



Deut. 3:1-22

“You must not fear for the LORD your God Himself fights for you”

NKJ Deuteronomy 3:1 "Then we turned and went up the road to Bashan; and Og king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei.

2 "And the LORD said to me, 'Do not fear him, for I have delivered him and all his people and his land into your hand; you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.'

3 "So the LORD our God also delivered into our hands Og king of Bashan, with all his people, and we attacked him until he had no survivors remaining.

4 "And we took all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we did not take from them: sixty cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

5 "All these cities were fortified with high walls, gates, and bars, besides a great many rural towns.

6 "And we utterly destroyed them, as we did to Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children of every city.

7 "But all the livestock and the spoil of the cities we took as booty for ourselves.

8 "And at that time we took the land from the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who were on this side of the Jordan, from the River Arnon to Mount Hermon

9 '(the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir),

10 "all the cities of the plain, all Gilead, and all Bashan, as far as Salcah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

11 "For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the giants. Indeed his bedstead was an iron bedstead. (Is it not in Rabbah of the people of Ammon?) Nine cubits is its length and four cubits its width, according to the standard cubit.

12 " And this land, which we possessed at that time, from Aroer, which is by the River Arnon, and half the mountains of Gilead and its cities, I gave to the Reubenites and the Gadites.

13 "The rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, I gave to half the tribe of Manasseh. (All the region of Argob, with all Bashan, was called the land of the giants.

14 "Jair the son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob, as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maachathites, and called Bashan after his own name, Havoth Jair, to this day.)

15 "Also I gave Gilead to Machir.

16 "And to the Reubenites and the Gadites I gave from Gilead as far as the River Arnon, the middle of the river as the border, as far as the River Jabbok, the border of the people of Ammon;

17 "the plain also, with the Jordan as the border, from Chinnereth as far as the east side of the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea), below the slopes of Pisgah.

18 " Then I commanded you at that time, saying: 'The LORD your God has given you this land to possess. All you men of valor shall cross over armed before your brethren, the children of Israel.

19 'But your wives, your little ones, and your livestock (I know that you have much livestock) shall stay in your cities which I have given you,

20 'until the LORD has given rest to your brethren as to you, and they also possess the land which the LORD your God is giving them beyond the Jordan. Then each of you may return to his possession which I have given you.'

21 "And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, 'Your eyes have seen all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so will the LORD do to all the kingdoms through which you pass.

22 'You must not fear them, for the LORD your God Himself fights for you.'

Normally when the world desires to build up the morale of a group of people, whether it be a coach pep talking a highschool football team, or a CEO talking to a group of employees, or a general addressing troops. The methodology is generally the same. You downplay everything that is against them and build them up. You say your opponents are worthless and weak, but you are strong, and you can do it! **YOU'VE GOT THE POWER!** *It's the eye of the tiger, it's the cream of the fight*
Risin' up to the challenge of our rival - Eye of the Tiger Man!

Interestingly enough though, that isn't the way that God encourages his people. He doesn't downplay that which stands against his people.

For instance in Matthew 10 before Christ sent out his disciples into the villages to go and preach the Gospel in the villages of Israel, He gathers them together and tells them not that their opposition is weak and their triumphs will be easy, but that he was sending them out of Sheep in the midst of Wolves, and that they would be persecuted on every side, you'll be beaten and scourged, even the members of their own families would be against them because of the Gospel message. He says in Matthew 10:26 ***you will be hated by all for My name's sake.*** He doesn't even say *You've got the power.* But he does tell them to go and not to fear, because they are beloved of the Lord, and ultimately the Lord will give them the victory. It is not they who are mighty, in themselves they are weak, *sheep amongst wolves*, but they serve a mighty God and that this God who has done all things well watches over them and cares for them. It is He who will vindicate them in the end.

Now in one sense, in Deuteronomy we are reading Moses' final pep-talk to the Israelites before they enter into the promised land. He too doesn't downplay the forces that are arrayed against them, the enemies and challenges they face, and he doesn't spend his time pumping up their heads and inflating their egos – in fact he does the opposite he has reminded them of their sins and failings several times. But he too is able to tell them not to fear, for as he says ***“the LORD your God Himself fights for you.”*** And He reminds them, lest they have any doubt that this God really is mighty and that he will fight for them once they cross over the river and enter into Canaan of the victories He has already given them.

He has already rehearsed the victories he gave them over the southern kingdom on the Eastern side of the river Jordan over Sihon and the Amorites, and now he points to the even more impressive victories he gave them over Og, King of Bashan. Now Og was the last of a giant people, the *rephaim*, and even his bed which we see mentioned in verse 11 was about 13 ½ feet long and made of Iron and not wood in order to support him, so we can guess he was about twice the size of a normal man.

Mentioning that OG was a giant is important, because their forefathers had been petrified of the giants in Canaan, and Moses also reminds them that the Cities of Bashan they took were all heavily fortified. That was another thing the people had been afraid of, the fact that the cities all had high and strong walls, and yet these too were as nothing before the Lord.

And so it was the Lord who had given them all the land on East side of the Jordan, from the south all the way up to Dan and Mt. Hermon just south of Lebanon. And these lands were already the inheritance of the tribes of Gad and Reuben and the half-tribe of Mannaseh.

The Lord had already delivered two kingdoms into their hands, and so Moses can offer proof to the people and assurance to Joshua that the Lord will slay the Giants and reduce the cities on the other side of well. Not because they are great, but because God is great, and He is faithful to keep all his promises no matter how difficult.

Moses reminds them of something else, in verses 18-20 he tells the tribes that had already received their inheritance on the east side of the river that they must also cross over the Jordan and help their brothers to subdue their enemies in Canaan. Israel is not a series of disconnected warring tribes, but *ONE COVENANT PEOPLE*, one place of worship, one sign of circumcision. They were to be *One Nation Under God*. Only when God had given all of them rest, could they stop fighting the good fight. They stand or fall together. That is true of all God's people in every age.

***Eph. 4:4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;
5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism;
6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.***

Now from this we can take away certain obvious life lessons:

1) We should view the challenges of the Christian life not in terms of the strength of our enemies or what stands against us, and our ability to handle them in terms of our strength, but through the lens of a mighty God. *The LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's*

Kids you remember the story of David and Goliath don't you? David too was facing a giant. Now that is not a story about how little guys who are brave can overcome all their opponents, David himself knew that the battle wasn't about that:

1 Samuel 17:45 Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

46 "This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you and take your head from you. And this day I will give the carcasses of the camp of the Philistines to the birds of the air and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

47 "Then all this assembly shall know that the LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands.

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?” (Psalm 27:1)

Romans 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

It is about the power of mighty God to overcome all obstacles.

This true obviously in some pragmatic senses, but especially in the case of our salvation.

Christians we have some fearsome enemies in this life, false religions, oppressive governments and so on. But none of them are anything compared to the spiritual enemies that stand against us, our own sin, and hell, and death. But none of them are anything compared to our mighty God:

1 Cor. 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.

25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted.

28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

2) What should you do? Those that are aged and experienced in the service of God should do all they can to strengthen the hands of those that are young, and setting out in religion. Two things he would have him consider for his encouragement:-1. What God has done. . 2. What God had promised. The Lord your God he shall fight for you; and that cause cannot but be victorious which the Lord of hosts fights for. If God be for us, who can be against us so as to prevail?

That was one of the things about the movie "Facing the Giants" that I appreciated, the fact that in it the enemies were not downplayed and the mighty power of God to change things was emphasized.

when God pleads his people's cause he can deal with giants as with grasshoppers – Matthew Henry