

November 11: 8:1-20

Sections:

Verses 1-10: The Lord's Provision in the desert

Verses 11-20: Remember! Blessing comes from the Lord

Detailed observation:

I. Verses 1-10: The Lord's Provision in the desert

Deuteronomy 8:1-10:

"All the commandments that I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord swore to give to your forefathers. ² You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. ³ He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. ⁴ Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. ⁵ Thus you are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son. 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, flowing forth in 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 where you will eat food without scarcity, in which you will not lack anything; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. ¹⁰ When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you.

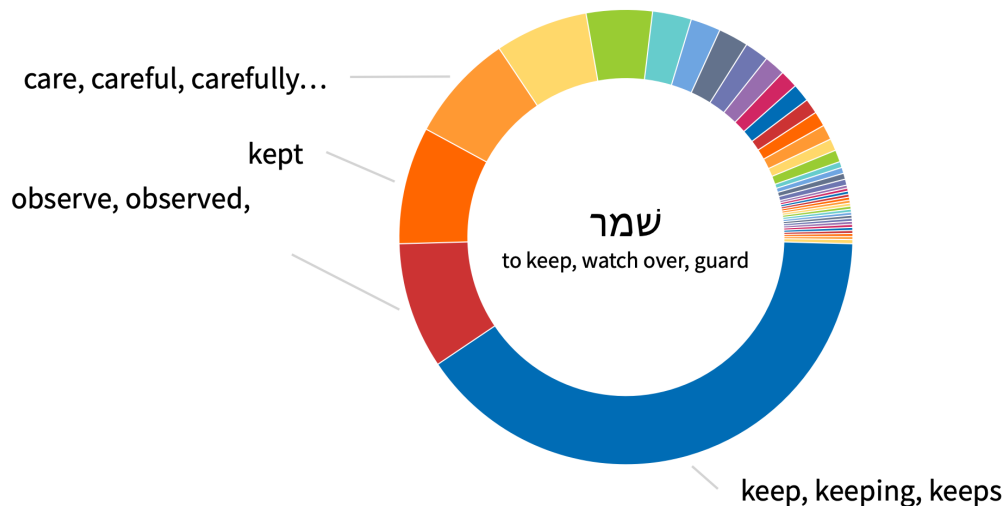
- a. The New American Commentary starts us out:
- b. In language reminiscent of Deut 6:1–3 and 4:1–8 Moses continues his exposition of the content of the covenant principles by focusing on the Lord as the source of all blessing, both past and future.¹³¹ He begins this new section by calling attention to the need to base all belief and behavior on the covenant relationship, one reduced here to the single word "command" (*mišwâ*, v. 1).¹
- c. The NET Bible adds: The singular term (מִצְוָה, *mitsvah*) includes the whole corpus of covenant stipulations, certainly the book of Deuteronomy at least (cf. Deut 5:28; 6:1, 25; 7:11; 11:8, 22; 15:5; 17:20; 19:9; 27:1; 30:11; 31:5). The plural (מִצְוֹת, *mitsot*) refers to individual stipulations (as in vv. 2, 6).²

¹³¹ R. H. O'Connell, "Deuteronomy viii 1–20: A Symmetrical Concentricity and the Rhetoric of Providence," *VT* 40 (1990): 437–52.

¹ Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, vol. 4, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 185.

² Biblical Studies Press, *The NET Bible First Edition Notes* (Biblical Studies Press, 2006), Dt 8:1.

- d. Verse 1 certainly begins by writing about commands.
- e. God tells them through Moses, “all” the commandments... “be careful” to do.
- f. They must obey all of the commandments and they must “be careful” to obey them.
- g. The verb translated as “be careful” is translated differently in different places. Sometimes it is translated as “keep diligently.”
- h. See the pie graph below:



- i. It is very important that they follow God’s commandments.
- j. There is a purpose. They must do these commandments so that:
 - i. they may live
 - ii. they may go in and possess the land
- k. this is the land the Lord “swore” or “covenanted” with their ancestors.
- l. Verse 2: notice how it now lists 40 years, though earlier the text said 38 years in Deut 2:14. This could be that it has been two more years, since that 38 years was a travel time from Kadesh-Barnea to the Brook Zered.
- m. God has been humbling them and testing them.
- n. Remember that the Lord does not tempt, but He does test.

Ex 15:25 He cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When Moses threw it into the water, the water became safe to drink. There the Lord made for them a binding ordinance, and there he tested them.

Ex 20:20 Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you so that you do not sin.”

