



Deuteronomy 1:9-25 **At the Door, Ready to Enter**

Deuteronomy 1 has thus far been a marvelous presentation of Christ and what God would do through Him. This continues to be true in the verses ahead today.

God has selected various words, through Moses, to convey to us a panorama of what has previously been much more minutely detailed. And yet, there are obvious changes from the original narrative, some insertions, and many exclusions.

In this, it becomes an obvious point of theological doom for the small-minded people who willingly look to identify the books of Moses, and indeed even various portions, verses, or words, as having come from one source or another, rather than from Moses.

This is an easy way out of doing the hard work of trying to determine why God made those changes, and of what significance they are. But the funny thing is that as easy as it is to take this path, scholars then go and spend countless hours, even entire careers, working on not pursuing the original God-centered path.

In fact, many of them have spent a lot more effort on this futile endeavor than they ever would have if they had simply taken the word at face value and searched it out from that perspective.

Text Verse: “The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple.” Psalm 19:7

The psalmist says, “The testimony of the Lord is sure.” He said this because he was sure concerning the testimony of the Lord. One will either be sure of the Lord’s word and pursue it from that perspective, or he will have no faith in the word of the Lord and pursue it from that perspective.

The changes in the accounts previously seen and of those in Deuteronomy, rather than showing that they are later additions, clearly demonstrate that they are original. Nobody who would later write another narrative would have made such obviously varied details, nor would they have left out so much of the already provided detail.

The stories mesh harmoniously, and yet they simply give different information that was needed or is now needed, and nothing else. This is the same situation that arises between the three synoptic gospels. They provide exactly what is needed and nothing else.

But such as this will never satisfy the naysayer. If the accounts in those gospels were identical, they would be called forgeries because of that. If there is any perceived difference between them, they will be called forgeries because of that.

One must come to this word looking for truth, and he must do so looking for Christ. When these two thoughts unite, then a right understanding of why things are the way they are becomes evident.

And so, let us do this, as we do each week. Let us search for God's truth in the passage before us, and let us search for God's Messiah there as well. Such wonderful treasures are to be found in His superior word. And so, let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. How Can I Alone Bear Your Problems? (verses 9-18)

⁹“And I spoke to you at that time, saying:

Moses uses the word *amar*, or said, rather than the more common *dabar*, or spoke. The use of this word implies the need for cooperation rather than a direct word for something to be carried out. With this thought in mind, the next words make more sense...

⁹ (con't) ‘I alone am not able to bear you.

This is as much an appeal for help as it is a statement of fact. If a person is walking on a long hike, and he says to those with him, “I am not able to carry this load anymore,” he is implying to the others that he wants their help in carrying it.

It is important to note that Moses' words here bring about the recollection of two distinct events in his time of leading Israel. The reason this is important is that his words now are actually only recorded after their time at Horeb, as they marched from Sinai to Canaan.

However, the words are not necessarily chronological but in an arrangement of thought. And that thought began while at Horeb. The first event was actually a suggestion from Jethro which occurred at Horeb in Exodus 18 –

“And so it was, on the next day, that Moses sat to judge the people; and the people stood before Moses from morning until evening. ¹⁴ So when Moses’ father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, ‘What *is* this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit, and all the people stand before you from morning until evening?’” Exodus 18:13, 14

After saying this, he gave advice to Moses concerning sharing the responsibility of decisions of lesser importance with selected men in a top-down pyramid fashion. Moses took his advice and a great burden was taken off of his shoulders.

Although not specifically stated in Exodus 18, it is certain that Moses spoke to the elders at that time of his intentions because of what was suggested by Jethro and which was then approved by the Lord. As it came to be according to the Lord’s will, Moses then conveyed that to the people.

