

The Acts of God

Stand still and see the marvelous things our God does!

Deuteronomy 1–4

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • April 7, In the year of our Lord, 2013

Scripture Reader and Reading: Tim Braden – Deuteronomy 1.1–6

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Kevin Michael – Any exalting God and His works

Prelude:

I. The Lord led Israel

A. from Egypt to Mt. Sinai, but

B. that was not their final destination.

1. That is why in Deuteronomy 1.6

2. Moses said that the Lord had said

a) they had dwelt long enough at Mt. Sinai, or Horeb, and

b) later the Lord said the same thing when they were at another mountain,

1 “Then we turned and journeyed into the wilderness of the Way of the Red Sea, as the Lord spoke to me, and we skirted Mount Seir for many days. 2 “And the Lord spoke to me, saying: 3 “You have skirted this mountain long enough; turn northward. (Deut 2:1–3)

C. Then He continued to display His mighty acts for the children of Israel,

D. going right into the New Testament

1. in the life, death, and resurrected life of Jesus Christ,

2. in the lives of the apostles,

3. in the lives of the church recorded in the New Testament, and

4. continuing daily

a) in the lives of Christians, and

b) in the life of the church.

II. Truly,

8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb 13.8).

12 “Like a cloak You will fold them up,
And they will be changed.
But You are the same,
And Your years will not fail.”
(Heb 1.12)

6a “For I am the Lord, I do not change...”
(Mal 3.6a)

A. Therefore, what He was to and for the Israelites in the wilderness,

1. He is also to and for the church,
 - a) which is the Israel of God,
 - b) in the world.
2. God acts on behalf of His people today,
 - a) although He does not do the same acts as then, but
 - b) He still acts in today’s world.

Persuasion:

I. God Gave Israel Land

8 “See, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land which the Lord swore to your fathers—to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—to give to them and their descendants after them” (Deu 1.8, 20, 21; 2.31, 33; 3.18–22).

A. Therefore, they could conquer anyone,

36 “From Aroer, which is on the bank of the River Arnon, and from the city that is in the ravine, as far as Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us; the Lord our God delivered all to us” (Deu 2.36; 3.2, 3).

B. Brethren, the Lord owns the Earth, and

i. places various peoples in their lands.

12 “The Horites formerly dwelt in Seir, but the descendants of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their place, just as Israel did to the land of their possession which the Lord gave them” (Deu 2.12).

19 “And when you come near the people of Ammon, do not harass them or meddle with them, for I will not give you any of the land of the people of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot as a possession” (Deu 2.19–22).

- a) You see, it was not just Israel
 - b) that the Lord used to dispossess a wicked people, but
 - (1) this is something that He has done throughout history, and
 - (2) He continues to do this today.
2. Remember what Paul said in Acts 17 to the Athenians,

26 “And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings” (Acts 17.26).

- a) That includes us as individuals and families.
 - b) That includes our nation.
- C. Moses even said that God gave something beyond the Earth
- i. to all nations,
 - 2. showing that in the Old Testament,
 - a) just as now,
 - b) His concern was not restricted to Israel,

19 “And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the Lord your God has given to

all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage” (Deu 4.19).

II. God Multiplied Israel

11 “May the Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times more numerous than you are, and bless you as He has promised you!” (Deu 1.11).

A. He promised Abraham to make his descendants

1. as numerous as the stars in the heavens or
2. as numerous as the sand on the seashore, and

B. that continues with Christians,

29 And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise (Gal 3.29).

III. God Fought for Israel

30 “The Lord your God, who goes before you, He will fight for you, according to all He did for you in Egypt before your eyes...” (Deu 1.30).

A. Exodus 14 shows that just before the Lord parted the Red Sea for Israel,

1. Moses had declared who would do the fighting that day,

13 And Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. 14 The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace” (Exo 14.13, 14).

B. The Holy Spirit put that in the Bible

1. that we might know,

37 ...in all...things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us (Rom 8.37).

IV. God Blessed Israel

7 “For the Lord your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand. He knows your trudging through this great wilderness. These forty years the Lord your God has been with you; you have lacked nothing” (Deu 2.7).

A. Why do we give thanks at every meal?

B. Do we believe the Lord only gives us our food?

1. No, of course not, but we cannot give thanks
2. for every step we take,
 - a) otherwise, we would not be able to do anything else, but
 - b) when we give thanks for our food, that represents all that He does.

V. God Punished Israel

2.14 “And the time we took to come from Kadesh Barnea until we crossed over the Valley of the Zered was thirty-eight years, until all the generation of the men of war was consumed from the midst of the camp, just as the Lord had sworn to them. 15 For indeed the hand of the Lord was against them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp until they were consumed” (Deu 2.14, 15).

A. We want to believe that the Lord acts in our lives, but

B. we tend to think only in the sense of blessing us.

1. However, in First Corinthians 11,
2. Paul told our Corinthian brethren
 - a) that they had sicknesses and death among them, because
 - b) they treated the Lord’s Supper with disrespect.

VI. God Made Others Fear Israel

2.25 “This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the nations under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of you, and shall tremble and be

in anguish because of you” (Deu 2.25).

A. Does the world fear us?

1. Yes, they do, and
2. that is why they seek to silence God in public life.

B. What was said against our brethren, as found in Acts 17,

1. is what the world says about us right now, and
2. for that reason they work to silence us,

6 “These who have turned the world upside down have come here too”
(Acts 17.6).

VII. God Loved Israel

4.7 “For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him?” (Deu 4.7, 33, 34).

A. That sounds like something we could read in the New Testament!

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (1Pe 2.9).

1. Truly, Peter’s words come from Exodus 19,
2. now applied to the church and to Christians.

B. Can we call upon our God for whatever reason?

14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him (1Jo 5.14, 15).

Exhortation:

I. Why do you have breath?

- A. Why did you eat today?
- B. Why do you have a Bible on your lap?
 - 1. These, and countless other ways, are the acts of God.
 - 2. All blessings come because of God.

II. This is why God wanted Deuteronomy 1-4 preserved for Christians,

- A. that we might know the acts of God on behalf of His people, because
- B. even as He loved Israel of the flesh
 - 1. so He loves Israel of the Spirit.

III. Do not be discouraged, but

- A. keep your eyes fixed on the One who feeds you daily, and
- B. He shall preserve you, and
 - 1. when the time comes to leave this Earth,
 - 2. He will be with us even as He has always been with us, but
 - a) in an even greater way, for
 - b) at that time we go to be with Him.