

# God's Word - Essential For Our Journey

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] I'm reading verses 3 and 4, Deuteronomy 8 verses 3 and 4. Your foot did not swell these 40 years.

You and I know just how easy it is to forget things. We're always saying that, oh I forgot. And the older we get, the more difficult we find it to remember things that have happened in the past.

Or even things that have happened in the present. It's one of the, I think one of the disturbing things as we get older is how quickly our memories begin to fade.

And even what we did yesterday can begin to, we find it sometimes difficult to recall. When I was younger I had a, I know that I had a very good memory for events and things that I did.

It was almost like a diary. Today I can hardly remember anything of it. It's like somebody has taken a sponge and wiped away just so much.

[ 1 : 3 2 ] And that is, it's now coming to a stage where you can hardly remember what you did yesterday. But God wants us to remember. And it's very interesting when you go through the book of Deuteronomy, how often the Lord is saying to his people, remember.

Or else he's saying, do not forget. These two things often go together. They sometimes say, they switch around. Remember, do not forget.

And this is what the Lord is asking Israel to do. We find that in verse 2, that they were to remember. And they were to remember the whole way that they were led.

Now, it's important for us to remember and to stop and to reflect often upon what God is doing for us. Because God fills our lives with so many good things.

And it's important for us to remember that. Because that is one of the things that was being drummed into the people of God. That they were always to remember just what it was that God was doing for them.

[ 2 : 4 0 ] So that there would be, there were to be many aspects to that. But one of the things is always to produce a sense of thankfulness to God for all that he does for us.

Now, as we see our memories are short. We can sometimes be guilty of that at a human level. People who are good to us. People who have been good to us.

And sometimes we can take umbrage at the least thing. And take the hump about this and that. And we have very short memories. In fact, you not often find, people not often say, Oh, well, they have short memories.

And I wonder how often God says that over us. What a short memory he has. What a short memory she has.

Do they not remember how I helped? Do they not remember what I did? Do they not remember this? Do they not remember that? Well, that's what God was trying to instill within his people.

[ 3 : 43 ] Then, and he is still wanting us to have the same attitude, the same spirit, to be reflecting upon what God is doing for us. Now, I know when we go to the likes of Philippians, Paul tells us to forget the things that are behind and to press on for the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

And while that is also very true, at one level, forgetting the things that are behind, God doesn't mean us to forget all the spiritual truths and all the deep experiences that we've gone through.

Because Paul himself often reflected upon the way that God had led him. And reflected upon the things that God had done for him in his life.

And so it's important for us to be remembering the way that God has led us along the way. And so that's why it says you shall remember the whole way the Lord led you.

Now, of course, when God took Israel out of the land of Egypt, they could have gone to the promised land fairly quickly. Now, of course, we know that a lot of that was because of the rebellion and disobedience that they didn't get there quickly.

[ 4 : 58 ] But also, the Lord had a lot of work to do in them. There was a lot of breaking, and a lot of humbling, and a lot of molding, and a lot of reshaping.

And that's exactly what the Lord has to do with you and with me as well. Because when he begins to, the journey begins to take us from the fearful pit and mighty clay, there's a lot of work to be done.

And God is at work in your life and in my life every single day. It's not that he does a wee bit of work one day, and then, like workmen who might be working on a particular project, but they're working, they've got two or three projects at the same time.

So they do a bit at this place, and then they go and they work at another place, and then they go to the third place, and then they're working. They're working between them. But they can't do the three at once. But the Lord is working in all of us, all the time, every single day, every single night.

It's not that he does a wee bit and then goes to somebody else. All the time he has had work in your life and in my life as well. And so the Lord is wanting Israel to remember that he humbled them on the way.

[ 6 : 17 ] And that's what the Lord is still doing to us. You see, Israel had to be humbled. And we have to be humbled as well, because one of the root problems of our lives is the sin of pride.

In fact, pride has been termed the mother of sin, because there is pride in all sin. If you were to go through the Ten Commandments, if you were to go through all that sin is, we will find an element of pride within it.

And it is natural to us. It's part of the fall where we become egotistical and where we become selfish and self-centered and self-sufficient. And there is an inbuilt rejection of God and a refusal to depend upon God.

God is a last resort. You find that in the book of Judges. That there was a never-ending cycle went on almost every 40 years.

Israel would disobey God. And then they would begin to follow idols. And then they would get lost into their idolatry. And then God would say, Enough is enough.

[ 7 : 31 ] And he would allow an enemy to invade the land, whether it was the Midianites or the Philistines or whatever. But Israel wouldn't call out to begin with. And it was only when they reached the very bottom, when there was nowhere left to go, when there were no resources anywhere else to find, when they were stuck.