Secondly, and more directly recorded, however, was Moses’ appeal to the Lord while at Taberah. It is a continuation of the relieving of the burden on Moses which began at Horeb –

“Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, everyone at the door of his tent; and the anger of the LORD was greatly aroused; Moses also was displeased. ¹¹ So Moses said to the LORD, ‘Why have You afflicted Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the burden of all these people on me? ¹² Did I conceive all these people? Did I beget them, that You should say to me, “Carry them in your bosom, as a guardian carries a nursing child,” to the land which You swore to their fathers? ¹³ Where am I to get meat to give to all these people? For they weep all over me, saying, “Give us meat, that we may eat.” ¹⁴ I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden *is* too heavy for me. ¹⁵ If You treat me like this, please kill me here and now—if I have found favor in Your sight—and do not let me see my wretchedness!” Numbers 11:10-15

At that time, the Lord had Moses gather together seventy elders of Israel, and He took of the Spirit that was on Moses and put the

same upon them. In this, they were able to share the overall burden of leadership in a different way.

Rather than a top-down structure, it was one which consisted more in mutual cooperation, and which extended laterally at the top. This was conveyed to these chosen men, and they were given a sign that what was proposed had come to pass because, as is recorded –

“Then the LORD came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that *was* upon him, and placed *the same* upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did *so* again.” Numbers 11:25

Before going on, let us consider what is being presented. Verse 2 showed what a short journey Israel had to make in order to enter into the Land of Promise – just eleven days. However, it then noted that they are now in their fortieth year since leaving Egypt.

In verses 5-8, the instructions for leaving Horeb and entering into the Land are given, including a brief description of the land. With that came the promise that the land stood before them, the land sworn to their fathers. All they needed to do was go up and receive what was promised.

In verse 9, authority was given to the people. It was not Moses alone who bore it, but people at all levels, meaning tens of thousands of people who were in authority over thousands, hundreds, and tens.

And further, there were seventy at the very top who also possessed the same Spirit that was on Moses. Understanding this, and keeping it at the forefront of our minds, Moses next says to them...

¹⁰The LORD your God has multiplied you, and here you *are* today, as the stars of heaven in multitude.

This verse recalls the promises of the Lord that were stated all the way back in Genesis. First, he made this promise twice to Abraham. He first did so in Genesis 15 –

“Then He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’” Genesis 15:5

He restated the promise when Abraham obediently took Isaac up Mt. Moriah to offer him as a burnt offering –

“Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, ¹⁶and said: ‘By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only *son*—¹⁷ blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which *is* on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.’” Genesis 22:15-17

The Lord then confirmed the promise to Isaac –

“Then the LORD appeared to him and said: ‘Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you. ³Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father. ⁴And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; ⁵because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.’” Genesis 26:2-5

Finally, using a similar expression, the sand on the seashore, it is seen that the promise continued through Jacob –

“Then Jacob said, ‘O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD who said to me, “Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you”:¹⁰ I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies.¹¹ Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me *and* the mother with the children.¹² For You said, “I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.”’” Genesis 32:9-12

Despite their time of bondage in Egypt, the Lord had faithfully remembered His covenant promises to the patriarchs, and He had fulfilled His words to them through maintaining Israel, increasing them, and then bringing them out of Egypt and towards the Land of Promise.

Moses’ words say, *kekokve ha’shemayim larov* – “as the stars in the heavens in multitude.” He chose this expression because it cannot be considered hyperbole. At any given time, the human eye cannot see more than three to five thousand stars. But Israel numbered over six hundred thousand fighting men, plus many others.

Moses is reminding the people that the Lord had not only been faithful, but that he had given them both the leadership necessary to take them into the land, and He had given them the numbers to make this possible. With that thought in mind, he next says...

¹¹ May the LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times more numerous than you are,

After noting that the Lord had accomplished what He said He would do, Moses next calls for an even greater blessing upon the people. This is not something that was previously said. Rather, it is

a parenthetical thought inserted by Moses into his ongoing narrative before he continues with his discourse.

The reason he is saying this now is because of what he has already said in verse 9, and what he will repeat again in verse 12. He acknowledges that he cannot bear the people, and thus such a magnificent increase in the people of Israel would be because they had a true leader, the God of their fathers, Yehovah. It is a spoken prayer for great multiplication – even beyond the promises already fulfilled in the people who sat before him. And further...

