looks to God alone,  
Laughs at impossibilities,  
And cries, "It shall be done!"  
—Anon.

Fear sees the obstacle; faith sees the opportunity.

## Deuteronomy 1:29 "Then I said to you, 'Do not be shocked, nor fear them.

- De 1:21
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passage:

Joshua 1:9 (JEHOVAH TO JOSHUA AFTER MOSES HAD DIED) "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! **Do not tremble** ([arats](#)) or be dismayed ([chathath](#)), for (TERM OF EXPLANATION - REASON NOT TO TREMBLE OR BE DISMAYED) the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

## MOSES INTERVENES TO ASSUAGE THEIR FEAR

**Then I said to you, 'Do not be shocked** (terrified, in dread), **nor fear them** - Moses tried to stem the tide of discouragement that swept through the entire nation by exhorting them to not be alarmed and do not fear the enemy. He explains why in Dt 1:30. The encouragement **do not fear** (do not be afraid) occurs repeatedly in Deuteronomy - Dt 1:21; Dt 3:2; Dt 3:22; Dt 7:18; Dt 20:1, 3; Dt 31:6, 8.

**John Maxwell** - The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when we fear Him, we fear nothing else; whereas if we do not fear God, we fear everything else. This is what happened to Israel. ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Shocked** ([06206](#)) ([arats](#)) means to cause to tremble, to be alarmed, to be terrified, to dread, to be struck with awe or dread. Isaiah says the **splendor of the majesty** of Jehovah make the earth **tremble** (Isa 2:19, 21). Deuteronomy and Joshua repeatedly reminded the Israelites before battle to not fear because God would be with them - Dt. 1:29; Dt 7:21; Dt 20:3; Dt 31:6; Josh. 1:9). Each time, Israel was admonished not to fear the nations who dwelt in the Promised Land, and each admonishment was followed by a reason for the maintenance of courage.

**Arats** - 16x in 15v - ause(1), cause terror(1), cause trembling(1), dread(3), feared(2), make the tremble(2), shocked(1), stand in awe(1), tremble(4). - Deut. 1:29; Deut. 7:21; Deut. 20:3; Deut. 31:6; Jos. 1:9; Job 13:25; Job 31:34; Ps. 10:18 = man "will not longer cause **terror**."; Ps. 89:7 = "A God greatly **feared**"; Isa. 2:19; Isa. 2:21; Isa. 8:12; Isa. 8:13; Isa. 29:23; Isa. 47:12

**Fear** ([03372](#)) [yare](#) to fear, to be afraid (Ge 3:10<sup>+</sup>), to respect, to reverence, to be terrified, to be awesome, to be feared, to make afraid, to frighten. Uses of **yare** in Deuteronomy - Deut. 1:19; Deut. 1:21; Deut. 1:29; Deut. 2:4; Deut. 3:2; Deut. 3:22; Deut. 4:10; Deut. 5:5; Deut. 5:29; Deut. 6:2; Deut. 6:13; Deut. 6:24; Deut. 7:18; Deut. 7:19; Deut. 7:21; Deut. 8:6; Deut. 8:15; Deut. 10:12; Deut. 10:17; Deut. 10:20; Deut. 10:21; Deut. 13:4; Deut. 13:11; Deut. 14:23; Deut. 17:13; Deut. 17:19; Deut. 19:20; Deut. 20:1; Deut. 20:3; Deut. 20:8; Deut. 21:21; Deut. 25:18; Deut. 28:10; Deut. 28:58; Deut. 31:6; Deut. 31:8; Deut. 31:12; Deut. 31:13;

**Utley** - [yare](#) is the common term for fear:

- of enemies—Deut. 1:21, 29; 2:4; 3:2, 22; 7:18, 19; 20:1, 3; 31:6; Josh. 11:6
- peoples of the earth fear the people of God—Deut. 28:10 (cf. Josh. 4:24); Josh. 9:24
- Israel is to fear/awe/respect YHWH—Deut. 4:10; 5:5; 6:2, 13, 24; 10:12, 20; 13:11; 14:23; 17:13, 19; 19:20; 21:21; 25:18; 28:58; 31:12; Josh. 4:24 ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

### Related Resources:

- [How To Handle Fear-Pt 1](#)

- [How to Handle Fear-Pt 2](#)
- [How To Handle Fear-Pt 3](#)
- [How to Handle Fear-Pt 4](#)

**Deuteronomy 1:30 'The LORD your God who goes before you will Himself fight on your behalf, just as He did for you in Egypt before your eyes,**

- **will Himself fight on your behalf:** De 20:1-4 Ex 14:14,25 Jos 10:42 1Sa 17:45,46 2Ch 14:11,12 32:8 Ne 4:20 Ps 46:11 Isa 8:9,10 Ro 8:31,37
- **just as He did for you:** Ex 7:1-25 15:1-27 Ps 78:11-13,43-51 105:27-36
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **MOSES REMINDS THEM OF GOD'S POWER OVER EGYPT**

Note that Moses did not issue the encouragements in Dt 1:29 in a vacuum, but founded his words on God's faithfulness in their past. It is always good to remember the great and mighty works of the Lord in the past that we might be encouraged in trials and adversities in the present. Do you keep a notebook of the great works of God in your life or the life of your family? If not, you might consider it, for we are a forgetful people! And it is a good thing for your children to see to encourage them in their walk of faith.

**The LORD your God Who goes before you will Himself fight on your behalf, just as He did for you in Egypt before your eye** - In contrast to their false idea that God would destroy them, Moses says He will fight for them (cf Dt 3:22, Dt 20:4)! Moses explains why Israel need not be terrified or fear the enemy, giving a reason and a reminder. The omnipotent God would Himself fight for Israel. This was not a new thing, but a historical fact. The fact that Jehovah had fought for Israel in Egypt should have been sufficient evidence to dissuade them from fear. After all they were even eye witnesses of God's mighty intervention on their behalf (see **before your eye**)! What was Israel's problem? They had a bad memory of past miracles (aka "spiritual amnesia, the Psalmist writing "**They forgot His deeds And His miracles that He had shown them** 12 He wrought wonders before their fathers In the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan. He divided the sea and caused them to pass through, And He made the waters stand up like a heap. (Ps 78:11-13<sup>+</sup>)

**Utley** - The LORD your God who goes before you"**This is a powerful encouraging phrase expressing God's best gift—His personal presence and provision.** Notice in v. 30 He goes ahead of them to battle (cf. 9:3); in v. 33 He goes ahead of them to lead them through the desert.

**Utley** - "fight on your behalf" This is an example of "**holy war**" or herem (BDB 355, e.g., Deut. 2:24; 3:6; 7:2; 20:16–18; Josh. 6:17, 21; 8:26; 10:1, 28, 37; 11:12, 20–21). This is God's judgment on the Amorites/Canaanites for their sin, not just God favoring His people (cf. Gen. 15:16). God had given the peoples of Canaan many chances to repent, but they would not, so His judgment was upon them. God will also judge His own people when they take up these same Canaanite practices (i.e., the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles)! Here, God is telling His people not to fear but to trust Him because He was on their side (e.g., Deut. 3:22; 20:4; Josh. 10:14, 42; 11:5–6)! ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

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### **[God Has Whatever We Need](#) Deuteronomy 1:30–33 - by Paul Chappell**

When God led the Children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt, He did not just give them freedom. He led them through the wilderness, providing them with everything they needed along the way. The visible symbol of God's presence with His people was a constant reminder to them that He would meet their needs. In the daytime, when the desert sun was hot, it was seen as a cloud, offering shade and protection. At night, when the cold winds blew, it appeared as a fire, providing warmth. And day by day, when it was time to travel, the cloud led them toward their next destination.

God has not changed. He still has unlimited resources available to meet every need that we have. Yet too often Christians live without accessing what God has promised to provide. We try to make our way on our own, not realizing our inability to orchestrate life alone, and not claiming God's promised provision. "Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not" (James 4:2). It is a tragedy for a child of God to live as if he were an orphan.

Growth Principle: Do not live without the provision for your needs God would give you if you would simply ask.

**Deuteronomy 1:31** and in the wilderness where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, just as a man carries his son, in all the way which you have walked until you came to this place.'

- **in the wilderness:** Ex 16:1-17:16 Ne 9:12-23 Ps 78:14-28 105:39-41
- **God carried you:** De 32:11,12 Ex 19:4 Nu 11:11,12,14 Isa 40:11 46:3,4 63:9 Hos 11:3-4 Ac 13:18
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Hosea 11:3-4 Yet it is I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them in My arms; But they did not know that I healed them. 4I led them with cords of a man, with bonds of love, And I became to them as one who lifts the yoke from their jaws; And I bent down and fed them.

### THE SUSTENANCE AND SUFFICIENCY OF JEHOVAH

**and in the wilderness where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, just as a man carries his son, in all the way which you have walked until you came to this place** - What a marked contrast is Moses accurate understanding of God, not as one who hated them but cared for them **just as a man carries his son**. Israel had just come from this wilderness journey but seem to have quickly forgotten how faithfully God had cared for them in this difficult environment! What God had accomplished in the past, He could accomplish in the future!

**John Maxwell** has an interesting comment - God cannot carry those who refuse to go forward with Him. We cannot sense God's power until we have attempted the impossible. For it is then that He manifests His greatness. ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

Notice Moses' focus on the sufficiency of the LORD in Dt 1:30-31 - The LORD your God who goes before you will Himself fight on your behalf...you saw how the LORD your God carried you. - **A B Simpson** applies this to our lives - "This is the ground of our confidence for all our spiritual victories; this is the answer to all our difficulties and all our fears; we are not sufficient for anything, but Christ is all-sufficient, and we "can do everything through him who gives [us] strength" (Philippians 4:13). When the soul sees the living Christ and His infinite resources, it has the pledge of perfect victory. They could not see God because their eyes were full of their enemies and their own insignificance.

**Utle** - "**carried you**" (BDB 669, KB 724, Qal PERFECT) can refer to physically bearing someone or something or "sustaining someone." God as Father (i.e., Parent) is a wonderful biblical, personal family metaphor (cf. Dt 8:5; 32:6; Exod. 4:22; Ps. 27:10; 68:5; 103:13; Pro. 3:12; Isa. 1:2; 63:16; Jer. 3:19; Hos. 11:1-4; Mal. 1:6; Acts 13:18). In the OT "son" is a corporate metaphor for YHWH's fatherhood for Israel, but it becomes individual to Davidic king and his special royal descendant (i.e., Messiah, Ps. 2:2, 7; Acts 13:33). ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

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**F B Meyer - Deuteronomy 1:31** The Lord thy God bare thee.

A safe carriage was that! In his love and in his pity God redeemed them, and bare them, and carried them all the days of old. When the little lad was tired and complained of his head, his father bade a servant carry him to his mother; but God does not hand over his children to his servants, He carries them Himself. When we realize that his everlasting arms are underneath, it is safer riding than any the ingenuity of man can devise; and here we need fear no ill.

"In all the way." — There are great varieties in the way — sometimes the sleepers are badly laid, and the carriage rocks and jolts; sometimes the gradient is steep, and the progress tedious; sometimes the pilgrim has to go afoot, climbing with difficulty from ridge to ridge; sometimes the route lies through a territory infested with enemies, and haunted by miasma; but we can each rejoice in the fact that the Lord "knoweth the way that I take," and that all the way, those gentle and unwearied arms bear us up and on.

"All the days." — Never a day without its cross, its lesson, its discipline, its peril; but never a day that God does not bear us up in his hands, as some mighty river bears up the boat of the missionary explorer. Through wilds, past villages of infuriated savages, over reefs and rocks, the patient river bears the voyager and his goods. Thus does God carry us. The Good Shepherd carries the lambs in his bosom. Why, then, should we dread the future, or quail before the faces of our foes? "The eternal God is thy refuge; and underneath are the everlasting arms." So strong; so tender! Let yourself go, and trust.

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**Deuteronomy 1:32** "But for all this, you did not trust the LORD your God,

- 
- 2Ch 20:20 Ps 78:22 106:24 Isa 7:9 Heb 3:12,18,19 Jude 1:5
  - Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Resources:

Hebrews 3:12+ Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

Hebrews 3:18-19+ And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were **DISOBEDIENT** ([apeitheo](#))? 19 So we see that they were not able to enter because of **UNBELIEF** ([apistia](#)) (NOTE THAT "DISOBEDIENT" PARALLELS "UNBELIEF" - THE ONLY FAITH THAT SAVES IS FAITH THAT RESULTS IN OBEDIENCE!)

