

Deuteronomy 7-8

Good morning and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to Deuteronomy chapter 7? We're continuing our study through this incredible book as God prepares the nation of Israel to enter the promised land.

Remember this 2nd generation of Hebrews is camped out on the edge of Canaan, getting ready to enter into the promises God gave them, the land flowing with milk and honey. But before they take possession, God needs to give them some reminders.

We're going to study both chapters 7 and 8 this morning, and the title of this morning's message is A CALL TO REMEMBRANCE

Would you please stand as we read verses 1-3 together?

1 "When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, 2 and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. 3 Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son.

LETS PRAY

Throughout the Bible we see that God has a distinct plan for His children. And this plan means being set apart, different, from the rest of the world. Jesus said in **John 15:19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."**

Throughout the ages God desires that those who follow Him be different from the rest of the world. We're to be walking billboards of our allegiance to God almighty. This was also the case for the Israelites...

1 "When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and has cast out many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than you, By all appearances, the nation of Israel was outnumbered and outmatched. These nations were greater and mightier than Israel for sure, but they were not mightier than God.

2 and when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. Notice God would deliver their enemies to them, but the people had to conquer and destroy them.

We see this over and over again not only in the bible, but in our lives as well. God will arrange the circumstances, but it's up to us to take steps of faith and obedience.

So not only are the Israelites to destroy their enemies...3-5

3 Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. 4 For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. 5 But thus you shall deal with them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images,[fn] and burn their carved images with fire. If the Canaanites were allowed to stay in the land, they would introduce idolatry and immorality which would

spread like wildfire among the Israelites. Remember the Canaanites practiced many abominations, including child sacrifice. Their extermination was protection for the Hebrews.

6-8

6 “For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. 7 The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; 8 but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. What an awe-inspiring statement. God didn’t choose Israel because of any advantages they had, or their numbers or for any other reason other than this: God chose Israel because He loved them.

And the same is true for us. There is nothing we can do that impresses God, nothing we can offer Him that will cause Him to love us any more than He already does. **Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

God loves you and me not because we are mighty or have something awesome to offer. Quite the opposite, He loves us just because He loves us. Period.

God’s love is not based upon how good I’m doing or how much you’re doing, how poorly I’m performing or how much you’re soaring.

God’s love for us is absolutely unconditional.

This understanding of God's unconditional love is the greatest motivation for obedience to God.

When we truly believe God loves us, and live with that belief as a conscious fact, we find it so much easier to obey, and it produces a desire to avoid sin because we know it's displeasing to God. Love is the most powerful motivator.

9 "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; 10 and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face. 11 Therefore you shall keep the commandment, the statutes, and the judgments which I command you today, to observe them. Over many generations the Canaanites had demonstrated their hatred for God, Now, using Israel as His instrument, God will repay the Canaanites with judgment.

Now in verses 12-16, God promises conditional blessings, so long as Israel obeyed God's commands.

12 "Then it shall come to pass, because you listen to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the LORD your God will keep with you the covenant and the mercy which He swore to your fathers. 13 And He will love you and bless you and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your land, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flock, in the land of which He swore to your fathers to give you. 14 You shall be blessed above all peoples; there shall not be a male or female barren among you or among your livestock. 15 And the LORD will take away from you all sickness, and will afflict you with none of the terrible diseases of Egypt which you have known, but will lay them on all

those who hate you. 16 Also you shall destroy all the peoples whom the LORD your God delivers over to you; your eye shall have no pity on them; nor shall you serve their gods, for that will be a snare to you. Now if you go back to verse 7, Moses told the people the Lord loved them unconditionally. Here, he tells them the Lord would love and bless them if they obeyed His Words. Is this contradictory? No not at all.

I love my kids whether they're good or bad. I love them simply because they're my kids. But if they say, "We're not going to be here for breakfast, lunch, or dinner, for Christmas, Thanksgiving, or Easter"—although I'll still love them, they'll not enjoy the blessings which would have come their way if they remained close to me.

This is why Jude said **Jude 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.**

Jude isn't describing earning or working for God's love. Jude says we're to just keep ourselves under the spout where God's blessings come out-close to Him.

