

Deuteronomy 8

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[0 : 00] to the book of Deuteronomy, Deuteronomy chapter 8. Deuteronomy chapter 8 is where we will be at this evening. Deuteronomy chapter 8, looking at the 8th chapter in its entirety. It'll be 20 verses, Deuteronomy chapter 8.

We'll try not to take a tremendous amount of time looking at it to give ourselves time for the business portion and then prayer as well. So Deuteronomy chapter 8.

The richness in this text may lead us to go back to it Sunday night. I'm not sure. We'll just have to see how the Lord's leading. But let's open up with a word of prayer and then we'll get right to the text together.

So let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much just for this evening. Lord, we thank you for allowing us an opportunity to gather together. We thank you for the privilege it is. Lord, we thank you for the opportunity we've already had to fellowship.

Thank you for the opportunity we've already had to be encouraged through fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ. Lord, we pray that now we would be encouraged and molded and shaped by the study and the reading of your word.

[1 : 03] We pray, O Lord, as we open up your word, that you would be magnified in our sight, that you would be lifted on high. We pray for those working with the children in the back in preparation for the Christmas play.

We pray for the youth. God, we just ask that in all things and in all ways, you would be glorified. Lord, we just pray that you truly would be magnified in this place throughout every activity that goes on.

And we want to give you all the glory and the praise for it. We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen.

Deuteronomy chapter 8 is our text. That's where we're at this evening. A very rich text which sets us up.

It's pretty easy to understand. Deuteronomy chapter 9. Deuteronomy chapter 8 is kind of the encouragement to do right, and it's the foundation for that. Deuteronomy chapter 9 is kind of a prophetic look into when they will not do right.

But again, keeping it in proper context, we understand that Moses here is preparing the people to go into the promised land. This is his last message. This is the final message of Moses.

[2 : 06] God is speaking through him and encouraging the people to faithfulness. He's encouraging them to go in and to take possession of the land he's about to give them. The ninth chapter, the chapter following this section, reminds them that God didn't give them the land because they were better.

God's not giving them the land because they're righteous. God was giving them the land because of the sins of the people that were living there. And this is something we've looked at. So in light of that, the book of Deuteronomy is an encouragement to faithfulness.

It has this great message throughout it where Moses is really just admonishing God's people to be true and to live faithfully in the land that he is providing for them.

And it ends with chapters of blessing and cursing. And if they walk faithfully, these things will happen. If they do not walk faithfully, then these things will happen. We know historically that the nation of Israel really didn't do much of what Moses here admonishes them to do.

As a matter of fact, some of you reading through the Bible reading plan have just recently read of kings who are rediscovering the word of God. And all of a sudden, we've got to keep the Passover.

[3 : 17] You know, there are only like two records of the nation of Israel keeping a Passover festival while in the promised land. And that's pretty instrumental. That's one of the major festivals, right? And there's all these things.

There's never a record of them given Sabbath, the rest of the land. There's no record of them. The year of Jubilee. There's no record of any of these things. But it was not because of a lack of

knowledge. It wasn't because God didn't tell them or warn them or prepare them.

Because this is what the book of Deuteronomy is. And ultimately, what happens is all the curses that God declared would come about did come about. But before they get there, we have here God encouraging his people as they begin to make this transition.

So Deuteronomy chapter 8 says this. All the commandments that I am commanding you today, you shall be careful to do. That you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land which the Lord swore to give your forefathers.

You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these 40 years. And that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart. Whether you would keep his commandments or not. He humbled you and let you be hungry and fed you with manna which you did not know.

[4 : 26] Nor did your fathers know that he might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone. But man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these 40 years.

Thus you are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you. Just as a man disciplines his son. Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God to walk in his ways and to fear him.

For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land. A land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills. A land of wheat and barley of vines and fig trees and pomegranates.

A land of olive oil and honey. A land where you will eat food without scarcity in which you will not lack anything. A land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper.

When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which he has given you. Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping his commandments and his ordinances and his statutes which I am commanding you today.

[5 : 27] Otherwise when you have eaten and are satisfied and have built good houses and lived in them. And when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold multiply. And all that you have multiplies and your heart will become proud.

And you will forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt out of the house of slavery. He led you through the great and terrible wilderness with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there is no water.

He brought water for you out of the rock of Flint. In the wilderness he fed you manna which your fathers did not know that he might humble you. And then he might test you to do good for you in the end. Otherwise you may say in your heart my power and the strength of my hand have made this wealth.

But you shall remember the Lord your God for it is he who is giving you power to make wealth. That he may confirm his covenant which he swore to your fathers as it is this day. It shall come about if you ever forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them.