11 (con't) and bless you as He has promised you!

The words are in the same order as were spoken to Abraham in Genesis 12:2. There the Lord said –

“Get out of your country,
From your family
And from your father’s house,
To a land that I will show you.
²I will make you a great nation;
I will bless you
And make your name great;
And you shall be a blessing.
³I will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him who curses you;
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Genesis 12:1-3

In other words, the blessing is not limited to numbers in physical increase, but it transcends that. The blessing is spiritual in nature. There are many nations which have become great in number, but they lack the blessing of the Lord.

Abraham would become great in number, but he – meaning his descendants – would also possess the spiritual blessing. This is what Moses now again petitions the same Lord, Yehovah, for.

They had the numbers, but they had also been under punishment for rejecting the Lord. He is preparing them for entry into the land and he is calling for their physical increase to be accompanied by the promised spiritual increase. With that parenthetical thought now uttered, he continues with the narrative of what brought them to this point...

¹²How can I alone bear your problems and your burdens and your complaints?

Moses now continues with his narrative, recalling the words of verse 9 where he said he alone was not able to bear the people. It wasn't just that there was a great multitude that he could not handle, but that the people put their difficulties upon him.

He describes these difficulties as problems, burdens, and complaints. The word translated as "problems" here is a new and rare word, *torakh*. It is found only here and in Isaiah 1:14, coming from a verb, *tarakh* which is only found in Job 37:11. There it speaks of the clouds being saturated with water. One can think of being filled to a maximum capacity, and thus under a weight which cannot be physically tolerated.

And so, what we have here are the three things which were weighing down on Moses. The word *torakh* describes the people themselves. They are of a capacity that Moses cannot physically bear himself.

The *massa*, or burdens, speaks of the people's own burdens which they heaped upon Moses. And the *riv*, or complaints are the people's quarrels between themselves, between themselves and Moses, and the between themselves and the Lord.

Moses felt these various negative aspects of the people and their lives in himself. And so, a remedy was spoken out...

¹³ Choose wise, understanding, and knowledgeable men

The word “choose” is acceptable. The Hebrew says, “Give to you.” The people were to give themselves men who would lead from among themselves. One would be expected to only give himself something which is good, and that is what Moses intended for them to do as a collective group.

As we saw earlier, in Exodus 18, Jethro made his recommendation to Moses. There he also highlighted various aspects of the men to be selected. He said that they should, “select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness.”

Jethro looked more to the moral aspects of the men to be selected. Moses speaks here of the administrative or technical aspects of the men. They are to be *khakam*, or wise. That is a person who already possesses knowledge and then takes that knowledge and applies it in an appropriate manner.

They are to be *bin*, or understanding, meaning that they can discern a matter, perceive what is appropriate to the situation, and then apply the wisdom they possess to ensure the proper goal is met. And they are to be *yada*, or knowing. This is experiential knowledge of a matter in order to be able to relay that knowledge on to others as each situation calls for. These men were to be...

¹³ (con't) from among your tribes,

There are two particular words which are most often translated as “tribes” in the books of Moses. One is *matteh*. The other is *shevet*. They both signify a type of staff or rod, and both come from roots signifying to branch off.

Though very similar in intent, *matteh* looks more to a genealogical stem and branch, whereas *shevet* looks to a political one. The first is never used in Deuteronomy, while the latter, *shevet*, is seen eighteen times.

Moses understands that the genealogical records of Israel have been set. The people have been counted, and the families have been identified and detailed. What he is concerned about is preparing the people for entrance into Canaan, and so his words focus on the political aspect of tribal division. In providing him with a list of such people for these political bodies, Moses says...

¹³ (con't) and I will make them heads over you.'

In giving to themselves such people, Moses would then appoint them to be leaders. It would be self-defeating to choose men who were unqualified, and so Moses trusted that those selected would meet the qualifications. Obviously, the idea went over well...

