

Evening Worship December 30, 2018

“Long Enough - Turn Northward” Deuteronomy 2:1-3

“You have skirted this mountain long enough; turn northward.
(Deuteronomy 2:3 NKJ)

I. Long enough –

"Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness of the Way of the Red Sea, as the LORD spoke to me, and we skirted Mount Seir for many days. (Deuteronomy 2:1 NKJ) *Many days = 38 years*

“You have skirted this mountain long enough; ... (Deuteronomy 2:3A NKJ)

1. Israel had been commanded by God to enter the promised land, they were promised it; it was theirs –

"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.” (Deuteronomy 1:20-21 NKJ)

A. This promised land was good, desirable –

"For the land which you go to possess is not like the land of Egypt from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and watered it by foot, as a vegetable garden;¹¹ "but the land which you cross over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water from the rain of heaven,¹² "a land for which the LORD your God cares; the eyes of the LORD your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year. (Deut. 11:10-12 NKJ)

B. In its goodness, in its desirable nature, it (the Promised land) is like many desirable things we might look forward to –

1st Heaven – eternal life / 2nd Church growth / 3rd For me, weight loss
4th For me, maybe getting married / 5th For another it maybe a job, more money, a secure retirement, health ... All good things come from God!

2. We should only desire the attainment of anything “good” with God’s blessing –

For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. (Psalm 84:11 NKJ)

Sometimes there is a temptation to get good, even promised things in the wrong way –

A. Hagar was Sarai and Abram’s mistake, it was a quick solution, that caused trouble -

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no *children*. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.² So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing *children*. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai. (Genesis 16:1-2 NKJ)

B. Another example of desiring something “good” in the wrong is when Israel desired “meat” to eat –

Now the mixed multitude who were among them yielded to intense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said: "Who will give us meat to eat?"⁵ "We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic;⁶ "but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!" (Number 11:4-6 NKJ)

- At least part of the problem in Numbers 11, was the people were not content with what God had provided.
- Another problem was they complained rather than prayed!

3. A big part of the delay for Israel, 38 years, was a lack of faith –

"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.”²⁶ "Nevertheless you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God;²⁷ "and you complained in your tents, and said, “Because the LORD hates us, He has brought us out of the land of Egypt to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.”²⁸ “Where can we go up? Our brethren have discouraged our hearts, saying, “The people are greater and taller than we; the cities are great and fortified up to heaven; moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakim there.”²⁹ "Then I said to you, “Do not be terrified, or afraid of them.”³⁰ “The LORD your God, who goes before you, He will fight for you, according to all He did for you in Egypt before your eyes,³¹ “and in the wilderness where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a man carries his son, in all the way that you went until you came to this place.”³² "Yet, for all that, you did not believe the LORD your God, (Deuteronomy 1:25-32 NKJ)

4. *The longer we have struggled with something, the more difficult it makes real believing and yet this does not stop God from working, another part of delay is God's preparing us –*

"So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. (Deuteronomy 8:3 NKJ)

I have a plaque on my wall which says –

*"All I need today is a little bit of coffee and a whole lot of Jesus."
Just this week, for the first time, I read it seriously ...*

Turning northward, diet-wise for me, is just not eating as much, all I really NEED is so much more Jesus –

II. Turn Northward –

1. *For Israel this was the first step in a long time toward the promised land!*
2. *They would pass through some places, see more of Deuteronomy 2*
3. *They had battles before them –*

Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in.² And the LORD said to Joshua: "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor. (Joshua 6:1-2 NKJ)

4. *Yet, there was a first step, a turn northward – January 1, 2019 is a first step of a New Year for each of it.*

5. *We can count on new mercies from God –*

Through the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.²³ They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. (Lamentation 3:22-23 NKJ)

6. *We need "faith" for victories –*

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. (Hebrews 11:30 NKJ)

7. *As they moved ahead in obedient faith, other faithful joined them –*

By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace. (Hebrews 11:31 NKJ)

8. *God's Word was also key to their victory and will be key to ours*

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"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. (Joshua 1:8 NKJ)

A. *God's Word is our spiritual compass, it shows us spiritual North – Jesus Christ –*

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. (John 14:6 NKJ)

B. *It is the Seed of the New Birth, which brings the fruit of eternal life –*

having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,²⁴ because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away,²⁵ But the word of the LORD endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you. (1 Peter 1:23-25 NKJ)

III. What is YOUR Promised Land this year? What is your first step toward that?

1. *For some it will be Heaven -² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-3 NKJ)*
2. *For others it is the salvation of a lost loved one – PRAY!*
3. *How about the growth of our church? (Acts 2:42-47 NKJ)*
4. *God's Blessing(s) – Psalm 1 Avoid the Ways of the World / Love the Word!*
5. *Remember a step north was an action, go to it –*

Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise,⁷ Which, having no captain, Overseer or ruler,⁸ Provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest. (Proverbs 6:6-8 NKJ)

Do it! Do it now - ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. (2 Corinthians 6:2 NKJ)

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