

Deuteronomy 7-8: Don't Forget the Lord

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Life Bible Ministry

Deuteronomy chapter 7. Somebody could realistically read through the Book of Deuteronomy and say to themselves, why in the world should I read this book? And particularly, why would I want to study it? I mean, why would I want to get into it in depth?

Well, not only is it very important for us to understand the history of Israel, the history of God's redemptive program among His people, but there's a great deal of things in the Book of Deuteronomy that transfer over to our lives; our Christian lives.

I want to just remind you of something again, and this goes on through the Book of Joshua and so forth. Going into the promised land is a picture of living our Christian lives. When they cross over the Jordan, that is a picture for you and I of what it means to begin to walk with Jesus into the promises that He has laid out.

You'll remember that the only reason that they went to the promised land was because God promised it. This is the land, but remember that land is full of enemies. It's full of challenges. It's full of threats to your faith. Like the subject of evolution versus creation, I suppose. And there's many, many other sorts of things that you're going to, that we deal with on a regular basis, walking out the promises of God, walking out our lives with Jesus.

The Book of Deuteronomy is a sermon that Moses gave to the nation of Israel just prior to their going into the land. And he was reminding them of the covenant promises that God had made to them. He was reminding them of their responsibilities related to that covenant. And he was exhorting them in the Book of Deuteronomy about their end of the bargain, keeping and walking in those promises, and in their case commandments.

We've made the point in the past that Jesus quoted from the Book of Deuteronomy. In fact, when He struggled against the temptations of the enemy in the wilderness, He quoted from Deuteronomy. We're actually going to see some of those tonight.

And so Jesus held this book in very high regard. It's one of the most quoted books in the entire rest of the Bible. There's so much good stuff here and I think you're going to see that as we go through these chapters tonight.

Chapter 7 of Deuteronomy begins this way. *“When the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, and clears away many nations before you, (and then he names some of them) the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations more numerous and mightier than you, (I don't know if this is a pep talk or not, but he says) ² and when the LORD your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then you must devote them to complete destruction. You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them.” (ESV)*

All right. I want you to stop there right now, because we've already run into a question, at least along the lines of what God is telling the nation of Israel through Moses. He says, listen, when you go into the land, first of all, these people are stronger than you are. They're mightier than you. They're larger than you, and you're going to come up against them.

But he's, He reminds them, I am the one, God says, I am the one who's going to give these people into your hands. And when I do, I want you, I don't want you just to beat them. I want you to destroy them.

And what is being said here, without actually being verbalized, is that God is bringing judgment upon the nations of Canaan, and He's using Israel as His sword of judgment.

Listen, don't read this section of Deuteronomy as if God is saying through Moses, I like you guys. I like you guys better than the other people that have been hanging out here in Canaan. And this is a good land, and I figured it was as good as any for you guys to live in, so I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to have you go into the land, and I'm going to actually give you the power to kill those people, so you can take their land. Hee, hee, hee. Won't that be fun? We'll just rid ourselves of these people because I don't really like those people very much. Listen, that's not what's going on here.

I want you to understand that God is not simply telling these people to go in and take the land because He likes them better. The land is being given to Israel because the Canaanites had for hundreds of years, refused to repent of their sins, and turn to the one true God. And that, by the way, is going to be made clear in one of the coming chapters. I don't know if we'll get there tonight. It depends on

how quickly you guys listen. But God is going to actually talk about that in very clear terms in just a little bit.

But here's the question, how long actually did God give the Canaanites to repent of their sin? Do you know, we don't know for sure because it could have been for a long time before Abraham even came on the scene. But we know that when Abraham was promised or told, first of all, to go to the land of Canaan, and when he got there, the Lord said, I'm giving you this land.

Now remember, Abraham was promised the land, but he never possessed it. Okay. Isaac, that promise was passed along to Isaac. I'm giving you this land, but Isaac never possessed the land. Jacob lived right there in that land and Jacob was told by God, I'm giving you this land, but Jacob never possessed it. Right.

And then Israel you'll remember was, went to Egypt where they stayed for 400 more years. Obviously during that time, they didn't possess the land, although God had promised it to them. So we have all of that time.

