

Dessert First: Celebrating God's Blessings

Message Notes:

Wednesday *The Lord brought us out...gave us land*

Read Deuteronomy 26:4-9

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. Write your own statement of remembrance reviewing how, in your life, God has heard your cry, delivered you, and blessed you.
2. Who in our time is oppressed and yearning to be delivered to "a land flowing with milk and honey"?

Prayer Focus Give thanks for God's saving presence in your life; pray for God's deliverance in the lives of those oppressed in our day.

Thursday *I bring first fruit of the ground that God has given.*

Read Deuteronomy 26:10

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. Why is it important to give to the Lord the first fruits of our harvest?
2. What does the act of bowing down before the Lord indicate?

Prayer Focus Prayerfully consider giving to God the first fruits of your income. Is this any different than your previous pattern? What does it indicate about your priorities?

Friday *With Levites and aliens, celebrate the bounty*

Read Deuteronomy 26:11

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. How does it feel to be instructed to give first to God, then those without property and marginalized, and use the remainder for yourself? Does this differ from your usual routine?

Prayer Focus

Give thanks for the opportunity to share what God has given. Pray for guidance about how you share your bounty in giving to Christ's ministry and to those in need.

Small Group Format

Welcome

- Introductions/getting acquainted
- Mutual Invitation question: *Share a story from your life in which you experienced the deliverance of God.*

Opening Prayer

Song (optional)

Reflection on Deuteronomy 26:1-11.

- Have someone read **Deuteronomy 26:1-11.**
- Discuss observations about the text
 - *What word or phrase strikes you the most?*
 - *What do you think is the most important point of the text?*

Application of Scripture (The central transformative questions)

- What did you hear God say to you through this week's Scriptures?
- What are you doing about it?
- How can we support you?

Share your faith (in groups of 3)

- *How have you experienced God recently in your life?*
(This is a weekly question – it may be difficult to answer at first, but if you ask it each week you may start to notice God more in your life.)

Pray for each other

Refreshments (optional)

November 11, 2018

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Monday *The land the Lord is giving you as an inheritance.*

Read Deuteronomy 26:1-3

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. What have you received as an inheritance (material and non-material items) from family members? from the community of faith? from God? How does it feel to receive gifts as an heir?
2. What inheritance or legacy (non-material and material) do you hope to leave for family members? friends? our faith community?

Prayer Focus

Give thanks for the various gifts you have inherited from family, the faith community, and from God. Ask God to guide you in leaving a valued and living legacy for others.

Tuesday *Take some of first of all fruit of ground*

Read Deuteronomy 26:1-4

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. How do you tend to express gratitude for what you have been given?
2. How do you feel about giving away the first/best of what you have received or earned? Why?

Prayer Focus

As in a gratitude journal, write down five things for which you are grateful today. Pray to be attentive to God's blessings throughout the day.