



# PRAYING WITH PURPOSE MINISTRIES

## BIBLICAL NOTES & HIGHLIGHTS

*March 2021*

### **Numbers • Deuteronomy** **Principle of Stewardship**

#### **REVIEW**

In the first session you were introduced to seven spiritual principles which are found in the book of Genesis — mainly in creation story.

Principle Organization — God's plan to simplify our lives

Principle of Sow & Reap — God's plan to provide for our lives

Principle of Stewardship — God's plan to fulfill our lives

Principle of Authority — God's plan to protect our lives

Principle of Unconditional Love — God's plan to keep us from failing

Principle of Obedience — God's plan to reward our lives

Principle of Agreement — God's plan to crown our lives with peace

Also, we discussed the importance of reading through the Bible and oldest book in the Bible, Job.

Our second session — we discussed the Principle of Sow & Reap, which is a faith-building principle — using the books of Genesis, starting with chapter 12, Exodus then Leviticus talking about the patriarchs of old who put their faith into action.

Our third session will cover the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy and we will discuss our third principle that is found in the book of Genesis. The **Principle of Stewardship, which** is a character-building principle. It is God's plan to fulfill our lives.

The plan is to be a wise steward over God's provisions.

The purpose is to super abound having all our needs met and to meet the needs of others.

When we look at the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy, we see Moses, the leader of the Israelites, who was certainly according to scripture a good and wise steward. A faithful servant over God's house according to Numbers 12:7 and Hebrews 3:5, respectively.

*Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house. (Numbers 12:7)*

*Moses was certainly faithful in God's house as a servant. His work was an illustration of the truths God would reveal later. (Hebrews 3:5)*

So, we will use Moses as our biblical character to talk about the Principle of Stewardship.

Also, for the practical application of the Principle of Stewardship we will use a 21<sup>st</sup> century character-believer to share about this principle.

## **I. The Paradigm of Stewardship — Character-building principle.**

What is character?

One of the attributes or features that make up and distinguish an individual.

Now, character is the essential ingredient in developing integrity and excellence in whatever we do.

There are seven qualities that one must exhibit in order to display excellence in whatever you do, especially in ministry, and Moses exhibits these character traits. They are as follows:

One must be . . .

1. Qualified to handle the things of God (Numbers 12:7–8). Moses wrote the five books of the Pentateuch and Psalms 90 and 91.
2. Knowledgeable — He had the best education one could have. He was trained in the Egyptian school system. He grew up as the son of Pharaoh's daughter and spent time in Midian under the tutelage of Jethro, the Midianite priest.
3. Honest (Numbers 11:29; Psalm 90)
4. Competent (Numbers 1:1; 33:2). He had a relationship with God. There are over 80 statements of the Lord speaking to Moses. As the central character from Exodus to Deuteronomy, he was more qualified than any person to lead the Israelites.
5. Faithful (Numbers 12:7)
6. Good character — moral, spiritual (Numbers 14:13–20)
7. Steadfast (Deuteronomy) — Moses was steadfast in encouraging the people to obey the commands, laws and precepts of God, especially in the Book of Deuteronomy, which he gave three discourses/sermons to the people. Even though Moses could not enter the Promised Land, he brought the children to the Promised Land and commissioned Joshua.

## II. Plan/Objective: To be a wise steward over the provisions of God

- A. Faithful stewardship arises out of sense of appreciation — must appreciate what God did for us in Genesis 1:26–28.  
God created us in His image and likeness, which means we have all things necessary to fulfill our created role.
- B. There must be sowing — invest time in the Word (which you have committed to do).
- C. Stewardship requires maintenance.

What does maintenance mean?

*The act of maintaining (to keep in an existing state; preserve from failure or decline (one's health); to sustain against \*opposition or danger; uphold and keep up; bear the expense of*

\*Opposition of the devil — 1 Peter 5:8–9:

<sup>8</sup> *Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.* <sup>9</sup> *Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.*

- D. God has given us stewardship over
  - 1. self
  - 2. others
  - 3. His Word
  - 4. His things — provisions
  - 5. finances
  - 6. government
  - 7. earth/environment

Now, as children of the Most High God, let's be good stewards first over "self". Therefore, one needs to know his or her spiritual gift(s). Apostle Peter tells us in 1 Peter 4:10 to be good stewards over the gifts God has placed inside us. And the apostle Paul talks about the functional gifts in Romans 12:6–8:

<sup>6</sup> *We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your<sup>[a]</sup> faith; <sup>7</sup> if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; <sup>8</sup> if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,<sup>[b]</sup> do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.*

By knowing our spiritual gift(s) and using them, we can fulfill our destiny — plan God has for us. Our destiny is defined in the creation story in Genesis 1:28. We were to fill; to subdue; and to have dominion over the earth and everything in it.

