

READ through the Bible passage. WRITE your thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life experience. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.

**Monday, 4/7/08 – Read Deuteronomy 8:1-3**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: God has blessed us extravagantly and urgently wants us to participate with God in using all our blessings to carry out his work on planet earth. We begin with a speech given by Moses to the Hebrew people at the end of their 40 years of wilderness wandering and just before their entrance into the land that God had promised their ancestors. ... Moses suggests to them that one of the purposes of their wilderness time was to bring them to the realization that the human "does not live by bread alone" but by the word of God. ... What do you think that means? What is meant by "bread alone"? What is meant by "every word that comes from the mouth of God"? ... When have you opted for bread alone? When have you lived by the word of God? How were those times different for you?

**Tuesday, 4/8/08 – Read Deuteronomy 8:7-10**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: Read again, slowly, through this description of the land that God is providing for his people. What does this description suggest that God's gift is like? Stingy? Barely enough? Extravagant? ... God wants you to have what you need in life -- what you need and more! God's generosity is extravagant and abundant. ... When have you experienced God's gifts to you as extravagant? Describe the experience?

**Wednesday, 4/9/08 – Read Deuteronomy 8:11-14**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: Verse 11 begins: "Take care that you do not forget ...". Are we forgetful people? Do you ever forget? When everything is going well and you have all that you need, is it easy in those times to forget the source of goodness in your life? ... Remember a time when you forgot -- when you simply quit paying attention to (or saying thank you to) the God who gives you so much so extravagantly. What was that time of forgetfulness like for you? Make some notes to help you remember.

**Thursday, 4/10/08 – Read Deuteronomy 8:15-16 and Romans 8:28**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: God does not send hardship or difficulty or trouble or misery specifically to individuals. Romans 8:28 is clear about that. But God has placed us in a world where we do encounter trouble and difficulty. Today's verses suggest that it is God's purpose "in the end to do you good." ... Have you ever experienced that? Have you ever come through a hard patch in life to discover that God has turned the experience into something good for you? Describe the difficulty -- and the goodness that God brought out of it.

**Friday, 4/11/08 – Read Deuteronomy 8:17-18**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: When life goes well for us, when we are successful, when we are prosperous, inevitably we face a big temptation. We are tempted to conclude that it is solely our own ingenuity, intelligence, and competence that have produced this success. Our human efforts, of course, do play a

role. The spiritual task is remembering (not forgetting) that our ingenuity, intelligence, and competence are also gifts of God. It is God who "gives you the power to get wealth" as verse 18 expresses it. ... Have you been tempted to conclude that your success was solely the result of your own ability and effort? How did that affect your relationship with other people? How did that affect your relationship with God?

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**Saturday, 4/12/08 - Read Psalm 1 and Matthew 7:24-27**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: Both Psalm 1 and Jesus' little parable suggest that there are two ways to live. Now, of course, there are many points in between the two extremes but for the sake of our reflection, let's focus on the two ways. Our reading this week in Deuteronomy 8 would say that there is the way of forgetting and the way of remembering -- again, two ways. ... In your own words, how would you contrast these two ways. From your own experience and observation, would you say that these two ways produce different results in people's lives? What results have these two ways produced in your life?

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**Sunday, 4/13/08 - Read Psalm 23**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: This very familiar and cherished psalm says, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. ..." Do you think that's true? If so, what do you think it means? ... Does God want us to have what we need; does God want us not to experience "want"? We humans are often so anxious and apprehensive -- so fearful that there won't be "enough." Do you ever feel that anxiety? How would life be different if you were deeply confident that God wanted you to have enough?

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*My Faith Journal, April 6, 2008*

***Reach UP, Reach IN, Reach OUT***

**What do I want to remember out of today's service and presentation?**