Abraham lived 175 years. He came into the land when he was 75 years old, he lived another 100 years. So we know there's a hundred year period right there. Right? Where these people still had an opportunity to repent of their sins. And then we've got the life of Isaac. He lived there his entire life. And then we've got Jacob who lived there for 130 years and then went to Egypt and lived another 17 years. Lived a total of 147 years and then died. And then we've got 400 years of captivity, captivity, life in Egypt. It wasn't all captivity at the beginning, but we have that 400 year period of Israel.

Suffice it to say, God gave the Canaanites what we know of, hundreds of years to respond to Him, to repent of their sin. And they did not, they would not. And so eventually judgment fell. And God decided to use Israel to exact that judgment.

Now, as we keep reading here, you'll notice that verse 3 is an interesting one in light of what God just told them. What did he just tell them? He said, when you go into the land, exterminate them, exterminate the people.

But verse 3 begins by saying, "*You shall not intermarry with them,*" which is a really interesting thing to say right after you've told them to obliterate these people. It's like, hey, when you go into the land, obliterate them, get rid of them completely, devote them to destruction. Oh, and by the way, don't intermarry with them.

Well, obviously that's not even possible if they were truly obedient to the word of the Lord, right? I mean, if they're all gone, there's nobody to intermarry with. God is already speaking to them about the fact that He understands, He knows that when the word is given to us, we are never 100 percent obedient to that word.

The law is laid out for us, and we can't keep the law. We don't keep the law perfectly. We don't do what God tells us to do perfectly. If we did, I suppose we'd probably live in a perfect world. But we don't.

And that's why John the Apostle writes in his first epistle that the man who says he does not sin is a liar, and the truth isn't in him, because we all sin. (1 John 2:4) We all mess up, we don't follow God's Word perfectly. God knows that, so now He begins to address the reality of that imperfection, knowing that there will remain Canaanites in the land, even after they come into it.

He begins, and he says again in verse 3, *"You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, (and here's the reason why) ⁴for they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly."*

And by the way, that's the reason why, even under the new covenant we are exhorted as believers not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. And It's a very, very, challenging situation.

I remember when I was a youth pastor back when I was also a youth. I remember having a Bible study with some kids. And we were going over that passage about not being unequally yoked. And the girls that were there at the time literally were just like, oh, yeah, whatever. And they literally, that's the way they responded to that word. They said, and if I date a guy who's an unbeliever, not a big deal. I'll just bring him to the Lord, don't worry.

Paul even talks in that very same, in that section about marriage, he talks to the Corinthians and says, he says, husband, how do you know that you will save your wife and wife how do you know if you'll save your husband? (1 Corinthians 7:6) You don't. You don't know unless God has spoken to you personally and given you a promise, which He has the right to do if He wants to, but that typically isn't what happens. You don't know.

And I tell you, as someone who's been pastoring now for about 35 years, I can tell you that I have sat with many, many married people. One of whom was

saved and who was lamenting the decision in their life to marry an unbeliever. Because not only is there that unequal yoke, there's something that they can't share in their marriage relationship and that is the spiritual dynamic of what it is to be one flesh in every respect, or literally intimate in every respect.

Intimacy is an incredible thing that God factored into marriage. We think of intimacy as being only physical. You'll hear somebody say, they were intimate and we assume that what that means is, they had some kind of physical relations. Well, intimacy impacts other areas in marriage. If a couple is physically intimate, but they're not emotionally intimate, there's something very much lacking in that marriage relationship.

Intimacy was meant to be a whole package. There's an emotional aspect to intimacy. There's a physical aspect to intimacy, as we've already said. There's a spiritual aspect to intimacy where a couple comes together and shares, shares things with one another that they would share with no one else, there's even intellectual intimacy, the telling of things, the sharing of information that you would share with your spouse, that you would share with no one else.

God intended marriage to impact all of these areas of intimacy. But when you are unequally yoked with an unbeliever, there's at least one area where you cannot be intimate, and it's like riding in a car where you got one flat tire. You might get there, but it's not going to be very fun. And there's going to be challenges along the way and just there's...