Here in Deuteronomy, God promises the Israelites that they'll experience wonderful blessings if they simply obey His Word.

Yet God knows the heart, and how quickly it can give in to fear, which is why He says in verse 17...

17 "If you should say in your heart, 'These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess them?'— 18 you shall not be afraid of them, but you shall remember well what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt: 19 the great trials which your eyes saw, the signs and the wonders, the mighty hand and the outstretched arm, by which the LORD your God brought you out. So shall the LORD your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid. When we participate in communion like we will this

morning, we're reminded that Jesus gave everything to save our soul. And with this as a reminder, I know He'll see me through whatever it is that's causing me to be afraid.

It's interesting what the Bible has to say about fear. **1 John 4:18**
There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. When fear creeps in, we need to look no further than the cross to dispel that fear.

20 Moreover the LORD your God will send the hornet among them until those who are left, who hide themselves from you, are destroyed. When the Lord fights for you even the hornets become your allies.

21 You shall not be terrified of them; for the LORD your God, the great and awesome God, is among you. Jesus tells us in **Luke 12:32 Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.**

The great and awesome God is with us. What do we have to fear?

22 And the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you little by little; you will be unable to destroy them at once, lest the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. ” If the Israelites completely wiped out all their enemies instantaneously, that would leave no one to help thin out the population of wild beasts that would not only threaten them physically, but also all their valuable crops.

Israel would get rid of one problem, but they would inherit another. So, God chose to drive out their enemies “little by little”. God promises victory, but it's often won in small increments.

This is so important to remember because I don't know about you, but I want overnight, instant elimination of all my problems. But that's not how victory usually occurs in the Christian life.

Solving all of our problems and concerns instantly might seem easier and better to us, but it would result in consequences we cannot see or fully appreciate. **Isaiah 55:9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth,**

So are My ways higher than your ways,

And My thoughts than your thoughts.

God's desire is that we grow, and so He grows us little by little.

23 But the LORD your God will deliver them over to you, and will inflict defeat upon them until they are destroyed. 24 And He will deliver their kings into your hand, and you will destroy their name from under heaven; no one shall be able to stand against you until you have destroyed them. So even though the progress would seem slow, little by little, the Lord will deliver the enemies over to the Israelites. And notice-no one would be able to stop God's plan.

25 You shall burn the carved images of their gods with fire; you shall not covet the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it for yourselves, lest you be snared by it; for it is an abomination to the LORD your God. 26 Nor shall you bring an abomination into your house, lest you be doomed to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest it and utterly abhor it, for it is an accursed thing. Ok in your Bibles you may just want to notate Joshua 7 next to these verses.

CHAPTER 8 1-2

1 "Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers. 2 And

you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. Through the 40 years wandering in the desert, God humbled the nation of Israel.

He brought them to a place, the wilderness, where all they could do was depend upon Him. The people had nothing else, and no one else they could call upon for help.

Now God didn't test Israel because He didn't know their hearts, because He knows our hearts. Rather God tested the people because they didn't know their own hearts.

You and I have to constantly be corrected of our over-estimation of ourselves, don't we? **Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"**

It is never a pleasurable thing to be humbled and tested by the Lord.

Corp America story-last 3 years of it?

Don't look for a quick exit!

3 So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.

Jesus said **Matthew 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,**

For they shall be filled.

Too often, we don't crave God's Word because we become satisfied what this world offers.

BTW, this is the verse Jesus quoted in Matthew 4 when Satan tempted Jesus to prove He was the Messiah by turning stones into bread.

Now verse 4 provides a new detail about the wilderness wanderings we haven't seen before....

4 Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. Imagine having the same clothes and shoes for 40 years! This is another miracle of God's provision during the years they wandered the wilderness. Even though they may have felt like God abandoned them, He didn't. He took care of even the smallest detail.

5 You should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the LORD your God chastens you. Moses tells them 'you might know this in your head, but you need to know this in your heart.'

God is our perfect Father. And because He loves us, sometimes He will chasten us, which means to instruct or discipline.

Our Father loves us so much He won't let us go on a path that will be destructive to us. He'll discipline and chasten us when we're out of line in order to bring us back to Him.

