

What We Must Remember

Deuteronomy 8:1-9

April 26, 2009

Intro

We are studying through the last messages of Moses' life as he stood before the nation of Israel as they were completing their 40 years of wilderness wandering. We are now in the second of five messages that Moses gave to the nation of Israel to prepare them to enter into the land of promise.

Moses recounted the laws and commandments that God gave to Israel on Mount Sinai, but he also helped them to understand the law in light of 40 years of experience in the wilderness. He wanted to prepare their hearts to enter into the land of Canaan, the Promised Land, and he was seeking spiritual revival before they crossed the Jordan. He knew that God had chosen them to be a great nation, but their greatness, and their blessing, could also be their downfall.

Here in these verses Moses is asking the nation of Israel to remember all that God has done for them, because frankly, there are many dangers in not remembering.

I. God Has Led You All the Way

- 1 In verse two, Moses instructed them that they should remember all the way, "which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these 40 years."
- 2 That's the first thing they should remember, that God had led them and had been with them throughout all their experiences in the wilderness.
- 3 But he also wants them to remember these things for a reason, that they should see what God was doing all the way, that they would be strengthened in their faith, and in their relationship to the Lord.

A. God leads us into humility

- 4 This is the first thing that Moses said to them; that they should remember that God humbled them.
- 5 This is not usually on the list of things that we ask God to do in our lives. I know of few people who would actually pray, "*O God, please humble me today. This is the cry of my heart, I plead with you that you would answer my prayer.*"
- 6 The reason we don't pray this way is probably because we're afraid that He may actually do it! The pride that we have in our lives, frankly, resists being humbled.
- 7 The lesson we must learn is that God resists the proud. In other words, pride gets in the way of what God wants to do in our lives.

1 Peter 5:5-7, Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders... and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

8 The reason that God wants to lead them into humility, is so that they don't become proud. This is because there is great danger in becoming proud.

9 Look at the clear warning in the verses that follow...

Deuteronomy 8:10-18 God gave the power to make wealth

10 We see a great picture of this humility in the New Testament when Peter was walking in Jerusalem and came upon a man who had been lame from birth begging alms... God healed the man through Peter and when a crowd gathered he said

Acts 3:12, 16, “Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.”

B. God leads us into proving

- 1 Look at verse two and see that the next thing Moses wanted them to remember was that God was testing them, to know what was in their hearts, whether they would keep his commandments or not.
- 2 We've studied before that we should not test God, because God has already demonstrated his love for us when He sent his Son to die on the cross for our sins.
- 3 God can test us, however. But this is for our benefit. God already knows what is in our heart, but we need to know.

Proverbs 17:3, The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, But the Lord tests hearts.

Illus – I may think I'm doing so well spiritually, but then someone pulls out in front of me and then drives super slowly when I'm in a big hurry! Now that's a test!

Illus – Jesus told the disciples that they would all fall away from Him. Peter was certain that if all the rest of them fell away, he would not. I believe he meant what he said, but he did not know his own heart.

- 4 Once we know the condition of our heart, we then can know how much we need God.

James 1:2-3, Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

- 5 Notice also that the **testing** and the **humbling** of Israel came together. In verse three we see that God humbled them, allowing them to be hungry.
- 6 This was also a test for them so that they could see what was in their hearts. The whining and the complaining they did throughout the wilderness journey was clear evidence that they needed to grow in their faith.
- 7 So God provided manna for them, a resource they did not know.

App- the times of greatest spiritual growth in our lives come during times of difficulty and testing. We don't really gain great spiritual strides when on vacation.

Illus – When I was in grade school, we used to have to stand up and tell people what we did and what we learned over summer vacation. Typically, kids would talk about some trip they took. But what most people learn is that eating a bag of potato chips with Coke just before bed isn't good or that you need sunscreen.

- 8 But what did Israel learn in their time in the desert? They learned that God has the power to destroy their enemies, that He can take bitter water and make it sweet, that He can bring water out of rock, that they had to trust God every day for their daily bread.

Illus – We want security. We want to know that we're going to be taken care of the rest of our lives; that we're not going to have any worries or concerns.

In fact, in our country we even have what we call social security. But how much security is there in it really? Even our currency says, "In God we trust."

What we need to learn is how to hold the things of this world loosely, and to hold tightly to God.

1 Peter 1:7, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

Illus – Even while God was testing them, He was demonstrating that He was their great provision. Moses pointed out to them that even their clothes did not wear out. (Oh, if only my clothes lasted 40 years.)

II. We Need Spiritual Understanding

- 1 In verse three we see that God was testing them and humbling them so that they might gain spiritual understanding.
- 2 This is how we grow spiritually. We need to understand God's heart for us. We need to understand how God works in our lives.

A. Man does not live by bread alone

- 1 This is a very difficult lesson for many to learn.
- 2 What he wants them to understand is that life is not found in the flesh.
- 3 This is difficult for many because that is where they are searching for life. They want to satisfy their fleshly desires and think that will bring life, but they are in error. There is no life found in the flesh.
- 4 The most important part of our being is our soul, and life is only found there.
- 5 These words should be familiar to us because Jesus quoted them. Just before He began his ministry, He went into the desert where He fasted for 40 days. At the end of that time, the devil came to Him to tempt him...

Matthew 4:1-11 The victory of Jesus over temptation

- 1 Jesus gave great insight when He said to His disciples....

John 4:31-32, 34, Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But He said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." ... Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work."

B. God disciplines His Son

- 6 Verse 5 is important. "You are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son."
- 7 We are to know this in our hearts because many people do not understand what is happening when God is disciplining them.
- 8 In fact, many people are convinced that God doesn't love them when they're been disciplined; but this is actually one way you know that he does love you.

Hebrews 12:5-6, “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by him; for those whom the Lord loves he disciplines...”

- 1 What does discipline actually mean? It means to train up, to raise up, to build up, to edify.

Illus – Many times when I’ve had to discipline my kids, I try to remind them that there will come a day when they will look back on this and actually thank me for it.

Hebrews 12:11, All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

- 9 We are to always remember that God loves us and is raising us up like a father raises his children.
- 10 Because if we forget, then bad things come into our lives. God wants to save us from this.

There is a Famous quote regarding the reason for America’s greatness. “I sought for the reason for America’s greatness in her commodious harbors, her ample rivers, her fertile plains, and her boundless forests, but it was not there. I sought for her greatness in her rich mines, her vast world commerce, and in her public school system and in her institutions of higher learning, but it was not there. I sought for her greatness in her democratic Congress and in her matchless constitution, but it was not there. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because America is good and if America ever ceases to be good America will cease to be great.”

- 1 There’s probably no better way to end than to read again vs. 17 and 18 and be reminded again that it is He who is giving us the power to live.