Oh, man if I could let some people, even from our fellowship, get up and tell you what life is like married to an unbeliever, you, I mean, you'd see what I mean because they've got some pretty powerful testimonies of what it is to live under an unequal yoke. God says to the people here, don't do that.

Verse 5, *"But thus shall you deal with them: you shall break down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and chop down their Asherim and burn their carved images with fire."* Isn't that interesting? In other words, reject their religious practices. Notice He doesn't say burn their houses, burn their fields.

You need to understand that pagan religious practices that were going on in Canaan at that time involved all manner of vile sexual practices, and even child sacrifice. They would offer their children in the fire to their pagan gods and, so not only were these people warped spiritually, but we've even heard that some archeological evidence has unearthed the fact that they were sickly as well from a physical standpoint, because you can't be immoral to the degree that they were sexually, and remain healthy. We know that from our culture.

I mean, if somebody is sexually promiscuous, you're just inviting all kinds of diseases and so forth. There's things that we don't even know about what happens when people have physical relations. There's things we're just now figuring out.

Did you see the article that just came out recently that says that a woman who has had multiple partners, physical partners, actually retains some of the DNA from every single man she's been with, and it remains a part of her forever. That's fascinating, but this is something they've just discovered. And they discovered it in the process of trying to find more information about diseases and this and that. And unlocking DNA information has just provided this open window into so many things in our society, in our life, but this is just one of them.

And so we're now seeing that a woman who's had multiple partners it's not just this quick act that is done. You have a one nighter and then you're done and you never see the guy, or whatever. His DNA remains part of you forever. It's fascinating.

So my point is, we just figured that out and, we're medically speaking, scientifically speaking, we're pretty smart. We've figured out a lot of things, but there's so much more we don't know. And what happens to people. Well, the effect that it has on people when we violate God's Word is just, I don't think we can even over speak it. You know what I mean?

God says these religious practices that involved all this crazy, warp, sexual activity, get rid of it, burn it down, crush it. You don't even want it around. Nothing to even remind you of it or tempt you toward it. Why?

Verse 6, *"For you are a people holy to the LORD your God."* And the word, holy carries the idea of both chosen and set apart. All right. He says, *"The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."* The people of God are His treasured possession and I believe that applies very much to the church too.

He said, look at this. He says, *"⁷ It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, (in fact he said) for you were the fewest of all peoples, ⁸ but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, (he's talking about Abraham and Isaac and Jacob) that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."*

And you can see here in this language, our own lives, can't you? You can see our own Christian lives. God has chosen you out of the world. You are His treasured possession. He brought you out of slavery to sin, and now brings you to this good land that you might enter into it, and walk in it according to the promises of God. You see the picture here.

Verse 9, *“Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations, ¹⁰ and repays to their face those who hate him, by destroying them. He will not be slack with one who hates him. He will repay him to his face. ¹¹ You shall therefore be careful to do the commandment and the statutes and the rules that I command you today.*

¹² *“And because you listen to these rules and keep and do them, the LORD your God will keep with you the covenant and the steadfast love that he swore to your fathers. ¹³ He will love you, bless you, and multiply you. He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your wine and your oil, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock, in the land that he swore to your fathers to give you. ¹⁴ You shall be blessed above all peoples. There shall not be male or female barren among you or among your livestock.” Even.*

And look at this, *“¹⁵ And the LORD will take away from you all sickness, and none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which you knew, will he inflict on you, but he will lay them on all who hate you. ¹⁶ And you shall consume all the peoples that the LORD your God will give over to you. Your eye shall not pity them, neither shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.*

¹⁷ *“If you 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 what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt, ¹⁹ the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, the wonders, the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm, by which the LORD your God brought you out. So will the LORD your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid.” In other words, the Lord is saying, remember, through Moses here.*

Verse 20, *“Moreover, the LORD your God will send hornets among them, until those who are left and hide themselves from you are destroyed. ²¹ You shall not be in dread of them, for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God.”*

I love that verse because again, verse 21 is a reminder to you and I, as we walk out the promises of God in our Christian lives, He says, don't dread anything

you face. Don't dread the challenges. Don't dread the enemies. Don't dread the difficulties that you face in this life. Don't dread it. Why? For the Lord, your God is in your midst. In other words, He's in your corner and He's a great and awesome God.