Numbers 14:11+ The LORD said to Moses, "How long will this people spurn Me? And how long will they **not believe** ([aman](#)) in Me, despite all the signs (VISIBLE EVIDENCE) which I have performed in their midst?

### THE TRAGEDY OF DISTRUST OF THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD

**But for all this - For all** the pleas of Moses and all the blessings of God and all the assurances of God's supernatural help that they (FIRST GENERATION) themselves had experienced in their deliverance from Egypt and then the divine power and provision after they had come to Sinai and been guided safely through the great and terrible wilderness.

**Utley on all this** - This includes God's special, personal presence and care from the call of Abraham (Genesis 13) through the Exodus (Exodus—Numbers). ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

Not only did they not walk by faith, but given all the sights evidencing the greatness and goodness of God, they likewise did not walk even by sight! Sad testimony to their stubborn hearts.

**THOUGHT-** Moses found out that God's blessings do not automatically produce grateful hearts. As far as the Israelites were concerned, the glorious past was immediately negated by the discouraging present. In their fears, they forgot their God and His blessings. (Maxwell)

**You did not trust the LORD your God-** **You** refers to the first generation of Israel that was now dead, the parents of those who are now hearing Moses' discourse. Israel steadfastly refused to trust Jehovah in spite of the repeated overwhelming evidence of His power and provision on their behalf. Their unbelief was manifest in their rebellion (Dt 1:26). They even witnessed the [Shekinah glory cloud](#) ([Abiding Presence of God](#)) by day and night, and still refused to trust in God, referred to here as **the LORD your God!** (Dt 1:10, 21, 26, 30, 31, 32). One is reminded of the many miracle of Jesus in Palestine and the tragedy that for all these miracles most of the Jews refused to believe in Him. Their hearts in the first century AD were just as stony hard as their ancestors 1400 years prior. One is reminded of the words of Isaiah 53:1 "who hath believed our report" (Isa 53:1, Jn 12:38, Ro 10:16). The Hebrew word for trust ([aman](#)) is translated in the Septuagint with the rare verb *empisteuo* which means literally to trust in. The irony is that this same rare verb for "trust in" was used centuries later to describe the idol worshipping Ninevites who heard Jonah's preaching and "believed ([aman](#); Lxx = *empisteuo*) in God" and were saved from destruction! (Jonah 3:5)

**Merrill** says that in this context **trust** ([aman](#)) "with the following preposition *bē*, means to "make oneself secure" in the Lord." ([New American Commentary – Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#)) The

As the writer of Hebrews said (see [above](#)) "they were not able to enter because of **UNBELIEF**." (Hebrews 3:19+)

**Guzik** - They were not persuaded of the love of God, and they found it hard to trust a God they did not believe loved them. Christians today also need to be persuaded of the love of God. Many believers are hindered in their walk with God because they are not genuinely persuaded of the love of God for them. They should ask, "What would it take me finally convince me that God really loves me?" We don't wait for God to give us everything we want before we love Him. That is the selfish demand of a short-sighted child, like the child who thinks mommy doesn't love him because he can't have all the candy he wants. God has already given the ultimate demonstration of His love: But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8) The death of Jesus for guilty sinners is the ultimate demonstration of God's love; He can do nothing greater than what He has already done in Jesus. Now we can simply receive His love. ([Deuteronomy](#))

**A B Simpson** - you did not trust in the LORD your God" (1:32). This is the root of all disobedience and sin. The fall of man at first sprang from doubting God. Salvation begins with the recovery of our lost faith, as apostasy always originates in some form of

faithlessness. Let us "see to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God" (Hebrews 3:12).

**Trust (believe)** (0539) [aman](#) Some sources consider the primary root meaning of **aman** to be "to prop" or "to support", a meaning which is literally portrayed in the use in 2Ki 18:16 where **aman** is used to depict the **doorposts**, clearly emphasizing the ideas stability or support. Another picture of the meaning of **aman** is seen in the related (derivative) noun '**emunah** in Ex 17:12 "But Moses' hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were **steady** (**emunah** derived from '**aman**) until the sun set." We see a good picture of aman in the belief of Abraham in Ge 15:6+. The use of **aman** in this passage indicates that Abram did not just give mental assent to God's promise (Ge 15:5), but that he relied on that promise and made a personal commitment. In other words Abram's faith was not only **cognitive** (the mental act of acquiring knowledge) but also **personal** for he believed God's word of promise (Cp the NT "commentary" on this OT use of "aman" -- Hebrews 11:8- = His faith was the root of the fruit of obedience, which is a sign that one's faith is genuine saving faith and not just mental assent! {See [obedience of faith](#) and separate discussion of [faith and obedience](#)} Note the depth of his faith which led to the ultimate act of obedience in Heb 11:17, 18, 19) and he committed his soul to the God Who had revealed Himself. Considering that "**amen**" (truly, it is certain) is derived from "aman", it is as if Abram heard God's promise in Ge 15:5 and said "**Amen**!" Jesus repeatedly used the Hebrew word "**amen**" ("Truly") to express the trustworthiness and abiding certainty of His sayings. Paul's use of Genesis 15:6 in Ro 4:3+, Ro 4:9+, Ro 4:22+ and Galatians 3:6 demonstrates that this Old Testament verse is foundational for our understanding of what it means to "believe" God. Aman is used 5 times in Deuteronomy - Deut. 1:32; Deut. 7:9; Deut. 9:23; Deut. 28:59; Deut. 28:66;

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#### G Campbell Morgan - Deuteronomy 1:32-33

...the Lord your God, Who went before you in the way, to seek you out a place to pitch your tents in.—Deut. 1.32,33

This Book of Deuteronomy is didactic rather than historical. Its actual history covers a very brief period, probably not many days. It consists of a collection of the final discourses of Moses. The first of these (Deut 1.6-4.43) is retrospective. In it, Moses dealt with the three stages of their wanderings—from Horeb to Kadesh-Barnea (Deut 1.6-46); from Kadesh-Barnea to Heshbon 2); and from Heshbon to Beth-peor (3)—and then exhorted them to obedience (Deut 4.1-43). In dealing with the first stage, he reminded them of the Divine call which caused them to leave Horeb, and recalled their rebellion in the matter of the spies. The purpose of the review was that of setting all the facts of their experience in the light of God's government. Their disturbance at Horeb was that of the direct command of God. The way of the wilderness was a terrible one, but they had not been left to grope their way through it alone. In this connection the words quoted above were used, and they are very full of revealing beauty. Through them we learn that in the government of God nothing is haphazard. How often life is a wilderness way! As we journey, there seems no map, no plan, no timetable. The truth is that our God is not only accompanying us on the march ; He is ever going before us, selecting the places of our pausing. Wherever at night we pitch our tents, the place is chosen by God. That is all we need to know. (Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

**Deuteronomy 1:33 Who goes before you on your way, to seek out a place for you to encamp, in fire by night and cloud by day, to show you the way in which you should go.**

- **Who goes:** Ex 13:21 Nu 10:33 Ps 77:20 Eze 20:6
- **in fire:** Ex 13:21-22 Ex 14:19-20,24 Ex 40:34-38 Nu 9:15-22 Nu 10:11-12 Nu 14:14 Ne 9:12 Ps 78:14 105:39 Isa 4:5,6 Zec 2:5
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Exodus 13:21-22+ The LORD was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. 22 He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

Exodus 14:19-20+ The angel of God, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. 20 So it came between the



camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud along with the darkness, yet it gave light at night. Thus the one did not come near the other all night.

Exodus 14:24+ At the morning watch, the LORD looked down on the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud and brought the army of the Egyptians into confusion.

Numbers 10:11-12+ Now in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth of the month, the cloud was lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony; 12 and the sons of Israel set out on their journeys from the wilderness of Sinai. Then the cloud settled down in the wilderness of Paran.

## REMINDER OF GOD'S GRACIOUS GUIDANCE

**Who goes before you on your way, to seek out a place for you to encamp, in fire by night and cloud by day, to show you the way in which you should go** - Jehovah was continually "spying" out the best paths for His people (and He still does that today beloved!) Moses sought to encourage the Israelites reminding them of Jehovah's daily (and nightly) presence and provision of guidance. The [Shekinah glory cloud](#) over the Most Holy Place symbolized God's presence and whenever the cloud moved, Israel had followed the Lord (Nu 10:33-36+). Why would He guide them into a place of defeat? **Perish the thought!** Past faithfulness should have stimulated present trust (and obedience). The fact that it did not speaks to the depth of their unbelief and hardness of their hearts!

**THOUGHT** - Satan loves to make us forget what we should remember (the past victories and miracles of God on our behalf). He also loves to make us remember what we should forget (our past of sin and the self-life). (Guzik [Deuteronomy](#))

**Jack Deere** - Ironically Moses reminded the people that God, by means of the **pillar of fire by night and... cloud by day** (cf. Ex. 13:21) had even acted as a spy for them. The Hebrew word **tûr** (**seek out**, Deut. 1:33), is the same word used in Numbers 13:2-25 of the spies' activity! Moses, in contrast with the people, relied on the Word of God and his experience of God in history, allowing these two realities to interpret his circumstances and control his response to the news of the Anakites. The people's obstinate refusal to be encouraged by God's working for them in the past makes this passage an eloquent testimony to the fickleness of human hearts. A few "experts" (10 of the 12 spies) were able to overturn the facts of God's unmistakable providential care. It is hard to imagine the stupidity of the Israelites' unbelief. Yet people today ought to be warned. The perverse vacillation displayed here is not uniquely Israelite. James needed to warn his Christian readers—who after the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus never had cause to doubt God's love or power—not to approach their God with a vacillating spirit (James 1:5-8)..([Bible Knowledge Commentary](#))

**Utley on goes before you** - God went before the people in a fire by night and cloud by day, which is known as the [Shekinah glory cloud](#)" (e.g., Exod. 13:21–22; 14:19, 24; 19:16–18; 20:21; 24:15, 18; 33:9–10; Lev. 16:2; Num. 9:15–23; 14:14; Ps. 78:14) This cloud symbolizes the presence or transportation of deity and is found throughout the Bible (e.g., 1 Kgs. 8:10, 12; Ezek. 1:4; Dan. 7:13; Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Acts 1:9–11; 1 Thess. 4:17; Rev. 1:7). He is coming on the clouds! ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**Eugene Merrill** - That these phenomena represented the presence of God is clear from Ex 14:24, which notes that "the LORD looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion." This also connects the fire and cloud with the pursuit of holy war. The double theophany continued to lead the way through the desert even after the conclave at Sinai. Thus at the outset of the journey the cloud covered the tabernacle by day and the fire by night. Whenever they remained at rest, the camp remained; but when they rose up and moved on, this was the signal for the people likewise to move (Num 9:15–23). Particularly instructive is the connection between these actions of cloud and fire and the very person of the Lord himself: "At the LORD'S command the Israelites set out, and at his command they encamped" (Num 9:18). ([New American Commentary – Volume 4: Deuteronomy](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:34** "Then the LORD heard the sound of your words, and He was angry and took an oath, saying,

- **took an oath:** De 2:14-15 Nu 14:22-30 32:8-13 Ps 95:11 Eze 20:15 Heb 3:8-11
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Numbers 14:28+ "Say to them, 'As I live (AN OATH),' says the LORD, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing,

so I will surely do to you;

Hebrews 3:8-11+ DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS WHEN THEY PROVOKED ME, AS IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS, 9 WHERE YOUR FATHERS TRIED Me BY TESTING Me, AND SAW MY WORKS FOR FORTY YEARS. 10 "THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THIS GENERATION, AND SAID, 'THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART, AND THEY DID NOT KNOW MY WAYS'; 11 AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, 'THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.'"

Hebrews 3:16-19+ For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? 17 And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19 So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

## HOW TO MAKE A LOVING GOD "LIVID"

**Livid** alliterates nicely but is probably not the best word to describe God's anger, which is never sinful, but always righteous, holy and justified.

**Then the LORD heard the sound of your words-** This speaks of God's [Omniscience](#)! Secret sins on earth are open scandal in Heaven! In Nu 14:28 we read "just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you."