6-10

6 "Therefore you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. 7 For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; 8 a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil 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 When you have eaten and are full, then you shall

ble**ss the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.** God is not against us having nice things. We can see in these verses God desired to materially bless Israel. The problem happens when our possessions come between us and the Lord.

And just like we saw last week in our study of chapter 6, God gives a warning to the nation as they are about to enjoy the blessings He gives them...

11-17

11 “Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, 12 lest—when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; 13 and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; 14 when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; 15 who led you through that great and terrible wilderness, in which were fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock; 16 who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do you good in the end— 17 then you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.’ When everything is going well, and our lives are filled with abundance, it’s easy to drift into thinking we’ve accomplished something. Without much afterthought, we can forget the LORD Himself and all His work on our behalf.

God doesn’t bless our business, our family, our finances or our church for any of us to take the bows. We need to give the glory and honor to who it belongs.

Isaiah 42:8 I am the LORD, that is My name;

And My glory I will not give to another,

Nor My praise to carved images.

I've lost count how many Christians I've witnessed that prospered, and then drifted away. They don't have time for the Lord anymore. Their passion diminishes and their devotion decreases. It's like watching a ship drift aimlessly out to stormy seas because they won't drop their anchor. It's heartbreaking.

Let's finish the chapter...

18 "And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. 19 Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the LORD your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. 20 As the nations which the LORD destroys before you, so you shall perish, because you would not be obedient to the voice of the LORD your God. As time went on the temptation would be to look at the nations that God was judging and to think, "We're better than them, so we are safe. But God would deal with them that way if they rose up in pride against Him.

God knows our tendency to listen and grasp onto His word, and as time goes on, to relax our grip as life happens around us.

This morning we're going to remember, lest we forget, through communion.

Before we do, I want to tell you the brief, real life story of a father and son duo named Dick and Rick Hoyt. Before his death in March of this year, Dick and his son Rick raced a lot together. 72 marathons. 257 triathlons. 219 10k runs. If my math is right,

since 1975 they crossed 1,142 finish lines. They even crossed the USA.

Team Hoyt loves races. But only half of team Hoyt can run.

SHOW PIC 1 Dick, the dad, can run. But Rick's legs don't work, nor does his speech.

Doctors gave a grim prognosis at birth, but Rick's parents disagreed. Rick couldn't bathe, dress or feed himself, but he could think. They knew their son was bright, so they enrolled him in school and he graduated. They enrolled him in college and guess what-he graduated again.

But Rick wanted to run. At age 15 he asked his dad if they could enter a 5 mile benefit race.

Dick wasn't a runner, but he was a father. So he loaded his son in a 3 wheeled wheelchair, and off they went, and they didn't stop.

Young Rick Hoyt relied on his dad to do it all: lift him, push him, pedal him and tow him. Other than a willing heart, Rick made no contribution to the effort. Rick depended entirely on the strength of his father. **CLOSE PIC 1**

Our Heavenly Father wants you and I to do the same.

Now I get it, in our society of self-sufficiency, believe in yourself is the more followed slogan of our day in age. Try harder, work longer, and dig deeper. Self-reliance is our goal.

But we bring to the spiritual life what young Rick Hoyt brings to the physical one. Our spiritual legs have no strength. Our morality has no muscle. Our good deeds cannot carry us across the finish line, only Jesus Christ can.

John 10:28 “And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”

That is the power of the cross of Christ. Jesus died on the cross for all of my sins, all of your sins, so that we may spend forever with God. But that’s not the end of the story. 3 days later Jesus rose from the grave, and is in heaven, and He is coming back, and we will be with Him in heaven for all eternity.

Remembering God’s love for us, what do we have to fear?

Remembering God’s sacrifice for us, we propelled to worship Him!

Recalling God’s mercy, His grace, and His faithfulness to us, should buoy our emotions in times of trouble.

He’s our great and mighty God, mighty to save!

Let us recall His love for us as Jesus was nailed to the cross.

Please hold onto your cups, so we can partake together as family.

Luke 22:19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

And

Luke 22: 20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.”