At our request through prayer, heaven was to bestow its blessing on earth. Our prayers were to be the natural channel through which the Lord in heaven and we as lords of this world, communicated. We see this in Genesis, how God gave Adam the responsibility to name all the animals, because we were created in God's image to rule.

But with the fall all of this changed, and the Fall brought all creation under the curse. However, God's planned redemption brought the beginning of a glorious restoration. Therefore, when we are born again, we have these gifts placed in these earthen vessels, so we can fulfill our created roles . . . fulfill the plan and purpose God has for each of us.

God's plan for our lives is hidden in our spiritual gift.

Peace is found in the exercise of our gift.

We rob ourselves of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit when we don't function in our gift — not being a good/wise steward.

### **III. Purpose/Goal: To super abound having all our needs met and meet the needs of other.** (Ephesians 4:28)

A. Faithful stewards over your time reading thru the Bible

B. Invest/sow the Word in your heart — spend quality time in the Word

C. Maintain/meditate on the Word — the Word must be a constant in our lives

In bearing God's image, we were to be priest and kings; therefore, we could bear God's rule. We were created, so much like God — so capable of entering into God's purposes and carrying out His plans — that God could trust us with the wonderful privilege of asking and obtaining what this world might need. We begin to occupy that position again when we function in the **Principle of Stewardship**.

Moses our biblical character really functioned in the **Principle of Stewardship**. He was a faithful steward over God's house. Let's talk about **Numbers and Deuteronomy**, the last two books of the Pentateuch that Moses penned.

### **Notes on Numbers**

The book of Numbers opens at the beginning of the second year after their deliverance from Egypt while they are still in the foothills of Mount Sinai/Horeb. In Chapter 1 of Numbers, God directs Moses and Aaron to take a census of the Israelite community.

<sup>2</sup> *“Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one. <sup>3</sup> You and Aaron are to count according to their divisions all the men in Israel who are twenty years old or more and able to serve in the army. (Numbers 1:2-3).*

In the above passage, not only does God direct Moses to take a census, but He also tells him who to count and why the census is taken.

They are to count the men that are able to fight Israel's wars. This command to count the men available to serve in the army, I believe, represents a change in the way God sees the Israelite community.

He no longer sees them as just descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but now He also sees them as a nation. Just being descendants of Abraham constituted them as a family, a community of related individuals. But God was now telling them that I have now made you to be more than a mere family, I have made you into a "holy nation."

Families don't need armies, but nations do. Families don't wage war and take possession of land that is currently occupied by other people, but nations do. From God's perspective, He is engaged in nation building at the foothills of Mount Sinai/Horeb.

According to Numbers 2:32–33 this census revealed 603,550 Israelite men between the ages of 20 years old or more who are able to serve in the army.

The census allows God to accomplish two things:

1. It allowed Him to demonstrate to the Israelite community their own strength as a nation.
2. It sent a message to the Israelite community that this time they were going to have to put forth some work in order to inherit the promise.

When God delivered them from Egypt, He did all the work. He performed all the miracles that brought the strong and defiant Egypt to its knees in humiliation and defeat.

It was God who humbled Pharaoh's heart. It was God who saw to it that the Israelites left with the wealth of Egypt in their possession. God did all this ... all the Israelites had to do was stand back and watch the spectacle of it all! And when it was over, they just walked out ... carrying with them the wealth of Egypt!

### **They walked out wealthy and healthy!**

Now, God was saying ... I expect more from you. In Egypt they were slaves; however, at Mount Sinai/Horeb they were freed people.

God gave them rules of behavior (code of ethics/conduct) that distinguished them from other peoples and defined them as a peculiar people ... a "holy nation." God is sending them a message that now He expects them to act like a nation of free and strong people, capable of defeating any adversary that may be in their way.

