

God in the Wilderness

July 16, 2023 ▪ Brad Manley

In the Wilderness God is _____ with His people

In the Wilderness God is _____ toward His people.

In the Wilderness God is _____ His people.

Deuteronomy 8:1-20

¹ "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, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. ³ And 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 man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. ⁴ Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. ⁵ Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. 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, 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.

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, ¹⁴ then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, 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, to do you good in the end. ¹⁷ Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' ¹⁸ You shall remember 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, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God. (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: What were some of your experiences being disciplined as a child? How would you say it benefited you?

Read: Deuteronomy 8:1-20

1. Twice in chapter 8 (vv. 1, 11) the people are exhorted to "take care" in their relationship with God. What other words would you use to explain the idea Moses is trying to communicate by using this expression? What does this look like practically in your own life?
2. As you read verses 3, 4, 15, 16, note the ways God provided for His people in the wilderness. What was God's purpose in all of this? (*See also verse 2.*) How have you experienced God's work in a similar way in your life? How would you explain the importance of this to a new believer?
3. What did Moses want Israel to understand by telling them that "man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (v. 3)? What might have been the benefit of the people fully comprehending this? How is this concept helpful in your spiritual journey?
4. God sometimes chooses to discipline His people. What does verse 5 imply about God's motive in such discipline? Read Hebrews 12:3-11. How have you experienced God's blessing through discipline?
5. Moses warns Israel against taking credit for God's gifts in their lives as they come into the land (v. 7). What is the correct way to view our prosperity? (*See verse 18.*) What helps you to follow Moses' warning when you are tempted to be prideful about your abundance?
6. The danger of forgetting God is a prominent theme in Deuteronomy, and the word "forget" is used ten times. Note its use in verses 14 and 19. What actions or attitudes are connected with forgetting God in these two verses? Can you think of a time when you, in some way, "forgot" God? What do you think contributed to that? How would you equip other believers to avoid this danger?

Apply: How would you summarize what God wants His people to know through these verses? What difference will that make in your life this week?