It was then that they would call out to the Lord and cry to him for help. And he would deliver them. And he would send a deliverer, people like Gideon and Samson and so on.

And then after a period of years, they would fall back into the same vicious cycle. And they would go down and down and down. And it wasn't until the very last that they would cry to the Lord. And we're like that as well.

Humanly speaking, if we can avoid calling upon the name of the Lord, if we can avoid depending upon him, we will. That's the nature. That is human nature.

And that comes from pride. That is the bottom line. That is why the Lord tells us, Judge not. He says that ye be not judged.

[ 8 : 39 ] And our judgment of others so often comes from pride. It is because, you know, if we judge somebody, very often as we sit in judgment of that person, we're actually saying, I'm better than them.

I wouldn't do that. Every time we sit in judgment, we are setting ourselves up above them. And we're looking down on them.

And we're sitting, it's because of pride. And that's why the Lord, the Lord is very strong on us not judging one another. Because we're prone to it.

It's almost like second nature. It's part and partial of what we do. But we're told, Judge not, that you be not judged. So, Israel were being dealt with by the Lord in the wilderness.

He was at work within them, bringing them to the place where they would rely upon him and trust in him. And we see that part of what he did to them was he allowed them, he humbled you, verse 3, and let you hunger.

[ 9 : 47 ] Now, that really is humbling. Because, I would imagine, it's the one thing that you expect. I'm sure all of us in here, we expect every day to have sufficient food.

Now, I know that there are people within this country who don't have that. But we, I would imagine, that every single one of us here expects every day to have food.

And it's a serious thing if you don't have food. Because it's one of the most basic human requirements of life. And if you don't have food, then you have to beg for food.

And it's a very, it's a very humbling thing where you have to go and beg from people for food. But Israel's situation was so grim that not only did they not have food, but there was nobody to beg from because they were in the wilderness.

And that is why they had to turn to the Lord because there was nothing else for them to do. There was nowhere else for them to go. And so the Lord was humbling them through this, bringing them to the place where they were to see that their dependence was entirely upon Him.

[ 11 : 09 ] And we see how God miraculously fed them with bread from heaven. He poured down bread from heaven upon them. It was an amazing miracle.

It had been unknown before. Their fathers didn't know about it. Their fathers had never experienced, nobody had ever experienced this miraculous provision before. And so the Lord was teaching them and He's teaching us about His great grace.

Because when God fed them in the wilderness, we've got to remember that they weren't just crying to the Lord. They were grumbling. There was a combination of, yes, crying to the Lord, but of resentment within their heart.

They were grumbling. They were a grumbling nation. You see, and this comes again from pride. They had a wrong idea of their own importance. And they were, God was showing them, look, you are absolutely dependent upon me.

And they grumbled against God continually. You find, they were a grumbling people all the way through. Always grumbling. Always moaning against God. Complaining against God.

[ 12 : 26 ] And that's why God had to break them. Because He said, you are not ready to go into the land of promise. In fact, it would have been a disaster for Israel if they had come straight out of Egypt into the land of promise.

Because straight away they would have set up idolatry. Straight away they would have been worshipping other gods. They would have abandoned the living and through God in no time. So they had to be broken. It was a constant breaking.

A humbling. So that they would come bit by bit by bit to depend and to trust upon the Lord. And so that we see God's graciousness and His goodness to them.

And I love the picture that we have here of Israel being taken up to the land of promise. Because they are a rebellious people. They are a grumbling people.

They are always complaining. And yet God is gracious to them. And He is merciful to them. And despite everything He has promised to take them up.

[ 13 : 30 ] And He will take them up. And He took them up. And you know that is exactly what He is doing with you and with me as well. Because He has taken us from the pit that we were in.

And He has set our feet upon a rock. And He has led us along the way. But far too often we are like Israel and we are grumbling and complaining against God.

Against the way He is leading us against what is happening to us. And all these kind of things so often this is going on. But God is still gracious to us. He is still merciful to us.

And He is saying despite all that you are I am still going to take you home with myself. And that is a display of His grace and the display of His mercy. And just as He sent bread from heaven in the wilderness so He has sent the bread from heaven in the form of His Son the Lord Jesus Christ into our lives.

In fact Jesus Himself said I am the bread of life. And He said I am the true bread that came down from heaven. And so we read there that He humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

[ 14 : 54 ] And when God brought this let this manna fall down upon them it wasn't that He just allowed a little manna to fall at night so that when they got up in the morning or through the night there it was lying on the ground.

It was a liberal pouring. In fact in Exodus it says I will rain manna down I will rain bread down upon you. And that's what the Lord does.