We should note that even today, as we grow in the Word and get to know God better, He expects more of us. God expects us to walk in the truth that we know.

**REMEMBER JESUS SAID YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND IT SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.** (John 8:32)

In Numbers Chapter 13, God directs Moses to send some men to explore the Promised Land that He was giving to the Israelites.

*“13 The LORD said to Moses, <sup>2</sup> “Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders.” (Numbers 13:1–2).*

When these men returned from exploring the land, they gave to Moses and the Israelite community an evil report according to Numbers 13:27–31:

*<sup>27</sup> And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.*

*<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.*

*<sup>29</sup> The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.*

*<sup>30</sup> And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.*

*<sup>31</sup> But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.*

*<sup>32</sup> And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.*

*<sup>33</sup> And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.*

This evil report was in the eyes of God contempt and unbelief. I would like to reiterate that doubt or unbelief is evil in the eyes of God. When you doubt, you are saying that His promise or His Word is not true and God is not a man that He should lie.

The devil is the father of lies; therefore, you are aligning yourself with the devil and he will bring destruction upon you. However, you would have opened the door for him to do it by what you said out of your own mouth, because life and death are in the power of the tongue according to Proverbs 18:21.

Now, Psalm 34:12–13 tells us, *“Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies.”*

The word ‘evil’ there means doubt — keep your tongue from doubt and unbelief. If we desire to live an abundant and high impact life, we must not doubt God.

God hates doubt because anything that’s not of faith is doubt according to Romans 14:23; for it is impossible to please God without faith (Hebrews 11:6).

Therefore, God said in Numbers 14:28 “*Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you.*”

Their murmuring and complaining brought condemnation upon them which cause the Exodus generation death in the wilderness. They ultimately had what they had been saying since their exodus from Egypt that they wished they had died in Egypt or in the wilderness.

**REMEMBER MARK 11:23–24 — JESUS TEACHES US WE CAN HAVE WHAT WE SAY. THEY GOT WHAT THEY SAID.**

They had a “grasshopper mentality.”

- a small view of themselves
- a feeling of inferiority
- a destructive second-rate feeling that made them feel unqualified to be a vessel of God’s goodness

This kind of mentality is unacceptable to God: Why?

- He created us in His image
- He has empowered us with His strength
- He has given us spiritual gifts and abilities to reflect His image

The passages in Numbers 13:27–33 demonstrate that the Israelites did not see themselves as God saw them. They agreed with God that it was indeed a good land; but they did not believe that they could take it.

God saw them as strong; they saw themselves as weak. God saw them as capable; they saw themselves as incapable. God saw them as His partner and He would work through their own effort to give them the land of promise; they didn’t see God as their Partner, they thought they had to do it alone. But note, in today’s world we must be careful to always see God as our Partner.

**Remember the Holy Spirit — our Paraclete (one who walks along side of us) is our Helper. He can’t help us if we aren’t doing anything.**

Also, God is our Source and He provides resources.

**Numbers 14:28** is a classic example of God allowing man to make his own decisions, even if it is not what is best for us. God respects our decision-making authority in the earth.

However, when the people realized the consequence of their decision, they wanted to change their minds, but it was too late. God said that they would wander around in the desert for 40 years, until that generation of fighting men had all died out, except for Joshua and Caleb, the two who believed.

It is interesting that those who believed and those who did not believe were linked together. They both had to wander in the desert for 40 years, except, at the end of the forty years, those that believed (Joshua and Caleb) did indeed go in to possess the land.



This should be a reminder to us that the company we keep and their influence over us can have important consequences for our own lives. If you are hanging around persons with a “grasshopper mentality”, you will eventually have that mentality too.

**ALSO, MAKE SURE YOU ARE NOT HANGING AROUND CARNAL MINDED CHRISTIANS; FOR TO BE CARNAL MINDED IS DEATH!** (Romans 8:6–8)

As the end of the forty years of wandering in the desert was coming to an end, God again directed Moses and Eleazar to take another census of the fighting men among Israel. (Numbers 26:1–4)

At this time, Aaron had died and Eleazar, his son had succeeded him.