¹⁴ And you answered me and said, 'The thing which you have told us to do is good.'

This has never been stated before in the ongoing narrative, and so the reason for including the words may not seem apparent, but it is the same reason for everything that has been said, and everything that will be said, all the way through the rest of the chapter.

Nothing was forced upon the people, they agreed to everything that was said, and the blame for all that occurred which brought them under punishment rests solely with them. Here, they agreed with their own mouths to the structure which would govern them.

When the people rebelled against the Lord, it was *their* leaders, who *they* agreed to and appointed, who failed to step in and lead

the people as they should have. We are, as at all times, being shown typological pictures of Israel's rejection of Jesus.

It is the leaders who are focused on throughout the gospels and into the epistles. In the leader's rejection of their responsibilities, all of the people collectively suffered. This is because all of Israel agreed to the very structure of government under which they lived.

¹⁵ So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and knowledgeable men, and made them heads over you, leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, leaders of tens, and officers for your tribes.

This corresponds to Exodus 18:25. As suggested by Moses, as authorized by the Lord, and as accepted by the people, Moses made the appointments. In this, two designations are made – *sare* and *shoterim* – rulers and officers. The word *shoter* comes from a root signifying “to write,” and thus it would be a scribe. By implication, it speaks of a type of magistrate. Why is this important?

It is because the same types of people were still leading Israel at the time of Jesus, the scribes and Pharisees fill the same type of offices that had been filled at the beginning.

Though the Pharisees were more to be considered a religious sect they, along with the Sadducees, were considered as leaders to the people. But they failed to submit to the Lord, just as these now-appointed leaders failed to do so.

¹⁶ “Then I commanded your judges at that time, saying, ‘Hear *the cases between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the stranger who is with him.*”

Moses now speaks out his words of command which begin with “Hear.” One must listen before he can judge. It is as important for

the judge to open his ear to hear a case as it is for him to keep his hand closed from any bribe which may affect his judgment.

And their judgment was to be fairly made between a man and his brother – without partiality, even to a man and a stranger, meaning anyone who dwelt among Israel, but who was not of Israel. Justice was to be blind to the man, or the state of the man. Further...

17 You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great;

The Hebrew essentially reads, “You shall not recognize faces.” When two come forward to present their cases, it was to be as if they had masks on so that neither could be recognized.

The precept is substantially repeated in Exodus 23:2 and Leviticus 19:15. Whether poor or wealthy, whether unknown or well-known, or for any other such reason, the judges were to remain impartial. But this is one of the reasons that Jesus rebuked the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23. They devoured the houses of the lowly widows simply because they could.

17 (con’t) you shall not be afraid in any man’s presence,

Here it basically says, “you shall not be afraid from the face of any man.” It doesn’t matter how important he is, how influential he is, how big and scary he is, or for any other reason. The judgment was to be made without fear...

17 (con’t) for the judgment is God’s.

The idea here is that of complete surrender of one’s judgment in such matters because the one judging is answerable to God. The general idea of this thought, though under a different context, is well expressed by the words found in Hebrews 13:6 –

“The Lord *is* my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?”

The failing of the rulers at Jesus’ time concerning this very idea is expressed in John 12:42, 43 –

“Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³ for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.”

There was a greater fear of what man could do than what God was sure to do. In this, the rulers failed the people, and the people came under the collective punishment promised in the word.

17 (con’t) The case that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it.’

This is what Jesus said to the people. They brought matters up which were difficult. Even the leaders challenged Jesus. And when this occurred, he would lead them right back to Moses, such as in Mark 10:3 when the subject of divorce came about. His first response was, “What did Moses command you?”

Also, in His parable of the rich man and Lazarus, he said that those whom Lazarus appealed for should hear Moses and the prophets, further telling him that “if they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.”