Boy, if we would just remember this verse, whenever we're going through hard times, just remember, well, God's with me. I love it actually, when I hear people say that. When they say, here's what's going on in my life, it's really challenging, very difficult, but the Lord's with me. They're saying exactly what Moses is reminding the people of Israel of.

We need to really keep that in mind, but you need to know something. When you go through difficult times, the enemy's chief desire is to convince you, God is not with you. He wants very much to convince you that God has left you alone. And that you're just, you're on your own, pal. There is no help. There's no looking to God. He's not answering you're praying. He's not listening. Right?

How many times have I heard that? I pray, but I just feel like God's not listening. Yeah, that's exactly what the enemy wants you to think. It's what he wants you to feel.

The fact is, God has promised you that He's with you. He's promised you. Here's the question. Are you going to believe your promise, or are you going to believe your feelings?

See, that's what the Israelites came up against when they first came to the promised land. The people whom Moses is talking to here, it was their parents. And they came to the doorway of the promised land, and God told them, gave them the very same promise, I will be with you. These people will not be able to stand against you because I am with you.

And what did they say? I just feel like we really can't win. I just really feel scared cause these guys are big. I just feel like we have no chance of winning. I just feel, I just feel, I just feel. And we're just all very feely today, aren't we? And we, and so what do we do? We listen to our feelings instead of basing our strategy on the promises of God.

There's nothing wrong with saying, I feel afraid, but the Lord has promised that He's with me. David would pray that way to the Lord. When you read through the Psalms, David would, man, he was honest with God. He laid it right out there, but then he would come back at the end of his prayers, and he would affirm what God had said in His Word. And he would reiterate the promises, but

You Lord are faithful, but You have promised, to be with me. And I know that I will be victorious, and da-da-da.

David would give himself these pep talks based on the promises of God, especially when he was feeling like defeat was imminent. And David went through those same sorts of feelings that you and I do, right?

People, we can't listen to our feelings. I just feel like, there's no chance, there's no hope for my marriage. Hey, listen, your feelings are not what matters at this juncture. You need to just be on your knees and hear from God and open your heart to Him. I just feel like, I just feel like. If I had a dollar for every time I heard somebody say, I just feel. Yeah, I wouldn't, yeah. I could be a lottery unto myself. So by the way, I don't play the lottery. I just want to make that very clear right there.

Okay, that's verse 21. So there's a great verse for you guys to hang on to. *"You shall not be in dread of them, for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God."* Verse 22. *"The LORD your God will clear away these nations before you little by little. You may not make an end of them at once, lest the wild beasts grow too numerous for you. ²³ But the LORD your God will give them over to you and throw them into great confusion, until they are destroyed. ²⁴ And he will give their kings into your hand, and you shall make their name perish from under heaven. No one shall be able to stand against you until you have destroyed them."*

I look at that verse and you know what I think of? That passage in the New Testament that says, God has given us everything we need for life and godliness. (2 Peter 1:3) And I see the same promise here that no one is going to, these things, these enemies that you face, they cannot stand against you until they are destroyed because God's given you everything we need.

We know that we, at least we know it intellectually. God has given us everything we need for life and godliness. Would you agree that's true? I mean, it's in the Bible. You have to. So there you go. God has given us everything we need for life and godliness.

If He's given us everything we need for life and godliness, why is it that we're not always godly? I mean, that's the, it's because we're not perfect. If we were perfect in laying hold of the power of God, and walking out the power of God, we would always be godly, but we're not. We make decisions to do our own thing. We walk in selfishness. We walk in unbelief. We walk in fear, right? We walk in anger. We walk in bitterness. We walk in ignorance sometimes and we

don't walk it out perfectly. But that doesn't mean the power of God isn't available.