**Aaron died the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 40<sup>th</sup> year after the Exodus event according to Numbers 33:37–38. He was 123 years when he died. Now, Aaron was three years older than Moses; so, at Aaron’s death Moses is 120 years old.**

*”<sup>1</sup> After the plague the LORD said to Moses and Eleazar son of Aaron, the priest, <sup>2</sup> “Take a census of the whole Israelite community by families—all those twenty years old or more who are able to serve in the army of Israel.” <sup>3</sup> So on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho, Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them and said, <sup>4</sup> “Take a census of the men twenty years old or more, as the LORD commanded Moses.”(Numbers 26:1–4).*

The results of this census is given by the following passage:

*“<sup>51</sup> The total number of the men of Israel was 601,730.”* (Numbers 26:51).

Please note that after the first census in Numbers Chapter 1, the number of Israeli fighting men were 603,550 and some forty years later the number of fighting men were 601,730. It’s interesting to note that the Book of Exodus mentioned how the Israelites dramatically grew in number during their time of captivity in Egypt.

But now for this forty-year period, the population of the fighting men did not increase. Instead, they were simply replaced. It seems that God is saying to the Israelites that they did not need a larger army in order to take the land, but what they needed was to trust Him to work through their efforts and bless them. God was showing them that their success is not based on their might, but on their ability to trust Him to work through them.

Similarly, in our lives today, God is encouraging us to believe that we already have sufficient faith to overcome all our problems. We don’t need more faith; we need to trust God with the faith that we do have and believe that God will make up the difference. Our (The Peoples’ Community Baptist Church) theme this year is **“Lord You make all the difference.”**

In the Book of Numbers, God wanted the Israelites to not look at their ability, but to trust Him to work through them. Today, God wants us to not look at our ability, or resources, or health status, but use our faith — trust Him for that which we need: accomplishments, jobs/employment, and/or healing.

God wanted to go with the Israelites and fight the battles for them, but they had to trust Him enough to move out and go. He wants to go with us in the battles of our lives, but we too have to trust Him enough to move out and go!



So, let's not have a "grasshopper mentality;" instead let's be wise stewards over the promises He has given us in His Word, because we were created in His image, empowered by the Holy Spirit and endowed with spiritual gifts and talents to fulfill the plan and purpose He ordained for us.

### Notes on Deuteronomy

The Book of Deuteronomy opens in the fortieth year after the Israelites were delivered out of Egypt. After wandering in the Sinai desert for some 39 years, they find themselves on the east side of the Jordan River at a location that is opposite or nearly opposite the walled city of Jericho. During the forty years of wandering, the Israelite community was largely transformed into a new people. There were likely very few men over the age 60!

As you recall from the Book of Numbers, forty years earlier, the men who Moses sent to explore the Promised Land brought to Moses and the Israelite community an evil report which convinced the people that they could not defeat the inhabitants of the land and take possession of it. God called this an evil report and he decreed that all the fighting men of Israel 20 years of age and over would die in the desert and not enter the Promised Land except for Joshua and Caleb.

God set aside a forty-year period for all the unbelieving fighting men to die! Also, during this time, He would raise up their children to replace them. It is interesting that God did not try to rehabilitate the unbelievers. **He just moved them off the scene. He let them die. Selah**

These unbelievers were eyewitnesses to all the miracles that God did in Egypt when He brought them out of slavery. They saw God part the Red Sea and they themselves walked across on dry ground. They were eyewitnesses to God bringing water out of the rock. They saw God speak to them out of the fire and smoke on Mount Sinai — "the great theophany."

These events show the great length to which God went, in order, to reveal Himself to the nation of Israel. And after witnessing God perform all those miracles ... revealing Himself, still they could not believe.

It seems as if God said to Himself ... If they don't believe me after all this, they have forfeited their opportunity for further help. In fact, it is as if God is saying that not only will they not believe, but they will hinder the entire nation from believing. The most efficient remedy was to remove them from the scene, to get them out of the way; so that others may believe and succeed.

A message to us today is that when God reveals Himself to us via life circumstances or via His Word, we are to consider it to be very precious — an **EPOCH (remarkable event, circumstance)** in our lives. It is to be treasured!

We should see God's revelation to us as a roadmap or signal to draw closer to Him ... to trust Him more, to become more dependent on Him. We should allow it to encourage our faith and propel us forward.