His resources are endless. He is a God who has everything at His disposal. And we've said it so often if we are trudging our way home to glory if we're like it's walking through the moor and it's a wet moor it's soggy and we're going down it's like a squelchy sludge every time and having to drag our foot out and then down into another one.

You know sometimes we almost feel like that's the way we're making it home. The Lord says no I have all the provision for you. I can fill your heart and fill your soul with good things.

Because He is the God who loves to give. And so this manna was of course a picture of the word of God. It's a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 16 : 14 ] And there were certain rules that were given to Israel with regard to the manna. The first thing was that they were to gather it. Now that I suppose is stating the obvious. They were to gather it.

And it's the same for ourselves. You see it wasn't enough for Israel to look out their tent and say oh there's the manna. Oh that's great.

That's a provision for the day. And not do anything about it. They had to go out and get it. And it's the same for you and for me. It's not enough to know about the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's not enough just to come to church. You know great don't get me wrong. We've come to church. That is important. And here we are. It's like being at the door of your tent and you're looking at the manna but that manna won't do you any good until you go and you gather it and you take it and you eat it.

That's what you've got to do. And it's the same with the Lord Jesus Christ. We have to take him by faith. It's not enough to be beside where he is. It's not enough just to be in his presence where he's promised to be.

[ 17 : 24 ] We have to go a step further. We have to take Jesus to ourselves and feed upon him. That's what we've got to do. And once we've done that we have to feed upon him every single day.

Because that's again what we're told with the manna. That they were to pick the manna each day. Sufficient for that day of course except on the seventh day there was no manna. They had to pick manna for the following for the Sabbath day as well.

But the point we're making the point what the Lord was teaching is that the manna every day you went out and you picked your portion for that day. And that's exactly what you and I are to do with the word of God every single day.

And that's why I'm saying if you're struggling if you're struggling as a Christian you know one of the basic things you have to say to yourself is am I am I eating upon Jesus every day?

You and I have to eat in life we have to it's normal we eat every single day don't we? There'd be no point in sort of saying if somebody said to me today come on in I've got come in for your dinner oh no no I ate yesterday thanks thanks thanks I'm good I'm good I ate yesterday they would say but yes it's today and so often we're like that with the Bible that we live on yesterday our yesterdays and sometimes if we have sometimes when the Lord teaches us something really good out of the word and we and we live on that and that's good as well that's important but don't live on yesterday's word although yesterday's word is important for you you have to live on today's take a little time every single day make sure you do and read God's word read it prayerfully read it thoughtfully read it so that you think upon what you're reading and it's far better just to read I've said this so often read a few verses rather than read a whole lot and afterwards say to yourself you know this

[ 19 : 48 ] I haven't a clue what I read you know it's possible to read the Bible to go and read two or three chapters and close the Bible and somebody say what did you read I can't tell you because sometimes we read simply to solve the conscience that's not what it's about it's not just reading for the sake of reading we've got to be disciplined and say we've got to set aside a little bit of time and say Lord help me help me to focus upon what you're saying help me to take this word on board help me to digest it so that this word will become a pillar in my life that it will be a truth that will help me and sustain me and guide me just as we need the normal food for our everyday existence so we need the spiritual food for our everyday existence as well that's what God has given us and provided for us and it's through that word that we're taught and directed and guided and rebuked and built up and all these different things and so that's what the Lord is saying that's why he says that he's teaching you that we do not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of the

Lord a closed Bible is a disaster and I believe it's one of the great issues that's facing us as a nation today is that by and large the Bible is an unknown book when you think of this nation of ours which was once a nation of the book we cannot say that anymore and I believe we reap what we sow because if God's ways and God's laws and God's statutes are not part of our life and if they were and we're trying to remove them then inevitable disaster is going to come and God will leave us to ourselves and you cannot think of anything worse than if God says alright on your own that's what you want you don't want me I have I have I have been with you I am keeping offering myself I am still being gracious to you but more and more you're saying to me I don't want you I don't want you in society

I don't want you in the schools I don't want you in politics I don't want you anywhere within our life the only place you're allowed is if somebody wants you on their own in their own house privately and that's what so many today that is the attitude of so many within our society today and that's the worst thing that could happen is that God says alright on your own sort it out yourselves that's about the worst judgment that could come upon us and how we need to pray that the Lord will be merciful to us but the again we see that this this manna was heavenly food that's been described as a food of angels it was heavenly food and it was a food that came from heaven that was preparing them for heaven and that's what the Lord Jesus Christ is doing as well he is the bread from heaven he came from heaven and he is fitting us and preparing us from heaven as well and that's that's what his food is about nourishing us strengthening us preparing us for the great for the great glory that that that lies beyond and then we read also that in verse 4 your clothing did not wear out on you and that's quite amazing I know that some people have different ideas about that but I believe very simply it is what it says that over these 40 years that their clothes did not wear out and that's quite miraculous in many ways wearing the same clothes for 40 years and I suppose that idea today is one that most people couldn't even begin to imagine but that's how it was

