

Full Hands, Empty Memory

Deuteronomy: Choose Life | Week Eight | Deuteronomy 6:10–25

A study you can do on your own in about 40 minutes. Find a quiet place, a Bible, and something to write with. The questions speak to you directly, and the lines are yours.

THE BIG IDEA

The moment of greatest spiritual danger is rarely the crisis. It is the season when everything finally works, because abundance has a way of quietly erasing our memory of the God who gave it. So Moses hands Israel two safeguards: gratitude that traces every good thing back to its true source, and a rescue story retold until each generation owns it. Nothing we hold was earned, hardship is not a bill from heaven, and the perfect obedience we could never manage was completed by Jesus and counted as ours. From beginning to end, we are living inside grace.

01 Check in with God *about 5 minutes*

Before you open the passage, be honest with God about your week. Write short answers. Nobody else will read them.

1. What was a high point and a low point from your week?

2. What is one good thing in your life right now that you did nothing to deserve?

- 3. If I did last week's study, how did the step I named go? If this is my first week, what do I hope God does in me through Deuteronomy?

02 Setting the scene

We are eight weeks into Deuteronomy, listening to Moses preach his farewell sermons to Israel on the plains of Moab, just across the river from the land God promised. Last week we heard the most famous words in the book, the call to love the LORD with all our heart, soul, and strength. This week Moses names the greatest threat to that love, and it is not what we would expect. The danger is not hardship. It is abundance. Israel is about to inherit cities, houses, wells, and vineyards prepared by hands that were not their own. And Moses knows that once they are settled and satisfied, the temptation will be to forget the God who carried them out of slavery.

03 Read the Word *about 10 minutes*

Open your Bible to Deuteronomy 6:10–25 and read the whole passage aloud to yourself, slowly, even if it feels strange. Reading aloud slows you down and helps you notice. If you can, read it twice. The verses for each part of the study are printed in the sections below.

MEMORY VERSE | DEUTERONOMY 6:12

be careful not to forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery.

Read it aloud three times now, and once each morning this week.

First impressions

4. The word, phrase, or image that stood out to me as I read was this.

5. What surprised me, or what I noticed for the first time.

04 Study the scripture *about 20 minutes*

The sermon walked through three sentences: you did not build this life, do not forget this God, and keep telling this story. The verses for each part are printed below. The first question in each part asks what the text says, the last asks what it changes in you. The dotted questions are the ones to keep if time is short.

YOU DID NOT BUILD THIS LIFE

Read verses 10–11 again.

Deuteronomy 6:10–11 CSB

10 When the LORD your God brings you into the land he swore to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give you, a land with large and beautiful cities that you did not build, **11** houses full of every good thing that you did not fill them with, cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant, and when you eat and are satisfied,

Before Israel takes a single step into the land, Moses reminds them that none of it will be their own doing. The cities, the houses, the wells, and the vineyards are all ready and waiting, prepared by people they never met. Even the promise behind it reaches back centuries, spoken to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob long before this generation existed. Grace was at work before anyone had a chance to earn it. Israel enters the land as heirs, not builders.

- 6.** Look at verses 10 and 11. List the things Israel will receive that they did not build, fill, dig, or plant. How far back does the promise behind them reach?

- 7.** Make a quick list: what are some things in your life that you did not build but were handed to you? What happens in your heart when you name them?

- **8.** Moses insists the blessing was promised long before anyone could earn it. Where are you most tempted to treat God's goodness like a wage for your faithfulness instead of a gift?

DO NOT FORGET THIS GOD*Read verses 12–19 again.***Deuteronomy 6:12–16 CSB**

12 be careful not to forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the place of slavery. **13** Fear the LORD your God, worship him, and take your oaths in his name. **14** Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you, **15** for the LORD your God, who is among you, is a jealous God. Otherwise, the LORD your God's anger will burn against you, and he will wipe you off the face of the earth. **16** Do not test the LORD your God as you tested him at Massah.

A NOTE ON THE HARD VERSES

You may wonder about verse 15, where God says he will wipe Israel off the face of the earth. This is the language of a jealous love that will not share, spoken to a people about to be surrounded by other gods, and the same chapter says this God is among you. Judgment and nearness sit in the same verse. If this troubles you, bring it to a pastor. It is a good question.