This segment of the Israelite's history also teaches us something about God:

1. God is loving, patient, and longsuffering
2. God has the best in mind for us and the best plan for us
3. We have a role to play in accepting His goodness
4. It is possible for us to miss a season of blessing
  - a. by being slow to believe;
  - b. slow to act on God's revelation/illumination; or,
  - c. just insensitive to what God is saying to us.

### **How we handle that which God has revealed to us is serious business!**

However, God's plan to give the Promised Land to the descendants of Jacob was not deterred. In fact, in the Book of Numbers, God identifies exactly who would go in and possess the land.

*"<sup>31</sup> As for your children that you said would be taken as plunder, I will bring them in to enjoy the land you have rejected. <sup>32</sup> But as for you, your bodies will fall in this wilderness."* (Numbers 14:31).

As a result, when the Book of Deuteronomy opens, all the fighting men who came out of Egypt had died, except for Joshua and Caleb; and Moses is talking to the children of the previous fighting men, the next generation of Israel's army.

The Book of Deuteronomy is the last book of the Pentateuch. As you know, the Pentateuch consists of five books which is accredited to Moses as the author.

In the Book of Deuteronomy Moses recounts the miracles, signs and wonders that God performed in delivering His people from Egypt. He goes over the commands and statutes that God gave him for the children of Israel.

Moses is preparing the people to move into the Promised Land and assures them that God will be with them as long as they obey His commands and that Joshua would be their new leader. He also tells them that God will not allow him to enter the Promised Land because he did not sanctify God in the presence of the people. God told Moses to **speak** to the rock; instead Moses **struck** the rock in anger. It cost Moses dearly, that one act of disobedience, even though Hebrews says "Moses was a faithful servant over God's house"; and God, Himself, said in Numbers 12:7 that Moses was faithful.

I say again...

**DO NOT LET CARNAL MINDED PEOPLE CAUSE YOU TO MISS YOUR PROMISED LAND!**

So, in Deuteronomy, Moses gives three discourses to the children of Israel before he dies. The Book of Deuteronomy opens about six months after Aaron's death on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of 11<sup>th</sup> month of the 40<sup>th</sup> year after the Exodus event. This means that Moses was still 120 years old; so, between Aaron's and Moses' deaths there are about 6 months, certainly less than a year.

The Book of Deuteronomy can be broken into three sections:

Chapters 1–4	— retrospective discourse	—	“What God has done for Israel”
Chapters 4–26	— introspective discourse	—	“What God expects of Israel”
Chapters 27–30	— prospective discourse	—	“What God Will do for Israel”

In Chapter 1 and most of Chapter 2 of Deuteronomy, Moses recounts for this new army some of Israel's recent history. He recalled how their parents, forty years earlier, refused to believe God and how that caused them to wander in the desert for forty years while the parents gradually died and their children gradually grew up.

In Chapters 5 and 6 of Deuteronomy, Moses recalls for the Israelites the commands of God as they relate to their day-to-day lives. These included: encouragement to obey God, warnings against idolatry, and he re-introduces to them the Law of the Ten Commandments. Moses is telling the people what God expects of them.

In Chapter 7 God gives explicit instructions about how the Israelites are to handle the people that they are about to conquer. The conquered peoples were to be totally destroyed.

*“<sup>2</sup> and when the LORD your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then you must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy.”*  
(Deuteronomy 7:2)

In Chapters 8 and 9 God gives Israel important warnings about how to handle the success of driving out the nations and taking possession of the land.

**In Chapter 8 God warns them to not follow other gods after they have settled in the land and to not think that their success is due to their own effort.**

*“<sup>17</sup> You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” <sup>18</sup> But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.*

*<sup>19</sup> If you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. <sup>20</sup> Like the nations the LORD destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the LORD your God.”*  
(Deuteronomy 8:17–20).

In Chapter 9, God realizes that the success that He is about to give the Israelites in defeating the nations of the Promised Land might tempt the Israelites to become arrogant as a result of being so blessed by Him. They might assume that God's blessing upon them is because of their righteousness. God wanted to correct this before it even happened. He corrects it in Deuteronomy 9:4–6:

*“<sup>4</sup> 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 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 before you. <sup>5</sup> It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God will drive them out before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. <sup>6</sup> Understand, then, that it is not because of your righteousness that the LORD your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stiff-necked people.” (Deuteronomy 9:4–6).*

In summary, Chapters 8 and 9 provide three warnings for us today and gives an indication of how God expects us to handle His blessings:

1. Realize that the blessings in our lives come from Him and we did not do it ourselves,
2. Remember Him and keep Him first place in our lives and put nothing before Him,
3. Resist being self-righteous and believing that our blessings have been ‘earned’ by our righteousness.