I testify against you today that you will surely perish. Like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you so you shall perish. Because you will not listen to the voice of the Lord your God.

[6 : 30] Deuteronomy chapter 8. Very, very rich passage. And I don't know if you caught it with the repetition there a couple times that he said. That he might humble you and test you. Isn't that great phrase and do good for you in the end.

I want you to see this evening. Like I said I'm not so sure we'll get to the end of it. We may have to revisit it Sunday evening. But I want you to see this evening living faithfully in changing times.

Living faithfully in changing times. Because the whole makeup of society is about to change for God's people. These people, just about all of them, or at least the majority of them.

Because some of them would have been under the age of 20. If you remember they have been in the wilderness now for 40 years. And all they have known for their adult life, many of them for all of their life, is just wilderness wanderings.

Right? It is living a nomadic life. Prior to that, those who may remember life prior to being a nomad. Of dwelling in tents and moving from place to place. They would have remembered slavery.

[7 : 29] Every one of them would have been born into slavery. And therefore released from slavery. And lived throughout their life in the wilderness. For 40 years they have been following the Lord. Wherever he moved, they moved.

When the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night was lifted. And it moved, they moved. When it stopped, they stopped. And they dwelt in tents. They were in temporary shelters and temporary abodes. Moving from place to place to place.

And now things are about to drastically change. Because they're going to go from moving about to settling in. And they're going to go from completely walking by faith to knowing where they're living. They're going to go from wilderness wandering to promised land dwelling. They're going to go from living in tents to living in houses. They're going to go from gathering what food they can find to planting and growing and harvesting.

And all these things, right? Reaping and grapes. And getting water from a flint rock to getting water out of a well and a cistern. Everything is about to change. Everything, all these great dreams are about to come true.

[8 : 27] Everything that the forefathers had looked forward with expectation is about to be there. Since the days of Abraham, God had promised that he would give his people a land.

And since the days of Abraham, they had not had a land. And now for the first time in history, the descendants of Abraham, 400 plus years.

Years. Way, way, way ahead. Right? Many of them would have never dreamed that they would have lived at this time. They are about to possess a land.

They're literally on the banks of going in and taking possession. And everything is going to change. And what God is doing here is he is encouraging them to live faithfully amongst those changing times.

To not move beyond who they are and whose they are, but to stay consistent. Now, were the people of God perfect? No.

[9 : 29] Were the people of God really faithful throughout the wilderness wanderings? No. No. One thing you will find, the further you read in the Old Testament, the more people look back to the wilderness wanderings as being a good time.

But when we're in the Pentateuch, that's the first five books of the Bible which looks at it as a bad time. Right? The further we get away from it, the more they look back to it and go, man, that was good there. Because by the time Christ is born, the wilderness wanderings are seen as the glory days of the nation of Israel's faith.

And this chapter here kind of shows us why. This shows us why they looked back with, we want to go back to that. Because they didn't live faithfully.

They didn't live true. They didn't live perfect. They didn't live righteously. Though they were encouraged to. And I want you to see what preparations they had for that and what encouragement God gives them through Moses to live faithful during this changing times.

Number one, we notice the past preparations God gave them. Because Moses says, obey my commands. Do everything God is telling them. All the commandments that I'm commanding you today, you should be careful to do that you may, look at this, live and multiply.

[10 : 39] It's not just to exist, right? He's not talking about just existing. One thing we need to understand, every time God refers to his people being alive, even in the New Testament, Jesus says, I am the vine and you are the branches.

He who dwells in me, what does it say? Bears much fruit. Right? So there's always this fruitfulness that is a picture of God's people being alive.

So he says, you're not going to go into the land and just exist. He's not just saying, you're going to go have somewhere to be. He said, you're going to live and multiply. The picture there is thriving, right? You're going to really live.

You're not just going to inhabit space. That's a big deal. So many believers today just want to inhabit this space until they get to eternity. When God has called us to live this life for his glory and preparations for eternity.

That's a big difference. We're not just taking up time and space today until that day. We are to live this day in fruitfulness, bearing fruit for his glory until that day.

[11 : 41] But he says that you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land. So he says, you're about to go in here and I want you to be faithful there. I want you to be fruitful. I want you to really prosper.

I want you to be effective. But to do that, the first thing you got to do is look back. Right? Because he says, remember. Remember. Look back. He said, you shall remember all the way the Lord your

God has led you.

Now, we want to pay special attention to this. And this is where it gets so deep. I think we want to flesh this out when we have more time. But he says, I want you not just to remember the wilderness, but remember the way God led you in the wilderness.

Here's the longing that the nation of Israel looks back with later on in their history. Don't just remember the wilderness. Remember the way the Lord your God led you in the wilderness.