2 Ch 32:31 So when the envoys arrived from the Babylonian officials to visit him and inquire about the sign that occurred in the land, God left him alone to test him, in order to know his true motives.

- o. There is a lot more that certainly could be said about this idea of the Lord testing us.
- p. The Lord does know the future. The Lord knows what we will do in any given scenario. God gives us an amount of free will, though He knows the future.

- q. Verse 3: God humbled them.
- r. Notice the mention of manna. In verse 16 it will mention manna again and both times he mentions manna which they knew nothing about.
- s. God is making this understand the we do not only live by bread...
- t. The NIV Zondervan Study Bible adds: man does not live on bread alone. *Biblical texts in themselves rarely provide a systematic doctrine of humanity, but this verse provides one in abbreviated form. Human beings need bread, but, more important, they need a word from God; the Israelites in the wilderness learned that God's daily decree provided the bread itself. Jesus cited this verse when Satan tempted Matt 4:4 and Luke 4:4*
- u. Dr Constable shares: It is important to note, however, that in the ancient Near East and in the Old Testament there is no essential distinction between act and word, for the act is produced by the word and the word is never without effective purpose. It is dynamic, entelic, purposeful, creative, powerful (cf. Gen. 1:3, etc.). It does not exist (as in Greek philosophy, for example) as a theoretical or neutral abstraction. In terms of revelation, and especially in Deuteronomy, it is necessary to see the powerful word as a covenant instrument; the word of the Sovereign commands and communicates, but it also effects, empowers, and creates.
- v. Verse 4: notice that even their clothing did not where out. The IVP Bible Backgrounds Commentary gives insight: *In the Gilgamesh Epic, Utnapishtim instructs that Gilgamesh be clothed with garments that do not wear out for his return journey. Job 13:28 describes the "wearing out" of clothes as being "moth-eaten" or perhaps moldy. This verse suggests a supernatural protection from decay.*³
- w. Dr constable shares: *Just as the Genesis narratives used God's act of providing clothing for Adam and Eve to demonstrate his care for humankind after they were cast out of the Garden (Ge 3:21), so God's care for Israel in the wilderness is pictured here in his providing for their clothing (Dt 8:4). Moreover, the same picture of God as a loving father, which permeates the early chapters of Genesis . . . , is recalled again here: 'As a man disciplines his son, so the LORD your God disciplines you' (Dt 8:5; cf. 32:6).'*
- x. The Commentary on the Old Testament adds: *At the same time, there is no necessity to follow some of the Rabbins and Justin Martyr (dial. c. Tryph. c. 131), who so magnify the miracle of divine providence, as to maintain not only that the clothes of the Israelites did not get old, but that as the younger generation grew up their clothes also grew upon their backs, like the shells of snails. Nor is it necessary to shut out the different natural resources which the people had at their command for providing clothes and sandals, any more than the gift of manna precluded the use of such ordinary provisions as they were able to procure.*⁴
- y. Verse 5: There are many other passages about the Lord's discipline: Deut 4:36; 2 Sam 7:14; Prov 3:12; Heb 12:6; Rev 3:19⁵

³ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, [*The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*](#), electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Dt 8:4.

⁴ Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, [*Commentary on the Old Testament*](#), vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 890.

⁵ [*New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update*](#) (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995).

- z. One source adds: *In this way Jehovah humbled and tempted His people, that they might learn in their heart, i.e., convince themselves by experience, that their God was educating them as a father does his son.* יָסַר, to admonish, chasten, educate; like παιδεύειν. *“It includes everything belonging to a proper education” (Calvin).⁶*
- aa. Verse 6 is a restatement: Keep the commandments of the Lord, our God, to walk in His ways and fear Him. Fear could be revere Him.
- bb. Verse 7: verses 7-10 all describe the “good” land:
- i. Brooks of water
 - ii. Fountains and springs
 1. Flowing forth in valleys
 2. and hills
 - iii. a land of wheat and barley
 - iv. of vines and fig trees
 - v. pomegranates
 - vi. a land of olive oil and honey
 - vii. you will eat food without scarcity
 - viii. you will not lack anything
 - ix. stones are iron
 - x. out of whose hills you can dig copper
 - xi. verse 10: bless the Lord for the good land which He has given you.
- cc. Verse 10 flows in to the next section and the next chapter. This all comes from the Lord.
- dd. The Reformation Study Bible adds: *a good land ... iron ... copper. The description is more extensive than the familiar “flowing with milk and honey” found in most of the rest of the Pentateuch. Palestine certainly had more variety and more rainfall than the flat land of Goshen, but today much of the land is arid. The climate may have been different then, for a small difference in rainfall can significantly affect productivity. The land today has suffered from years of mismanagement—modern hills that were forested within recent memory are now barren. In Assyrian reliefs from c. 800 B.C. , Israel is depicted with lush vines and grapes, and there is no reason to deny the characterization of the land as pleasant (11:9–12).*
- ee. The IVP Bible Backgrounds Commentary gives more: *The text mentions streams, pools and springs. The first is the result of runoff from precipitation at high elevations, and the other two represent subterranean water sources. In a land where rainfall is seasonal and, in some areas, limited, irrigation is necessary to sustain agriculture, and water sources are important both for animal herds and for human settlements. While there are few streams west of the Jordan, there are many springs that were used to sustain cities and villages. Seven agricultural products are mentioned here that are the staple products of the region. The Egyptian Story of Sinuhe describes the land of Canaan and lists six of the seven named here (pomegranates are omitted). Wine and olive oil were two of the principal exports of the region, while the other products provided a significant portion of their diet. The honey referred to here is the product of the date palm, not bees’ honey.*
- ff. **iron and copper:** *The text also identifies the natural resources of the land from the mining perspective. There are numerous deposits of poor-quality iron ore in Palestine, but few of high quality. The only major deposits of iron ore known in*