All three of these lessons can be implemented in our lives by maintaining always a humble spirit before God our Father.

### **GOD EXPECTS US TO ALWAYS REJOICE IN HIM AND HAVE A GRATEFUL HEART AND BE THANKFUL!**

The majority of the rest of the Book of Deuteronomy is concerned with Moses continuing to recall the history of the nation of Israel and how they are to live (be good stewards) in the Promised Land; so that they will super abound having all their needs met and meet the needs of others, which is the purpose of the **Principle of Stewardship**. And Moses tells the Israelites what God will do for them if they obey. In fact, a general theme of all these chapters is the linkage of obedience to God’s instructions and rules for day-to-day life and living successfully.

While it is important to understand the context of the big picture of what God is doing through Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy, it is also important and instructive for us to get a more detailed glimpse into how Moses actually spoke to this new generation of Israelites. So, now as we close out this version of the Deuteronomy notes, we ask the following question:

### **Why did God have Moses go through that long and laborious process of re-teaching the Israelites their history?**

Because Israel’s future in the Promised Land will depend on a right relationship with God.

### **THEY HAD TO BE GOOD/WISE STEWARDS AND OBEY HIS COMMANDMENTS!**

Let's look at a passage from Chapter 4 of Deuteronomy.

*“<sup>35</sup> You were shown these things so that you might know that the LORD is God; besides him there is no other. <sup>36</sup> From heaven he made you hear his voice to discipline you. On earth he showed you his great fire, and you heard his words from out of the fire. <sup>37</sup> Because he loved your ancestors and chose their descendants after them, he brought you out of Egypt by his Presence and his great strength, <sup>38</sup> to drive out before you nations greater and stronger than you and to bring you into their land to give it to you for your inheritance, as it is today.”* (Deuteronomy 4:35-38).

This passage may be looked at as an effort by Moses to enlarge the perception that the Israelites had of God. When you know God as the above passage admonishes them to do, then they will realize that God is their source. Their ability to perform God's assignment is linked to understanding that He is with them. The knowledge that God is with them gives them confidence that they will accomplish all that God has for them to do.

It causes them not to look at their inability, but to look to God. To know God is to trust God. That's why it is so important to read His Word — so you might know His commands and promises — that we know the God, we serve who is our heavenly Father. That we like Moses may know His Ways — not just His acts.

Moses was encouraging them by telling them that God had already done great things for them, which should let them know that He will indeed perform this great task as well. For there is nothing too hard for God. Moses didn't want them to have a “grasshopper mentality.”

### **Moses was getting the new generation of Israelites ready for war!**

Now, Jesus has gotten the victory for us; but He tells us to occupy until He gets back. In other words, we have to maintain our territory — our Promised Land because we have an adversary who goes around seeking whom he can devour.

Let's review the definition of maintenance:

What does maintenance mean?

*The act of maintaining (to keep in an existing state; preserve from failure or decline (one's health); to sustain against \*opposition or danger; uphold and keep up; bear the expense of*

\*Opposition of the devil---1 Peter 5:8-9:

*<sup>8</sup> Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.*

## **IV. Practical Application**

- A. Remember to keep God (His Word) in first place
- B. Redeem the time
- C. Resist/Reject self-righteousness

Testimony — 21<sup>st</sup> Century character (Sol Hicks) who walks in the Principle of Stewardship.

## **PRAYER**

Father, I pray that we will simply be wise stewards over Your Word; so, we might super abound having all our needs met and meet the needs of others. And that we will obey You and Your Word. For Jesus said in John 10:27, “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.” That we will listen for Your voice and obey that still small voice — following the pattern that our Lord and Savior modeled; for He set Himself like a flint and joyed as He went to the cross. He was obedient until to death. May we joy, as we crucify the flesh, and abound in the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, in Jesus’ Name. Amen.