

# My Favorite Thing About DEUTERONOMY

Deuteronomy 11:18-21

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My Favorite Thing About Deuteronomy can be summed up in one word = **REMEMBER**.

- **Ellen White {PP 292-293}** - God had promised to be their God, to take them to Himself as a people, and to lead them to a large and good land; but they were ready to faint at every obstacle encountered in the way to that land. In a marvelous manner He had brought them out from their bondage in Egypt, that He might elevate and ennoble them and make them a praise in the earth. But it was necessary for them to encounter difficulties and to endure privations. God was bringing them from a state of degradation and fitting them to occupy an honorable place among the nations and to receive important and sacred trusts. Had they possessed faith in Him, in view of all that He had wrought for them, they would cheerfully have borne inconvenience, privation, and even real suffering; but they were unwilling to trust the Lord any further than they could witness the continual evidences of His power. **They forgot** their bitter service in Egypt. **They forgot** the goodness and power of God displayed in their behalf in their deliverance from bondage. **They forgot** how their children had been spared when the destroying angel slew all the first-born of Egypt. **They forgot** the grand exhibition of divine power at the Red Sea. **They forgot** that while they had crossed safely in the path that had been opened for them, the armies of their enemies, attempting to follow them, had been overwhelmed by the waters of the sea. They saw and felt only their present inconveniences and trials; and instead of saying, "God has done great things for us; whereas we were slaves, He is making of us a great nation," they talked of the hardness of the way, and wondered when their weary pilgrimage would end.

George Santayana - *"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it"*

After taking an 11-day journey {Deut. 1:2} and turning into a 40-year odyssey, Israel was once again on the eastern bank of the Jordan.

Moses was old {120 years} and his work was done. He was about to die, but before he walked off into the sunset, he had some things to say....

## Review of the past 40 years:

First, he spent some time reminding Israel of it's past:

- Spy gate
- The desert years
- Defeat of King Sihon

**In spite of all your rebellion, the LORD has blessed you. He has watched over your journey and for 40 years He has been with you and you lacked nothing. {2:7}**

- Defeat of King Og
- Division of the land east of the Jordan
- Moses forbidden from entering the land

**Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6** - Listen to the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and go in and take possession of the land that the LORD is giving you. Do not add to it and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you..... Follow them when you enter the Land. Keep them because they will be your wisdom and understanding to the surrounding nations.

**Deuteronomy 4:9-10** - Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when he said to me, "Assemble the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children."

**Deuteronomy 4:23** - Be careful not to forget the covenant of the LORD your God that he made with you; do not make for yourselves an idol in the form of anything the LORD your God has forbidden.

## A Review of the Law:

After the lengthy history lesson, Moses restated The Ten Commandments and reminded the people to walk in all God's ways and then he gave them what would become the center of their daily worship – **The Shema** {Deuteronomy 6:4-9}:

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup> Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. <sup>7</sup> Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. <sup>8</sup> Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. <sup>9</sup> Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.....

.... be careful that you **do not forget** the LORD, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. {Deuteronomy 6:12}

Instructions for entering the Land:

- Have nothing to do with the people of the Land – Protection!
- **Don't forget** all the ways the Lord has led you in the past.
- Don't be unfaithful like your parents.
- Love God. Walk in all His ways. Serve Him with all your heart and soul and keep His commandments.

**Deuteronomy 11:31-32 - You are about to cross the Jordan to enter and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you. When you have taken it over and are living there, <sup>32</sup> be sure that you obey all the decrees and laws I am setting before you today.**

**DON'T FORGET!**

Ceremonial and civic obligations - Chapters 12 – 26:

- **12** - Instruction regarding worship.
- **13** - Warnings against the worship other gods
- **15** - Instructions regarding the treatment of the poor/need/servants.

**Deuteronomy 15:15 - Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you.**

- **16** - Instructions regarding the Appointed Feasts

**Deuteronomy 16:12 – Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, and follow carefully these decrees.**

- **17** - Instructions regarding sacrifices, the establishment of a high court and kingship:
- **18** - Instructions regarding the inheritance of the Levites and the practices of the Canaanites that were to be avoided.
- **19** - Instructions regarding the Cities of Refuge.
- **20** - Principles regarding warfare.
- **21** - Instructions regarding removing of blood guilt.
- **22-25** - Miscellaneous instructions regarding community life.

**Deuteronomy 24:18, 22 - Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you from there. That is why I command you to do this..... <sup>22</sup> Remember that you were slaves in Egypt. That is why I command you to do this.**

- **26** - Instructions regarding the firstfruits of the harvest and provisions for the Levites and the poor and needy.

**Deuteronomy 26:16-19 - The LORD your God commands you this day to follow these decrees and laws; carefully observe them with all your heart and with all your soul. <sup>17</sup> You have declared this day that the LORD is your God and that you will walk in his ways, that you will keep his decrees, commands and laws, and that you will obey him. <sup>18</sup> And the LORD has declared this day that you are his people, his treasured possession as he promised, and that you are to keep all his commands. <sup>19</sup> He has declared that he will set you in praise, fame and honor high above all the nations he has made and that you will be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised.**

**REMEMBER** that you were once slaves, but now you are a free people and this is how free people live and **DON'T FORGET** that you freely entered into a Covenant relationship with God and with that comes specific responsibilities:

You're going to be faithful to the promises you made.

God's going to be faithful to the promises He made.

**Looking Ahead:**

As Moses began to conclude his speech, he looked into the future --- to the time the people would be settled in the land. The time when **remembering** would become vital to their survival {ch. 28}.

## Blessings:

If you fully obey the LORD your God ... He will set you high above all the nations on earth. <sup>2</sup> **All these blessings will come upon you....** Do not turn aside from any of the commands I give you today, to the right or to the left, following other gods and serving them.

## Curses:

However, if you do not obey the LORD your God ... **all these curses will come upon you and overtake you....** <sup>46</sup> They will be a sign and a wonder to you and your descendants forever. Because you did not serve the LORD your God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity....

God placed Israel in Canaan for a very specific reason – it was a major trade route. They were to be His witnesses and point the world to Him. Their fidelity or infidelity would be clearly seen and would have a direct impact on how other nations viewed God. God took this very seriously and He wanted the people to take it seriously too, so He spent a lot of time reminding them not to forget in order to help them avoid the consequences of unfaithfulness.

**Deuteronomy 30:11-20 - Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. <sup>12</sup> It is not up in heaven, ... <sup>13</sup> Nor is it beyond the sea, ... <sup>14</sup> No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it. <sup>15</sup> See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. <sup>16</sup> For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. <sup>17</sup> But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, <sup>18</sup> I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup> This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live <sup>20</sup> and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.** {see Psalm 78}

In Deuteronomy the idea of *“Remember”* is active.

You write a grocery list so that you *“remember”* what you need, but the benefit comes **ONLY** when you actually go to the grocery store, take out your list and put the stuff in your cart.

So, in Deuteronomy, Moses is telling the people, *“Don’t just remember what I have told you, do something about it – obey.”*

Forgetfulness is a problem we all suffer from. We forget all too easily the things that God has done in our past. We are all too quick to whine when things don’t go as expected. So, He says to us, *“Don’t forget --- Remember what I have done and remember what I have promised to do and then act upon what you remember - obey.”*

**Ephesians 2:12-13 - Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.**

**Revelation 3:3 – Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.**