Moses was to be the ultimate authority for the decisions to be rendered. When something from the law needed clarification, even at the time of Jesus, they were to go to those who were responsible for the law. This is recorded in Matthew 23 –

“The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. ³ Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, *that* observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.” Matthew 23:2, 3

18 And I commanded you at that time all the things which you should do.

This encompasses everything passed on to the people after the initial giving of the Ten Commandments. After that awesome display, it then said –

“Then they said to Moses, ‘You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.’” Exodus 20:19

His words now cover from that time, all the way through their almost year-long stay at the mountain. After this comes our next thought...

*We are on our way to the Promised Land
Taking our leave and heading out
It is a place of beauty and glory, so we understand
To the Lord our God, we shall raise a shout*

*Here we are at the Door, ready to enter in
We are ready to take possession of what is promised to us
Restoration and paradise are about to begin
But what is this? Who is this Jesus?*

*He claims that He is the Way
How can that be? We demand a sign!
If He will do for us the thing that we say
Only then will we our faith towards Him align*

*Here we are at the Door, ready to enter in
But is there some other way for our restoration to begin?...*

II. The LORD Your God Has Set the Land Before You (verses 19-25)

19 “So we departed from Horeb,

This was recorded in Numbers 10 –

“Now it came to pass on the twentieth *day* of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle of the Testimony.” Numbers 10:11

It is from this point that the thought of verse 2 is to be remembered. Israel was led by the Lord, they had leaders chosen from among themselves, and Kadesh Barnea was an eleven-day journey away. In just eleven days, they were set to begin their entrance into the Land of Promise. That means they should have arrived at that point on the first day of the third month of the second year. Until then...

19 (con't) and went through all that great and terrible wilderness which you saw on the way to the mountains of the Amorites,

The term *ha'gadol*, or “the great,” speaks of the vastness of the area. It stretches so far that it is an eleven-day journey. The term *ha'nora*, or “the terrible,” speaks of that which is fearful or awesome. The location is so barren and dry that it cannot be plowed and planted. It is a vast wasteland leading to a land of abundance and promise.

One can imagine it comparable to the span of human existence, apart from Christ. There is a vastness to it which extends from the fall until the millennium. And is a terrible existence when compared to that which lies ahead for those of promise.

As we saw in the first Deuteronomy sermon, eleven is the number which marks disorder, disorganization, imperfection, and disintegration. The description given by Moses now beautifully expresses that state for humanity in life apart from Christ.

It is horrible, even to the thought of death, to which this place extended – both before their arrival at Kadesh at several key points

where they complained against the Lord – and to after their rejection of the Lord when they were turned back into it to die apart from the promise.

19 (con't) as the LORD our God had commanded us.

As a people, they had been redeemed from Egypt. Despite the horrid state of what lay ahead, He would be with them, and He would deliver them. And so, He commanded their departure as is recorded in Numbers 10 –

“So they started out for the first time according to the command of the LORD by the hand of Moses.” Numbers 10:13

19 (con't) Then we came to Kadesh Barnea.

The name Kadesh Barnea, or “Holy Purifying Wanderings,” was not used until Numbers 32, when there was a possible second turning of the people. Before that, it was only known as Kadesh, or “Holy.” Moses uses the full name now to remind them that their disobedience is what brought about their punishment.

The wanderings they had to go through came after, not before, their arrival at the doorstep of Canaan. It is they, because of their own rejection of the Lord, who were not purified to enter the promise, and so they were turned away.

Moses’ words have been, and continue to be, carefully selected to show Israel that what had befallen them was solely their own fault. As this entire account pictures Israel’s rejection of Christ, it is – whether it sounds cold or not – showing them that the misery of the past two thousand years has been a self-inflicted wound. They had been led throughout their history to the Promise, meaning Christ...

²⁰ And I said to you, ‘You have come to the mountains of the Amorites, which the LORD our God is giving us.

Moses presented to Israel the Land of Promise – “Here it is! You have come to the land which the Lord our God is giving us!” And Moses also presented to Israel the Man of Promise – “Here He is! You have come to the One which the Lord our God gave to us.”

