

## Preparing for Victory – Part 2

The Bible tells us that God had brought His children, Israel, out of Egypt, and after their deliverance from Egypt, God's will for His people was for them to be prepared to enter the Promised Land. He had brought them out of bondage to a land reserved for them to inhabit. But there was a major obstacle that they must overcome if they were to dwell in the land. Canaan was occupied by several Gentile nations. They were people who would hinder their walk with the Lord and lead them away from His paths. If Israel were to possess the land, the occupying nations had to be removed.

If you've been following our study, you'll remember how that we looked at six of those Gentile nations we read of in Deuteronomy 7:1-8. We found in those nations a picture of those things that often hinder our walk with the Lord as Christians. We've looked at the character of sin, Deuteronomy Chapter 7. We saw in the text that the Hittites were there. These were allowed to remain, and, of course, this is a representation of sin that is allowed to remain in our lives as saved people. We saw the Girgashites. Little is known about them. They represent the secret sins of life. And then we see the Amorites. These were a rebellious, bitter people. I don't think I have to tell you anything about these people today, because we have people around us who are bitter and, yes, even saved people who are bitter.

Number four are the Canaanites, known for immorality, false worship. They were merchants or peddlers. This would be a representation of modern-day charlatans, making a mockery of God and selling things to make a fortune. Perizzites, they dwelt in unwallled villages. They allowed the world in. Of course, this is a representation of not

guarding against worldliness. And then we see the Hivites. Unwilling to fight, these people were arrogant. They thought they could do everything on their own. Well, this could be a representation of Christians doing things on their own and trusting in themselves instead of God. Not willing to take a stand against sin.

This brings us to the Jebusites. The Jebusites... their name means "trodden underfoot"... lived on the border between Judah and Benjamin, and neither tribe was able to remove them. The Jebusites picture people who have forsaken the holiness of God, those who have trodden upon that which we have received from Him. I've seen churches that once enjoyed the blessings of God and they grew and prospered in Him but soon forgot that it was God who had blessed them. They got so big that they forgot the Lord. His presence was no longer viewed as essential. These once giants for the Lord no longer exist as God-honoring churches or Bible-based Christian schools, and many have simply ceased to be.

I never want to be guilty of overlooking the presence and power of our Lord. We need Him every day we live and every time we gather together as God's people. It's dangerous to tread upon the holiness of our Lord. The Bible says, *Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, it an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace.* Hebrews 10:29 says that.

If we are to possess the fullness of God, the fullness that God intends for us, and that's victory, we must rid our lives of those things

we have welcomed in that prevent us from being all we should be for the Lord. Canaan is in sight and reachable for the church, but it must be achieved according to the will of God. Christians cannot live a life of abundance and victory while allowing the world to remain an influence in their lives.

I want to continue examining the truths today within this passage, Deuteronomy Chapter 7. Once again, as we consider preparing for victory, it's time for us to advance and inhabit the land of promise. As we looked at the nations mentioned in Deuteronomy 7:1, we considered the character of sin. Now, we need to consider the challenge of sin.

It would not be easy for Israel to live in the land, but God had a plan and wanted Israel to follow His plan. Israel understood who the people were who already lived in the land. They were aware that these nations had to be destroyed and removed. We, too, see those things in our lives that hinder us. We are aware of the character and destructive nature of sin, and the question is this: What are we going to do about it? These verses give some insight on how to approach and deal with the sin that hinders our lives.

Notice this. Sin must be acknowledged. The Lord revealed there were seven nations greater and mightier than the people. It was clear that God wanted Israel to possess the land, but here we find that this would be a great challenge. God did not mislead Israel by sugarcoating the challenge before them. He told them upfront they faced an adversary that was greater and mightier than they were. It says there in Deuteronomy 7:1 "seven nations greater and mightier than thou." God told them. God wanted them to know the battle was not within their power to handle. They were in a situation that was beyond their ability to control. He wanted them to see

themselves as dependent upon Him. The task they faced was greater than they were. It would be impossible without the Lord.

