

Drash on Devarim (Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22)

Ahavat Yeshua DC Service

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Parashat [Devarim](#) (דְּבָרִים) is the first parashat of the last book of the Torah, also named *Devarim*, which means *words*. The English title of the book, Deuteronomy, is actually Latin and literally means *Second Law*, referring to how it functionally repeats the first four books of the Torah. The book contains speeches made by Moses very near the end of his time leading Israel through the desert. Indeed, there may not have been enough time for him to write it out afterwards; thus, he may have been reading it aloud.

The first two parashats are a speech that reviews Israel's recent history starting with the departure from Mt. Horeb where the Covenant was established. This parashat ends with the assigning of the land formerly governed by Og and Sihon to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh.

Yah-a-mod, Yahnatan ben Daniel v'Patricia v'gam Gila bat Stephan v'Hannah. Via Zoom, Jonathon will read and Laura will check Deuteronomy chapter 1, verses 32 and 33 in Hebrew and in English from the Complete Jewish Bible:

³² Yet in this matter you don't trust Adonai your God, ³³ even though he went ahead of you, seeking out places for you to pitch your tents and showing you which way to go, by fire at night and by a cloud during the day.

Thank you, Jonathon and Laura.

“This matter” refers to obeying ADONAI's command to go into the Promised Land and take complete control of it. Since the Exodus, the faith of the Israelites had been uncertain. In some matters God could be trusted, but there were some matters that led most of the Israelites to set God straight on how He was failing to provide for their needs. In *this* matter, however, they crossed a line that resulted in a dramatic change of destiny for that entire generation save Joshua and Caleb. The rest got what they thought they wanted only to realize they had wanted a wrong thing. Worse, they persisted in not trusting God and launched an invasion contrary to God's updated Will for them, an endeavor now doomed to failure.

This speech was being presented approximately 38 years after the referenced failure to trust ADONAI. It is probable a majority of the listeners weren't even old enough to be aware of this matter at that time; indeed, most had not yet been born. So we should not put too much stock in this translation's choice of present tense for the first verse. After all, English translations by far render this in past tense. I have not discovered why the CJB translates verse 32 this way, but I have a theory: the present tense predisposes anyone reading it (or hearing it read) to consider they themselves, in some matter, do not trust God even though He has done so much for them. This provides opportunity for the Holy Spirit to illuminate

lack of trust in need of repentance. I will not request a show of hands by those who experienced such illumination when the verse was read by Jonathon to avoid temptations to possibly misrepresent responses in order to signal one's virtue to others.

I call myself a Believer. I base this upon that moment in my life when I received and accepted divine revelation that Yeshua is the Messiah—the Son of God. This is no different from Simon's revelation that led to his name being changed to Peter. His experience just preceded mine and hopefully yours. Receiving this divine revelation is the rock that the Messianic world view is built upon. And according to Ephesians chapter 2 verses 8 through 9 [CJB], we cannot take credit for that:

⁸ For you have been delivered by grace through trusting, and even this is not your accomplishment but God's gift. ⁹ You were not delivered by your own actions; therefore no one should boast.

I don't call myself a Truster, but I could. Understand that believing and trusting are, for all intents and purposes, one and the same. Faith, too, is tightly intertwined with belief and trust. The three are almost inseparable. When someone is faithful, you can generally trust them and believe them, too. God Himself is the epitome of faithfulness, trustworthiness, and believability.

True belief, trust, and faith in God are not shallow or halfway. I really liked how Don Finto exhorted us more than once at the last Tikkun conference to "put your weight on it." What does that mean? In an observation room way up Toronto's [CN Tower](#) back in the '90s there was a transparent area in the floor big enough for a dozen people or more. You could clearly see the concrete area directly underneath about two Washington Monuments away. I, myself, experienced a surprisingly strong reluctance to put my full weight upon that area. Don't even think of jumping and stomping on it repeatedly while carrying as much weight as you are able. This reluctance is a natural response to perceived danger. However, I did overcome it by trusting, somewhat through my understanding of construction materials and engineering, but particularly from my observation that none of the people choosing to be supported by that glass floor ever fell to the waiting concrete far below. What Don Finto means is totally trust and depend upon God's Will for you every second of the rest of your life no matter how precarious and unwise that appears to you. This is not an option for Believers; rather, it's our hallmark.

Of that generation, Joshua and Caleb alone walked in trust, faith, and belief at the time of this matter. 38 years later, they walked into the Promised Land. They overcame what sought to hold them back from trusting and believing that they could do what God had commanded and thereby accomplished what they had been created to accomplish.