As has been the case each time they are mentioned in this chapter, the name “Amorite” is singular in the Hebrew. It is also prefixed by an article – “The Amorite.” The name signifies, “The Renowned,” and so one can see that it is a typological reference to the Lord. “You have been brought to the Mount of the Renowned,” the One spoken of and who possesses the land.

It is this which is promised to Israel. A dwelling with the Lord. And it is this which Israel turned away from, even though Moses implored them to enter...

²¹ Look, the LORD your God has set the land before you;

The Lord led Israel to the doorstep of Canaan. He set it before them as a gracious offering. And the Lord led Israel to the Door, which is Christ. They were at the threshold, given as a gracious Offering. Moses spoke to them, imploring them to enter Canaan, and Moses, through the law, implored them to enter... “Go!”

^{21 (con’t)} go up *and* possess *it*, as the LORD God of your fathers has spoken to you;

Here Moses recalls the word of the Lord God. This was stated many times between Exodus and Numbers. One example is –

“So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing

with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.” Exodus 3:8

Likewise, the Lord God of their fathers spoke many times of possessing the promise, meaning Christ and His kingdom. Jesus confirms this in John 5 –

“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.” John 5:39

The Scriptures are literally filled with hints of the coming Messiah. His manifestation to the people of Israel was as obvious as Israel’s arrival at the threshold of Canaan. “Go, take possession!”...

²¹ (con’t) do not fear or be discouraged.’

al tira v’al tekhat – “not do fear, and not be discouraged.” The words are a close reflection of John 14:27 –

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

The themes repeat because the Lord is trying to wake His people up to His word, His promises, and the reliability of who He is in relation to them. In trusting in the Lord, there is to be no fear, and there is to be nothing which can allow one to be discouraged. Israel, however, took another path, starting with the next words...

²² “And every one of you came near to me

Moses is speaking to those of the congregation sitting on the side of the Jordan, waiting to enter. All of the those who came before him at that time are now dead, and yet, he says, *va’tigrevun elay kulekhem* – “and came near to me all of you.”

The leaders speak for the people, and the nation is a collective whole. Thus, the idea conveyed to Moses represents the desire of the collective, and it speaks of all at any time. What the leaders did is as if the people now have done.

22 (con't) and said, 'Let us send men before us, and let them search out the land for us,

Taking the original account together with this one, there is an order to what occurred. The idea was given by the people to Moses. From there, he took it to the Lord for the Lord's approval. The Lord gave them what they wanted, meaning He allowed them free will to choose their own path.

The only reason for such a request is personal fear and trepidation. It is a display of unbelief. The Lord had proven Himself countless times up to this point. He had promised what the land would be like and that the land would be delivered to Israel. Upon entry, their satisfaction would be assured.

But again, a parallel is seen in the leaders of Israel. The Lord, through the law, had led Israel directly to Messiah, and Messiah held the promises which lay ahead. But instead of accepting Him at face value, they asked for more. They directly challenged Him in this, just as Israel is directly challenging the Lord now –

“Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven.” Matthew 16:1

The Land of Promise lay ahead, and Israel asked for proofs. The Messiah stood before them, and Israel asked for proofs. But heaven is received by faith, not by demand. Christ's answer to them was, “A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah” (16:4). And the sign of Jonah was given to them – a year for a day.

Jonah prophesied that Nineveh would be destroyed in forty days, and Jerusalem was destroyed forty years later. Israel failed to believe, and they were under punishment for forty years in the wilderness – a year for each day the spies were gone.

22 (con't) and bring back word to us of the way by which we should go up, and of the cities into which we shall come.'

The spies, instead of bringing these things back as requested, brought back a bad report. The way is given –

“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” John 14:6

And the city which is promised is described. The New Testament tells us what the spies should have provided. The gospel and its promises, however, must be accepted, by faith.

23 “The plan pleased me well;

The Hebrew reads, *va 'yitav b'enay ha'davar* – “And was good in my eyes the word.” Moses had no problem showing them what delights lay ahead because he knew that the Lord could deliver.

