

Tell Your Story and Rejoice!

Deuteronomy 26:11 *“And you shall rejoice in all the good that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house, you, and the Levite, and the sojourner who is among you.”*

What’s your story? If someone were to ask you how you came to the place where you are today, what would you say? Is it a happy story or a sad story? A comedy or a tragedy? How do you celebrate where you are today and who do you thank for getting you here? A lot of questions this morning, I know, but they’re important to think about.

In Deuteronomy 26, Moses has been reciting the laws of life given to him by God and here he comes to instructions on giving. But if you read chapter 26:1-11, you’ll notice something about it that is different from most approaches to giving. First, you bring your “first fruits,” the best that you’ve got, to the temple. You give it to the priest and then you feel satisfied that you’ve done your duty. NO! After you present your gift, you tell your story. Why are you giving this gift? Tell your story. For Israel, it’s the story of deliverance from Egypt. Why give? Because God has rescued you and delivered you. Tell your story.

After you’ve given your gift and told your story, rejoice. Celebrate and sing a new song. Celebrate for all the good things that God has given to you. For the Hebrew people, it was freedom, land, food, and a promise of a future with God. They had reason to celebrate and rejoice. They had their share of the messes of life as well, but they had even more reason to celebrate.

Do you celebrate? Do you rejoice in all the good that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house? Sometimes it is hard to rejoice when you are surrounded by tragedy and pain as some of us are. God is not telling us to ignore the hurt, but He is using the story of the Hebrews to remind them and us of all the good things He has done and His promise to continue doing them. Because we people tend to forget the good things pretty quickly.

Like the Hebrews, we tell our story. At the very least, we tell our story on Sunday. We tell our story of confession and forgiveness, of our baptisms, of our faith. Giving is a celebration of that story. It is a way of rejoicing in the best thing that God has given us, Jesus Christ, His Son. Offer your gift, tell your story and then rejoice!

Some final questions to think about: What can you rejoice about today? Is there someone who needs to hear your story? Tell your story and rejoice!

Heavenly Father, you instructed the Hebrew people on giving, so that they would never forget nor fail to rejoice in their story. Keep us mindful of our story, how we were once lost and now are found, once doomed and now victorious. We rejoice because of your mercy, through your Son, Jesus. In his name we pray, amen.