⁶ Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 890.

Palestine today are at Mugharat el-Wardeh in the Ajlun hills by the Jabbok River. Copper mining sites are mostly in Transjordan. While iron can be mined on the surface, copper mining requires shafts.⁷

99.

II. Verses 11-20: Remember! Blessing comes from the Lord

Deuteronomy 8:11-20:

“Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today;¹² otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them,¹³ and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies,¹⁴ then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.¹⁵ He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint.¹⁶ In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end.¹⁷ Otherwise, you may say in your heart, ‘My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.’¹⁸ But you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.¹⁹ It shall come about if you ever forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish.²⁰ Like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you, so you shall perish; because you would not listen to the voice of the Lord your God.

- a. Do not forget the Lord which would be done by NOT keeping His commandments, ordinances and statutes.
- b. Just like verse 2 the text is saying to “be careful” or “be diligent” or “to guard” to keep these commandments.
- c. Verse 12: this gives a scenario of disobedience:
- d. Verses 12-15 give a scenario of
 - i. Eating and being satisfied
 - ii. Built good houses and lived in them
 - iii. Herds and flocks multiply
 - iv. Silver and gold multiply
 - v. All that you have multiplies.
- e. Then your heart becomes proud and you forget the Lord
 - i. The Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt.
 - ii. Out of the house of slavery.
- f. Verse 15 begins the past... notice the contrast of the all the good in verses 12-14 vs the bad that the Lord rescued them from in verse 15.
 - i. He led you out of the “great and terrible” wilderness
 - ii. With its “fiery” serpent
 - iii. Scorpions
 - iv. Thirsty ground where there was no water. He gave them water.
- g. Verse 16: repeat of manna and that their fathers knew nothing about it.

⁷ Victor Harold Matthews, Mark W. Chavalas, and John H. Walton, [*The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*](#), electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), Dt 8:7–9.

- h. Once again, repeated idea that the Lord will humble them and test them so that they will do good in the end.
- i. Verse 17: important that they realize that they did not do this. It was NOT their own power and their own strength.
- j. Verse 18: BUT they must remember the Lord

a Prov 10:22; Hos 2:8

Pr 10:22 The blessing from the LORD makes a person rich, and he adds no sorrow to it.

Ho 2:8 Yet until now she has refused to acknowledge that I was the one who gave her the grain, the new wine, and the olive oil; and that it was I who lavished on her the silver and gold— which they used in worshiping Baal!

- k. It is He who gives power to make wealth and confirm His covenant.
 - i. Emphasis on the covenant again.
 - ii. Emphasis that He swore the covenant with their fathers.
- l. Verses 19-20:
 - i. This is a strong warning.
 - ii. If they forget the Lord.
 - iii. If they go after other gods and serve them and worship them...
 - iv. Notice the language: “I testify against you today...”
 - v. You will surely perish.
 - vi. Verse 20: like the nations...
 - vii. This is because you would not listen to the voice of the Lord God.
 - viii. About verse 19 the Reformation Study Bible shares about “If you forget...”: *Continuing fidelity is the requirement for blessing. Israel without God is no better than the pagans. But God will keep His covenant with the fathers and save a remnant chosen by grace (v. 18; Rom. 11:28, 29).*
- m. This chapter flows right into chapter 9.