Strangely, Moses saves his strongest warning for the good times. It is not hunger that worries him. It is a full stomach. Hardship tends to keep people praying, but comfort slowly convinces us that we are doing fine on our own. In the Bible, forgetting God is less about losing information and more about losing our identity as rescued people, and it rarely happens on purpose. It creeps in through crowded schedules and easy seasons, until God has faded quietly into the background of a life he gave us.

9. Look at verses 12 to 15. What is Israel told to be careful about, what are they told to do instead, and what reason does verse 15 give?

10. Why do you think comfort and success are more spiritually dangerous than hardship? Where have you seen the drift happen in your own life?

11. Many of us quietly assume that good things prove God is pleased with us and hard things prove he is not. Where has that assumption shown up in your prayers, your giving, or the way you view other people's circumstances?

KEEP TELLING THIS STORY*Read verses 20–25 again.***Deuteronomy 6:20–23 CSB**

20 When your son asks you in the future, “What is the meaning of the decrees, statutes, and ordinances that the LORD our God has commanded you?” **21** tell him, “We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand. **22** Before our eyes the LORD inflicted great and devastating signs and wonders on Egypt, on Pharaoh, and on all his household, **23** but he brought us from there in order to lead us in and give us the land that he swore to our ancestors.

God assumes that one day the children will want to know the reason behind it all. And the answer he provides is remarkable. Instead of defending the rules, parents are told to recount a deliverance: we were slaves, and the LORD set us free. Each new generation learns to speak of the exodus as its own experience, because a faith that stays secondhand rarely survives.

That kind of storytelling was never meant to stay inside our own homes. The people God has placed around us, coworkers, neighbors, and classmates, do not need another highlight reel. They need to hear from somebody honest about the moments when God did for them what they could not do for themselves.

12. Look at verses 20 and 21. What question does the child ask, and how does the parent’s answer begin? Notice what it is not.

13. Why do you think a rescue story forms faith better than a rule ever could?

● **14.** Who is one person in your life this week, at your table, at work, or in your neighborhood, who needs to hear a rescue story where you are not the hero? What story would you tell them?

05 Back to Jesus *about 5 minutes*

How does this passage point me back to Jesus?

Israel went on to prove the warning true. Prosperity came, and memory faded. And the standard of verse 25 turned out to be beyond anyone's reach, since it required flawless obedience to everything God commanded. Jesus stepped into that gap. Facing the devil in a desert, he answered from this very chapter and held on to his Father where Israel let go. The one who possessed everything chose poverty so that we could receive what we never earned. His perfect obedience became our standing before God, a righteousness credited to us rather than achieved by us.

- 15. How does knowing that Jesus kept every command and handed you his righteousness change the way you approach God when you fail, and the way you hold both blessing and hardship this week?

APPLICATION

What is God telling me to do today? One specific step I will take this week.

06 Pray *about 5 minutes*

Write your prayer. Prayers on paper are slower and more honest than prayers in our heads. Tell God what you found, ask him for what you need, and name the step you just wrote down.

Who has God brought to mind?

Someone who needs what you have been reading about. Write their name, pray for them by name, and send them a message before you close this guide.

A PRAYER TO CARRY WITH YOU

Father, everything I am holding today came from your hand, and I confess how easily I take the credit. Free me from the lie that your love rises and falls with my circumstances. In seasons of plenty, keep my heart awake to you. Make me generous because you have been generous to me, grateful before and after every meal, and brave enough to tell the people I love how you rescued me when I could not rescue myself. In Jesus' name, Amen.

At home this week

Deuteronomy 6 tells parents to talk about God's words at the table and on the road. If there are children in your home, ask at dinner this week: **What is something we have that we did not build or buy ourselves?** Then read Deuteronomy 6:12 together and thank God for it by name. Remembering who gave it keeps our hearts awake.

Before Sunday

Three things to carry into the week.

- Read Deuteronomy 6:10–25 again on your own this week, and ask God what he is saying to you through it.
- Take the one step you wrote down, and tell someone once you have done it.
- Follow up with the person whose name you wrote above. A message today, a conversation this week.

DO THIS WITH OTHERS

Deuteronomy was preached to a people, not to a person, and this guide works best with others around the table. LOFT's Bible studies meet during the week and welcome new people at any point in the series. Find one in the Church Center app or at loftcity.church, or email sam@loftcity.church and we will help you find one.