**And He was angry and took an oath ([shaba](#)), saying** - God is not a man, so when He takes an oath, He will not break it. The psalmist records "Therefore I swore in My anger, Truly they shall not enter into My rest." (Ps 95:11) Angry is translated in the Septuagint with the verb [paroxuno](#) (pará = at point of, implying movement toward a point + **oxúno** = sharpen, incite, irritate) meaning literally to sharpen and then figuratively spurred on or provoked to wrath (used in the Septuagint of Dt. 1:34; Dt. 9:7; Dt. 9:8; Dt. 9:18; Dt. 9:19; Dt. 9:22; Dt. 31:20; Dt. 32:16; Dt. 32:19; Dt. 32:41)

**Utley on took an oath** - This same phrase, "took an oath" (BDB 989 KB 1396, Niphal IMPERFECT), was used when God committed Himself to a covenant relationship with Israel. Here He is committing Himself to the covenant consequence for disobedience-cursing. Notice that God's promise to Abraham was to succeeding generations, but the curse was only to one generation, which was the initial evil (i.e., unbelief in YHWH's promise of giving them Canaan) generation of the Exodus. ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**Was angry (07107)(qatsaph)** means a strong emotional outburst of anger, especially when man is the subject of the reaction, the first us describing Pharaoh who "was furious." **Qatsaph** is used to give pointed expression to the relationship between two or more persons, one or both of which can be said to feel anger ('ap), have wrath (hēmā), indignation (ka'as), or express anger ('ebrā) as when there is anger, heat, displeasure held or felt within one because of what another has said or done. It is said eleven times that men were wroth, (e.g., Pharaoh, Moses, Naaman, Philistine princes). 23x **qatsaph** is said that God was wroth, whether against the heathen or against his covenant people. As in the present passage it can refer to God being angry or provoked (Deut. 9:7, 8, 22; Zech. 1:2; 8:14). Jehovah's anger at the "strange fire" offered by [Nadab and Abihu](#) resulted in their death (just as it did for all of the first generation out of Egypt, except for Joshua and Caleb). In Isa 47:6 qatsaph speaks of Yahweh's anger that resulted in Judah's exile to Babylon.

([Complete Biblical Library](#) - Its meaning overlaps with several other synonyms for anger, but examples such as Pharaoh (Gen. 40:2; 41:10) and Moses (Exo. 16:20; Lev. 10:16; Num. 31:14) suggest that it often means an emotion that arises quickly and forcefully, then subsides quickly. Even God's wrath is described as something that only endures for a short time and is replaced by mercy (Isa. 57:16; Zech. 1:15). The Qal stem means "to be angry," "to become angry." Most of the seventeen passages which speak of God becoming angry are descriptions of his wrath at Israel because of their disobedience (e.g., Lev. 10:6) and sin (Num. 16:22; Lam. 5:22). The remaining uses describe human anger in a variety of situations: Pharaoh's anger with his servants (Gen. 40:2; 41:10), Moses' anger with the people (Exo. 16:20) or leaders (Lev. 10:16; Num. 31:14), the anger of the Philistine princes against Achish (1 Sa 29:4), Naaman's irritation with Elisha (2 Ki. 5:11), Elisha's anger with Joash (2 Ki. 13:19), the fury of the leaders of Jerusalem against Jeremiah (Jer. 37:15), the wrath of Ahasuerus against Vashti (Est. 1:12) and the resentment of Ahasuerus' servants against him (Est. 2:21). The Hiphil stem means "to provoke to anger." Each of the five references refers to the time when the nation of Israel provoked God to anger by their stubborn willfulness, ultimately ending in the forty years of wilderness journeying (Deut. 9:7f, 22; Ps. 106:32; Zech. 8:14). The Hithpael stem occurs only in Isa. 8:21, where it describes people under judgment who become so hungry that they fly into a rage and curse the king.

**Qatsaph** 32v - angry(21), became angry(1), became...angry(1), become wrathful(1), enraged(1), furious(3), provoked(1), provoked him to wrath(1), provoked me to wrath(1), provoked the to wrath(2), wrath(1), wrathful(1). Gen. 40:2; Gen. 41:10; Exod. 16:20; Lev. 10:6; Lev. 10:16; Num. 16:22; Num. 31:14; Deut. 1:34; Deut. 9:7; Deut. 9:8; Deut. 9:19; Deut. 9:22; Jos. 22:18; 1 Sam. 29:4; 2 Ki. 5:11; 2 Ki. 13:19; Est. 1:12; Est. 2:21; Ps. 106:32; Eccl. 5:6; Isa. 8:21; Isa. 47:6; Isa. 54:9; Isa. 57:16; Isa. 57:17; Isa. 64:5; Isa. 64:9; Jer. 37:15; Lam. 5:22; Zech. 1:2; Zech. 1:15; Zech. 8:14

Deut 9:19 For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which the LORD **was wrathful (Qatsaph)** against you in order to destroy you, but the LORD listened to me that time also.

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### Seven Times when Moses Was Angry

1. When leaving Pharaoh the last time (Ex. 11:8)
2. When Israel murmured for flesh (Ex. 16:20)
3. When Israel sinned by making the golden calf (Ex. 32:19–22)
4. When Aaron failed concerning the sin offering at the time his sons died (Lev. 10:16)
5. When Israel murmured for flesh the second time (Num. 11:10–15)
6. When Korah rebelled and Dathan and Abiram refused to obey (Num. 16:15)
7. When the army captains disobeyed by not killing all Midianites (Num. 31:14)

**Deuteronomy 1:35 'Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land which I swore to give your fathers,**

- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Numbers 14:28+ "Say to them, 'As I live (AN OATH),' says the LORD, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you; 29 your corpses will fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number **from twenty years old and upward**, who have **grumbled** against Me.

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF UNBELIEF

**Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall see the good land which I swore ([shaba](#)) to give your fathers** (ancestors, forefathers)(cf [Abrahamic Covenant](#)) - For Yahweh this was **the last straw** as we commonly say! "With patience, he had brought them out of Egypt and provided for them along the way, but at every step they had complained and become obstinate." (Merrill) What about the women? Some presume the fact that they are not mentioned in the judgment suggests they were not affected by the divine "death penalty." I cannot find Scripture to support this premise, so it is mentioned only for completeness.

*Disobedience causes us to forfeit the best that God has for us.*

-- John Maxwell

The divine verdict was in and it sentenced the first generation to "exile" from what should have (could have) been their homeland of **milk and honey**. Let us learn from Israel that the cost of stubborn rebellion against God's goodness, mercy and grace can be costly and in some cases have lifelong consequences! In verse 34 Jehovah swore and oath to destroy the **evil generation**, but that did not eliminate the covenant oath He had sworn to the patriarchs to give them the Land. God would keep both of these oaths.

**Utley** - Covenant disobedience results in covenant curses for Israel (cf. Deuteronomy 27–29) and Moses (cf. Deut. 3:26–27). ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**Utley on good land** - "the good land" This is a recurrent phrase (cf. Exod. 3:8; Deut. 1:35; 3:25; 4:21, 22; 8:7, 20; Josh. 23:13). Good denoted (1) God's presence (i.e., God is "good," Ps. 86:5; 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 118:1, 29; 145:9; and also note the parallelism of Amos 5:4, 6, 14, 15) and (2) "a land flowing with milk and honey" (e.g., Exod. 3:8, 17; 13:5; 33:3; Num. 13:27; 14:8; 16:13, 14; Deut. 6:3; 11:9; 26:9, 15; 27:3; 31:20; Josh. 5:6). ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**Fathers** (forefathers) is used 21 times in Deuteronomy - Deut. 1:35; Deut. 4:31; Deut. 4:37; Deut. 6:18; Deut. 6:23; Deut. 7:8; Deut. 7:12; Deut. 7:13; Deut. 8:1; Deut. 8:18; Deut. 10:15; Deut. 10:22; Deut. 11:9; Deut. 11:21; Deut. 13:17; Deut. 19:8; Deut. 26:3; Deut. 26:15; Deut. 28:11; Deut. 31:7; Deut. 31:20. This repetition emphasizes Israel's reception of the covenant promises made to their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob.

**Deuteronomy 1:36 except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and to his sons I will give the land on which he has set foot, because he has followed the LORD fully.'**

- **Caleb:** Nu 13:6,30 26:65 32:12 34:19 Jos 14:6-14 Judges 1:12-15
- **followed.:** Nu 14:24
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Numbers 14:6-10+ **Joshua** the son of Nun and **Caleb** the son of Jephunneh, of those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 7 and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, "The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. 8 "If the LORD is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us—a land which flows with [milk and honey](#). 9 "Only do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them." 10 But all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Then the glory of the LORD appeared in the tent of meeting to all the sons of Israel.

Numbers 14:30+ 'Surely you (ISRAEL) shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.' (NOTE NO MENTION OF MOSES ENTERING -- **GOD KNEW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IN Nu 20** - see Dt 1:37 below)

Joshua 14:8-9, 14 (**CALEB**) Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt with fear; but I followed the LORD my God fully. 9 "So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden will be an inheritance to you and to your children forever, because you have followed the LORD my God fully.' (14:14) Therefore, Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite until this day, because he followed the LORD God of Israel fully.

### THE MERCY OF GOD TO THE FAITHFUL

**Except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and to his sons I will give the land on which he has set foot** (cf Josh 1:3), **because he has followed the LORD fully** (NET = "wholeheartedly followed Me"; ESV = "Wholly followed the LORD.") - **See it** means walk in it, for Moses saw it but was not allowed to walk in it. The crucial phrase is **because he has followed the LORD fully**. The Masoretic Texts says literally, "he was full (of being) after Yahweh." Belief leads to obedience and obedience brings blessing. In Nu 14:24+ Moses recorded "But My servant Caleb (NOTE DESIGNATION AS "MY SERVANT"), because he has had a different spirit (OBEDIENT SPIRIT) and has followed Me fully (FULLY OBEYED), I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it."

*Obedience allows us to receive the best God has for us.*

-- John Maxwell

Don't miss the word **fully** which is the Hebrew word [male](#) meaning to be full (complete, consecrated, dedicated), and is translated in the Septuagint with the verb *proskeimai* (not in NT) which means to be closely attached to, absorbed in, devoted to, a vivid picture of the man Caleb! Nu 14:24+ says "But My servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has **followed Me fully** ([male](#)), I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it." What a contrast Caleb as with most of the nation of Israel after their deliverance from Egypt Moses recording "None of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob; for they **did not follow Me fully** ([male](#)) (Nu 32:11) (Septuagint has *proskeimai* [\[read full definition in Liddell-Scott\]](#) = maintain allegiance to, adhere to [God], to be closely attached to, involved in, absorbed in, devoted to = THIS DESCRIBES CALEB! DOES IT DESCRIBE YOU?) Could it be said of you (or me) that you follow the LORD fully? This is the path of blessing in the Old and New Testaments! Remember the writer of Hebrews who exhort his readers to "not be sluggish, but **imitators of those** who through **faith** and **patience** inherit the **promises**." (Hebrews 6:12+)

**Caleb** - 35v - Num. 13:6; Num. 13:30; Num. 14:6; Num. 14:24; Num. 14:30; Num. 14:38; Num. 26:65; Num. 32:12; Num. 34:19; Deut. 1:36; Jos. 14:6; Jos. 14:13; Jos. 14:14; Jos. 15:13; Jos. 15:14; Jos. 15:16; Jos. 15:17; Jos. 15:18; Jos. 21:12; Jdg. 1:12; Jdg. 1:13; Jdg. 1:14; Jdg. 1:15; Jdg. 1:20; Jdg. 3:9; 1 Sam. 30:14; 1 Chr. 2:18; 1 Chr. 2:19; 1 Chr. 2:42; 1 Chr. 2:46; 1 Chr. 2:48; 1 Chr. 2:49; 1 Chr. 2:50; 1 Chr. 4:15; 1 Chr. 6:56

**Utley on followed me fully - Fully** "means "wholeheartedly" (Piel PERFECT). It refers to one without mixed motives; Caleb loved YHWH with all his heart and followed Him. It is a metaphor of true devotion (e.g., Nu. 14:24; 32:11–12; Josh. 14:8, 9, 14; 1 Ki 11:6). It is similar to the phrase, "with all your heart and with all your soul" (cf. Deut. 6:5; 10:12; 13:3; 30:2; 1 Kgs. 9:4; 11:4). ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**Merrill** - With his whole mind, heart, and soul, Caleb determined to do the will of God. Nothing else mattered to him. This commendation is used only of Caleb and Joshua (Num 14:24; 32:11, 12; Josh 14:8, 9, 14) and of David (1 Kgs 11:6). and his descendants would take ownership of the land he had already claimed by walking over it. Those who step out in faith and claim the victory in the name of the Lord have every right to have hope in him. ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