The nation of Israel ended up going into the land and they did not displace all these nations. But it wasn't because God's power wasn't available. It wasn't because God did something wrong. It's because they didn't walk out that power on a consistent basis. And it's the same with you and I. We don't do it on a consistent basis. That's one of the reasons we're here tonight to encourage one another as we carry on the battle, to keep walking it out in the strength of the Lord, because we need to be strengthened, don't we? Because life has a way of just dragging us down.

And sometimes it's the people you work with. You guys who go to work every day, and you're just constantly barraged with ungodliness, ungodly thoughts, ungodly language, ungodly philosophies. And you hear it day in and day out, and it wears you down. And eventually you're just like, you crawl. I can just see some of you spiritually crawling into church on a Wednesday or on a Sunday because you're like, I am so beat down. I am so, I just need to spend time in the presence of God. I need to hear something that's true for a minute to build myself up in the Lord.

Now, that's one of the reasons why we don't perfectly walk out the power and the Word of God in our lives, because we get burdened. We get weighed down. We get weakened by living in this world that we do.

Verse 25 is going to address once again, some of the accoutrements of the religions of these pagan peoples. And he says in verse 25, *"The carved images of their gods you shall burn with fire. You shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them or take it for yourselves, lest you be ensnared by it, for it is an abomination to the LORD your God."*²⁶ *And you shall not bring an abominable thing into your house and become devoted to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest and abhor it, for it is devoted to destruction."*

As you can see, the Israelites were told here to deal very harshly with the things that would otherwise cause them to sin, right? The things that might potentially draw them into sin. And you and I are told to deal very harshly with the things that can potentially draw us into sin. And Jesus said this same thing using a different word picture. It's in Matthew's Gospel. Let me put it on the screen for you so you can see it here. It's from Matthew chapter 5. Jesus said this, verse 29 and 30.

Matthew 5:29-30 (ESV)

If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

This is a word picture, you guys. It's not meant to be taken literally from the standpoint of gouging out your eye and cutting off your hands. If it was, we would all be handless and eyeless. Jesus is talking.

You have to remember how the culture, His culture, understood the right eye and the right hand. It was, it meant the best. It was a phrase referring to my best, my strongest, my above all. So my firstborn son in Israel, in Jewish eyes, he would be called, the son of my right hand.

Where is Jesus seated now at the right hand of the Father? You have to understand, I'm sorry if you're a left handed person, but left handed people were looked upon as, we're not so sure about you, because the right was considered to be the dominant, the proper side. But that was just the picture. That was the idea that they had in that culture.

So you can understand now when Jesus says, if your right hand causes you to sin, if your right eye caused you to sin, obviously your hand and your eye don't cause you to sin. It's actually the heart, but there are things outside of us that draw us into temptation. And what Jesus is saying is, deal harshly with those things, lest you be drawn into sin.

Same thing Moses is telling the people of Israel, through the Word of God here. When you see these things that the people of Canaan have worshiped, when you see their altars, when you see their statues, their idols, destroy them, get rid of them, and if they're coated in gold or silver, don't covet it. It is an abominable thing, the Lord says.

Deuteronomy 8. *“The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land*

that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. ² And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, (and look at what it says here) that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. ”

Do you know that God tests us? God doesn't tempt us but He does test us. The Bible makes it very clear, God does not tempt, nor can He be tempted, but He will issue a test. (James 1:13) And that test is for you, an opportunity to trust Him or not.

You'll notice here that Moses says, God, during your time in the wilderness, brought you into a time of testing in order to humble you to see what was in your heart. And it was humbling because God took them into a place where there was nothing. He took them into the wilderness. He didn't take them into a land where there was a grocery store on every corner, and a restaurant down the street. And a market over there and a and a motel to go stay in. You know what I'm saying?

He didn't take them into a populated area. He took them into the wilderness. They had nothing to do, but rely on the Lord. That's all they could do. And God will do that in our lives from time to time. He will bring us into a place where there's nothing you can do, but rely on Him. Why? He's testing you. Because will you do as the Israelites did? Will you get angry and bitter and start complaining? God brought me here. And I don't, what's the problem anyway.

