

Deuteronomy 8 - Thursday, July 14th, 2011

- By way of introduction to this chapter; we are in the middle of the second of five sermons that are preached by Moses to the children of Israel.
- This next generation of Israelites are on the cusp of entering the Promised-Land and God is speaking to them, through Moses, concerning this.
- Moses will not lead them into the Promised-Land, Joshua will however, before he does there are a number of warnings they need to heed first.

(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.

- Notice that the reason God both humbled them, and tested them, was so they could know what was in their own heart, namely; disobedience.
- God sees and knows man's heart, and man looks only on the outward appearance and cannot see the heart, so God shows him what He sees.
- He does this because man becomes proud outwardly, and in order to humble him, He must show him; "him," inwardly, as He sees him, truly.

Jeremiah 17:9 NKJV "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"

- This is how, and why, man has the propensity to deceive himself, into thinking more highly of himself, and in so doing puffs himself up in pride.
- When I'm self-deceived in this way, I become disabled in every way, and my disabilities are many, the chief of which is that I'm visually impaired.
- My blindness, will be proportionate to my haughtiness. Because I've been disabled in this way, I'm not enabled in any way, to see my true self.

- It's for this reason that God must show me, me! Left to my self-deceiving pride, I have no hope of seeing myself nor my need to humble myself.
- If you were to ask me what one of the most powerful and personal ways in which God deals with us, this would certainly be listed amongst them.
- This is the "why" behind the "what" of Moses preaching this sermon. God has got to, through Moses, speak to them, and must forewarn them.

- I'm keenly aware that, by now, you're wondering how it is I can speak so authoritatively on the subject matter of pride. Well, I'm a pro at pride!
- I know what pride looks like, feels like, and even smells like, because of the foul odor, emitted from the proud pours, of my proud heart and life.
- An arrogant life, is a disobedient life. I disobey the commandments of God, fancying myself knowing more than God, like in the garden with God.

As one commentator so aptly said it; "Pride is the ground in which all the other sins grow, and the parent from which all the other sins come."

- So, how does God forewarn the children of Israel against disobedience to His commandments? By getting to the heart of the matter, literally.
- God gets to, and puts His finger on, what causes the disobedience. The tumor of a prideful heart, causes the pain of disobedience in my heart.
- God doesn't deal with symptoms on the surface, He deals with the sin beneath the surface. He will sterilize inwardly, so as to sanitize outwardly.

- While they both have the connotation of cleansing, sterilization and sanitization should not be seen as synonymous in terms of what they mean.
- Sterilization means removing, and sanitization means protecting. Sterilizing removes the bacteria, while sanitizing protects from the bacteria.
- Sterilizing requires heat, sanitizing does not. Sterilizing brings contaminants to the surface, sanitizing wipes the contaminants from the surface.

- Lest you think you're in a medical study instead of a Bible study, let me hasten to connect the dots, and fill in the blanks of our understanding.
- Like with the Israelites, God will use the heat in the desert of difficulty, in order that he might sterilize and sanitize our hearts from impurity.
- God used the forty years in the wilderness to humble their hearts, test their hearts, and purify their hearts, so they would have obedient hearts.

1 Peter 1:6-7 NIV (6) In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. (7) These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

(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.

- Moses reminds them of the manna, and how God allowed the hunger to humble them, and how He fed them, in order that he might teach them.
- What is it that God wants to teach them? That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.
- The hunger came, then the humbling came, then the manna came, then, with it, the bread of life came. They found life in it, as they lived on it.

Charles Spurgeon - "...it is intended for us to live upon, ...our daily food, upon which we rejoice to live. ...Oh, keep to the Word, my brothers! Keep to it as God's Word, and as coming out of his mouth. Suck it down into your soul; you cannot have too much of it. Feed on it day and night, for thus will God make you to live the life that is life indeed."

- Perhaps this verse sounds familiar and rightfully so, as Jesus quoted it when He was tempted by the Devil after fasting for forty days and nights.
- All three of the scriptures Jesus quotes are from the book of Deuteronomy. Actually, Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy more than any other book.
- When Jesus quotes this verse He is humble and hungry telling Satan that man doesn't live on bread alone, but by every Word from God's Word.

- I find it interesting that God allows them, to go through the wilderness to humble them, and then He allows them to go hungry, to humble them.
- Why? The wandering in the wilderness teaches us that He is our God, while the manna in the wilderness teaches us a reliance upon our God.
- The common denominator in both is the prerequisite of humility. If I'm humble I can't exalt myself before God, nor rely on myself instead of God.

- Satan tempts Jesus to satisfy His hunger, in His way, and the reason he couldn't get him to do that was because Jesus knew it wouldn't satisfy.
- We cannot satisfy a spiritual need in a carnal way, because not only will we become hungry again, but when the hunger returns, it will be worse.
- Jesus told the woman at the well that if she tried to satisfy her cravings by drinking the water of her worldly ways, she would get thirsty again.

John 4:13-14 NIV Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, (14) but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

- If I'm trying to fill the hole in my soul with the things of the world, I may get what I want, however it comes packaged with a leanness in my soul.
- I think of the mixed multitudes complaining about the Manna, and demanding flesh to eat instead. They thought that meat would satisfy them.
- God grants them their request and sends them quail, only to have God strike them with a severe plague while the meat was still in their teeth.

Psalms 106:15 KJV And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

- When He sends the manna, He sends with it a fullness into my soul. When He gives me water to drink, He gives with it a satisfying of my soul.
- When He offers me the bread of life, He offers with it a gratifying for my soul. Would to God, that we rely on Him; our souls are satisfied in Him.
- Would to God, that we are found numbered amongst the ones who have a craving for Him, that we may also be the ones who are filled by Him.

Matthew 5:6 NIV Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

(4) Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years.

- This particular verse has been fodder of sorts for many a Bible commentator in their speculation, and their pontification, related to its meaning.
- One suggests that the manna contained everything they would need nutritionally, by virtue of how feet swell up when there's a diet deficiency.
- While that may very well be true, it does not really explain why, in the same verse, we are also told that their garments did not wear out either.

Adam Clarke - "The plain meaning of this much-tortured text appears to me to be this: 'God so amply provided for them all the necessities of life, that they never were obliged to wear tattered garments, nor were their feet injured for lack of shoes or sandals.'"

(5) You should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the LORD your God chastens you. (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 bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

- This is what I love about the Word of God, and the God of the Word; He never forewarns us, about something that really isn't a danger to us.
- Here, the warning is quite clear. They were about to be blessed exceedingly, abundantly, above and beyond anything they could have imagined.
- Therein lies the problem, namely, the peril of prosperity, or as one called it, the agony of affluence. It's not conducive to an attitude of gratitude.

(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.' (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.

- This is what I call; "forgetting to remember." At the risk of sounding a little bit dorky, please here me out because there's a profound truth here.
- Just as pride impairs my vision, prosperity impairs my memory. We forget our "humble beginnings," and don't remember where we came from.
- When God blesses us, do we bless Him? Are we like the leper who threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him, or are we like the other nine?

(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.

- Wow, what a way to end the chapter! If you forget to remember your God, and obey your God, and follow, and worship other gods, you will die.
- God is warning them, and Moses is testifying against them, in the event that they ever think God's blessing on them, is really because of them.
- This begins the end. If I think my business success is because of me, it will begin to die. If I think it's all me in the marriage, it will begin to die.

Daniel 4:27-31 NKJV Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity." (28) All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. (29) At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. (30) The king spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?" (31) While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you!