



Remember Part 3: Remember What the Lord Taught Us in the Wilderness September 20, 2026

Holy Text: Deuteronomy 8:1-18

- In part one, Pastor Profit taught us that remembering God's Word means continuing in it and doing it.
- In part two, Pastor Hill exhorted us to bring that Word home, weaving it into the ordinary life of our households.
- Now, Moses warns us not to lose what the Lord formed in us in the next season through seasons of testing.

Background

1. Egypt to Kadesh Barnea
2. The land was truly beautiful [Deuteronomy 1:24–25](#), [Numbers 13:23](#)
3. The giants were real [Numbers 13:33](#)
4. They remembered the giants but forgot their god
5. This was a heart problem [Deuteronomy 1:28](#)

Heart = *lēvāw*, refers to a person's thinking, understanding, intention, desire, judgment, will, and emotions. The giants did not create their unbelief; the giants exposed a pattern of unbelief that had been traveling with them before they left Egypt.

- Exodus 5: they blame Moses when Pharaoh makes their labor harder.
 - Exodus 14: at the Red Sea, they accuse Moses of bringing them out to die and say slavery in Egypt would have been better.
 - Exodus 16: they grumble over food and romanticize Egypt.
 - Exodus 17: they quarrel over water and ask, in effect, whether the LORD is really among them.
 - Exodus 32: at Sinai, while Moses is gone, they turn to the golden calf. This is not merely complaining; it is outright covenant rebellion.
 - Deuteronomy 1:28 ...Our brothers have made our hearts melt...
6. The giants revealed what their hearts had been all along.
 - Different circumstances. Same heart.

[Deuteronomy 1:27 \(KJV\)](#) ²⁷ And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the LORD hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.

7. The battlefield of the heart
 - Covenant faithfulness is what's at stake. God has made promises. He delivered on them.
 - Forgetting is the danger. Israel's problem was not a lack of information.
 - The heart is the battlefield. Ultimately, the battle is not merely between Israel and the Anakim

Now that we have seen what was happening in Israel's heart, we are ready to hear Moses' words in Deuteronomy 8.

Our Text

[Deuteronomy 8:1–6 \(KJV\)](#) ¹ All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers. ² And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest

keep his commandments, or no. ³ And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. ⁴ Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. ⁵ Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, *so* the LORD thy God chasteneth thee. ⁶ Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

1. The wilderness was judgment, but God made it a classroom

Why forty years? Because Kadesh happened first. Israel rebelled. They refused to enter the land. And they learned that the God who loved Israel enough to deliver them is also holy and just, and His love did not cancel His judgment of their unbelief.

[Numbers 14:34 \(KJV\)](#) ³⁴ After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, *even* forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, *even* forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.

So let us be clear: the wilderness was punishment for unbelief. But that is not all Moses says was happening:

[Deuteronomy 8:2 \(KJV\)](#) And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

2. God did not waste the wilderness

Look at the verbs in Deuteronomy 8.

- | | |
|--|--|
| • God led them. v2 | • God fed them. v3 |
| • God proved (tested) them. v2 | • God sustained them. v4 |
| • God humbled them. v3 | • God chastened (disciplined) them. v5 |
| • God suffered (allowed) to hunger. v3 | |

The generation that rebelled at Kadesh was dying under judgment. But another generation was growing up in the same wilderness.

Their sin explains why they entered the wilderness. God's sovereignty explains what He accomplished while they were there.

3. God already knew their hearts; the wilderness made their hearts visible to them.

[Deuteronomy 8:2 \(KJV\)](#) ² And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

There is our word again for heart - *Lēvāv*. God did not take them into the wilderness because He needed information. God already knew their hearts. The testing brought what was inside them out into the open. Similar to a sponge.

You can look at a sponge and not know everything it has absorbed. But squeeze it. Whatever is inside comes out. The wilderness was the squeeze. Hunger squeezed them. Thirst squeezed them. Waiting squeezed them. Fear squeezed them. Uncertainty squeezed them. And every time they were squeezed, the same heart kept showing up.

Psalm 78:8 (KJV) ⁸ And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation *that* set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.

