

The Book of Deuteronomy

Lesson 6: A Chosen People; Remember the Lord -- Deuteronomy 7:1–8:20

Have you ever wondered why God picked them? A ragtag band of former slaves, no kingdom, no army worth the name, no track record of faithfulness, in fact a long record of grumbling. Moses asks the question out loud and then answers it in a way that should undo our pride forever:

“The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples”. He chose them, Moses says, simply “because the Lord loves you”. That is the whole reason. Love, and a promise He had sworn.

This is where so much religion goes wrong. We assume God chooses the impressive, blesses the deserving, loves the lovable. Deuteronomy 7 demolishes that. Israel was chosen not for greatness but for grace, not because they were a treasure but to be made one. And the purpose of their being chosen was never merely their own comfort; through this people God would keep His oath to Abraham and bless all the families of the earth. They were chosen for a mission, not just a privilege.

Then chapter 8 turns to a different danger, the one that comes after the rescue. God led them forty years in the wilderness, humbled them, let them hunger, fed them with manna, all to teach them that “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord”. The wilderness was a school of dependence. And the lesson they had to learn in the desert was the lesson they would be most tempted to forget in the land of plenty.

For here is the trap waiting in the good land: the day would come when their barns were full and their houses fine, and a whisper would rise in the heart, “My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth”. Self-made. Self-sufficient. God forgotten. Moses sees it coming a mile away and plants the antidote: “You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth”. Remember. The whole of chapters 7 and 8 hang on that one word, and so, very often, does the health of our own souls.

Group Discussion: Moses says God chose Israel not for their greatness but because He loved them and kept His promise. How does grounding our standing with God in His love and faithfulness rather than our own merit change the way we relate to Him and to others?

Personal Reflection: Where in your life are you most tempted to say, in effect, “my power and my own hand have gotten me this”, and what would it look like to deliberately remember and credit God this week?

Read Deuteronomy 7:1–8:20

Study Questions

1. Why does Moses say God chose Israel (7:6–8), and what does it reveal about the basis of God's love and the purpose for which He set them apart?
2. If God's love rests on His own grace and promise rather than on our worthiness, how does that free you from both pride and despair in your walk with Him?
3. Why were Israel commanded to drive out the nations and to refuse idolatry and intermarriage (7:1–5), and what does this reveal about the seriousness of anything that turns the heart from God?
4. What in your life has the subtle power to “turn your heart away” from wholehearted devotion to God, and how should you deal with it?
5. What did God intend to teach Israel through the wilderness, the hunger, and the manna (8:2–5), and what does “man shall not live by bread alone” reveal about real life and dependence on God?
6. Where is God using a season of need, waiting, or discipline to teach you dependence, and how are you responding to His training?

7. What is the danger Moses warns of in the good land (8:7–18), and how does the heart move from gratitude to the proud claim, “my power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth”?
8. When you succeed or prosper, how honestly do you credit God as the giver, and where do you catch yourself quietly taking the credit?
9. Deuteronomy says God chose Israel by His love and oath, not their merit, and warns that forgetting Him brings ruin (8:19–20). How should we understand God’s choosing of a people and His gift of blessing, guarding against both the idea that He elects individuals unconditionally to salvation and the idea that prosperity is a formula we can claim?
10. Looking back across Deuteronomy 7 and 8, name one specific way Jesus is teaching you to remember the Lord and live by His word rather than by bread alone, and what is your next step?

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Genesis 12:1–3, the oath to Abraham to bless all nations through his seed; Galatians 3:16,29, the promise fulfilled in Christ and in all who are His; Matthew 4:4, Jesus answering the tempter from Deuteronomy 8 that man lives by every word of God; Deuteronomy 9:4–6, Israel given the land not for their righteousness but by God’s promise; 1 Corinthians 4:7, what do you have that you did not receive

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