It is important to note the reiteration of the phrase **I will give the land**, for this indicates clearly that God's covenant with the patriarchs was [immutable](#). When God swears a covenant oath, He keeps it (cf [Faithfulness](#)). This is good news for us in the [New Covenant](#) by grace through faith. So if you think you can do anything to [abrogate](#) God's New Covenant promises to you, than you do not understand the faithfulness of God and the immutability of His covenant promises! You can never lose your salvation dear Arminian! (See [What is Arminianism, and is it biblical? | GotQuestions.org](#))

**J Vernon McGee** - The fact of the matter is that Caleb will lay hold of the land that he wanted. We will find later, in the Book of Joshua, that he was a remarkable man. He walked up and down the land, and he claimed the mountain where the giants lived! "This is what I want," he said, and God gave it to him for an inheritance. By the way, what do you want of God, friend? Are you a parent? Are you a young person starting out in life? What do you want of God? Let me say this: If you think you can sit on the sidelines and get it, you are wrong. There are a great many folk who think they should just sit and pray and pray and pray. I certainly agree that we must pray and live in fellowship with Him, but, my friend, you are going to have to go out there and take it. Did you know that? God said He would give to Caleb the land that he had trodden upon. A great many of us today are not being blessed because we are spending too much time sitting down. That is the wrong place to be if we want the blessing of God. We are to walk. There is a great deal said in the Scriptures about the Christian's walk and very little said about the Christian's sitting down. We need to lay hold of God's promises. Joshua is the man who is to become the leader to succeed Moses. Why was he chosen? Well, he is a man of experience, and he is a man who wholly followed God. He and Caleb brought back the good report because they believed God. Faith was the essential thing. They believed God and they were willing to step out in faith. Friend, you don't believe God by just sitting down and claiming great blessings. You have to step out in faith for Him.

**Guzik**- Significantly, two men could see the exact same sights—the same grapes, the same men, the same land, the same cities—one can come away singing in faith, and the other is filled with a sense of certain doom. Ultimately, faith or unbelief does not spring from circumstances or environment, but from our hearts, which God must change. ([Deuteronomy](#))

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#### QUESTION - [Who is Caleb in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - The story of Caleb, a faithful man of God, begins in the book of Numbers. After being delivered from bondage in Egypt, the Israelites were led by God to the border of the [land of Canaan](#), a land "flowing with milk and honey" that God had promised they would inherit (Exodus 3:8, 17). Moses had chosen twelve men, one from each tribe, to scout the land before entering. Among them was Caleb, representing the tribe of Judah. The twelve men spied out the land for forty days and then came back to Moses. They reported that the land was indeed fruitful but its inhabitants were the mighty descendants of Anak. Terrified by the size and strength of the Canaanites, ten of the spies warned Moses not to enter Canaan (Numbers 13:23–33).

Caleb silenced the murmuring, fearful men by saying, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it" (Numbers 13:30). Caleb took his stand because he followed the Lord wholeheartedly (Joshua 14:8–9). Caleb knew of the promises of God to the Israelites, and, despite the evidence of his own eyes regarding the obstacles, he had faith that God would give them victory over the Canaanites.

Unfortunately, the people of Israel ignored Caleb and listened to the report of the other spies. They were so frightened that they wept all night and even wished they had died at the hands of their slave masters in Egypt (Numbers 14:1–4). They turned on [Caleb and Joshua](#) (the spy from Ephraim) and wanted to stone them on the spot (Numbers 14:6–10). God was exceedingly angry with the people and threatened to destroy them until [Moses interceded](#) for them. God relented, but He decreed that the people would wander in the wilderness until all of that faithless generation had died. But God said that "my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly" and gave him the promise that he would own all the land he had seen as a spy (Numbers 14:11–24).

The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years until all of that generation, except [Joshua](#) and Caleb, died (Numbers 14:29–30). After the forty years of wandering and five more years of war within Canaan, Caleb was 85 years old; yet he was as strong as ever and able to fight the same Anakites that had frightened his countrymen. His confidence was born out of his absolute faith in the promises of God (Joshua 15:13–14).



Caleb's territory in Canaan included "Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron. (Arba was the forefather of Anak.) From Hebron Caleb drove out the three Anakites—Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai, the sons of Anak. From there he marched against the people living in Debir (formerly called Kiriath Sepher)" (Joshua 15:13–15). Othniel, a nephew of Caleb, captured Kiriath Sepher and was given Caleb's daughter Aksah to wed (verses 16–17). Later, Aksah asked her father to include some springs of water as part of her inheritance (verses 18–19), and Caleb gave them to her. Later still, [Othniel](#), Caleb's son-in-law, became Israel's first judge (Judges 3:7–11).

From the accounts of the life of Caleb, we see a faithful man who trusted God to fulfill His promises when others allowed their fears to override their small faith. Even into his later years, Caleb remained steadfast in his faith. God blessed Caleb for his faithfulness and patience, an encouragement to us to believe God. Like Caleb, we should be prepared to follow God in every circumstance, patiently waiting for Him to fulfill His promises and ready to take action when the time is right. [GotQuestions.org](#)

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the story of Joshua and Caleb in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](#)

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#### Mattoon - What is the difference in Caleb?

His focus is upon the power and greatness of God Almighty. Let me ask, "Can you take a stand for God like Caleb? When you are in the minority or when people think you are crazy, can you stand for Christ?" True faith and confidence in the Lord will lead to prompt obedience. There will be no "wondering" if you should do what the Lord commands or trying to make up your mind. You will just "obey." Doubt and disobedience to the Lord...

- denies the promises of God.
- distracts from godly priorities.
- delays or discourages disobedience to the Lord.

The evidence of God's promises is in front of them, but they reject the evidence. Unbelief pays no attention to evidence. It refuses to obey and for this reason, men reject Christ, in spite of the evidence that He is the Son of God.

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**Brian Bell** - Caleb was a man of faith who didn't worry about the size of the problem because he trusted a great God! The question in life is not "How big is the problem?" Or, "How big am I?" But, "How big is my GOD?" :) This is another case where there is a majority report & a minority report. And it was the **minority report** that was right! Remember, "Noah, went in a **minority** & came out a **majority**!" The Majority saw the **excellencies** for the land, but they had seen the **difficulties** and beyond these they had seen nothing. The **Minority** first saw Jehovah, & then excellencies, & finally the difficulties. **The essential difference is the vision of God!** (Obstacles? oh you sure see them, but they become nothing, after seeing God! **ED**: cf "[Turn your eyes upon Jesus](#) Look full, in his wonderful face And the things of earth will grow strangely dim In the light of his glory and grace ). What was the promise in [Nu 13:2](#)? Was Israel a great people? Nope, but they were loved by a great God, who did great things for them, & thereby led them to marvelous achievements.. Do not look at God through circumstances, but at circumstances through God!

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#### Recipe For Victory

The word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. —Hebrews 4:2

Today's Scripture: Numbers 13:1-2,26-33

A visitor was taking a tour of a mill where power was generated by a fast-flowing river that ran close by its walls. All the gears inside, however, were inactive. "How do you make things work?" the visitor inquired. She was told to pull a handle that the guide pointed out. Immediately the wheels turned and the place was alive with motion.

In a similar way, the power of God surges into the heart of those who reach out by faith. Our belief or unbelief determines whether we receive or reject those things that the Lord promises.

For example, when the children of Israel were confronted with the problem of advancing against the Canaanites, most of them were terrified by the strength of the enemy. Caleb, however, was not alarmed by the giant opponents and their walled cities. With a courage born of faith he said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it" (Num. 13:30). The promise of God that Israel was to inherit the land was mixed with faith in his heart, and he did not shrink back from what seemed to be impossible odds.

What difficulties are you facing today? You too can be victorious by trusting in God's promises. By: Henry G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Increase our faith, and clear our vision, Lord;  
Help us to take Thee at Thy simple Word,  
No more with cold distrust to bring Thee grief;  
Lord, we believe! Help Thou our unbelief.  
—Sherwin

Faith is the link that connects our weakness to God's strength.

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**Streams in the Desert** - Deut. 1:36 EVERY hard duty that lies in your path, that you would rather not do, that it will cost you pain and struggle or sore effort to do, has a blessing in it. Not to do it, at whatever cost, is to miss the blessing. Every hard piece of road on which you see the Master's shoe-prints and along which He bids you follow Him, surely leads to blessing, which you cannot get if you cannot go over the steep, thorny path. Every point of battle to which you come, where you must draw your sword and fight the enemy, has a possible victory which will prove a rich blessing to your life. Every heavy load that you are called to lift hides in itself some strange secret of strength.—J. R. Miller.

"I cannot do it alone;  
The waves run fast and high,  
And the fogs close all around,  
The light goes out in the sky;  
But I know that we two  
Shall win in the end,  
Jesus and I.

"Coward and wayward and weak,  
I change with the changing sky;  
Today so eager and bright,  
Tomorrow too weak to try;  
But He never gives in,  
So we two shall win,  
Jesus and I.

"I could not guide it myself,  
My boat on life's wild sea;  
There's One who sits by my side,  
Who pulls and steers with me.  
And I know that we two  
Shall safe enter port,  
Jesus and I."

**Deuteronomy 1:37 "The LORD was angry with me also on your account, saying, 'Not even you shall enter there.**

- De 3:23-26 4:21 Dt 34:4 Nu 20:12 27:13,14 Ps 106:32,33
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Deuteronomy 3:23-26 I also pleaded with the LORD at that time, saying, 24 'O Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand; for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as Yours? 25 'Let me, I pray, cross over and see the fair land that is beyond the Jordan, that good hill country and Lebanon.' 26 "But the LORD was angry with me on your account, and would not listen to me; and the LORD said to me, 'Enough! Speak to Me no more of this matter.

Deuteronomy 34:4 Then the LORD said to him, "This is the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants'; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there."

Numbers 20:1+ Then the sons of Israel, the whole congregation, came to the wilderness of Zin in the first month; and the people stayed at Kadesh. Now Miriam died there and was buried there. 2 There was no water

for the congregation, and they assembled themselves against Moses and Aaron. 3 The people thus contended with Moses and spoke, saying, "If only we had perished when our brothers perished before the LORD! 4 "Why then have you brought the LORD'S assembly into this wilderness, for us and our beasts to die here? 5 "Why have you made us come up from Egypt, to bring us in to this wretched place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, nor is there water to drink." 6 Then Moses and Aaron came in from the presence of the assembly to the doorway of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to them; 7 and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 8 **"Take the rod; and you and your brother Aaron assemble the congregation and speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water. You shall thus bring forth water for them out of the rock and let the congregation and their beasts drink."** 9 So Moses took the rod from before the LORD, just as He had commanded him; 10 and Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, **"Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?"** 11 **Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod;** and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank. 12 But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, **"Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."** 13 Those were the waters of Meribah, because the sons of Israel contended with the LORD, and He proved Himself holy among them.

### MOSES' PERSONAL LAMENT

**The LORD was angry with me also on your account, saying, 'Not even you shall enter there - With me** is first in the Hebrew text for emphasis, so the NET is more accurate "As for me..." (Dt 1:37NET). This is righteous anger! The tragedy is that Moses almost made it into the Promised Land. Moses' unbelief happened at the return to Kadesh after 38 years of wandering (cf. Num 20:1 ff.). Moses is not **"passing the buck"** when he says **on your account**, but simply saying their grumbling spurred him to commit a wilful act of sin. Sin is always our personal responsibility!

The psalmist records this event

Psalms 106:32-33+ They also provoked Him to wrath at the waters of Meribah, So that it went hard with Moses on their account; 33 Because they were rebellious against His Spirit, He spoke rashly with his lips.

**MacArthur** - Moses included it here with Israel's disobedience to the Lord because his disobedience was of the same kind. Moses, like Israel, failed to honor the Word of the Lord and thus, in rebellion for self glory, disobeyed God's clear command and struck the rock rather than speaking to it. Thus, he suffered the same result of God's anger and, like Israel, was not allowed to go into the Land (Nu 20:12). ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

Moses records this divine decree in Numbers 20:12 (Nu 20:12 "But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."" Even Moses' plaintive plea failed to reverse God's judgment (Dt 3:25-26).

