

Exegetical Notes, Deuteronomy 8:1-20

**“Remember”**

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**Deuteronomy 8:1-20**

**Verses 1-5**

***Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land the LORD promised on oath to your ancestors. <sup>2</sup> Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. <sup>3</sup> He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. <sup>4</sup> Your clothes did not wear out and your feet did not swell during these forty years. <sup>5</sup> Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the LORD your God disciplines you.***

- In the first chapters of Deuteronomy a common theme emerges. Israel is charged to hear the command of God and to remember his keeping of her since her deliverance from slavery. She is then told that, out of gratitude for his keeping, she should love God above all else and that her love for him will be demonstrated in her obedience to his commands. That theme is prevalent in this chapter.
- First, Israel is charged to hear and follow God’s commands. The promise is that she will be blessed if she does so.
- Second, Israel is told to remember what God did for her in the past. He humbled her by making her hungry and then fed her with food from heaven. The purpose was to teach Israel to depend upon him for everything, including her daily bread. During the time of wandering in the wilderness because of her disobedience neither her shoes nor her clothing wore out and she did not suffer from the effects of walking long distances as one would expect. Israel was to remember how God cared for her on this

difficult journey to the promised land even when she was disobedient to him.

- Moses then reminded Israel that God was like a good parent who taught his children what they needed to know to be blessed in life. When necessary, God disciplines his children so that they will learn to walk in his ways.

### Verses 6-16

***<sup>6</sup> Observe the commands of the LORD your God, walking in obedience to him and revering him. <sup>7</sup> For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills; <sup>8</sup> a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; <sup>9</sup> a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills.***

***<sup>10</sup> When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. <sup>11</sup> Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. <sup>12</sup> Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, <sup>13</sup> and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, <sup>14</sup> then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. <sup>15</sup> He led you through the vast and dreadful wilderness, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. <sup>16</sup> He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you.***

- Walking in obedience to God brings blessing. And Israel will be blessed for her obedience. She will be given the promised land
- But when she is living in blessing, she must be careful to remember that all she has is God's gift to her. If she remembers that everything is God's gift and obeys him, she will continue to be blessed. But there will be a tendency for her to become proud and forget all that she owes to YHWH.

### Verses 17-20

***<sup>17</sup> You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” <sup>18</sup> But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.***

**<sup>19</sup> If you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed.**

**<sup>20</sup> Like the nations the LORD destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the LORD your God.**

- Israel's tendency will be to become proud and think that she has secured God's blessing for herself through her own power and strength. She will think it fine to become like the cultures around her and will even join them in worshipping things other than YHWH. If/when she does, she will lose God's blessing and face destruction.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *Remember*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen, Senior Pastor at Cornerstone Fellowship, Coatesville Pennsylvania. All rights are reserved by Dr. Jensen and *Cornerstone Fellowship*.)