Sometimes I get some really angry emails. They're not angry at me. They're angry at God. And people will, and I appreciate honesty, I do, and I don't fault them for honesty. Frankly, again, you go back to the Psalms, you find some very honest prayers. Lord, will you forget me forever? As an example.

And I've had people actually write that to me. Does God even care for me? Does He even care how I feel? Believe me, I understand that. I really do. But sometimes you have to understand, you need to understand, that God is bringing you to this place of testing to see what your response is going to be.

Will it be, God, do you even care? Or will it be, God, I choose to trust in You regardless. And those tests are not fun, ever. I didn't like testing in school. I don't like testing with God either. And when I'm going through a test, I'm a miserable puppy and you're probably the same because we don't like being tested.

But God will bring you into the wilderness where there's really nothing you can do except get angry. There's other testings where we're not necessarily in the wilderness, but those are testings just the same. Sometimes God will bring you to a place where there are multiple other options to fix your problem to see if you'll go for those or go for Him. And that happens a lot too. It's not just wilderness.

God's talking here through Moses of wilderness testing where He's removed other solutions from in front of you and you just, all you have is God. But I many, many, times, many, probably even more times. God will bring you to a time of testing in the midst of other options, but those options are of the flesh. Those options are yours to do according to your own power, your own ability, your own smarts. Your own effort.

And it could be you're having marriage problems. It could be you're having financial problems. Could be you're having physical issues. There's some of the kings that are talked about in the Book of Kings, how they got sick or they were injured or something, and they did not come to the Lord. They only relied on doctors and never prayed about it, and that sort of thing. You see what I'm saying? They had other options. And so they chose to follow those options to the exclusion of even addressing it in prayer with the Lord.

And God will allow those things to happen in your life too. And we have to ask ourselves the question when we begin, when we're facing an issue, when I'm facing a problem, right? I have to ask myself the question, am I trusting the Lord and am I trusting for His solution or am I creating a solution of my own? Am I doing something of my own power, my own making? Am I literally, and this is the question. Am I literally trying to deliver myself from this problem? Or from this circumstance. And that is an extremely important question to consider. Is this me or is this, am I trusting the Lord?

Verse 3. He goes on and he says, *“And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, (in other words, it never been seen before) that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.”*

He's reminding them of God's provision. They didn't have anything to eat. What are you going to do in the wilderness? Right? There's nothing. There's nothing to eat in the wilderness. You want to eat sand for heaven's sakes. So what did God do? He gave them food. First of all, to show that He is providing for them, but He gave them this wonderful food again to test them.

And by the way, this is a verse that you'll remember Jesus quoted to Satan when He was tempted to turn stones into loaves of bread. It says that Jesus after 40 days of being tempted in the wilderness, it says He was hungry, which has to be probably the biggest understatement in the Scripture.

And of course, the fact that He was hungry, that's exactly why Satan came and said, oh, look at those rocks over there. If you squint and cock your head, just right, they look like loaves of bread. Wouldn't you say? I mean, just care, squint your eyes here. Just look. See, it looks like a bread. It's like a loaf of bread. I bet you have the power to make it into a loaf of bread. Hungry, aren't you? Just, yeah, twitch your nose and there you go. You got some bread.

And what was Satan trying to do with Jesus? He was trying to get Him to take care of Himself. Jesus had the power to take care of Himself like you and I don't. But He came to live a life. Not relying on self, but relying on His heavenly Father. In fact, He came to show you and I how it's done.

And Satan comes to you and I in the same sort of a way and says, if you just took this thing into your own hands, you could have this thing fixed in side of 24 hours. You wait on God, who knows when he'll get around to, you take a number. He might get to you. He might not. So, you better get busy.

And what do we do? We get scared, we get tired, we get weary, we get panicked, we get busy. And we start doing what Jesus was tempted to do, and that is, do it yourself. Don't wait on your Heavenly Father, do it yourself. And that's exactly what the whole temptation was all about.

And that's why Jesus said to Satan, He reminded him, yeah, but in the Word, it says, you shall not live. Man does not live by bread alone, but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. (Matthew 4:4) In other words, I'm going to wait for My Father. Bread is not the issue here. Hunger is not the issue here. That's what Satan loves to do.

