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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2023

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# Forty Years of Sand

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## Deep Dive

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- In what ways do we settle for “second best” instead of a life that understands God’s purposes?
- What would it look like for us (individually and corporately as MAG) to embrace the unknown and the impossible in pursuit of God’s purposes?
- What are some of the areas in which we diminish the absolute nature of God’s commands in their application to our own lives?
- What are some of the ways in which we practice “selective” or “discretionary” faith, commitment, and obedience?

# Forty Years Later

- Forty years after Israel had forfeited the future that God had reserved for them, when the last of the “faithless and fearful generation” had died, God resumed doing what He had found it necessary to suspend.

*Moses continued, “Then the Lord said, ‘Now get moving! Cross the Arnon Gorge. Look, I will hand over to you Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and I will give you his land. Attack him and begin to occupy the land. Beginning today I will make people throughout the earth terrified because of you. When they hear reports about you, they will tremble with dread and fear.’”*

Deuteronomy 2.24-25

# “Show me the money!”

- As was the case when Israel entered the occupied land, the provision was already waiting for them as part of the promise fulfillment. The psalmist, recounting these events, wrote:

*You are my King and my God,  
who decrees victories for Jacob.* (PSALM 44.4)

Although God repeatedly tried to teach them, the chosen generation could not understand that when God makes a promise, ***sovereign provision is already included***. If they didn't see it, they didn't believe it. God does not honor faithlessness.

- When the two spies visited Rahab, she specifically referenced these victories as the source of overwhelming fear and convincing revelation.

*“I know the Lord has given you this land,” she told them. “We are all afraid of you. Everyone in the land is living in terror. For we have heard how the LORD made a dry path for you through the Red Sea when you left Egypt. And we know what you did to Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River, whose people you completely destroyed. No wonder our hearts have melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight after hearing such things. For the LORD your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below. (JOSHUA 2.9-11)*

- How ironic: Rahab the prostitute could figure it out, but not the generation that had experienced firsthand what God had done for them.

# A New Generation and the Purposes of God

- With two survivors from the failed generation, God will reset with the next generation; they will inherit the fulfillment of the 400 year old promise. God's plans may be delayed by the faithless, but they are never nullified.

*The plans of the LORD stand firm forever,  
the purposes of his heart through all generations.*

Psalms 33.11

*The secret things  
belong to the  
LORD our God,  
but the things  
revealed  
belong to us  
and to our  
children forever,  
that we may  
follow all the  
words of this law.*

Deuteronomy 29.29

- It would appear that this generation never asked God what His purpose was for their lives and generation. Only Joshua and Caleb had their eyes – and therefore their hearts – set on being part of God’s evolving plan. They understood that they were an integral part of God’s continuing work and purposes and they were determined not to settle for anything less than being in the center of what God was pursuing.

**HIGHLIGHT:**  
*21 times in Deuteronomy, Moses connects God’s actions and Israel’s destiny to the “oath God swore to their forefathers.”*

- Many Christians settle for second best: the preference of an “adequate life” instead of a life that understands the purposes of God in my generation and embraces by faith all that is unknown (and therefore, potentially fearful) and all that is impossible (and therefore, intimidating).
- In what ways do we settle for “second best” instead of a life that understands God’s purposes?
- What would it look like for us (individually and corporately as MAG) to embrace the unknown and the impossible in pursuit of God’s purposes?

- The purposes of God always involve partnership. It is in covenant partnership that God executes His will on earth. For His part, God brings his full commitment and sufficiency; we must bring our full commitment and obedience.

*“Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today.”*

Deuteronomy 6.4-6

- We readily affirm love for God and obedience to His commands but diminish their absolute nature and their applicability to our own lives—as though certain aspects of faith, obedience, and commitment are intended for other people, but not us. A true disciple of Jesus, however, is measured by his obedience to all that Jesus has commanded.
- What are some of the areas in which we diminish the absolute nature of God's commands in their application to our own lives?
- What are some of the ways in which we practice "selective" or "discretionary" faith, commitment, and obedience?

- The meaning of “covenant partnership/relationship”—  
**love → commitment → obedience**

had been completely misrepresented and distorted to this generation by their parents.

*“When the LORD heard what you said, he was angry and solemnly swore: “No one from this evil generation shall see the good land I swore to give your ancestors, except Caleb son of Jephunneh. He will see it, and I will give him and his descendants the land he set his feet on, because he followed the LORD wholeheartedly.”*

Deuteronomy 1.34-36

- Our greatest success or failure as parents will be in the example we set for our children in faith, obedience, and covenant commitment to the purposes of God.

*“Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you—they are your life.”*

Deuteronomy 32.46-47

- Do you agree or disagree? How do you think we rate as a community in this area?