

THE COMPLETE DESTRUCTION OF THE ENEMIES OF THE PROMISED LAND: A PICTURE OF SPIRITUAL SEPARATION DEUTERONOMY 07:06–11

Introduction

Enemy after enemy confronts man as he walks throughout life. The enemies are hostile, often attacking and threatening to drain the life out of man. Sometimes the enemies are powerful, far too strong for man to overcome by himself. Without supernatural help, the enemies can easily destroy a person, enemies such as...

- cancer
- heart problems
- other diseases
- accidents
- drugs
- alcohol
- loneliness
- depression
- discouragement
- mental problems
- unemployment
- bankruptcy
- greed
- abuse
- anger
- hostility
- lawlessness
- violence
- war
- death

The list of enemies that attack and threaten to destroy man are almost innumerable. But there is hope, the hope of God's presence and power.

Moses knew this fact, that God would empower His people to conquer the enemies that were to confront them. This is the reason he preached the message of this Scripture to the Israelites. They were camped by the River Jordan in the plain of Moab right across from the great city of Jericho. They were poised to cross over the Jordan and enter into the promised land. But before they could lay claim to their inheritance, they needed to be prepared to face the enemies that were going to oppose them. The enemies were going to be powerful and far more numerous than the Israelites. Fear and doubt were potential problems; therefore, Moses had to challenge the people to obey God. In obeying God, they would assure the presence and power of God. Disobedience would cut them off from God, separating them from Him. But obedience would secure the presence and power of God and assure victory over all the enemies who attacked. This is the subject of this important passage of Scripture: *The Most Dangerous Threat Against the Law of God: the Enemies of the Promised Land*, Deuteronomy 7:1-26.

- I. The clear charge of God: Defeat! Conquer! Totally destroy all enemies of the promised land (vv. 1-5).
 - II. The reasons why all enemies of the promised land must be completely destroyed: a picture of spiritual separation (vv. 6-11).
 - III. The results of obedience: what happens if all the enemies of the promised land are destroyed (vv. 12-16).
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IV. The solution to doubt and fear: the presence and power of God (vv. 17-26).

Deuteronomy 07:06–11 The Reasons Why All Enemies of the Promised Land Must Be Completely Destroyed: A Picture of Spiritual Separation

The reasons why all enemies of the promised land must be completely destroyed are clearly spelled out. Moses wanted to stir up the people to obey God, to make sure they completely destroyed all enemies who would keep them out of the promised land. God's people must march into the promised land and lay claim to the inheritance promised by God. This was their right: to live as conquerors throughout life and to secure their spiritual rest in the promised land of God. Five strong reasons are given for obeying God, for conquering all the enemies who seek to defeat them and keep them out of the promised land.

1. Standing there preaching with fire in his heart, Moses declared: "You are to obey God. Go forth and conquer all the enemies of the promised land. This you are to do for a very special reason: you are holy, set apart to God. You are chosen to be His special people, His special treasure — the people who are totally committed to God, committed to love and obey Him.

You are chosen to be His witnesses to the immoral, lawless, and violent peoples of the earth — witnesses to the only living and true God" (Isa 43:10).

Moses declared that God's people are not chosen because of any merit or value within themselves. In fact, the Israelites had been the fewest (smallest in number) of all people when God chose them (see notes, Gen 12:1-3. See Gen 46:26.) Long before — far, far back in antiquity — the whole earth lay in wickedness. Immorality, lawlessness, and violence swept the earth. Few persons, if any, obeyed God. There were no righteous persons upon earth. God had no choice but to start all over, and this He did by choosing one man, Abraham. God made several great promises to Abraham if he would just follow and obey God:

- => the promise of the promised land
- => the promise of the promised seed, the coming Messiah and Saviour of the world
- => the promise of a great nation of people (see notes, Gen 12:1-3)

It was from Abraham that God's people had been born. The present generation of Israelites standing before Moses were the descendants of Abraham.