Psalm 95:8–11 (KJV) ⁸ Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, *and as in* the day of temptation in the wilderness: ⁹ When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. ¹⁰ Forty years long was I grieved with *this* generation, and said, It *is* a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: ¹¹ Unto whom I swore in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

Ezekiel 20:15–16 (KJV) ¹⁵ Yet also I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given *them*, flowing with milk and honey, which *is* the glory of all lands; ¹⁶ Because they despised my judgments, and walked not in my statutes, but polluted my sabbaths: for their heart went after their idols.

4. God humbled them through dependence on his provision

Deuteronomy 8:3-5 (KJV) ³ And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. ⁴ Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. ⁵ Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.

Notice the order. He let them hunger. Then He fed them. God allowed them to come to the end of what they could provide for themselves. So that they would know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD.

The lesson of humility was not: You are worthless. The lesson was: You are dependent. And the Lord provided for them. He fed them with manna; their clothes never wore out. Their feet did not swell. And he did it for forty years. The response, however, was more of what Israel had been doing all along.

Numbers 11:4–6 (KJV) ⁴ And the mix multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? ⁵ We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic: ⁶ But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.

Numbers 21:5 (KJV) ⁵ And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.

Their complaint was not that God had failed to provide. Their complaint was that God's provision was enough, but it was not extra.

5. The goal was obedience

Deuteronomy 8:6 (KJV) ⁶ Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.

Verse 6 shows us what all of the wilderness training was aiming toward. God was not humbling them merely so they could survive the desert. He was humbling them so they could learn to obey Him when the desert was over.

Kadesh exposed a people whose hearts would not trust God enough to obey Him. The wilderness became the place where God humbled them, tested them, provided for them, disciplined them, and taught a new generation what dependence upon Him looked like. And now verse 6 says,

6. God was doing more than Israel could see

I want you to see the awesomeness of our God. While He was teaching Israel lessons they needed in their own generation, He was also laying down pictures and patterns that point to Christ and his earthly ministry.



The Camp of Israel in Numbers 2

God arranged Israel around the tabernacle under four tribal banners:

- The banner Judah in the East: 186,400
- The banner Reuben in the South: 151,450
- The banner Ephraim in the West: 108,100
- The banner Dan in the North: 157,600

Numbers does not explicitly say that Israel camped in the shape of a cross. But standing on this side of Calvary, the pattern is striking. God's people encamped in the shape of a cross hundreds of years before crucifixion was invented, with God's presence in the center.

The Brazen Serpent

[Numbers 21:6–9 \(KJV\)](#) ⁶And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. ⁷Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. ⁹And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

[John 3:14–16 \(KJV\)](#) ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: ¹⁵That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁶For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

The Rock

[Exodus 17:6 \(KJV\)](#) ⁶Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

[Numbers 20:8 \(KJV\)](#) ⁸Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.

[1 Corinthians 10:4 \(KJV\)](#) ⁴And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Kadesh exposed what was in their hearts. The wilderness was where God worked on their hearts. And the Promised Land would reveal whether the lessons of the wilderness would survive in abundance.

7. God is bringing them into a good land

Deuteronomy 8:7–10 (KJV) ⁷ For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; ⁸ A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; ⁹ A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any *thing* in it; a land whose stones *are* iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. ¹⁰ When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

- We do not want to preach as though the wilderness is the spiritually superior place. God Himself calls this a good land. He was not teaching them wilderness lessons for wilderness living. He was teaching them wilderness lessons for life in the land.
- The promised land is where he wanted them. There is nothing unspiritual about enjoying what God has given you. Moses does not tell them, “When you enter the land, stay hungry so you will remain humble.” He says, “When thou hast eaten and art full, bless the LORD.”

8. Can you remember God when you are full?

Deuteronomy 8:11-17 (KJV) ¹¹ Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: ¹² Lest *when* thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt *therein*; ¹³ And *when* thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; ¹⁴ Then *thine* heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; ¹⁵ Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, *wherein were* fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where *there was* no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; ¹⁶ Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; ¹⁷ And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of *mine* hand hath gotten me this wealth.

Some of the greatest dangers to the heart don’t come when God withholds something. They come after God has given us what we asked for. Moses is warning Israel that fullness can create a new kind of spiritual danger.

They eat, become full, build good houses, and everything they have begins to multiply. Then Moses says, “Thine heart be lifted up.” The danger is not the blessing; the danger is what the blessing can begin to do to the heart.