Moses is an excellent, albeit tragic illustration of the principle expressed by Jesus in Luke 12:48+

From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.

As a teacher, I also shudder when I read James 3:1+

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

**Angry** (0599)(**anaph**) means to be angry, enraged, or to breathe through the nose (see note on **anaph**). The word derives its meaning from the heavy breathing and snorting typical of anger. **Anaph** is only of God's anger or displeasure with His people: Moses (Dt. 1:37; 4:21); Aaron (Dt. 9:20); Solomon (1 Ki. 11:9); and Israel (Dt. 9:8; 1 Ki. 8:46; 2 Ki. 17:18; Ps. 60:1; Ps. 79:5). Each of these men (and the nation) provoked God's anger. Psalm 2:12, refers to the anger of Messiah.

**Anaph** - 14x in 14v - Deut. 1:37; Deut. 4:21; Deut. 9:8; Deut. 9:20; 1 Ki. 8:46; 1 Ki. 11:9; 2 Ki. 17:18; 2 Chr. 6:36; Ezr. 9:14; Ps. 2:12; Ps. 60:1; Ps. 79:5; Ps. 85:5; Isa. 12:1

**Complete Biblical Library** - The basic meaning of ʾānaph is "to be, feel angry" or "to be displeased." It occurs in two of the seven Hebrew verbal patterns. The prayers and psalms of people are often expressed in the the Qal form (basic verbal pattern) to beseech God to relent his anger (e.g., Ps. 79:5; Ezra 9:14). In the Hithpael

forms (a reflexive or reciprocal pattern of verbs) biblical writers described the attitude the Lord in fact had displayed toward Israel or its leaders (e.g., 1 Ki. 11:9; 2 Ki. 17:18). This Hithpael usage can mean "to show oneself angry." From this verb, the Hebrew words for "nose" are derived as that part of the human countenance where anger is expressed. (Ps. 2:12; 85:5; Isa. 12:1). Usages divide into three contexts. First, there are usages where the Lord's anger toward his covenant people is in view. In the context of the golden calf episode at Mount Sinai, Moses told Israel, "At Horeb you aroused the Lord's wrath, so that he was angry enough to destroy you" (Deut. 9:8). Psalm 60 is a national prayer for God's help after an apparent defeat. Verse 1 abruptly begins the Psalm, "You have rejected us, O God, and burst forth upon us; you have been angry—now restore us!" Solomon's prayer of dedication of the temple anticipates the future disobedience of Israel. He requests of God, "When they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you become angry with them and give them over to the enemy then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause" (1 Ki. 8:46-49 and repeated in 2 Chr. 6:36-39). Ultimately God did allow Israel's enemies to overwhelm the land. 2 Ki. 17:18 records what happened to the northern ten tribes, "So the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence." Second are the contexts where God's anger is stirred against the leaders of his covenant people. Moses, recounting why he would not enter the promised land, says, "Because of you, the Lord became angry with me also and said, 'You will not enter it (the land), either'" (Deut. 1:37; see also Deut. 4:21). Because of his role in the golden calf incident, God expressed his anger to Aaron, but Moses interceded on his behalf, "And the Lord was angry enough with Aaron to destroy him, but at that time I prayed for Aaron too" (Deut. 9:20). Ironically, God became angry at Solomon, the one who had prayed so eloquently on behalf of the people, "The Lord became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel." (1 Ki. 11:9).

**Utley on angry** - The VERB "angry" (BDB 60, KB 72, Hithpael PERFECT) is from the NOUN for "nostril" or "nose." Apparently it referred to (1) the flaring of the nostril as a physical sign of anger or (2) snorting a nasal sound. This term is used consistently for divine anger ([Anthropomorphic Language](#)) (cf. Exod. 32:12; Deut. 1:37; 4:21; 9:8, 20; 2 Kgs. 24:20). Another use of this word in connection to deity is the phrase, "slow to anger," which emphasizes God's patience and longsuffering (e.g., Exod. 34:6; Num. 14:18; Neh. 9:17; Pro. 14:29). ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**On account (1558)(galal)** is masculine noun particle occurs ten times in the Hebrew scriptures, always in the construct state with the preposition **be** ("with, in, by"), and is best translated "because of," "for the sake of," "on account of." Galal apparently is derived from a root meaning to roll, and signifies primarily a turn in events, a circumstance, an occasion or reason. The Hebrew phrase "**be galal**" thus indicates why something is done. Thus "the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house **on account of** Joseph" (Ge. 39:5). "Please say that you are my sister so that it may go well with me **because of** you" (Gen. 12:13) Laban said "I have divined that the LORD has blessed me on your (JACOB) account." (Gen. 30:27).

**Galal** - 10x in 10v account(6), because(3), because\*(1). - Gen. 12:13; Gen. 30:27; Gen. 39:5; Deut. 1:37; Deut. 15:10; Deut. 18:12; 1 Ki. 14:16; Jer. 11:17; Jer. 15:4; Mic. 3:12

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## So Near And Yet So Far

Back in Canada's early days, pioneers were taking shelter in Fort Babine. When supplies were nearly exhausted, Victor Clark and a young guide left the fort and walked to the town of Hazelton to get food.

On their way back to the fort, snow began to fall. Soon the two travelers were chilled to the bone by a stinging wind and were unable to follow the trail in the darkness. Forced to stop, they built a fire and spent a miserable night. Then as light slowly dawned, they saw the fort with its warmth and comfort—only a few hundred yards away from where they had stopped. So near and yet so far!

The Israelites were at the very border of the Promised Land (Numbers 13). Caleb and Joshua, the two courageous spies, had brought back the lush foods of Canaan and encouraged the people to take possession of the land (Nu 13:26,30). But the people doubted and condemned themselves to 40 years of wandering and death in the desert (14:28-30). They too were so near and yet so far away!

Have you heard many times about Jesus' love for you but remain uncommitted to Him? Are you near yet so far away? Choose now to cross over into the "promised land" of salvation found in Jesus. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

## A Prayer

Dear Jesus, I admit that I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness.

I believe that You died and took my punishment.  
I trust You as my Savior and Lord.  
Now is the time to choose the Lord—later may never come.

**Deuteronomy 1:38** Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall enter there; **encourage** him, for he will cause Israel to inherit it.

- **Joshua:** Nu 13:8,16 Nu 14:30,38 Nu 26:65
- **stands:** Ex 17:9-14 24:13 33:11 1Sa 16:22 Pr 22:29
- **encourage him:** De 3:28 Dt 31:7,8,14,23 Nu 27:18-23 Jos 1:1,6-9
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Exodus 24:13+ So Moses arose with **Joshua his servant, and Moses went up to the mountain of God.**

Exodus 33:11+ Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses returned to the camp, **his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.**

Numbers 14:30+ 'Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.

Numbers 14:38+ But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive out of those men who went to spy out the land.

Deuteronomy 3:28+ 'But charge Joshua and encourage him and strengthen him, for he shall go across at the head of this people, and he will give them as an inheritance the land which you will see.'

Deuteronomy 31:7-8+ Then Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance. 8 "The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

Deuteronomy 31:14+ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, the time for you to die is near; call Joshua, and present yourselves at the tent of meeting, that I may commission him." So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the tent of meeting.

Deuteronomy 31:23+ Then He commissioned Joshua the son of Nun, and said, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall bring the sons of Israel into the land which I swore to them, and I will be with you."

### JOSHUA GOD'S CHOICE TO REPLACE MOSES

**Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, he shall enter there-** NET, NLT, NIV = "your assistant." Joshua had been Moses' servant from the time in Exodus (Ex 24:13, Ex 33:11). God's leaders may falter and fall, but God's plan stands. The commissioning of Joshua takes place in Dt 31:14-23+. (Ex 24:13; 33:11; Nu 11:28; cp. for the meaning of the phrase Deut 10:8; 18:7; Da 1:5).

See [Who was Joshua in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org/Who-was-Joshua-in-the-Bible/)

**Utley** - The phrase, "**who stands before you**," is a Hebrew idiom which refers to a leader. Joshua was the right-hand man of Moses and this may be a prophecy of his future leadership role. ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#)) (Septuagint of **stands before** - [paristemi](#) in perfect tense = it describes Joshua's state as placed beside Moses, put at his disposal)

**Encourage him, for he will cause** (enable) **Israel to inherit it** - IT is "the good land" (Dt 1:35) "**Encourage** him, because he will enable Israel to inherit the land." (Dt 1:38NET) Moses is charged to not have a pity-party but press on in the role God had given him as Israel's leader. Moses obeyed and shortly before he died he issued the command to **be strong** to all of Israel (Dt 31:6) and then to **Joshua** (Dt 31:7). **Encourage** is the Hebrew verb [chazaq](#) and means to encourage one to be strong and is translated in the Septuagint in this passage with the verb [katischuo](#) (in [aorist imperative](#)) which means to be strong against an enemy and thus to prevail over them, vanquishing them!



**THOUGHT** - Note well that ALL men need encouragement, even those we categorize as great like Joshua. Is there some spiritual leader/pastor/teacher you need to encourage today? Just do it! (See Spurgeon's sermon - [Deuteronomy 1:38 Encourage Your Minister](#))

**Pulpit Commentary** - In Dt 1:8 and Dt 1:21, the land is spoken of as to be **possessed** by the Israelites; here it is spoken of as to be **inherited** by them. The former has reference to their having to wrest the land by force from the Canaanites (יָרַשׁ, to occupy by force, to dispossess; cf. Dt 2:12, 21, 22, where the verb is rendered by "**destroyed**"); the latter (**inherited**) has reference to their receiving the land as a heritage (נַחֲלָה) from God, who, when he divided to the nations their inheritance, assigned Canaan to the children of Israel (Dt 32:8). "Joshua the executor of the inheritance" (Schroeder). ([Deuteronomy 1 Exposition](#))

**Guzik** links Joshua with Jesus - Moses was the great law giver, and represented relationship with God through the Law. This could give a person a wilderness kind of relationship with God, but could never bring them into the Promised Land kind of relationship with God. Only Joshua could do that – and the Hebrew name Joshua exactly corresponds to the name Jesus. Only Jesus can bring us into a Promised Land relationship with God. ([Deuteronomy](#))

**Encourage** (strengthen) ([02388](#)) **chazaq** conveys the basic meaning of to be or become strong, to make strong or strengthen. Used in the charge "**Be strong** and courageous" (see uses below).

Deuteronomy 3:28 'But charge Joshua and **encourage** him and strengthen him, for he shall go across at the head of this people, and he will give them as an inheritance the land which you will see.'

Deuteronomy 11:8 "You shall therefore keep every commandment which I am commanding you today, so that you **may be strong** and go in and possess the land into which you are about to cross to possess it; (NOTE STRENGTH IS LINKED TO OBEDIENCE)

Deuteronomy 31:6 (**MOSES ADDRESSING ALL ISRAEL**) "**Be strong** and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you."

Deuteronomy 31:7 Then **Moses called to Joshua** and said to him in the sight of all Israel, **Be strong** and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance.

Deuteronomy 31:23 Then **He commissioned Joshua** the son of Nun, and said, "**Be strong** and courageous, for you shall bring the sons of Israel into the land which I swore to them, and I will be with you."

Joshua 1:6 (JEHOVAH TO JOSHUA) "**Be strong** and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

Joshua 1:7 (JEHOVAH TO JOSHUA) "Only **Be strong** and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9 (JEHOVAH TO JOSHUA) "Have I not commanded you? **Be strong** and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

Joshua 1:18 (JEHOVAH TO JOSHUA) "Anyone who rebels against your command and does not obey your words in all that you command him, shall be put to death; only **Be strong** and courageous."

Joshua 10:25 Joshua then said to them, "Do not fear or be dismayed! **Be strong** and courageous, for thus the LORD will do to all your enemies with whom you fight."

