

DANGER ZONES, Part II

(Beyond Faith, Beyond Fear, Beyond Blessings)

In a Christian's life, safety and blessings can only come through worship to God and obedience to His word.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ Deuteronomy is the record of Moses' last speech to the nation of Israel before he died.
- ❖ The majority of his listeners had been under 20 years of age when Israel left Egypt for the 11-day trip to the Promised Land, or had been born during the now 40-year journey through the wilderness.
- ❖ Moses was telling and/or reminding them of what had happened over the course of those 40 years.
- ❖ At this time, Israel was living in a reality that can be described as a place "beyond faith".
- ❖ But for Israel, this "place beyond faith" turned out to be a place of fear, rebellion, complaining and disobedience.
- ❖ They had been and were experiencing a multitude of divine, miraculous interventions on their behalf on a daily basis. They didn't only know what God *could* do; they were living in the reality of what God was *doing* for them every single day.
- ❖ Living "beyond faith", we know the miraculous works God has done and is doing every day of our lives. So our problem is not that we lack faith in *God*; it's really that we lack faith in *ourselves and our own abilities*. We then take that self-focused lack of faith and project our self-doubting on God.
- ❖ God knows it is impossible for us to do what only He can do – so all He requires is for us to trust Him!
- ❖ God responded to Israel's lack of faith with this decree: "...your little ones and your children...they shall go in there; to them I will give [the Promised Land]..." (Deut. 1:39).
- ❖ We read of Gideon in Judges 6, 7 and 8. In chapter 7:16-18, we see him move from a place of fear to a place of total assurance of victory and success.
- ❖ We too can move to a place "beyond fear".
- ❖ But here is the danger: PRIDE. When we experience God's miraculous deliverance and provision, we have a tendency somehow to begin thinking of it as "our" success and to expect some credit for it.
- ❖ Pride is a dangerous enemy. In Gideon's case, he immediately added his own name to the battle cry (v. 18). Then after his God-given victory, he used loot from the war to make a golden ephod that became an idol to the people (8:24-27).
- ❖ At least 15 times in Deuteronomy 4 & 5, Moses refers to God speaking to His people in an audible voice, giving them Commandments by which to live.
- ❖ Moses was highlighting another crucial aspect of continuing to receive God's blessing in our lives, and the 'wise man' of Ecclesiastes echoes the

KEY SCRIPTURES: Deuteronomy 6:1-15; 1:19-39, 2:25, 3:22, 5:29 (Ecclesiastes 12:13); Judges 7:13-18, 8:24-27

principle: "Fear God and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

- ❖ Deuteronomy 6 begins with the famous 'Shema' teachings and instructions:
 - "Hear, O Israel: **The LORD our God, the LORD is one!** ⁵...**love the LORD your God...** ⁶...**these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.** ⁷...**teach them...**to your children...**talk of them...**in your house, when you walk...when you lie down...when you rise up. ⁸...**bind them...**on your hand...as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹...**write them** on the doorposts of your house and on your gates" (6:4-9).
- ❖ The word of God has to be our manual for living. His law and His commandments must be our daily delight. We should be shouting "Amen!" with David in Psalm 119:9-16.
- ❖ This needs to be our response to God as we navigate the dangers that lie in the place beyond faith and the place beyond fear, striving never to reach the place where we are beyond the blessings of God.
- ❖ Praise and worship must be in our hearts and on our lips; gratitude and humility must be consistent in our lives. Our faith and trust must be in God, not in man. And our love for Him must be undiluted and unconditional.
- ❖ We need to stay out of the danger zones and daily live in His presence!

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. In your own words, describe the following places: 'beyond faith', 'beyond fear' and 'beyond blessings'.
2. Have you ever been afraid of, or for some other reason not acted on something God told you to do? Explain why, as best you can.
3. Using scriptures for reference, describe how God interprets and responds to our lack of faith and our resulting disobedience to him.
4. Review the following scriptures that will help us live in the place of gratitude, praise, love and trust in God: Psalm 100, 34:1-10. 95:1-7, 150; 1 Chronicles 29:11-12.




Prayer Time




Lord, help me to read and believe Your word, trust and obey You, and give You glory always

WEEK OF SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 2019

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

 (Reminds me/Confirms)
  (New idea)
  (Think about)

 (Do this)
  (Speaks to my heart)
  (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

Start-up: What is your typical reaction when someone doubts your word and/or fails to act on specific instructions you have given?