

You Shall Remember

Deut. 8:1-11

Introduction: When these words were spoken, Israel was at the parting of the ways. A change was imminent, both of leaders and of circumstances. Moses knew that soon he would lay down the burden which he had carried for so long and so courageously, and that someone else would lead the people. He knew also that soon they would change their circumstances of the wilderness for those of the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey. In this book of Deuteronomy we have the final charges to the people, charges no doubt resulting from experience and expectation. Standing among the people whom he loved so well; with whom he had so patiently borne; with whom he had been so righteously angry; he looked back over the years, and on into all that he knew lay before them, because God “made known His ways unto Moses;” and spoke to them out of the fullness of his heart.

Moses recognized the influence of memory, and so in this closing message he understood that properly stored, it would serve as a continual inspiration for present endeavor; as well as one of the great forces that makes the future. In this call to remember there is not only the historic setting, and the philosophic basis, but the spiritual purpose of this text as well. Moses desired that their memory be directed to the supreme matters, urging them to look back, but to look back from the right perspective, and to see things in the right

relationship; to see the real things, the abiding things, the things that are really worth remembering.

The word translated '**remember**' quite literally means to **mark**. "You shall mark all the way which the Lord your God has led you." There is a beautiful pictorial suggestiveness of this word, it is that of a chart, the map, or the way which certain facts were to be marked, and therefore fixed upon their collective and individual memory.

First, let us remember the past in relation to God.

We may note three things that Moses wanted them to remember: .

1. God's deliverance from Egypt
2. God's leading that he had led them through the terrible wilderness experience
3. God's resources which were placed at their disposal.

The people had been brought out of Egypt and all its bondage into freedom. When you read the Old Testament and listen to its teachings you will discover how constantly the prophets, seers, and psalmists took the people back to Egypt, and the fact of their deliverance. Their history really began when they were bought out of Egypt. In verse 14 of this chapter "the lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery" They were a special people on the ground of deliverance, and they were to place all the past, the immediate past, the forty years, in relation to that beginning of deliverance when God broke the power of the oppressor, and led them out into the place

where it was possible for them to live the life of faith, the life of direct and immediate obedience to their God.

My dear friends tonight, in all our backward looking, we are to remember that the life of faith begins in that hour in which He looses us from our sin and makes it possible for us to obey his kingship and to follow Him wherever He may lead us. When we look back, we must put everything in relation to that initial deliverance by which God broke the back of sin and all of its dominion and enslavement and brought us out into relationship with Himself. So often we fail to do this. We look at the incidents of our life, and the happenings of the days, and we fail to set them in relation to the fundamental fact of our redemption by blood, and our relationship to Christ upon the basis of sin forgiven and peace with God. If the prophets, Seers and Psalmists constantly referred the people to their coming out of Egypt, the New Testament writers as constantly refer us to redemption, and to our oneness with Christ by the mystery of His cross.

Secondly, Moses charged them to remember all the way along which God had led them. V.2

There is nothing more beautiful in the book of Deuteronomy than the different passages in which Moses insisted upon that guidance of God. God went before you in the way, to seek you out a place to pitch your tents in.” God chose the ground where they halted, it may have been rough but he was there with them. He had provided for them all they needed. The cloud by day to guide and to shelter them from the scorching

Mediterranean sun; the pillar of fire at night to warm them from the drastic drop in temperature.

Thirdly, God's resources were placed at their disposal.

He had fed them, preserved their clothing and their shoes. In other words, their basic necessities of life were provided for. Clothes, bread, water. They had received a great deal more, but what he laid upon their memory was the fact that things absolutely essential for life God had been providing for them. For forty years, in spite of all their murmuring and unbelief, and difficulty and suffering, there had never been a day when they had lacked necessary things.

Yet a deeper note in the text and in this injunction to remember are the lessons God wanted to teach them. There are three of these lessons I find in the text.

1. That they might be humbled v.2.

God's purpose is to produce the character, which is the opposite of pride.

Illust. The story of the man who missed his flight.

If a man is to be delivered, he will be delivered when he feels he cannot help himself.

If a man is to be led he must be flung into the wilderness where there is neither map

nor guide post. If a man is to depend on God, and lose his arrogance and his pride, he must receive his supplies from one who brings them from the unknown resources..

Oh, there is beauty in humility. Humility always veils its face and worships. God has been leading you into the wilderness to humble you; not to break your spirit; not to make slaves of you; but to free your character from all the things he hates, at the root of which is pride so that you can be meek and humble and lovable.

2. That they might know what was in their heart

It isn't that God does not know what is in our hearts, but that he brings us into circumstances so that we would know the incipient evil that may be lurking in our hearts.

Such things as:

Rebellion

Hatred

Blasphemy

Cowardice

Dishonesty

Impurity

Greed

All these may be hidden beneath the surface. Then he will lead me into places where they will be revealed.

3. That they might be taught that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. V.3

Jesus so beautifully quoted these words when he himself was in the wilderness being tempted by the Devil. It is a word here that is deep and powerful for every age. It does not refer to the Bible only. It includes it but yet I believe there is something profounder and greater.

Where do we really get our bread from?

We are placed in difficult situations by which we will have the opportunity of finding out who we really are and also to find out who God really is, and so finding life.

There will be days of desolation, darkness, despondency, despair; day when you think you are done, beaten, at the end of everything; and then there came a light, and a glory, and a supply, and a deliverance, and God. It is by these things man live, not by rose gardens and not by the hills and valleys to which they were going. vv.7-9.

Conclusion: Let us sing the song of deliverance; let us remember the markers, the places and situations he has guided us through. Let us remember how adequate his resources. Let us learn the lessons: Walking humbly with our God, knowing what's in our heart and truly knowing who God is. It could just be that the backward look will be one that in its final value is an onward look. For there is a land out there

flowing with milk and honey. God will keep us there as well as in the wilderness.

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