And, in fact, the law does tell of what lies ahead. Interspersed throughout the Old Testament are descriptions of what God promises in glory. Those who came to Jesus asked for more though. He was unwilling because they already had the word of the Lord which told them all they needed to know, and they had the further miracles that He had already accomplished throughout Israel. They simply failed to accept what their eyes saw and what the Lord promised to them.

23 (con't) so I took twelve of your men, one man from *each* tribe.

Just as Jesus designated twelve apostles. The twelve spies were selected to provide details for the people to understand the nature of the glory which lay ahead. The twelve apostles were selected for the same reason. Did Israel accept the positive words of the spies? Did Israel accept the positive words of the apostles?

²⁴ And they departed and went up into the mountains,

It more literally reads, “And they turned and went up into the mountain.” “Mountain” is singular. In understanding the typology, one cannot help but see a hint of what the author of Hebrews says

—

“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, ²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel.” Hebrews 12:22-25

The spies were to see the Land of Promise and describe it to the people. The apostles say that those who come to Christ, the true Promise have come to Mount Zion. They have come to JESUS.

²⁴ (con’t) and came to the Valley of Eshcol, and spied it out.

Here, almost all of the details and locations of the journey of Numbers 13 are ignored. The account focuses solely on the Valley of Eschol, the last place noted in the Numbers 13 account. He could have chosen any point among the journeys, but his words single out the Valley of Eshcol. And so, *nakhal eshkol*, or the Valley of Eshcol, must be again explained.

The word *nakhal* signifies a wadi where water would flow through during the seasons of rain. That word comes from *nakhal* meaning, “to take possession,” or “inherit.” Eshcol means “cluster.” But that comes from the word *eshek*, meaning testicle.

As we learned then, this pictured Christ’s work. Once having been accepted, He took possession of that which proceeds from the spot where man is generated from. In other words, it is a picture of the overriding of original sin in man.

Sin transfers from father to child. The semen, which is generated in man, is what transfers that sin. Christ has, through His work, taken possession of that in all who move from Adam to Him. It is the realization of the kingdom for His people through this act.

This, however, as we will see again, was rejected by Israel, just as Israel, at the word of the spies who went into the Valley of Eshcol, had rejected the promises of the Lord. Moses is giving us a recounting of what brought them to the disaster that followed. That, in turn, is given to show Israel today what brought about their own punishment when they rejected Christ and His work.

*25 (fin) They also took *some of the fruit of the land in their hands and brought it down to us; and they brought back word to us, saying, ‘It is a good land which the LORD our God is giving us.’*

This final verse leaves out many of the details from Numbers 13. It is given as a sufficient contrast between the attitude of the people and of the location that they had just trudged through. The land was a great and terrible wilderness, and yet the Lord led them through it. Canaan is a good land with abundant fruit, and it is certain that the Lord could bring them into it.

Further, they acknowledge now that it is not just a good land, but one which *Yehovah Elohenu* or, Yehovah our God, was giving to

them. Thus, to enter is completely and solely, based on an act of faith in the capability, reliability, and grace of the Lord.

If one cannot see that as reflected in the gospel of Christ Jesus, he is not looking very hard. The Lord has already led us through the great and terrible wilderness of our lives. He has promised that He will conduct us into the Promise. And, He has offered it to us by grace. It is not something we can earn apart from Him. It is His, and therefore it must be received as a gift, based on faith.

The Lord our God, Yehovah Elohenu, has done everything necessary to bring us to Himself through the Person and work of Christ. It is now up to each one of us, individually, to accept what He has done, and to enter into the inheritance. It is that simple, and it is waiting for you to do so.

Closing Verse: “Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer,
The Holy One of Israel:
“I *am* the LORD your God,
Who teaches you to profit,
Who leads you by the way you should go.” Isaiah 48:17

Next Week: Deuteronomy 1:26-33 *Shall we trust Him? I say, “Yes, certainly!”* (The Goer Before You – HE) (4th Deuteronomy Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

At the Door, Ready to Enter

And I spoke to you at that time, saying:
‘I alone am not able to bear you, so I did conclude
The LORD your God has multiplied you, and here you are today
As the stars of heaven in multitude

May the LORD God of your fathers

Make you a thousand times more numerous than you are
----- you, His saints
And bless you as He has promised you
How can I alone bear your problems and your burdens
----- and your complaints?

