

THE DEUTERONOMY FIVE

Part 3 • August 2, 2026 | Pastor Jason Smotherman

THE POWER OF REMEMBRANCE

Primary Texts: Deuteronomy 6, Deuteronomy 8, and Deuteronomy 26

We remember God's faithfulness so we can walk into tomorrow's promise, not live imprisoned by yesterday's pain.

One of the most repeated commands in the book of Deuteronomy isn't "obey." It isn't "fear." It isn't even "love." **It is, remember.**

Moses knew something about people. We don't naturally remember what God has done. We naturally remember what hurt us. We remember the betrayal. The diagnosis. The divorce. The failure. The embarrassment. The disappointment. But God continually says, "Remember Me."

What you continually remember eventually shapes what you become. Before Israel ever crossed into the Promised Land, Moses was concerned that they might forget the God who brought them there.

Notice the progression in Deuteronomy 4 He says, "Choose life." In Deuteronomy 6, "teach these things diligently to your children. Talk about them when you sit down. When you walk. When you lie down. When you rise up."

In Deuteronomy 8, "Remember the whole way the Lord has led you."

Then in Deuteronomy 26, "When you finally possess the land, stop, bring your first fruits, and tell the story again."

Moses understood something profound. If one generation stops remembering, the next generation starts forgetting. Remembrance isn't nostalgia. It is discipleship.

1. REMEMBER THE GOD WHO LED YOU, NOT JUST THE PLACE HE LED YOU THROUGH

DEUTERONOMY 8:2 (NKJV)

² And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

You shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way. Notice what Moses emphasizes. He doesn't simply say remember the wilderness. He says remember the Lord who led you.

Some people can tell you every detail of their pain, but struggle to describe God's faithfulness in the middle of it. The wilderness was never supposed to become the headline. **God was.**

Some people have become historians of their hurt. God wants us to become witnesses of His faithfulness. The enemy wants your memories to become prisons. God wants your memories to become testimonies.

2. TEACH THE TESTIMONY, NOT JUST THE TRAUMA

DEUTERONOMY 6:6-9 (NKJV)

⁶ "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Before Israel ever entered the land, God said, talk about My Word. Teach your children. Write it on your house. Put it on your gates. Why? Because every generation inherits someone's memories. The question is, which memories?

Children don't just inherit stories. They inherit perspectives. If all they hear is how hard life was, they'll inherit fear. If they hear how faithful God was, they'll inherit faith.

Some families have become experts at repeating wounds. God wants His people repeating victories. **Don't make your pain the family inheritance. Make God's faithfulness the family inheritance.**

3. DON'T BECOME CAPTIVE TO THE PLACE THAT EDUCATED YOU

DEUTERONOMY 8:15-16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ who led you through that great and terrible wilderness, in which were fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock; ¹⁶ who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do you good in the end—

The wilderness taught them dependence. It taught humility. It taught trust. But it was never home. There is a difference between carrying the lesson, and carrying the chains.

Many people are still emotionally living in seasons God already brought them through. Israel left Egypt overnight. Egypt left Israel over forty years. Some of us have crossed the Red Sea physically, but Egypt still lives in our thinking.

Every miracle became another opportunity to compare God's future to yesterday's familiarity. They wanted the onions. The leeks. The garlic. But forgot the slavery. Not every memory deserves equal influence.

Remember the lesson. Leave the chains.

4. WORSHIP IS GOD'S WAY OF PROTECTING OUR MEMORY

DEUTERONOMY 26:1-11 (NKJV)

¹ "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, ² 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. ³ And you shall go to the one who is priest in those days, and say to him, 'I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come to the country which the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.'

⁴ "Then the priest shall take the basket out of your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God. ⁵ And you shall answer and say before the LORD your God: 'My father was a Syrian, about to perish, and he went down to Egypt and [c]dwelt there, few in number; and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. ⁶ But the Egyptians mistreated us, afflicted us, and laid hard bondage on us. ⁷ 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. ⁸ 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. ⁹ He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, "a land flowing with milk and honey"; ¹⁰ and now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land which you, O LORD, have given me.'

"Then you shall set it before the LORD your God, and worship before the LORD your God. ¹¹ So you shall rejoice in every good thing which the LORD your God has given to you and your house, you and the Levite and the stranger who is among you.

This is one of my favorite moments in Deuteronomy. God tells Israel, "When you finally possess the land, Bring your firstfruits. But then, before you lay down your offering, tell the story.

"My father was a wandering Aramean..." "We cried out..." "The Lord heard..." "He delivered us..." "He brought us..." "He gave us..."

Notice what worship is doing. Before God receives the offering, He restores their memory. Because gratitude grows where remembrance lives. Every act of worship is an opportunity to recalibrate our memory. That's why communion is so powerful.

Jesus didn't say, "Remember your failures." He said, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

The cross becomes the lens through which every other memory is interpreted.

The danger isn't forgetting Egypt.

The danger is forgetting God.

Some people are chained to memories God intended to become milestones.

Others have become so comfortable in blessing that they've forgotten the One who blessed them.

Moses says:

Remember.

Remember when God humbled you.

Remember when He provided.

Remember when He corrected you.

Remember when He delivered you.

Remember when He carried you.

Remember when He was faithful.

Because healthy remembrance produces humility. Healthy remembrance produces gratitude. Healthy remembrance produces obedience.

But unhealthy remembrance produces fear. Shame. Bitterness. And spiritual paralysis.

Choose life.

Then choose what you will remember. Carry the lesson. Leave the chains.

And keep telling the story of the God who brought you out so He could bring you in. God never asked Israel to forget Egypt. He asked them to stop living like they were still there.

That captures the heart of Deuteronomy. Moses continually calls Israel to remember God's mighty acts while refusing to let the past dictate the identity and obedience of the future.

*Dig deeper into The Book of Deuteronomy with this Bible Study Guide. Also sign up at parkwaycc.com/newsletter. Select **"General (Newsletter + Updates)"** to get notified of additional content.*