The heart that struggled to trust God when it had nothing can begin to trust itself when it has plenty. In the wilderness the heart asked, “Can God provide?” In the land, that same heart can begin saying, “Look what I have produced.”

This is where CRC has to heed the warning

I believe there are seasons in the life of a church where dependence upon God becomes impossible to ignore. For our church, 2014-2019 is a good example.

That season did more than cause people to leave. Bishop said it revealed underlying disagreement about who we were supposed to be as a church and began what he called “a long and difficult process of maturity.”¹

¹ <https://subsplash.com/u/calvaryreformationchurch/media/d/w3hzgvd-order-in-the-church-pt-2>

That matters because difficulty has a way of exposing what is underneath. And through those difficult years, the church kept doing the basic things God had called us to do.

- We kept praying to the Lord for healing and guidance.
- We kept loving one another, as the Lord commanded.
- We kept preaching the whole counsel of God.
- We kept worshipping the Lord corporately.
- We kept discipling our families according to the word.

So the church is now growing again. The membership is growing. Praise and worship is growing. The different ministry teams are all growing. New leadership and a healthy bench of potential leaders.

And this is where the warning of Deuteronomy 8 becomes very real for us. The lessons the Lord taught us in that difficult season must not be forgotten in the blessings he has allowed us to experience now. The blessings are not bad, but out of context, the blessing can make our dependence upon the Lord easier to forget.

I think pride may be one of the greatest threats to a church like ours. The danger is that ‘The Lord kept us’ can slowly become

- We stood.
- We did not compromise.
- We held to the truth.
- We survived.
- We were faithful when others were not.

Some of those statements may contain truth. But they become dangerous when the explanation for what God has done begins to shift. From: “Look what the Lord has done.” To: “Look what we have done.”

[Deuteronomy 8:14 \(KJV\)](#) ¹⁴ Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

[Deuteronomy 8:17 \(KJV\)](#) ¹⁷ And thou sayest in thine heart, My power and the might of *mine* hand hath gotten me this wealth.

Sadly, brothers and sisters, this was a warning that Israel did not heed. Even after the miracles in Egypt, being sustained in the wilderness, and ultimately brought into the wilderness and into the land. Israel forgot the Lord.

[Hosea 13:6 \(KJV\)](#) ⁶ According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.

Ask CRC to check its heart... Why are we asking the Lord to increase our light? CRC vs Israel

9. Remember the LORD thy God

[Deuteronomy 8:18 \(KJV\)](#) ¹⁸ But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for *it is* he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as *it is* this day.

How we remember

1. Keep the word of God at the center

[Joshua 1:8 \(KJV\)](#) ⁸ This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

[Matthew 4:4 \(KJV\)](#) ⁴ But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

[Matthew 4:7 \(KJV\)](#) ⁷ Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

[Matthew 4:10 \(KJV\)](#) ¹⁰ Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

2. Keep preaching the whole counsel of God

[Acts 20:27–31 \(KJV\)](#) ²⁷ For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. ²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. ²⁹ For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. ³¹ Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

3. Younger generation, ask and learn.

[Deuteronomy 32:7 \(KJV\)](#) ⁷ Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.

4. Older generation, teach and testify.

[Psalms 71:17–18 \(KJV\)](#) ¹⁷ O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. ¹⁸ Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto *this* generation, and thy power to every one *that* is to come.

5. Preserve the testimony of what God has done

[Joshua 4:6–7 \(KJV\)](#) ⁶ That this may be a sign among you, *that* when your children ask *their fathers* in time to come, saying, What *mean* ye by these stones? ⁷ Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

Final Thoughts

CRC, please don't forget what the Lord taught you in the wilderness when the season changes. That has been the burden of this entire series. In Part 1, we learned that if we remember God's Word, we obey it. In Part 2, we learned that we carry that Word home and pass it to the next generation.

And today, Moses has shown us that remembrance must also govern the heart. Because it is possible to remember what happened and still forget the Lord. It is possible to remember the wilderness and become proud of how well you survived it. It is possible to enjoy the blessing and forget the One who gave it.

Church, remember what the Lord taught you deeply enough that it still governs your heart when the season changes.

Amen.