God worked it in that way it was a miraculous provision but you know what it is it's a picture of what the Lord does for us as well because as we come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ he clothes us with his own garment the garment of salvation the robe of righteousness so that that's what we're covered in and that robe that he puts on us the covering of Christ is sufficient for us every single day it will never wear out we don't need anything else it won't in any way there come a time when we say oh this isn't sufficient I need to get something else no it is sufficient but not only does it tell us that their clothing didn't wear out your foot did not swell these 40 years it's not extraordinary walking for 40 years and their feet didn't swell now if you walk if you go on any any walking expedition very often that's one of the things you'll get blisters or there's sort of all sort of things begin to happen with your feet but imagine walking for 40 years well for 40 years Israel were walking through the wilderness and he says your feet didn't swell again it's a great picture to us of the Lord's sufficiency that enables us to keep going and keep going keeping going you know as many a day you think you say you know I can't keep going anymore in this spiritual journey have you not said that that sometimes and you say oh you know this

I don't know if I can keep going and yet you're still going no you can't keep going but the Lord will enable you to keep going and he's continued I will constantly go on in strength of God the Lord the psalmist says as your days so will your strength be the Lord will enable you to keep on walking because once you start walking down that road with him you will walk all the way to glory sometimes you may you might we might limp a wee bit we might wobble a wee bit we might stray a wee bit but he'll keep you and he'll keep you and he'll keep you until he takes you home one day your walking days in this world will be over but your walking days aren't over because you're going to continue in glory because the lamb is going to lead you and he's going to feed you from living fountains of water and so that there's this continual idea continuous idea of us walking question is this are you walking with the Lord tonight that's a big question so you walk out this church tonight are you walking on your own or are you walking with God because it's you're either it's one or other you're either walking on your own and although you might be surrounded by a lot of great people you know it's actually a really lonely place in this world all on your own you don't need to because the Lord is saying I'll walk with you and in fact if you ask me to walk with you I'll never ever ever let you go I'll walk with you every single step of the way and then I'll take you home to be with myself let us pray Lord we pray to grant us your grace we pray to enable us to see you to understand you to believe in you we give thanks Lord for the way you teach us give us teachable spirits give us thankfulness of heart give us to remember the way you work in us and that we do not forget all the way that you lead us so you're saying to your people remember the whole way that the Lord led you and so we pray that we may remember the spiritual lessons that we're learning along the way the things that have come into our lives the things that have happened that have shown us that we need you so we pray to bless us all bless all who are in need bless those who are unable to be present with us remember those in hospital those who are who have have been seriously ill and undergone surgery or undergoing it or have had it we commit them to your care remember those who are in need and in all the different situations and we pray that you will bless them watch over us and do us good and take away our sin in Jesus name amen we're going to conclude singing from psalm 19 19 the 19th psalm this is from the

[ 28 : 49 ] Scottish Psalter on page 223 we're going to sing verses 7 to 11 and the tune is Moravia God's law is perfect and converts the soul in sin that lies God's testimony is most sure and makes a simple wise the statutes of the Lord are right and do rejoice the heart the Lord's command is pure and doth light to the eyes impart as we sing these these words let us really think upon what it's saying and showing us what God's word is actually doing within our lives we see how it converts people and it makes makes us wise it enables us to rejoice in our heart it brings light into our into our eyes and so on so as we sing these words let us really think what we're singing down to verse 11 and again we see what God's word does moreover they thy servant warn how he his life should frame a great reward provided is for them that keep the same the tune is

Moravia 7 to 11 psalm 19 God's law is perfect and converts the soul in sin that lies God's testimony is most sure and makes a God's law is perfect and converts the soul in sin that lies the statutes of the Lord are right and do rejoice the heart the Lord's command is pure and love glorification of the Lordoks the Holy blood serves us all over and hopes the spirit of the Lord are right and do Certum know the situation that he is not forever orMartin on theiscreet of the Lord are right to the eyes of the Lord are right to the death of the Lord Lord's intent that he is all it is on purpose the necesario healing of things he is on purpose of the Lord is us of the name that the mother is broken that chained Oh

The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous fall together.

The poor land gold gave us thy gold to be desired of.

The honey, honey, from the cold that drove us sweeter far.

[ 32 : 13 ] Moreover, they thy servant war, how he is like should bring.

A great reward, though I did it, for them that keep the same.

Now may the grace, mercy, and peace of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore. Amen. Amen.