Joshua 23:6 "**Be very firm**, then, to keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, so that you may not turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left,

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**Deuteronomy 1:38 (Morning and Evening) - Spurgeon** - God employs his people to encourage one another. He did not say to an angel, "Gabriel, my servant Joshua is about to lead my people into Canaan—go, encourage him." God never works needless miracles; if his purposes can be accomplished by ordinary means, he will not use miraculous agency. Gabriel would not have been half so well fitted for the work as Moses. A brother's sympathy is more precious than an angel's embassy. The angel, swift of wing, had better known the Master's bidding than the people's temper. An angel had never experienced the hardness of the road, nor seen the fiery serpents, nor had he led the stiff-necked multitude in the wilderness as Moses had done. We should be glad that God

usually works for man by man. It forms a bond of brotherhood, and being mutually dependent on one another, we are fused more completely into one family. Brethren, take the text as God's message to you. Labour to help others, and especially strive to encourage them. Talk cheerily to the young and anxious enquirer, lovingly try to remove stumblingblocks out of his way. When you find a spark of grace in the heart, kneel down and blow it into a flame. Leave the young believer to discover the roughness of the road by degrees, but tell him of the strength which dwells in God, of the sureness of the promise, and of the charms of communion with Christ. Aim to comfort the sorrowful, and to animate the desponding. Speak a word in season to him that is weary, and encourage those who are fearful to go on their way with gladness. God encourages you by his promises; Christ encourages you as he points to the heaven he has won for you, and the spirit encourages you as he works in you to will and to do of his own will and pleasure. Imitate divine wisdom, and encourage others, according to the word of this evening.

**Deuteronomy 1:39 'Moreover, your little ones who you said would become a prey, and your sons, who this day have no knowledge of good or evil, shall enter there, and I will give it to them and they shall possess it.'**

- **your little:** Nu 14:3,31
- **who this day have no knowledge:** Isa 7:15,16 Jon 4:11 Ro 9:11 Eph 2:3
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **GOD'S GRACIOUS PROVISION FOR THEIR OFFSPRING**

**Moreover, your little ones** (Hebrew = [taph](#); Lxx = [paidion](#)) **who you said would become a prey, and your sons, who this day have no knowledge of good or evil, shall enter there, and I will give it to them and they shall possess it** - Their outrageous claim that their children would **become a prey** was absurd, for to the contrary they became the [protectorate](#) of God Himself so that they might enter the land, a clear "manifestation of God's covenant mercy." (Kline) This is the second generation who are now hearing God's prophetic promise that they would enter and possess the Land. God is the God of the second chance (and for that are we not all eternally grateful!). Israel's sin of unbelief at Kadesh Barnea did not thwart the sovereign God's plan to fulfill His covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The sad irony is that the unbelieving Israelites had actually used their **little ones** (Hebrew = [taph](#); Lxx = [paidion](#)) as a poor excuse as the reason they could not enter the Promised Land - "Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our **little ones** will become plunder; would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" (Nu 14:3+).

**THOUGHT-** Be wary of making weak excuses for disobedience to God! Weak (in faith) people make weak excuses! There is never an excuse for disobeying God!

**John Maxwell** - God can turn a victim into a victor! The parents had used their children as an excuse to rebel against the Lord's command. It is ironic that the little ones, who were weak, would be able to conquer and possess the land, while those who were strong would not.

The phrase **who this day have no knowledge of good or evil** speaks to the concept of the **age of accountability** of children (see discussion below). (See Isaiah 7:16).

As **Spurgeon** said "Anything, in fact, will serve as an excuse, when the heart is bent on compromise."

**Guzik** - It is sobering to consider how easily, how quickly, and how completely, God sees through our excuses. We often feel confident in our excuses, because other people can't really challenge them – but God sees right through them.

**NET Note - Do not know good from bad.** This is a figure of speech called a merism (suggesting a whole by referring to its extreme opposites). Other examples are the tree of "the knowledge of good and evil" (Gen 2:9), the boy who knows enough "to reject the wrong and choose the right" (Isa 7:16; 8:4), and those who "cannot tell their right hand from their left" (Jonah 4:11). A young child is characterized by lack of knowledge. ([Deuteronomy 1](#))

**Pulpit Commentary** - to know good and evil came to mean to be intelligent, and not to know good and evil to be unintelligent, as is a babe. The children here referred to knew nothing, and consequently could not be held as morally responsible; comp. Isaiah 7:15.

**Little ones** ([02945](#))([taph](#) from [taphaph](#) = to trip, take small quick steps) masculine singular noun meaning child, little one, children beginning to walk Emphasis seems to be on the younger ages; thus, the KJV rendering of "little ones" is frequently given. It is distinguished from young men, virgins (Ezek. 9:6), and sons (2 Chr. 20:13, "children"). It is often used in the formulaic pattern "men, women, and children" (Deut. 2:34; 3:6;

31:12; Jer. 40:7; 43:6), meaning everyone.

**Complete Biblical Library** - The Ethiopian noun, taff, means "infant," and the Arabic verb, tff, means "to trip." It has been suggested that taph refers to those who "trip along," "leap" or "dance." Children were a hindrance to travel on foot. At times, the noun appears in a broader context, denoting all who hinder movement (including the aged). Scholars suggest this nuance occurs in Deut. 2:34 and Jer. 40:7. This noun is also used to designate women who have never had sexual relations. After defeating the Midianites, Moses commanded the people of Israel to kill all the Midianite male children and all the women who had slept with a man. However, every "girl" who was a virgin was to be spared (Num. 31:17f). Often in the OT, "men," "women" and "children" are used to designate the entire population. The Israelites took the cities of Og and destroyed the entire population, all the men, women and children (Deut. 3:6).

**Vine** - Basically this word signifies those members of a nomadic tribe who are not able to march or who can only march to a limited extent. The word implies the "weaker ones." Thus we read of the men and the *ṭapīm*, or the men and those who were unable to move quickly over long stretches (Ge 43:8). This nuance is clearer in Ge 50:7-8. They left the women and the aged to take care of the beasts and babies. These verses certainly make it clear that only men went along. ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words](#))

**Taph** - 42v - children(11), girls\*(1), infants(1), little children(2), little ones(27). Gen. 34:29; Gen. 43:8; Gen. 45:19; Gen. 46:5; Gen. 47:12; Gen. 47:24; Gen. 50:8; Gen. 50:21; Exod. 10:10; Exod. 10:24; Exod. 12:37; Num. 14:3; Num. 14:31; Num. 16:27; Num. 31:9; Num. 31:17; Num. 31:18; Num. 32:16; Num. 32:17; Num. 32:24; Num. 32:26; Deut. 1:39; Deut. 2:34; Deut. 3:6; Deut. 3:19; Deut. 20:14; Deut. 29:11; Deut. 31:12; Jos. 1:14; Jos. 8:35; Jdg. 18:21; Jdg. 21:10; 2 Sam. 15:22; 2 Chr. 20:13; 2 Chr. 31:18; Ezr. 8:21; Est. 3:13; Est. 8:11; Jer. 40:7; Jer. 41:16; Jer. 43:6; Ezek. 9:6

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#### Question - [Where do I find the age of accountability in the Bible?](#)

**ANSWER** - The concept of the "age of accountability" is that children are not held accountable by God for their sins until they reach a certain age, and that if a child dies before reaching the "age of accountability," that child will, by the grace and mercy of God, be granted entrance into heaven. Is the concept of an age of accountability biblical? Is there such a thing as an "age of innocence"?

Frequently lost in the discussion regarding the age of accountability is the fact that children, no matter how young, are not "innocent" in the sense of being sinless. The Bible tells us that, even if an infant or child has not committed personal sin, all people, including infants and children, are guilty before God because of [inherited](#) and [imputed sin](#). Inherited sin is that which is passed on from our parents. In Psalm 51:5, David wrote, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." David recognized that even at conception he was a sinner. The very sad fact that infants sometimes die demonstrates that even infants are impacted by Adam's sin, since physical and spiritual death were the results of Adam's original sin.

Each person, infant or adult, stands guilty before God; each person has offended the holiness of God. The only way God can be just and at the same time declare a person righteous is for that person to have received forgiveness by faith in Christ. Christ is the only way. John 14:6 records what Jesus said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, except through Me." Also, Peter states in Acts 4:12, "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." Salvation is an individual choice.

What about babies and young children who never attain the ability to make this individual choice? The **age of accountability** is the concept that those who die before reaching the **age of accountability** are automatically saved by God's grace and mercy. The **age of accountability** is the belief that God saves all those who die never having possessed the ability to make a decision for or against Christ. One verse that may speak to this issue is Romans 1:20, "Since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse." According to this, mankind's guilt before God is based, in part, on the fact that people reject what they can "clearly see" of God's existence, eternality, and power. This leads to the question of children who have no faculty for "clearly seeing" or reasoning about God—wouldn't their natural incapacity to observe and reason provide them with an excuse?

Thirteen is the most common age suggested for the **age of accountability**, based on the [Jewish custom](#) that a child becomes an adult at the age of 13. However, the Bible gives no direct support to the age of 13 always being the **age of accountability**. It likely varies from child to child. A child has passed the **age of accountability** once he or she is capable of making a faith decision for or against Christ. Charles Spurgeon's opinion was that "a child of five can as truly be saved and regenerated as an adult."

With the above in mind, also consider this: Christ's death is presented as sufficient for all of mankind. 1 John 2:2 says Jesus is "the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world." This verse is clear that Jesus' death was

sufficient for all sins, not just the sins of those who specifically have come to Him in faith. The fact that Christ's death was sufficient for all sin would allow the possibility of God's applying that payment to those who were never capable of believing.

Some see a link between the **age of accountability** and the covenant relationship between the nation of Israel and the LORD where no requirement was imposed on a male child to be included in the covenant other than circumcision, which was performed on the eighth day after his birth (Exodus 12:48–50; Leviticus 12:3).

The question arises, "Does the inclusive nature of the Old Covenant apply to the church?" On the day of Pentecost, Peter said, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself" (Acts 2:38–39, NAS). The word *children* here (*teknon* in Greek) means "child, daughter, son." Acts 2:39 indicates that forgiveness of sins is available to one and all (cf. Acts 1:8), including future generations. It does not teach family or [household salvation](#). The children of those who repented were also required to repent.

The one passage that seems to identify with this topic more than any other is 2 Samuel 12:21–23. The context of these verses is that King David committed adultery with Bathsheba, with a resulting pregnancy. The prophet Nathan was sent by the Lord to inform David that, because of his sin, the Lord would take the child in death. David responded to this by grieving and praying for the child. But once the child was taken, David's mourning ended. David's servants were surprised to hear this. They said to King David, "What is this thing that you have done? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept; but when the child died, you arose and ate food." David's response was, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who knows, the LORD may be gracious to me, that the child may live.' But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." David's response indicates that those who cannot believe are safe in the Lord. David said that he could go to the child but could not bring the child back to him. Also, and just as important, David seemed to be comforted by this knowledge. In other words, David seemed to be saying that he would see his baby son (in heaven), though he could not bring him back.

Although it is possible that God applies Christ's payment for sin to those who cannot believe, the Bible does not specifically say that He does this. Therefore, this is a subject about which we should not be adamant or dogmatic. God's applying Christ's death to those who cannot believe would seem consistent with His love and mercy. It is our position that God applies Christ's payment for sin to babies and those who are mentally handicapped, since they are not mentally capable of understanding their sinful state and their need for the Savior, but again we cannot be dogmatic. Of this we are certain: God is loving, holy, merciful, just, and gracious. Whatever God does is always right and good, and He loves children even more than we do. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**Deuteronomy 1:40 'But as for you, **turn around** and **set out** for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea.'**

- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Numbers 14:25+ "Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites live in the valleys; **turn tomorrow and set out to the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea.**"

**SINCE YOU WON'T GO IN  
GO BACK!**

**But as for you, **turn around** and **set out** for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea**(See Utley's topic - [The Red Sea](#)) - You refers to the first generation - Moses is still giving the second generation an important history lesson. Note the two commands are identical to those in Numbers 14:25+. God said it was time for the rebels to **"go south!"** Here in a sense God gives them their wishes and so they wandered for the next 38 years and all ended up as corpses in the wilderness! They did not choose to believe His promises, so God sends them in the opposite direction.

**THOUGHT** - Sin is costly and will take you backwards, not forwards, in your spiritual growth!

**NET Note on you** - The Hebrew pronoun is plural, as are the following verbs, indicating that Moses and the people are addressed ([Deuteronomy 1](#))

**Merrill** points out that "The **sea** referred to here (yam-sup lit., "Reed Sea") is not the one crossed by Israel in the Exodus but the eastern branch of that sea now called the Gulf of Eilat or the Gulf of Aqaba." ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

**NET Note on the the Red Sea** - "Heb "the Reed Sea." "Reed" is a better translation of the Hebrew סוף (suf), traditionally rendered

“red.” The name “Red Sea” is based on the LXX which referred to it as *ερυθρας θαλάσσης* (*eruthras thalassēs*, “red sea”). Nevertheless, because the body of water in question is known in modern times as the Red Sea, this term was used in the translation. The part of the Red Sea in view here is not the one crossed in the exodus but its eastern arm, now known as the Gulf of Eilat or Gulf of Aqaba. ([Deuteronomy 1](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:41** "Then you said to me, 'We have sinned against the LORD; we will indeed go up and fight, just as the LORD our God commanded us.' And every man of you girded on his weapons of war, and regarded it as easy to go up into the hill country.

