

In the New Covenant, what is the mission that God has given to his people and what is their responsibility in this mission?

Read Deuteronomy 1:1-46

Read Deuteronomy 1:1-5 (Prologue)

Transjordan

In V.1 it says, "These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel," what gives Moses the authority to speak to all Israel?(cf. Ex 3:7-15, 4:10-12, Deu 18:15-19)

- Was sent (Ex 3:7-15)
- Was called by God to rescue his people (Ex 3:10)
- To speak on behalf of God (Ex 4:10-12), and this is the definition of a prophet who act as God's mouthpiece
- Be God's prophet (Deu 18:15-19)

Moses, in V.3, speaks of what the Lord "had given him in commandment to them." This has in view all that the Lord has taught Moses and Israel through the Covenants that God made with His people.

- I. *What is a Covenant?*
- II. *What are the two covenants God has made with Israel, (Cf. Genesis 15:1-18 and Ex 20:1-17, 24:1-8)*
- III. *What was the purpose of God to give these covenants to the nation?(Cf. Genesis 12:1-3 and Lev 19:2, Ex 19:1-8, Gal 3:19, Deu 6:1-3)*

I. What is a covenant: A blood bought promise between parties that they will fulfill certain conditions

II. Two covenants: Abrahamic Covenant and the Law, The Mosaic Covenant, or Old Covenant

III. Significance:

Abrahamic: To show his favour to Abraham and his offspring, and affirm his blessing to them

The Law:

- a To reveal God's holy nature to Israel (Lev 19:2)
- b. To make clear that Israel was to be holy and distinct from other nations (Ex 19:5)
- c. To reveal their sinfulness (Galatians 3:19)
- d. To mediate the spiritual well-being of Israel (Deu 6:1-3)
 - Sacrificial system to show God's forgiveness (Lev 1-7)
 - Sabbath (Lev 23)
 - How to worship God

Read Deuteronomy 1:6-18 (From Horeb)

Around Mt. Sinai

Out of God's promises and commands came a mission (V.5), what has God commanded the Israelites to do at this point in redemptive history, and what had been achieved so far (V.4-5)? (Cf, Deu 1:6-8) How is the Abrahamic Covenant in view?(Cf. V. 8-11)

I. To take possession of the Canaanite land as promised in the Abrahamic Covenant (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob)

II. Though not directly part of the conquest of Canaan, Israel did defeat two Amorite Kings, Sihon and Og. As it says in v. 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 in Edrei."

Before they take the Land, Moses reorganizes Israel's military and national administration. What does this organization look like? (V.9-18)

1. Commanders

v. 13 - *Choose for your tribes wise, understanding, and experienced men, and I will appoint them as your heads.'*

v. 15 - *So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and set them as heads over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officers, throughout your tribes.*

2. Judges (implied that they were also appointed like commanders)
- both judicial and military implications (see book of Judges)

V.17 - *You shall not be partial in judgment. You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.*'

- Judge righteously
- All cases to be considered
- Hardest cases go directly to Moses

3. From v. 18 more things were commanded that day, but Moses told these to fit his address to the nation of Israel

Leader's Recap

- Moses is recounting a selective history of Israel to this point of time
- Moses reminds that God had spoken to his people through covenants and now God is making good on his promise to them
- Before their campaign, Moses reorganized Israel, and he appointed commanders and judges
- Now they are at the outskirts of Canaan, the Promised Land they were to take

Read Deuteronomy 1:19-46 (From Kadesh-Barnea)

The Outskirts of Canaan

In V. 19-22, what has the Lord promised to the people of Israel on their mission, and what are your thoughts on Israel's response in V.22?