So how do we overcome? Not [*sung*] "we shall overcome some day"—no, "we shall overcome, right now!" First John chapter 5 verse 5 [AMP] makes the *how we overcome now* very plain:

Who is the one who is victorious and overcomes the world? It is the one who believes and recognizes the fact that Jesus is the Son of God.

Well, what work must we undertake to overcome right now? According to John chapter 6 verse 29 [AMP]:

²⁹ Jesus answered, "This is the work of God: that you believe [adhere to, trust in, rely on, and have faith] in the One whom He has sent."

So, believe. Period. You can't take pride in any deeds with which you have been involved that will pass through the fire to come, because it is God who is doing them through you. Everything you do with which God is not in fact involved is wood, hay, and stubble. You have no basis for boasting. Don Finto taught that as well. We are commanded to take captive every thought contrary to our faith and belief and make it conform to the Word of God, right now, per Second Corinthians chapter 10 verses 4 through 6. But don't try to do this in your own natural ability—you cannot. In faith, get out of the driver's seat and let the Holy Spirit drive your life right now and forever more while you verify everything He tells you is Scriptural (and if you can't verify it, ask Him how is it Scriptural). Consider Yeshua's example as recorded in Mark chapter 1 verses 9 through 13 [AMP]:

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ [f]Immediately coming up out of the water, he (John) saw the heavens torn open, and the [g]Spirit like a dove descending on Him (Jesus); ¹¹ and a [h]voice came out of heaven saying: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased and delighted!" ¹² Immediately the [Holy] Spirit forced Him out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted [to do evil] by Satan; and He was with the wild animals, and the angels ministered continually to Him.

And to that add Yeshua's explanation of his motivations in John chapter 5 verse 30 [AMP]:

I can do nothing on my own initiative or authority. Just as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just (fair, righteous, unbiased), because I do not seek My own will, but only the will of Him who sent Me.

Follow Him. Become like Him. The second most important reason He came in the flesh was to show us what total devotion to God looks like—how to do it. So ape Him. You can, and should, be led by The Holy Spirit in everything you do.

The glass floor analogy is the Believing 101 syllabus. Believing 201 looks at Peter's faith to, per Yeshua's command, get out of the boat during the storm and walk over to Him. Water is not as solid as glass. Expressions of fear, doubt, and unbelief arose in Peter that were not squelched, so he started falling. But the outcome depended not upon him solely, but mostly on The LORD who had not only commanded him to step out in faith, but enabled him to do so. Remember God is invested in your success when you are stepping out in faith, and if He allows you to fail, it is so you can learn something important that will prevent such failure in the future. Beware of having faith in your faith.

Any time you find yourself struggling with unbelief, first remember: it is a liar. Fighting unbelief does not nullify the transaction that made you a Believer. For proof, there is Mark chapter 9 verses 21 through 24 [AMP]:

²¹ Jesus asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he answered, "Since childhood. ²² The demon has often thrown him both into fire and into water, intending to kill him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" ²³ Jesus said to him, "[You say to Me,] 'If You can?' All things are possible for the one who

believes and trusts [in Me]!" ²⁴ Immediately the father of the boy cried out [with a desperate, piercing cry], saying, "I do believe; help [me overcome] my unbelief."

With unsurprising wisdom, Yeshua said what was needed to lead the father into immediately and strongly proclaiming aloud his belief and asking Yeshua to fight in the battle with unbelief. "Go, thou, and do likewise."

Notice the disciples, previously amazed by their authority over demons, discovered in this story they did not yet know-it-all. If you say to yourself, "I got this", you may be about to fail. You must always utterly depend upon God to work through you while remembering He may be setting you up for a learning experience.

Believing 301 looks at that concrete underneath. It is not the true danger. The everlasting Lake of Fire on the other side is the true danger. The concrete is merely the gateway to either eternal life with God or eternal life without God. So don't be concerned about death. Be concerned about the Judgment that follows it and be concerned about those who do not believe this to be true.

Your Promised Land awaits your graduation. Revelations chapter 12 verse 11 [AMP] describes the graduates of this curriculum:

And they overcame and conquered [the adversary] because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, for they did not love their life and renounce their faith even when faced with death.

Time does not allow reading the second and third chapters of Revelations for some of the promises made to those who overcome the world through believing that Yeshua is the Son of God. I encourage you to read them often.

Lastly, keep in mind all those who have put their weight on all this, whether those around you in the present or those who overcame in the past. You, too, can do this though Messiah Yeshua within you. Don't be like the chicken in the steak and eggs breakfast project, who was involved. Be like the cow, who was committed.

The next parashat is *V'et'chanan* and spans Deuteronomy chapter 3 verse 23 through chapter 7 verse 11.