- **We have sinned:** Nu 14:39-45 Nu 22:34 Pr 19:3
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Numbers 14:39+ When Moses spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, **the people mourned greatly**. 40 In the morning, however, they rose up early and went up to the ridge of the hill country, saying, “Here we are; **we have indeed sinned**, but we will go up to the place which the LORD has promised.” 41 But Moses said, “Why then are you transgressing the commandment of the LORD, when it will not succeed? 42 “Do not go up, or you will be struck down before your enemies, for the LORD is not among you. 43 “For the Amalekites and the Canaanites will be there in front of you, and you will fall by the sword, inasmuch as you have turned back from following the LORD. And the LORD will not be with you.” 44 But they went up heedlessly to the ridge of the hill country; neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses left the camp. 45 Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down, and struck them and beat them down as far as Hormah.

Proverbs 19:3 The foolishness of man ruins his way, And his heart rages against the LORD.

## CONFESSION TOO LATE TO REVERSE THE CONSEQUENCES

**Then** - Marks sequence in a series of events.

**You** (first generation even though he is addressing second generation) **said to me, 'We have sinned against the LORD** - Hollow, self-serving confession, not true brokenness. Regret without repentance. The fruit of repentance is a change of behavior. **Merrill** says "they donned a cloak of hypocritical repentance." (cf Nu 14:40+) They were not sorry for their sin, but for the consequences of their sin! Had Israel stopped with this confession it (and it had been genuine) it would have been a good thing. But their subsequent actions showed their confession to be a [sham](#). They foolishly thought they could escape God's righteous judgment (and/or consequences) against them! They had a superficial "change of heart" but went forth in their flesh not in faith (for if they had had faith they would have obeyed Dt 1:42). Of the two choices, either return to the wilderness or enter the Promised Land, they now favored the latter, but it was too late! They were using their human reason, not faith and in so doing proved their heart was still rebellious. Now they would disobey the command to return the wilderness, following one act of rebellion with another!

**John Maxwell** - They still were filled with unbelief. They disbelieved God's threats. And they still were filled with self-will. They did not ask, "Will God permit us?" but arrogantly exclaimed, "We will go up and fight."

**THOUGHT** - Believers must always be careful not to fall into this trap. Apparent obedience to the Word of God may be the result of choosing the path which seems best for us but is lacking in faith. Such a choice is founded on what is our desire and not on what is His command. A pathway of feigned obedience to the Lord that is pursued in the power of the flesh will always end in disaster. ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**We will indeed go up and fight, just as the LORD our God commanded us** - As a general rule arrogant men who are confident in themselves are destined ultimately for destruction and defeat as happened to these men. This action by Israel is an illustration of the principle of delayed **obedience** which is direct **disobedience**!

**John Maxwell** - The test of obedience is a willingness to do what God requires at the time He requires it and not when it is convenient for us. A distraught pilot, experiencing trouble landing his plane, listened as the control tower radioed instructions. "But there is a pole there," the pilot objected. The answer came back, "You take care of the instructions and we'll take care of the obstructions." What good advice for the Israelites. They were allowing the obstructions to bog them down.



**J Vernon McGee** - After the children of Israel refuse to go into the land at Kadesh-barnea, they face a terrible dilemma. They face the wilderness if they turn back -- remember that Moses called it "that great and terrible wilderness." Realizing they have sinned, and realizing they face the wilderness if they turn back, they decide to go into the Promised Land after all.

**And every man of you girded on his weapons of war and regarded it as easy to go up into the hill country-** When you are **disobedient**, you are often also **deceived** as Israel was to think now it would be **EASY to go up into the hill country!** These are the same ones who moments before were in utter dread of going into the hill country **WITH** the Lord as their victorious Warrior. Now without the Lord, they foolishly think they can conquer the Amorites! Lord keep us from similar self-deception!

**Grant** - They now considered, however, that they could triumph without the Lord. They had not learned the lesson voiced in the words of Moses after the people worshipped the golden calf: "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (Ex 33:15). It would be better not to go than to go alone! The presence of the Lord was what separated Israel from all other nations. Without Him they were powerless. The flesh may refuse to acknowledge this and human pride may rebel against it, but disaster can only be the outcome. ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

Israel had a superficial, fleshly sorrow much like what Paul described in 2 Cor 7:9-10

"I now rejoice, not that you were **made sorrowful**, but that you were **made sorrowful** to the point of repentance; for you were **made sorrowful** according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. 10 For the **sorrow** that is according to the will of God produces a **repentance without regret**, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world (WHICH IS THE SORROW OF ISRAEL) produces death (WHICH OCCURRED NOT ONLY IN THEIR WILLFUL DISOBEDIENCE TO GO INTO THE HILL COUNTRY, BUT SUBSEQUENTLY OVER THE NEXT 40 YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS)..

**Deuteronomy 1:42** "And the LORD said to me, **Say** to them, "Do not go up nor fight, for I am not among you; otherwise you will be defeated before your enemies."

- **Do not go up nor fight**; Nu 14:41-42
- for I am not: Lev 26:17 Jos 7:8-13 1Sa 4:2,10 Isa 30:17 59:1,2 Ho 9:12
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Numbers 14:41-43+ But Moses said, "Why then are you transgressing the commandment of the LORD, when it will not succeed? 42 "Do not go up, or you will be struck down before your enemies, for the LORD is not among you. 43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites will be there in front of you, and **you will fall by the sword**, inasmuch as you have turned back from following the LORD. And **the LORD will not be with you**" 44 But they went up **heedlessly** to the ridge of the hill country; **neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD nor Moses left the camp.**

### JEHOVAH'S WARNING WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY CLOSED!

A [window of opportunity](#) describes a brief period of time when an opportunity is favorable but must be seized lest it passes by. God had slammed shut the door of opportunity to enter the Promised Land!

**And the LORD said to me, 'Say to them, "Do not go up nor fight, for I am not among you; otherwise you will be defeated before your enemies** - Here Moses functions as a God's mouthpiece as a forth-telling prophet (warning them) and a fore-telling prophet, prophesying that they be defeated! God gave them a crystal clear warning and they still disobeyed. This substantiates that their "confession" of sin in Dt 1:42 was superficial at best and overt pretense at worst. God gives a clear prophecy warning of their being totally **defeated** (Heb = [nagaph](#); Lxx = [suntribo](#) = shattered, smashed, crushed as God will do to Satan - Ro 16:20+) **I am not going with you** is explained in Nu 14:44 as **the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD** not going with the rebels (see role of the ark cf. Josh 3:3; 6:4, 6; 1 Sam 4:3-19; Ps 132:8).

The key to victory was not their military strength, but the presence of YHWH

-- Bob Utley

**THOUGHT** - And the key to any spiritual victory in our incessant war against the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and



the [devil](#) is the presence and power of the Lord. Specifically in the NT it is especially the power of the Spirit, as in Romans 8:13+ "if by the Spirit (GOD'S PROVISION) you are (present tense = continually) putting to death (OUR PRACTICE) the deeds of the body, you will live." **Lesson?** DO NOT ATTEMPT to take on your mortal enemies with the arm of flesh but in reliance on the arm of the Lord! See "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)" (100/100)

**The LORD (spoke) said to me** - 16x in Deuteronomy - Deut. 1:41; Deut. 1:42; (spoke - Dt 2:1-2, 17) Deut. 2:9; Deut. 2:31; Deut. 3:2; Deut. 3:26; Deut. 4:10; Deut. 5:28; Deut. 9:12; Deut. 10:1; Deut. 10:11; Deut. 18:17; Deut. 31:2;

**Merrill** - The conquest would only come as the result of holy war (or Yahweh war), as carried out by God's direction (see Dt 2:26-37). In holy war, the priests would accompany the troops bearing the symbol of God's presence, the Ark of the Covenant (Dt 20:3-4; Josh 6:1-7). Yahweh's refusal to go left them on their own, for it was now carnal conflict and not holy war. ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#))

**Grant** - This should have caused them to reconsider their purpose, but so rebellious were they that they openly displayed the fact that their confidence was in their own strength and not in the Lord. Here was the final folly and the result was total defeat. For Israel this was the first time that they had tasted the bitterness of such failure. The Amalekites had previously fallen before them (Ex 17:8-16), but there was no Moses interceding for them now. ([What the Bible Teaches](#))

**Defeated** (struck down, smitten) ([05062](#)) **nagaph** means to give a blow, usually from God and either fatal or disastrous (Ex 8:2, Passover - Ex 12:23, 27, smiting Israel after making a golden calf). Prophecy to Israel she would be struck down because of her disobedience (Lev 26:17). Moses warning Israel would be struck down if they went against their enemies after refusing to go into the promised land (Nu 14:42). Lord causes defeat of Israel's enemies if they obey (Dt 28:7) but defeat (striking down) of Israel if the disobey (Dt 28:25).

**Deuteronomy 1:43** "So I spoke to you, but you would not listen. Instead you rebelled against the command of the LORD, and acted presumptuously and went up into the hill country.

- **rebelled:** Isa 63:10 Ac 7:51 Ro 8:7,8
- **presumptuously** Nu 14:44
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passage:

Acts 7:51+ (STEPHEN'S SERMON) "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart (UNBELIEVERS) and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did.

## ISRAEL'S STUBBORN RESISTANCE AND REBELLION

**So I spoke to you, but you would** (absolutely would) **not listen** (obey). **Instead you rebelled** ([marah](#) - used in Dt 1:26+; Lxx = [apeitheo](#) = disbelieved = disobeyed) **against the command of the LORD, and acted presumptuously and went up into the hill country** - They acted as if God's presence meant nothing, which was the height of arrogance (and stupidity) given the manifold times He had delivered them from [desperate straits](#). But the fleshly mind quick forgets the goodness of God! Numbers 14:44+ records "they went up heedlessly (arrogantly, defiantly) to the ridge of the hill country; neither the ark of the covenant of the LORD (symbolizing His presence) nor Moses left the camp."

**THOUGHT**- This verse also speaks to Israel's foolish pride to think for a moment they could win a victory without Jehovah's enabling power! Beloved, that same principle is true in our life as we wage war against the the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#). We are presumptuous and arrogant to think we can defeat these three strong enemies in reliance solely on our own power and resolve! We **daily** need to recall Paul's words in Romans 8:13+ "if by the Spirit (HIS POWER) you (OUR RESPONSIBILITY) are putting to death (present tense - continually) the deeds of the body, you will live." See the "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)" (100/100)

**Merril** quips that "True to human nature, when God forbade Israel to undertake the conquest because of their previous refusal to do so, they decided that that was precisely what they would do. ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary](#)) (**ED**: Just like my children when they were young. Tell them no you cannot have it what did they do? They wanted it! This is unredeemed godless flesh.)

**Presumptuously** (acted arrogantly)([02102](#)) **zud** means to boil up, seethe, act proudly or presumptuously or rebelliously. Figuratively be insolent. Egyptians's arrogant, proud treatment of the Israelites (Ex. 18:11; Neh 9:10) Israel's disrespect and presumptuous actions toward God's commands are described using the word (Deut. 1:43; 17:13; Neh. 9:16).

**J Vernon McGee** - I think there is a very fine distinction between **faith** and **presumption**. In the course of my ministry, I have counseled with many people. One man told me, "You know, Brother McGee, I believed God and I thought He would bless my business. I went into business believing He would bless me, but He didn't. In fact, I went bankrupt." Well, friend, was it faith in God or was it presumption? When we got down to the nitty-gritty, I learned that this man had heard another business man speak at a banquet. His message had been that he had taken as his motto, "God is my partner," and he had been very successful in business. He told about how he had taken God into partnership with him, and God had blessed and prospered him. Obviously, God led that man; I'm confident of that. However, I believe that my friend went home and presumptuously said, "Well, if God will make me prosperous, I'll take Him as my partner in business." God didn't lead him, you see. Believe me, friends, there is a difference between faith and presumption.

