



# Deuteronomy 26

HOW IS YOUR GIVING?

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# So How is Your Giving?

- ▶ **Luke 6:38**

- ▶ Give and it will be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will men give unto your bosom.

- ▶ **Galatians 6:7**

- ▶ Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.



# Deuteronomy 26

- ▶ The Fifth Book of Moses 26:1,2
- ▶ **26** "And it shall be, when you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it,
- ▶ <sup>2</sup> that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground, which you shall bring from your land that the Lord your God is giving you, and put *it* in a basket and go to the place where the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide.



# A Theological Interpretation

- ▶ After forty years in the wilderness, Moses instructs the Israelites about God's covenantal way of life and blessing in the Promised Land. As he concludes his core teachings (Deuteronomy 12-26), Moses unexpectedly returns to the earlier topic of pilgrimage festivals (cf., Deuteronomy 16, which describes the three pilgrimage festivals of Passover, Shavuot or Weeks, and Sukkot or Booths).
- ▶ Deuteronomy 26:1-11 presents a theological interpretation of the summer harvest, during which choice agricultural produce was brought to the temple in Jerusalem. This offering from the bounty provided by God through the gift of the land was associated with the pilgrimage festival known as Shavuot or Weeks, held seven weeks after Passover (hence the Greek name Pentecost, for "fifty" days after Passover).



# Good News: A Land Flowing with Milk and Honey

- ▶ As a people recently enslaved in a foreign land who had since spent a nomadic generation in the wilderness, the Israelites were presented with good news in the form of a commandment emphasizing the abundance of a "land flowing with milk and honey" (26:9) that God was giving them as an "inheritance to possess" (26:1).



# Bring forth the first fruits

- ▶ "Today I declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us" (26:3),
- ▶ and
- ▶ "[God] brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me" (26:10).

# Be ye doers...observe to do

- ▶ James 1:22
- ▶
- ▶ <sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.



# God brought them out...and He will bring you out to!

- ▶ <sup>8</sup> So the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders.
- ▶ <sup>9</sup> He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, "a land flowing with milk and honey";
- ▶ <sup>10</sup> and now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land which you, O Lord, have given me.'
- ▶



# Obey God's Commands

## Deut 26:16

- ▶ <sup>16</sup> "This day the Lord your God commands you to observe these statutes and judgments; therefore you shall be careful to observe them with all your heart and with all your soul.



# What are your 'firstfruits?'

- ▶ While all of us depend on agriculture for sustenance, fewer and fewer people in today's world live on farms or are involved in working the soil.
- ▶ Reflecting Dueteronomy 26 in more contemporary terms, what might be examples of the "first fruits" that we offer to God, our families, and the congregation or community, out of grateful recognition that everything promoting life, health, and peace has been given to us by God?



# Deuteronomy 26: 6,7,8

## Cry Out to God

- ▶ <sup>6</sup> But the Egyptians mistreated us, afflicted us, and laid hard bondage on us. <sup>7</sup> **Then we cried out to the Lord God of our fathers,** and the Lord heard our voice and looked on our affliction and our labor and our oppression. <sup>8</sup> So the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders.
- ▶ Let's examine God's responsiveness to the Israelites' cries for protection and on God's amazing power to deliver from oppression and to provide for a future filled with hope and abundance.



# What is our responsibility?

- ▶ In the New Testament there is the exhortation to care for those who teach. We understand this to mean those who serve, probably in full-time, but also in part-time.
- ▶ "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages" (1 Timothy 5:17-18).





# Do not muzzle the Ox

- ▶ The point in 1 Timothy 5:17,18 is that the ox should be able to eat while working. In other words, while the Levite (or in our case pastor and missionary) should be cared for while involved in their work.
- ▶ 1 Corinthians 9:6-9
- ▶ <sup>6</sup> Or *is it* only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working? <sup>7</sup> Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?
- ▶ <sup>8</sup> Do I say these things as a *mere* man? Or does not the law say the same also? <sup>9</sup> For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about?



# What does it take? For you to respond in giving?

- ▶ Beyond the tithe...
- ▶ "When you have finished paying all the tithe of your increase in the third year, the year of tithing, then you shall give it to the Levite, to the stranger, to the orphan and to the widow, that they may eat in your towns, and be satisfied" (Deuteronomy 26:12).
- ▶ BE Kind



# Are you on the lookout?

- ▶ Are you looking for ways to give?
- ▶ Are you led by the Holy Spirit in your giving?
- ▶ Malachi 3:10
- ▶ <sup>10</sup> Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,  
That there may be food in My house,  
And try Me now in this,"  
Says the Lord of hosts,  
"If I will not open for you the windows of heaven  
And pour out for you *such* blessing  
That *there will not be room enough to receive it.*



# Be a Giver and make it a habit all the days of your life!

- ▶ Acts 20:35
- ▶ <sup>35</sup> I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, '**It is more blessed to give than to receive.**'
- ▶ So get the blessing ball rolling and give!
- ▶ Be a giver...but also remember to be a good receiver.



# Works Cited

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