

## Turn North – Possessing the Promise

Dr. John Carmichael

[Deu 2:3 NASB95] 3 'You have circled this mountain long enough. [Now] turn north,

- Deuteronomy 2 records a pivotal transition moment in Israel's story. A generation had wandered for nearly 38 years, largely stationary around Mount Seir. This mountain had become familiar (safe, predictable, survivable) but it was never the destination.
- God speaks through Moses with divine urgency: "You have circled this mountain long enough."
- This was not rebuke alone. It was release.
- The NASB's rendering, "Turn north," is deeply significant. North symbolized forward movement, inheritance, and God-directed advance. Once they turned north, they were no longer wandering. They were marching toward possession.
- For North Church, this is more than direction. It is identity. We are not circling.
- We are not stalled. We are "turning NORTH" toward promise, purpose, and possession.

**What does turn North mean to us?**

**Here are five things turn North means to us.**

### **I. GOD DOES NOT ALLOW WANDERING TO LAST FOREVER**

- a. "You have circled this mountain long enough..."
- b. God permitted Israel's delay, but He did not endorse it permanently. Seasons of discipline, preparation, and waiting have expiration dates. What once served a purpose can become an obstacle if we refuse to move when God speaks.
- c. [Psa 66:12 NASB95] 12 You made men ride over our heads; We went through fire and through water, Yet You brought us out into [a place of] abundance.
- d. [Ecc 3:1 NASB95] 1 There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven
- e. Familiar ground can quietly become holy resistance.
- f. Application: Stop spiritual nostalgia. God never called Israel to memorialize the wilderness. Quit looking at the past for validation.

### **II. THE MOUNTAIN CAN BECOME A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE PROMISE**

- a. They lived near the mountain for 38 years, but mountains were not their inheritance.
- b. God revealed Himself on the mountain [Exo 19:18 NASB95] 18 Now Mount Sinai [was] all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently.
- c. Mountains are places of encounter, but not habitation. Israel confused encounter with occupation. What once hosted God's voice became a place of comfort and control.
- d. [Jos 1:3 NASB95] 3 "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses.
- e. You can love yesterday's move of God and still miss today's command.
- f. Application: Gratitude for the past must never cancel obedience for the future. Spiritual maturity means knowing when to move on; even from good things

### **III. TURNING NORTH REQUIRED LEAVING WHAT FELT LIKE HOME**

- a. To go forward, they had to leave where they had survived.
- b. For Israel, the mountain had become home: routine, identity, and memory.
- c. [Isa 43:18-19 NASB95] 18 "Do not call to mind the former things, Or ponder things of the past. 19 "Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, Rivers in the desert.

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- d. [Luk 9:62 NASB95] 62 But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."
- e. You cannot become who God wants you to be while clinging to who you were.
- f. Application: Let go of old labels, old mindsets, old compromises. The price of the new is often the surrender of the familiar

### IV. TURNING NORTH MEANT WALKING INTO A PROMISE ALREADY GIVEN

- a. They were not earning the land. They were entering what God had already granted.
- b. God's command to move was not speculation. It was authorization. The promise preceded the possession. Faith does not create promise; it responds to it.
- c. Obedience activates inheritance.
- d. [Deu 1:8 NASB95] 8 'See, I have placed the land before you; go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to give to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to them and their descendants after them.'
- e. [2Co 1:20 NASB95] 20 For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us.
- f. Application: Stop asking if God has a promise. Start by asking if you are positioned to possess it. Movement is often the missing ingredient to manifestation.

### V. NORTH CHURCH IS CALLED TO ADVANCE—TO POSSESS, NOT CIRCLE

- a. This is not just Israel's word. It is North Church's word.
- b. North Church is not in maintenance mode. We are in movement mode. God is calling this house to align, advance, and occupy spiritual territory prepared by Him.
- c. [Phi 3:13-14 NASB95] 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of [it] yet; but one thing [I do:] forgetting what [lies] behind and reaching forward to what [lies] ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- d. [Zec 4:6 NASB95] 6 Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts.
- e. We are not revisiting the past. We are not repeating old cycles. We are turning north.
- f. Application: Commit to movement: spiritually, relationally, missionally. Say yes to alignment, growth, and obedience in 2026

- When God says, "Turn North," He is calling us release our faith; leave old thought patterns and attitudes so we can advance into what He has already promised.
- Tonight, marks more than a new calendar year. It marks a directional shift.
- God is saying: "You have circled long enough." "Turn north."
- What you are leaving behind will not compare to what you are stepping into.