

FPFWC Christian Development



Liberating Passover

March 2022

Spring Quarter

March 26, 2022

Lesson #4 – Free Because of the Lord

SCRIPTURE TEXT –Deuteronomy 8:1-11

Key Verse - Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day.—Deuteronomy 8:11

ICE BREAKER –

1. *What is a practical way you can remember all the Lord has done for you?*

LESSON BACKGROUND

The setting for today’s lesson is “on [the east] side [of the] Jordan, in the valley over against Bethpeor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites” (Deuteronomy 4:46) in about 1406 BC. The recipients were the Israelites of a new generation who were about to enter the promised land. Moses would soon die on Mount Nebo, located in Moab (chapter 34), having been barred from entering the promised land because of his disobedience at Meribah (Numbers 20:7–12).

Deuteronomy is a covenant renewal treaty, delivered by Moses in a series of speeches (Deuteronomy 1:1–4:43; 4:44–28:68; etc.). In these speeches, he recounted the covenant God had made with Israel at Mount Sinai some four decades previously. This covenant is very similar to a specific kind of ancient Near Eastern treaty called a suzerainty covenant. In such covenants, a sovereign king (the suzerain) would write out terms of an agreement with a weaker king (the vassal). This generally required obedience from the lesser king in exchange for certain protections and benefits from the greater king. Typical suzerainty covenants contained at least six parts: (1) an introduction, (2) a historical basis for the treaty, (3) general stipulations followed by (4) specific stipulations, (5) divine witness, and finally (6) curses for disobedience and blessings for faithfulness.

Deuteronomy 5–11 is the high point of the book. Here the Ten Commandments are recounted (chapter 5; compare Exodus 20:1–17 and Deuteronomy 4:13; 10:4). This is followed by an exposition of how to love and obey the Lord (chapters 6–11). Our text today, from Deuteronomy 8:1–11, falls under general stipulations in the second speech.

One helpful way to categorize laws in the Bible is to distinguish between conditional and unconditional laws. Unconditional laws are what we have with the Ten Commandments. They are foundation principles for Israel’s covenant relationship. Covenant recognizes a relationship, and adherence to the rules maintains the relationship. Conditional laws rightly begin with a conditional clause (beginning with “if” or “when,” either expressed or implied), followed by a

declarative judgment (beginning with “then,” either expressed or implied; examples: Exodus 21:28–29; 22:26–27).

LESSON COMMENTARY

8:1. Moses reiterated that the Israelites needed to be careful to obey all that he was commanding them so that they **may live ... multiply, and ... possess the land ... the LORD** promised to give them. Moses’ repeated use of the word **today** in the book of Deuteronomy (2:18; 9:3; 11:32) highlights the need of that generation to respond appropriately to the covenant, but it also adds a sense of immediacy for all subsequent readers to respond appropriately to God’s commands as well.

8:2–10. Remembering the Lord’s past guidance during their 40 years in the wilderness gave motivation for Israel to keep the Lord’s commandments in the future. God allowed their time spent in the wilderness to **humble** them and to see if they would obey the covenant (v. 2). God was **testing** them, not because He was ignorant, but so that Israel’s commitment or lack thereof could be disclosed. The Lord ordained that they experience physical hunger, and then He supernaturally gave them **manna**. He did this to provide what their physical bodies needed and to emphasize that man does not live by physical **bread alone**, but also by spiritual food (commandments and teaching) that **proceeds out** of His **mouth** (v. 3). This mention of food echoes back to the first temptation in the garden of Eden—which pertained to food. Jesus cited this (Dt 8:3) in resisting the Devil’s temptation for Him to turn stones into bread (see the comments on Mt 4:4).

Besides giving Israel nourishment in the wilderness, God also did not allow their clothes to wear out. Nor did any of them suffer from swollen feet (v. 4), though they were walking on hot, rough terrain. His treatment of them during the wilderness period was based on His desire to discipline them for their good (v. 5), not out of any vindictiveness on His part. In keeping with the theme of discipline, Moses again reminded the Israelites to **keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him** (v. 6). He disciplined them so that they would be prepared to enter and receive the **good land**. This land had an abundant supply of different water sources (**brooks ... fountains and springs**) as well as fields, vineyards, and orchards, all yielding abundant produce and even rich minerals for mining (vv. 7–9). All these gracious provisions were to be enjoyed and were reminders to bless the **LORD** for the good land He benevolently furnished for them (v. 10).

LESSON NUGGET – As God guides us, He tests us. He tests us by His Word (v.1). Will we hear every word that He speaks, and will we obey? He also tests us by His ways (vv.2-9), putting us into situations that help us to know our own hearts. When we become proud, God has to humble us. When we neglect His Word, He must remind us that His Word is our very life.

Sources: Moody Bible Commentary, Standard Lesson Commentary, Life Application Bible and The Essential Everyday Bible Commentary