Choose wise, understanding, and knowledgeable men
From among your tribes, and I will make them heads over you
And you answered me and said,
'The thing is good which you have told us to do

So I took the heads of your tribes
Wise and knowledgeable men, and made them heads over you
Leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties
Leaders of tens, and officers for your tribes too

"Then I commanded your judges at that time, saying
Hear the cases between your brethren, so you are to do
And judge righteously, as I am relaying
Between a man and his brother or the stranger who is with him too

You shall not show partiality in judgment
You shall hear the small as well as the great
You shall not be afraid in any man's presence
For the judgment is God's, so to you I state

The case that is too hard for you, bring to me
And I will hear it and judge accordingly

And at that time I commanded you
All the things which you should do

"So we departed from Horeb, and went through
All that great and terrible wilderness which you saw on the way
To the mountains of the Amorites, as the LORD our God
----- had commanded us
Then we came to Kadesh Barnea, on that fateful day

And I said to you, 'You have come
----- to the mountains of the Amorites

Which the LORD our God is giving us
----- that land is now in our sights

Look, the LORD your God has set the land before you
Go up and possess it; yes, be encouraged
As the LORD God of your fathers has spoken to you
Do not fear or be discouraged

“And every one of you came near to me and said
‘Let us send men before us, and let them for us search out the land
And bring back word to us of the way by which we should go up
And of the cities into which we shall come
----- so it shall be properly planned

“The plan pleased me well
So I took twelve of your men, one man from each tribe
----- was made a scout
And they departed and went up into the mountains
And came to the Valley of Eshcol, and spied it out

They also took some of the fruit of the land in their hands
And brought it down to us, that was a tasty plus
And they brought back word to us, saying
‘It is a good land which the LORD our God is giving us

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...

⁹“And I spoke to you at that time, saying: ‘I alone am not able to
bear you. ¹⁰The LORD your God has multiplied you, and here

you *are* today, as the stars of heaven in multitude. ¹¹ May the LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times more numerous than you are, and bless you as He has promised you! ¹² How can I alone bear your problems and your burdens and your complaints? ¹³ Choose wise, understanding, and knowledgeable men from among your tribes, and I will make them heads over you.’ ¹⁴ And you answered me and said, ‘The thing which you have told *us* to do *is* good.’ ¹⁵ So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and knowledgeable men, and made them heads over you, leaders of thousands, leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, leaders of tens, and officers for your tribes.

¹⁶ “Then I commanded your judges at that time, saying, ‘Hear *the cases* between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the stranger who is with him. ¹⁷ You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man’s presence, for the judgment *is* God’s. The case that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it.’ ¹⁸ And I commanded you at that time all the things which you should do.

¹⁹ “So we departed from Horeb, and went through all that great and terrible wilderness which you saw on the way to the mountains of the Amorites, as the LORD our God had commanded us. Then we came to Kadesh Barnea. ²⁰ And I said to you, ‘You have come to the mountains of the Amorites, which the LORD our God is giving us. ²¹ Look, the LORD your God has set the land before you; go up *and* possess *it*, as the LORD God of your fathers has spoken to you; do not fear or be discouraged.’

²² “And every one of you came near to me and said, ‘Let us send men before us, and let them search out the land for us, and bring back word to us of the way by which we should go up, and of the cities into which we shall come.’

²³ “The plan pleased me well; so I took twelve of your men, one man from *each* tribe. ²⁴ And they departed and went up into the mountains, and came to the Valley of Eshcol, and spied it out. ²⁵ They also took *some* of the fruit of the land in their hands

and brought *it* down to us; and they brought back word to us,
saying, '*It is* a good land which the LORD our God is giving us.'