The point is striking: the Israelites were not chosen because of any merit or value within themselves. They were chosen only because of God's love and oath to Abraham and the forefathers (v. 8). God had chosen the Israelites to build a new race of people, a people who would belong totally to Him. The Israelites were to be His holy people, that is, a people totally set apart to God. For this reason, the Israelites were to obey God, do exactly what He said: completely conquer and destroy all the enemies who opposed them and tried to keep them out of the promised land.

Luke 1:74-75 *To rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.*

2 Cor 7:1 *Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.*

Heb 12:14 *Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.*

1 Pet 1:15-16 *But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”*

2 Pet 3:10-14 *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*

Lev 11:45 *I am the LORD, who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy.*

2. You are to obey God, conquer all the enemies of the promised land for another special reason: because the LORD redeemed you and saved you from the enslavement of Egypt (v. 8). It was only because of God’s salvation that the Israelites stood there before Moses. They would still be slaves in Egypt if God had not saved them. God loved His people; therefore He saved them and redeemed them from a life of enslavement. For this reason, they were to obey God and destroy all the enemies of the promised land, lest they become enslaved again. They owed their lives to God. Having been saved from Egypt and its sinful ways, never again were they to run the risk of becoming entangled with sinful unbelievers. They were now God’s people, saved and redeemed by Him.

Rom 6:22-23 *But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Eph 2:8-10 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

2 Pet 2:9 If this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

Psa 27:1 The LORD is my light and my salvation — whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life — of whom shall I be afraid?

Psa 37:39 The salvation of the righteous comes from the LORD; he is their stronghold in time of trouble.

Isa 12:2 Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD, is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation.

3. You are to obey God, conquer all the enemies of the promised land for a third special reason: the *LORD your God* is the true God. There is no other God; all other gods are false. They are lifeless, unable to save or help in times of need, unable to give a full and victorious life as you walk throughout life. There is only one true and living God, the LORD your God. Therefore you owe your obedience to Him.

But this is not all. The LORD your God is faithful: He keeps His covenant of love to all those who love and obey Him (v. 9). And He keeps His covenant for one thousand generations. But note that His covenant is conditional: it is kept only for those who love and obey Him. But for those who do love and obey Him, He keeps it eternally, for one thousand generations.

1 Cor 1:9 God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

Heb 6:17-18 Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged.

Heb 8:10 This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

1 Kng 8:56 Praise be to the LORD, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses.

Psa 36:5 “Your love, LORD, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies.”

Psa 89:1 “I will sing of the LORD’s great love forever: with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations.”

4. You are to obey God, conquer all the enemies of the promised land for a fourth special reason: because God does not hesitate to execute justice (v. 10). God will destroy all who hate and reject Him. All the Canaanite nations had filled to the brim “their cup of iniquity.” Consequently, they were to be destroyed. If any believer —

any of the Israelites — turned away from God — demonstrating a hatred and rejection of God — that person would face the judgment of God and be destroyed. God’s people were to fear the justice and judgment of God. For this reason, they must obey God and do exactly what He said: conquer all the enemies of the promised land.

Rom 1:18 *The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.*

Rom 2:8 *But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.*

Eph 5:3-6 *But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person — such a man is an idolater — has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient.*

1 John 4:17 *In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.*

5. You are to obey God, conquer all the enemies of the promised land for a fifth special reason: because obedience is demanded by God (v. 11). Simply stated, the believer must obey all God’s commandments. The enemies of the promised land must be completely destroyed. Once the enemies are destroyed, God’s people will secure the victorious life. They will live a life of conquest and of rest — both physical and spiritual conquest and rest (Heb 4:1-11).

Mat 7:21 *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”*

Deut 26:16 *The LORD your God commands you this day to follow these decrees and laws; carefully observe them with all your heart and with all your soul.*

Josh 1:8 *Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.*

1 Sam 15:22 *But Samuel replied: “Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. ■*