What is the wilderness? The wilderness probably is what they would refer to as the worst time of their lives. Right? It was barren. It was desolate. It was harsh. It was inhabitable. It was unfood.

[12:48] There was no food there, so it was unprofitable. There was no water there. It was just a ridiculous place to be. There were serpents. There were plagues. There were all these things there. Right? It was just a terrible place.

But he says, remember how the Lord your God led you at the worst time. Because, see, the greatest preparation for the best times is to remember who God was at the worst time. He says, remember how he led you.

Because the character of God in the bad, terrible, awful days is the character of God we lean on in the good days. Remember how he led you there.

Remember how when you had nothing else, there was no hope. Remember how when there was, if he failed, everything failed. I mean, they fought battles in the wilderness and these were slaves who had just recently been released.

Right? They weren't warriors. They weren't trained in, I mean, Egypt didn't train their slaves in military schemes. Right? Egypt didn't train their slaves how to fight battles.

[13:52] If anything else, you broke their spirit and you broke their will. Right? So the only one that would have been trained would probably be Moses. So these people weren't trained warriors, but yet they had to fight battles.

These people weren't, you know, they didn't know anything but enslavement. And what he says, remember those terrible, terrible days and remember how he led you. And then he points to things that probably weren't pleasant at the moment.

Because he says, remember how he humbled you and he let you go hungry. Remember how he humbled you and you were hungry. And you realize that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the Lord.

By the way, we're going to be in Matthew chapter 4 this Sunday if the Lord allows us to tarry. And in Matthew chapter 4 is the temptation of Jesus. And the very first thing Jesus is tempted with is being hungry.

And the very first response Jesus gives to any of our souls is, man does not live by bread alone, but by every word. He quotes this passage. Deuteronomy is the most quoted Old Testament book in all of the New Testament.

[14:58] Jesus points back to it more than any other book in the Pentateuch. So I told you this passage is deep, right? So he said, God let you go hungry.

That doesn't sound like a good thing, but it is a good thing. Because the reality is this. Sometimes God ordains that his people go hungry. So that his people will realize it isn't food that meets the ultimate need.

So that his people will realize that man does not live by bread alone. That his people live by the very word of God. Because without that humbling, without that lack, there would be no reality.

Now those aren't pleasant times, but he's pointing. He says, remember this. Remember how he humbled you and let you be hungry. Remember that when he did that, he made you understand.

Have you ever realized that some of the greatest difficulties in your life are the things that help you to understand the most? Charles Spurgeon said that the darkest moments always come before the dawning of the brightest days.

[16:06] Before we see the most of his glory, we usually walk through the darkest moments of our life. And it's because God is magnifying who he is in those dark moments.

I can't remember who said it, but it's been repeated more times than I said. God whispers to us in our joys. He speaks to us in our discomforts, but he screams to us in our pain. It is in those terrible days, in those humbling times.

And he says, the Lord your God was disciplining you. Disciplining. The book of Hebrews says, he whom he loves, he disciplines. And part of that disciplinary action is unpleasant.

But they are a revelation of who he is. This is the preparation. These are past preparations. To live faithfully now, we have to remember who he was then.

To live faithfully now, we have to remember who he was when it was all bad. To live faithfully now, God often, this is why when you share the gospel with someone, and when we're honest and straightforward with gospel conversations, do not do the disservice to any individual and tell them that the moment they accept Jesus Christ, everything will get better.

[17:26] That is a great unbiblical disservice. Because the reality is, is the moment you accept Christ, you usually go through your greatest battles. Because God is preparing you and showing you, and as the scripture says here, testing you to remind you, he is worthy.

So many people, parable of the souls, remember the parable of the souls? They go for that, if I accept Christ, life will be better.

And as Jesus says in the parable of the souls, they die out because of the displeasures and the discomforts and the entrapments of this life. The reality is, is that often, the disciplining of the father, it seems to be the harshest when we are youngest in our faith.

But it is because there he is showing us, he is worth our trust. He is worthy of our confidence. He is worthy of our dependence. He is worthy of our admiration.

He is worthy of all of those things. And he is showing us that he can. Because until he can entrust us with much, he needs to see as faithful in little.

[18:42] If we can't trust him walking through a barren wilderness as he feeds his man, he can never trust us when he puts us in cities that we did not build. We see the past preparations.

The past preparations lead to the second thing, and I'm making my way through these quickly. I'm going as quick as I can. These last two, I'll probably go quick, and we'll try to revisit this. The past preparations lead us to present provisions.

Because as Moses says, remember how he led you into wilderness. And he goes, now look at what he's about to give you. Because he makes this transition. In verse 7 it says, for the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land.