I. See, the LORD your God has set the Land before you. Go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has told you. Do not fear or be dismayed.' (V.21)

- Possess the Land
- Do not fear or be dismayed

II. Though Moses approves in v.23, and under normal circumstances spies are good, V. 22 coming immediately after God's reassurance seems to speak of Israel's lack of faith, and the details that Moses provides seem to point to that

What did the Israelites find when they went into Canaan, and what was their attitude towards actually taking the Land? (V.23-28)

I. Reported on the Land, even though they were supposed to spy on the Land (v.25).

- Found that the inhabitants were large and tall, cities were huge with high walls, and its people were descended from the powerful Anakim

- Looking to confirm God's promise of a Land flowing with milk and honey

II. Their attitude was that they did not want to take the Land because their eyes told them they would be defeated.

Furthermore, they doubted God as it says in V. 26-28:

²⁶ "Yet you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God. ²⁷ And you murmured in your tents and said, 'Because the LORD hated us he has brought us out of the Land of Egypt, to give us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. ²⁸ Where are we going up? Our brothers have made our hearts melt, saying, "The people are greater and taller than we. The cities are great and fortified up to heaven. And besides, we have seen the sons of the Anakim there.'"

In V.29-33, summarize Moses' speech, does this speech reveal anything about Moses' character as a leader? What did Moses think the success of Israel's mission rested on, and how does that contrast with why the people didn't attempt to take the Land?

I. Moses' speech

V. 29 Do not be in dread or afraid of them.

V. 30 The Lord will fight for you as he did with Egypt who is a greater enemy

V. 31 The Lord carried you to this place in the wilderness like a son

V. 32-33 Yet you did not believe the Lord who had always scouted the land ahead of them, gave them safe places to set up camp, and guided them by fire by night and cloud by day directing their steps

II. It shows Moses' pastoral leadership with Israel. Reminding them of God's promise and reassurance to them, and admonishes them in their sinfulness

III. Israel rested its success on their worldly wisdom/their eyes vs. Moses who rested it on God's word. Moses knew what all Israel had witnessed that God had conquered a greater enemy already in Egypt, he had never let them down, and had always been with them. God now says he will fight for them and they should not be afraid or dismayed. Taking the Land was an act of faith, and one where they were to trust God. People on the other hand lacked real faith, and they trusted in what they saw. They disobeyed God, and complained that God brought them here to die.

Reflection: A) What similarities or differences are there between their mission and ours today? B) What similarities do you see of Israel's heart and ours in completing our missions? C) How can we personally avoid acting like rebellious Israel? (Cf. Hebrews 3:12-15)

In V. 34-40, what is the penalty of Israel's sin?

- They would not enter the Land, neither would Moses enter it because of their sin

- Except Caleb and Joshua, and the young ones would take the Land who they thought would be prey (this again shows that success rests on God)

- They would not experience rest, they would toil by retracing their steps in the wilderness

How did Israel respond to God's judgement in V.41-46, and why did it go wrong when they tried to take the Land after the judgement had been announced?

I.

- Glibly confessed their sin against Yahweh.

V. 41- *"Then you answered me, 'We have sinned against the Lord. We ourselves will go up and fight, just as the Lord our God commanded us.'*

- They go into the Land and get beaten, as the Amorites chased them "as bees do"

II.

- Israel still acts in disobedience to the Lord. If they truly repented, they would not have attacked.

V. 42- *And the Lord said to me, 'Say to them, Do not go up or fight, for I am not in your midst, lest you be defeated before your enemies.'*

- As they wept before the Lord, God did not listen to them and they remained outside the Promised Land

Leader's Recap

- As they are about to go into the Land they are reassured by God of the mission they are about to begin

- They decided to send scouts to the cities to spy on them

- Yet it would seem based on Moses' telling of the story that they went out because they lacked faith, and when they realized the people were powerful their "hearts melted" and they grumbled against God

- Moses had reminded them not to be dismayed, but they refused to go into the Land even though God had defeated a greater enemy in Egypt and would fight for them

- Ultimately, this incurred God's wrath, and he would not let the current generation take the Promised Land. They failed at this act of faith, and it would be the next generation that would succeed at this task

- Israel then tried to take the Land and failed because God was no longer with them. They showed themselves that they were a rebellious people, and the Lord would not listen to them as they wept.

Deuteronomy 1 shares the history of the relationship of God and his people. The people continually rebel against Him and do not trust in His promises, while God continually reassures them, and because of their disobedience, He must bring down judgement. This picture is indicative of the ongoing relationship of God and Israel throughout the Old Testament. For Christians today, this is a cautionary tale of how not to follow after God in our own lives, because God is a sovereign God and it is on His Word that we experience successes and failures. Christians should take the advice found in Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."