

Why We Might Be Looking at This Old Testament Book All Wrong

There are many things in the Bible that help me to have confidence and faith in the overpowering forgiveness of G-D. One of the most significant is the book of Deuteronomy. Yes, the last book of the Torah, or first five books of the Bible. You may wonder why I would consider the book of Deuteronomy such a faith builder. It is because the entire book takes place simply because the children of Israel failed to trust and obey G-D. That's right. Think about it: the children of Israel were at the banks of the Jordan looking over into Canaan in the book of Numbers. It is in the book of Numbers that G-D speaks to Moses and Israel about how He is going to drive the inhabitants out of the land of Canaan and give it to the children of Israel, as promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It is in the book of Numbers that the Children of Israel send spies into the land which come back to report that everything in the Promised Land was exactly as G-D had promised them. And it is in the book of Numbers that the children of Israel look with eyes wide open and see that all was just as G-D promised them, and yet they still lacked the faith to enter the land and take the gift that G-D had promised to give them.

If the children of Israel had only acted in faith and crossed the Jordan in the book of Numbers, we would not have the book of Deuteronomy. Yet, they did not believe. They did not walk in faith. They spent nearly 40 extra years in the wilderness and as a result, you and I have the book of Deuteronomy.

We have a book that exists because Israel lacked the faith to believe what G-D had promised them. Or do we? What if the book of Deuteronomy isn't simply the result of unbelief and lack of

trust? What if we take a moment and remember that nothing has ever surprised G-D? What if we understood that even before the foundation of the world, G-D had a plan and within that plan, He knew that the children of Israel would come to the banks of the Jordan and walk in fear, doubt and unbelief and as a result, experience all the events of the 38 years in the wilderness? What if those years and the book of Deuteronomy were provided so that all those that followed, in the years after Moses wrote those words in the scroll, would see an amazing example of G-D's forgiveness and the power of G-D's covenant promises?

What if we began to look at the book of Deuteronomy as a book about G-D's success instead of looking at it as a book about Israel's failure? What if it is meant for you and I to read today and be reminded that there is nothing we can ever do that can cause G-D not to keep His promises to us? What if Deuteronomy was written so that every time we stumbled in our faith and failed to obey G-D in faith, we could read that final book of Torah and be reminded that G-D keeps His promises, even when we fail to keep ours? What if Deuteronomy was actually written not because of Israel's failure, but because of G-D's covenant promises? {eoa}

Eric Tokajer *is author of* With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity, OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry, #ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer *and* Jesus is to Christianity as Pasta is to Italians.