

DEUTERONOMY

Chapter 8

Remember the LORD Your God

“The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. 2 And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. 3 And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. 4 Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. 5 Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. 6 So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. 7 For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, 8 a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, 9 a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. 10 And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. 11 “Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, 12 lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, 13 and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, 14 then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, 15 who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, 16 who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. 17 Beware lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’ 18 You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day. 19 And if you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. 20 Like the nations that the LORD makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

8:1 *whole commandment.* All of God’s Commandments are intricately woven together, forming a unit. This exhortation ties in to 6:5. (TLSB)

8:2 *humble you, testing you.* God already knows what is in our hearts, so He does the testing for our sake, not His. These tests are designed to teach Israel to trust God more fully. Cf Heb 12:7–8. (TLSB)

8:3 *manna.* God’s provision of manna humbled the Israelites. They quickly found that they could not provide for themselves. Instead, they had to trust in God for their daily bread. God provided only enough manna for each day (Ex 16:4–5) in order that the Israelites might learn to rely fully on God for sustenance. We pray that God would daily provide for us each time we pray the Lord’s Prayer (Mt 6:11). Ambrose: “It is therefore a good thing for us to be bedewed with the exhortations of the divine Scriptures, and that the word of God should come down upon us like the dew. When, therefore, you sit at the table of that great man, understand who that great man is. Set in the paradise of delight and placed at the feast of

wisdom, think of what is put before you! The divine Scriptures are the feast of wisdom, and the single books the various dishes. Know, first, what dishes the banquet offers, then stretch forth your hand, that those things which you read, or which you receive from the Lord your God, you may carry out in action, and so by your duties may show forth the grace that was granted to you” (NPNF 2 10:28). (TLSB)

man does not live on bread alone. Quoted by Jesus in response to the devil’s temptation (see Mt 4:4; Lk 4:4). Bread sustains but does not guarantee life, which is God’s gift to those who trust in and live by his word: his commands and promises (see vv. 1, 18). God’s “discipline” (v. 5) of his people by bringing them through the desert taught them this fundamental truth. There they were humbled (cf. v. 14) by being cast in total dependence on the Lord. (CSB)

8:5 God disciplines believers to strengthen their faith or to return them to His righteous path in order that He might bless them. Cf Lv 26:14–42. (TLSB)

8:7–9 A concise description of the rich and fertile land of promise that the Israelites were about to enter and possess (see 11:8–12). (CSB)

8:9 *iron ... copper.* The mountains of southern Lebanon and the regions east of the Sea of Galilee and south of the Dead Sea contain iron. Both copper and iron were plentiful in the part of the Arabah south of the Dead Sea. Some of the copper mines date to the time of Solomon and earlier. Zarethan was a center for bronze works in Solomon’s time (1Ki 7:45–46). Some bronze objects from this site precede the Solomonic period, and today there are copper works at Timnah in the Negev. (CSB)

iron. The mountains of southern Lebanon and the territory east of the Sea of Chinnereth are rich in iron. *copper.* Copper mines and smelters have been found by archaeologists in the Arabah Desert south of the Salt Sea (TLSB)

8:12–14 Ter: “[The Lord is] teaching man not to be studious of the stomach” (ANF 4:105). When we have everything we want, it becomes easy to forget the Lord. (TLSB)

8:18 *remember.* God faithfully remembered His covenant promise to Abram (Gn 12:2–3) and continually provided for His people. (TLSB)

Ch 8 God weaves a pattern of worship into the lives of the Israelites. By remembering and keeping God’s commands, they honor His name and show God’s grace to the nations surrounding them (4:6). Their disobedience dishonors God’s name. How easily Christians today look upon themselves as self-made, dishonoring God in the process. Instead, may we pray as J. S. Bach did, “To God alone be glory” (*Soli Deo Gloria*), for there is no other Savior. • Father, forgive us. We are poor, miserable sinners, often content to go our own way and seek our own glory. We ask that You send Your Holy Spirit to lead us to repentance, and then feed us with Your sustaining bread of life. Amen. (TLSB)