The same God who humbled you and let you be hungry. The same God who met you and filled you with all of his word. And the same God who was there disciplining you.

The same one who was showing you his worthiness, now is about to lead you into a good land. And he begins to highlight the present provisions. He says, he's bringing you into a land of brooks, of waters, of fountains, and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills.

[19:46] No more striking of a rock, no more crying out because the water is unclean, right? He says, there's going to be an abundance of water. And he says, in the land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, in the land of olive and all.

All of these things are pictures of abundant harvest. And these humbling days of being hungry, they're behind you. Because he says, a land, look at what it says, where you will eat food without scarcity.

A land where you will eat food without scarcity. And in which you will not lack anything. A land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. When you have eaten and are satisfied.

Listen, so many times they weren't satisfied. But when you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which he has given you. What is he doing? He is reminding them, or he is highlighting for them, that he who humbled them in the wilderness is now abundantly provided for them in the promised land.

The God who let them be hungry is the God who's going to feed them abundantly. The God who met their need when they depended upon him is the God who's going to meet their need from this point on.

[20:52] Because listen, they're about to go into a land where the inhabitants say, well, the water comes from this God with a lowercase g, and the barley and the wheat harvests come from this God with a lowercase g, and the rain comes from this God, and fertility comes from this God, and the animals are from this God, and there's all these multitude of gods, and all these people are trusting in everyone else, and all these people are trusting in something else.

But the nation of Israel was to go in and realize that everything that was there, God gave them the land, so everything came from him. The same God who met them in the wilderness was the God who was giving them the land here.

And they were to remember, either hungry, as Paul would say, in hunger and in abundance, I will praise him. Because a right perspective of past showings helps us to properly enjoy present provisions.

Until we realize it was God who gave us what we needed in the past, we will not recognize it's him who's given us what we enjoy today. Because God lets us get to that place where we understand. This is deep. I'm telling you, it's really deep. It has more application for today than it did then. And we'll try to work it out later. I'm just kind of giving you the cliff note version of it tonight.

[22 : 18] All right? As the more I thought about it, the more I thought I would do disservice to say that we covered all of it, but the reality is, until we know what he did for us in the past, we will not fully see what he's doing to us in the present.

And the third thing, just for tonight, the third thing, and again, we'll come back to it. I don't want you to, you know, feel like we've done all of it here. But the third thing is, there's the potential problems. Because present provisions always bring potential problems. Present provisions always bring potential problems.

Jesus made this bold declaration that shook the faith of the disciples and really rocked the world of the Jewish people of his day. He said, it is hard for the rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

And the reason that shook the faith of the disciples and really rocked the world of the Jews of that day is because riches were seen as a sign of God's favor, a blessing from the Lord.

[23 : 30] Riches were seen as God's favor being rained down upon them. But Jesus says it's hard for the rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. History shows us, current events demonstrate for us that quite often the church is the strongest when the people are the weakest.

That the more desperate the people, the more desperate the situation, quite often the stronger the faith. This is why the persecuted church has always grown stronger than the relaxed church.

This is why in some portions of the world the church that used to suffer persecution and used to have to pay the ultimate price and give their lives for faith and have seen the government ease some of those restrictions, this is why now the leaders in some of those churches are praying that the government will begin persecuting them again because they realize that the church is getting kind of lackadaisical, the church is getting kind of lukewarm, and their prayer is not that the persecutions would stay away, but they're praying that the persecutions would return because they realize then there's this purging of the church.

This is why when missionaries from our own country would go to these other churches in these underground environments, the churches would tell the American missionaries, don't pray for us because we pray for you.

We ask that the Lord would give your church what He gives us because present provisions always, always bring potential problems.

[24 : 59] And these problems are what cause the majority, if not every issue, of the Jewish people moving forward historically.

And it is this, beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments. Beware. Here's the potential, right? Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and statutes which I am commanding you today.

Now how could that happen? When they know that God humbled them and they know that God disciplined them, when they know that God let them be hungry, when they know that God has given them this land, when they realize that God is providing freely for them everything that is before them, how could that ever happen?

Look at verse 12. Otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied. When you have eaten and are satisfied.

Squirrel trouble mine just goes somewhere. There's that old gospel song, gospel quartet song, Satisfied. I don't know if you know I'm not going to sing it because I can't sing, especially with the microphone on. But it is a really good one about being satisfied in Christ.

[26 : 15] That's not what it's talking about. When you have eaten and are satisfied and have built good houses and lived in them and when your herds and your flocks multiply and your silver and your gold multiply and all that you have multiplies, look at this.

They're full. Their houses are nice. Their animals are doing great. There's no miscarriage of even animals. Their silver and their gold multiplies.