**Utley** - Notice the parallel descriptions of Israel:

1. "You would not listen"—BDB 1033, KB 1570, Qal PERFECT
2. "You rebelled against the command"—BDB 598, KB 632, Hiphil IMPERFECT
3. "Acted presumptuously"—BDB 267, KB 268, Hiphil IMPERFECT

If Israel would have listened to YHWH earlier and done this very thing they would have been successful, but by doing it now it shows their continual self-asserting waywardness! This context clearly shows that obedience is integrally related to His covenant promises, presence, and power! ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:44** "The Amorites who lived in that hill country came out against you and chased you as bees do, and crushed you from Seir to Hormah.

- **chased you**: De 28:25 32:30 Ps 118:12 Isa 7:18
- **Hormah**: Nu 14:45 21:3
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

bee

[A Swarm of Bees](#)

## MOSES SUMMARIZES ISRAEL'S DEFEAT DUE TO DISOBEDIENCE

The **Amorites** who lived in that hill country came out against (confronted) you and chased you as (like a swarm of) **bees do, and crushed you** ([struck you down](#), beat you down, routed you) from **Seir** (Edom) to **Hormah** (cf Ex. 23:28; Ps. 118:12; Is. 7:18) - The prophecy was fulfilled! What a picture. One can envision the frightened Israelites running as from a swarm of angry bees for their lives only to be caught and crushed! Interestingly the Hebrew word for **bee** is [deborah](#).

**Related Resource:**

- Special Topic: [The Pre-Israelite Inhabitants of Palestine](#) - Bob Utley

**Chased you as bees** presents a vivid metaphorical picture - When bees are provoked or disturbed, the whole swarm attack and pursue whatever annoys them, with great courage and fury, and sometimes are a most formidable enemy. They were so troublesome in some districts of Crete, that, according to Pliny, the inhabitants were actually compelled to forsake their homes. Alian reports, that some places in Scythia were formerly inaccessible on account of the numerous swarms of bees with which they were infested. Mr. Park relates, that some of his associates imprudently attempted to rob a numerous hive which they found in their way. The exasperated little animals rushed out to defend their property, and attacked them with so much fury, that they quickly compelled the whole company of men, horses, and asses, to scamper off in all directions, The horses were never recovered, and a number of the asses were so severely stung, that they died the next day.

**Merrill** explains that "The idea is that Israel penetrated the lower Judean hills somewhere east of Hormah and was defeated in an area stretching from Hormah in the west to Seir (= Edom) in the east, a distance of about fifty miles. ([New American Commentary –](#)

**Seir** (Edom) in Deuteronomy - Deut. 1:2; Deut. 1:44; Deut. 2:1; Deut. 2:4; Deut. 2:5; Deut. 2:8; Deut. 2:12; Deut. 2:22; Deut. 2:29; Deut. 33:2;

**Hormah** (Derived from **haram** = ban, exterminate) - Place name meaning, "split rock" or "**cursed for destruction**." City marking the limit of the Canaanite rout of the Israelites after the failed Israelite attempt to invade Canaan that followed the report of the twelve spies (Numbers 14:45). Though the exact location of Hormah is not known, it was in the territory assigned to the tribe of Simeon (Joshua 19:4). The site controlled the east-west road in the Beersheba Valley and the north-south road to Hebron. Israel gained brief victory there (Numbers 21:3) after their earlier defeat (Numbers 14:45; compare Deuteronomy 1:44). The list of kings Joshua defeated includes Hormah (Joshua 12:14); the battle description says Judah and Simeon combined to take Hormah after Joshua's death (Judges 1:1, Judges 1:1, 1:17), the city earlier being called Zephath

**Utlei - Hormah** means "place of the ban." The term (BDB 356) means "devoted to destruction," which reflects Num. 21:3. It was originally called Zephath (cf. Jdgs. 1:17). After the Israelites destroyed it, they renamed it devoted/destroyed to/for YHWH (like Jericho, Joshua 6–7). It was located in the tribal allocation of Simeon, northeast of Beersheba. ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**Crushed** (beat down, hammer, broke, shattered) ([03807](#)) **kathath** means to beat, crush by beating and is used to describe the destruction of the golden calf (Dt. 9:21 = "I took your sinful thing, the calf which you had made, and burned it with fire and **crushed** it"); and in the eschatological hope of hammering swords into plowshares (Isa. 2:4; Mic. 4:3). It can also be used figuratively for destroying an enemy (Dt. 1:44 where the LXX = titrosko = to inflict a wound - injure, damage in the picturesque imperfect tense = over and over) and in Nu 14:45 of the enemy destroying Israel's futile attempt to take the Promised Land after refusing to take the promise from God!

**Utlei** The VERB (BDB 510, KB 507, Hiphil IMPERFECT) means "to beat into pieces." This is recorded in Num. 14:45. The ADJECTIVE was used of beating oil out of olives (cf. Exod. 29:40; Num. 28:5). It is used for the destruction of (1) the golden calf (cf. Deut. 9:21) and (2) of the smashing of idols (cf. Micah 1:7). ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

**John Maxwell - A false security brings defeat.** The people failed to understand the covenant. In the beginning they would not trust God because the task was too big. Now they trust their weapons and the task is small. They did not see God as their provider and protector, nor were they ready to go up when God commanded. They were only willing to go when "everyone of you had girded on his weapons of war" (v. 41). Contrast their attitude with that of David, the great warrior-king who said, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; / But we will remember the name of the LORD our God" (Ps. 20:7).

On what do we rely for security? Throughout the centuries, man has attempted to build walls of security around his possessions. A classic example is the Great Wall of China. It was started by the Emperor Shih Huang-ti, a merciless and ruthless tyrant. By brute force he had defeated feudal war lords and created an empire for himself. And then, as always happens, he started worrying that someone might do to him what he had done to them, so he decided to wall his country off completely from the rest of the world. The emperor began to build the Great Wall in 228 B.C., and eventually it stretched across the entire northern border of the country. It is built of bricks, stones, and mud, and has high towers every several hundred feet—twenty thousand towers in all. It took hundreds of thousands of men over fifteen years to build the wall. Finally the wall was completed and the empire, at the cost of thousands of lives, was seemingly secure. However, with the death of the emperor, the empire fell apart. Ironically, it was not overthrown by invaders, but by rebellion from within. That old story is not a new story. In trying to remain secure within "false walls," the Israelites were soundly defeated. ([Preacher's Commentary](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:45** "Then you returned and wept before the LORD; but the LORD did not listen to your voice nor give ear to you.

- Ps 78:34 Heb 12:17
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passage:**

Hebrews 12:17+ (ESAU'S REMORSE) For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

## TEARS OF REMORSE NOT REPENTANCE

**Then you returned and wept before the LORD; but the LORD did not listen to your voice nor give ear to you-** When the divine **die is cast**, it is too late for tears! God's attributes include [longsuffering](#), but can expire when He knows in His omniscience that a heart is hopelessly hardened against him (cf Pharaoh in Ex 9:12+). They may have **wept before the LORD**, but not because of their sin of unbelief and the fact that they had grieved the heart of the LORD. They **wept** because of the irrevocable consequences of their sin much like Esau (Hebrews 12:17+). Notice the bitter irony for just as Israel had refused to listen to the voice of Jehovah, Jehovah refused to listen to their voice. Actually note the combination of **not listen** and not **give ear**, make God's refusal to accept their [whining](#) crystal clear!

**THOUGHT** - I am reminded of the warning in Ps 66:18+ "If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear." That was true of Israel and it is true of us today even as His beloved children. We cannot come to God with unclean hearts and expect Him to hear our prayers!

**Utley** - It was not that God did not hear them, but He did not hearken unto them. He heard them, but said "No." Sin always brings consequences, even forgiven sin! ([Deuteronomy 1 Commentary](#))

Sin will take you further than you ever wanted to stray!  
Cost you more than you ever dreamed you would pay!  
Keep you longer than you ever thought you would stay!

**J Vernon McGee** - Notice this. They came before the Lord and they shed crocodile tears. They wept, and they repented. Yes, but what kind of a repentance was this? Listen to Paul in 2Corinthians 7:10: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." Did they weep because they disobeyed God? No. They wept because the Amorites had chased them. Their defeat was the reason for their weeping. You know of incidents when a thief is caught, and he begins to shed tears and repent. But wait a minute. What kind of tears are they? Does he weep because he is a thief? No, he weeps because he has been caught. There is a world of difference in that. This is exactly the case with these people.

**A B Simpson** - Let none of us trine with God's nows; but today, while it is called today, if we will hear His voice, let us harden not our hearts (Hebrews 3:13, 15). There is a sorrow that has no healing in it; a remorse that has no repentance in it, a weeping that has no softening, sanctifying power; a grief that even God has no compassion for, because it is the cry of a willful, proud and sinful heart; as self-willed in its weeping as it was in its defiance. What infinite pathos and despair there is in the closing words: "You came back and wept before the LORD, but he paid no attention to your weeping and turned a deaf ear to you" (Deuteronomy 1:45).

**Wept** ([01058](#)) **bakah** means to weep, bemoan, lament or wail, because of grief, pain, humiliation or even joy (Ge. 42:24; 43:30; Dt 21:13, Joel 1:5). **Bakah** can describe weeping as a response of contrition before the Lord (Dt. 1:45 - but see context as to why they were weeping and why it was too little, too late! = Dt 1:43-44; 2Ki 22:19 = King Josiah after discovery of Book of the Law in the House of God [2Ki 22:8] the reading of which caused Josiah to tear his clothes-2Ki 22:11). Weeping occurs 3x in Deuteronomy - Dt 1:45, Dt 21:13, Dt 34:8. (cf Nave Topical Bible [Weeping](#))

**Deuteronomy 1:46 "So you remained in Kadesh many days, the days that you spent there."**

- Nu 14:25,34 Nu 20:1,22 Jdg 11:16-17
- Deuteronomy 1 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE LENGTHY CONSEQUENCES FOR A MOMENT OF UNBELIEF

**So you remained in Kadesh many days, the days that you spent there** (NET = indeed, for the full time) - Many days, turned to many years Numbers 14:34+ recording "According to the number of days which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day you shall bear your guilt a year, even forty years, and you will know My opposition. This description does suggest that much of their 38 years was spent in the vicinity of Kadesh (which was an oasis and had pasturelands). **It is notable that other than this one statement, Moses does not record another word describing Israel's wasted wilderness years!**

**THOUGHT - Wasted Years** - How long they remained in Kadesh after this melancholy occurrence we do not know, and the narrative reads as if it did not matter much. There are chapters in life's history that are as blank

and cold as the face of an iceberg. They count for nothing in the annals of God and eternity; they are simply, bitterly and utterly vague—barren and empty as the desert wind. What a suggestive meaning there is in this sentence, “And so you stayed in Kadesh many days—all the time you spent there” (Dt 1:46). That is to say that there were just so many days and they were counted simply by the number of days, and not by any event of the slightest interest or importance. They were just passed by and that was all. They were not according to the will of God, or according to the plan of His love and ordering, or according to the useful service with which they were filled, but they were just according to the number of the days. They had 38 years to throw away, to finish the tramp of their vain and lost existence, and it seemed to be little matter where they spent them. Oh! it is pitiful to be living a life with God above us, immortality within us and eternity before us with such an awful record of vanity; and yet, such is the life of all who live not for God. They are just filling up the time until the next chapter, the long, the sad eternity. (A B Simpson)

**NET note on the days that you spent there** - Hebrew reads literally "like the days which you lived." This refers to the rest of the forty-year period in the desert before Israel arrived in Moab. ([Deuteronomy 1](#))

**John Trapp on many days** - Many indeed; yea, many years. And here it was, or hereabouts, that they received those laws which are recorded, {Num 15:1-41+} as also that they stoned him that gathered sticks on the Sabbath day; that Korah and his accomplices perished; that fourteen thousand seven hundred died of the plague; that Aaron's rod flourished; that Moses, seeing the people fall so fast in the wilderness, wrote Ps 90:1-17<sup>+</sup>, - where he telleth us that the ordinary term of man's life was reduced to seventy or eighty years, and so made shorter by half than before. All which things are thought to have happened in the last six months of the second year after their coming out of Egypt: the history of those two years only, and of the last of the forty are set forth by Moses: the intercurrent thirty seven years with their events, save only the bare names of their various stations, {Nu 33:1-56+} being passed over in silence. **If men will take liberty to commit sin against God, he will make but a short story of them and their works** Lot, for instance. {Ge 19:36}