

**Read: Deuteronomy 10:12-22**

## We Get More than We Deserve

### **Deuteronomy 10:12,13**

And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to observe the Lord's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Raise your hand if you have ever heard of the country of Kiribati. It is a tiny island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean with a population of about 100,000 people. Its location makes the island nation the first country to bring in the new year.

Go ahead, you can Google it!

If we can be excused for not knowing about Kiribati, the people of 1500 B.C. can be excused if they never heard of the nation of Israel. Before Israel left Egypt for their new home in Canaan, they did not have any land to call their own. Israel wasn't large or strong. And yet, God chose them to carry his promise of a Savior and receive a lot of blessings. They received more from God than they deserved.

Sadly, Israel did not respond to God's undeserved gifts with happy hearts. They disobeyed God's commands. They followed other gods. They looked out for themselves at the expense of others. Still, the Lord God continued to protect and provide for them. He gave them a land of their own, their population grew, and the promise of the Savior remained with Israel. They received *far* more from God than they deserved. In his final "sermon" to the nation he had led for many years, Moses urged the Israelites to live in ways that reflected their gratitude for God's undeserved gifts.

I have a friend who, when you ask him how he is doing, answers, "better than I deserve." It is a humble answer that he also reflects in the gracious way he lives. How about us? Do we grasp the grace that God has showered on us? He gives us food to eat and clothes to wear. We have cars to drive and phones in our hands. But more than that, we know that the promise of the Savior came true! Though we have been no less "stiff-necked" in our sin (it means to be stubborn!), God assures us that all our sins are forgiven in Jesus and heaven is our home. We, too, can live in ways that show others how much we appreciate God's gifts.

Who are we that we should receive such grace from God? The answer: We are the objects of God's love who get more than we deserve.

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- Moses spoke today's Word of God. Tell as much as you know about him.
- What is at least one blessing that you have enjoyed today?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- What was it about the nation of Israel that made them seem unqualified for God's blessings?
- Today's word of God started like this: "what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God?" What does it mean to "fear the LORD"?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Why had the Israelites received more than they deserved?
- Make a list of "undeserved" *earthly* blessings and "undeserved" *spiritual* blessings. Which list is longer? Why?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Gracious Father in heaven, even though we are sinners, you know us and continue to provide us with blessings for our bodies and souls. Give us grateful hearts that spill over into thankful lives, that the world may know your grace. Amen.