He loves to come to you and I focus on your issue. You're hungry, or your marriage, or your finances, or your this, or your that, your relationship, your home. It's terrible. And he wants you just to focus on it. Don't look over there, don't look, just look at your problem right there. And the more we look at it, of course, the more scared we get, the more focused we get, and the more oppressed we get. And pretty soon, we're just going to bust out in our own sort of deliverance.

And Jesus reminded Satan. The Word also says, man doesn't live by bread alone. Listen, you're trying to get me to think about my hunger as if that's the big problem. Yeah, I'm hungry, but that's not the big problem. The big problem is will I trust My Father and I choose to trust My Father. And that He modeled for you and I so don't miss the point.

Verse 4, he says, *"Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot (is what he says there) did not swell (that doesn't say did does not smell. It says your foot did not swell) these forty years."*

Can you imagine walking in the wilderness for a total of 40 years? I mean, you'd think that your foot would swell, but he said, you know what? Your clothing didn't wear out your shoes, your feet. In other words, God supernaturally took care of them the whole time. And again, this was meant to teach them. Teach them what? God's there to take care of you.

What's He doing? He's preparing them for when they come to the promised land. They're going to take all this time in the wilderness to be reminded, God takes care of me. God takes care of me. God takes care of me. Then when they get to the Jordan and they enter into the land, they're going to face these enemies. What are they going to say? God's going to take care of me. Hopefully. Hopefully we learn, by God's provision.

Verse 5. *"Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you."* He's telling them about the wilderness wanderings it was a time of teaching, disciplining, training for the new generation. It was not just a time of punishment for the old generation. It was that, but it was training for the new generation.

"⁶ So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. ⁷ For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, ⁸ a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, (I like pomegranates) a land of olive trees 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 And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you."

But, here's the warning, ¹¹ *"Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, ¹² lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and*

live in them, ¹³ *and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied,”* And you got that new car, and sitting there in your garage, and it's looking good, and your house looks good, and you're up on your payments, and everything's great. He says, be careful.

Verse 14, because that's the time that it might just happen. And *“then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, (you forget all that He has done for you, you forget) who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, (in other words) ¹⁵ who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, ¹⁶ who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, (look at this) to do you good in the end.”*

That's the part of discipline that we rarely can see. Well, we can never see, frankly, except with eyes of faith. That God is doing this in my life to do me good. See, that's what the Bible says for you and I. God works all things together for good. (Romans 8:28) You know what, though? We rarely believe it. He says it. We don't really believe it. Let's just face it. Let's be honest.

So he says, *“¹⁷ Beware lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’”* Because that's a deadly attitude. Why? Because it fails to see the Lord as the provider.

And he says, *“You shall remember (verse 18) the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day. ¹⁹ And if you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. ²⁰ Like the nations that the LORD makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, (why?) because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.”*

And look at that in verse 20. Remember I told you earlier, it wasn't because God just liked the Israelites better and he decided not to like the Canaanites. What does he say in verse 20? He says, the reason these nations are perishing is because they wouldn't obey the voice of the Lord. That's why God sent His Word to these Canaanite peoples. And they would not listen, they would not obey, they would not respond. And that is why they were being displaced.

But I want you to notice once again, verse 18. Look with me there again. *“You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth,”*

Listen, compared to, I dare say there's probably very few people here in this room or within the sound of my voice, who consider themselves wealthy. Go to a third world country sometime, compare what you have with what they have. You're wealthy. You are filthy rich by comparison. All right. Helps to put things into perspective.

Just remember, God says here, it is God who gives you the power, the ability to earn wealth. If you have what you have, you and I are never to hold onto it like I did it. It's mine. This is my money. This is my stuff, my car. My this, my that.

We're to take our hands off things and say, you know what, the Lord gave me this. What a wonderful God. And yeah, I worked hard in my job, but it's God who gave me the ability to work hard. God who gave me the opportunity, gave me the ability. It's Him. He is the source of all blessings.