If we are to overcome and enjoy the land of victory, we also must acknowledge that we alone cannot handle the sin and difficulties in our lives.

One of the greatest challenges in our day is getting folks to admit there is a need in their lives. We are faced with countless situations that are much mightier than we are in this flesh. Plainly stated, you cannot handle sin by yourself. You may think you are doing great and have beat the sin problem, but when we pat ourselves on the back for a job well done, sin will defeat us every time. It will take the presence and power of God in our lives in order to overcome the enemy... sin. There isn't a one of us who could not give in to the power of sin. There isn't a one of us that is exempt from temptation. You need to acknowledge your weakness and seek the help of the Lord. David was a man after God's own heart, and yet, he succumbed to temptation. The Bible says this, *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall*, I Corinthians 10:12.

Sin must be acknowledged and sin must be addressed. In Deuteronomy 7:2, in the first part of that verse, it says, *And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them*. He's speaking to Israel there about those nations. In verse 5 it goes on to say, *But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire*.

God was prepared to deliver the people of the Gentile nations into the hands of the Israelites. He expected Israel to deal with

those nations as He commanded. God wanted them to utterly destroy the enemy. They were to rid themselves of any remembrance or influence of the pagan ways of the Gentiles. It would have been in vain for Israel to have tried to possess the land with the enemy still there. They couldn't just ignore the enemy and hope they would leave. The enemy had to be dealt with. Israel had to address this issue. We think of the vainness when we think of people thinking they can handle things on their own, but that's vain, and this was vain for Israel to have tried to possess that land without the help of God, without God on their side.

We must address the issue of our enemy... sin. As Israel had to address the issue of their enemy, sin must be addressed in our lives. We cannot just ignore it or deny it when God brings conviction to our hearts concerning those things that are not right with Him. God expects sin in our lives to be dealt with. We cannot overcome sin of ourselves, but we can take it to the Lord. When the Lord brings conviction to your heart, He is offering you an opportunity to find deliverance from sin in your life.

The chastening of the Lord is not fun. I still don't enjoy it when God chastens me, but I have come to realize chastening is for my good. The Lord chastens and convicts us so that He might help us and bring us back to where we need to be. Once you have acknowledged your sin, you must address it. Sin must be dealt with. It will only grow and get much worse left alone. Once sin is acknowledged and addressed, then, since must be abandoned.

In Deuteronomy 7:2-4, it says this: <sup>2a</sup>*[T]hou shalt make no covenant with them...* speaking to Israel, talking about making a covenant with these nations... *nor shew*

*mercy unto them: <sup>3</sup>Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. <sup>4</sup>For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly, Deuteronomy 7:2-4.*

And there was no mercy in regard to the pagan nations. They were not to compromise or show sympathy toward them. Israel's children were not to intermarry with them. There would always be the danger of sinful influence if the enemy were allowed to remain. God wanted Israel completely removed from any influence of the gentile nations.

The same is true for our spiritual lives today. Once we have dealt with the sin in our lives, it must be abandoned. There is no such thing as sin in moderation. There is no such thing as a little indulgence. What is done in moderation usually leads to excess. If you are dabbling in sin today, it will become obsessive sooner than you think. We must rid ourselves of anything that would hinder us from serving the Lord.

Many homes have been destroyed because of "a casual affair." How many alcoholics said they would take a drink just one time? How many drug addicts think they can handle their drug abuse with the attitude, "Just a little can't hurt me." You can't play with sin and get away with it. It's dangerous, and the best approach is to avoid it altogether. Keep yourself from those places and situations that cause temptation. When you seek forgiveness, leave it at the feet of Jesus instead of picking it up again.

We will never reach our spiritual Canaan as long as we're unwilling to deal with the sin in

our lives. If God is dealing with your heart, let Him take care of it. Give it to Him. Admit the sin, not to get saved again, but because you are saved. Let Jesus Christ take care of you and take care of that sin problem in your life.

If you've never trusted Him as your Savior, why not bow your head right now and receive Him as Lord.

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