

Leader Guide



Speaker: Casey Scott

Sermon Outline – His Provision is a Blessing

Text: Deuteronomy 26:1–15

Big Idea: God’s people should still celebrate the blessing of “milk & honey” in multiple courses.

Outline

1. **Introduction: Five-Course Grace**
 - Firstfruits is a public, joyful, inclusive celebration of God’s covenant faithfulness.
 - “Milk & honey” names both promise given and promise received.
2. **Course 1 — Bring the Basket (vv.1–4)**
 - Firstfruits = the **first and best** freely brought in worship; the priest stands as witness that the Giver has kept His promise.
 - No coercion—gratitude initiates the offering.
3. **Course 2 — Tell the Story (vv.5–10)**
 - Creed: “A wandering/perishing Aramean was my father... the Egyptians mistreated **us**...” Each generation owns the rescue story.
 - History remembered becomes worship offered. “Embrace the cheese”—practice testimony.
4. **Course 3 — Share the Joy (v.11)**
 - Rejoice **with** Levites and foreigners; firstfruits becomes an open table for the landless and vulnerable.
 - Grace remembered → gift presented → community included.
5. **Course 4 — Release the Mercy (vv.12–14; cf. 14:28–29)**
 - The third-year tithe structures mercy so the Levite, foreigner, fatherless, and widow “may come and eat and be satisfied.”
 - If the poor aren’t welcome at our table, our prayer isn’t welcome at the altar.
6. **Course 5 — Pray the Blessing (v.15)**
 - Orthodoxy (confession) meets orthopraxy (care). Only then: “Look down... and bless.”
 - “Milk & honey” is covenant faithfulness, not prosperity indulgence.
7. **Gospel/Pentecost Lens**
 - Firstfruits likely associated with Pentecost; the Spirit’s outpouring signals God’s blessing poured out to be shared.
 - We “pass on the gift” in Jesus’ name as the true firstfruits people.
8. **Conclusion: Save Room for Dessert**
 - The feast points forward—the final course awaits the Lamb’s banquet. Live generous now; long for Jesus’ return.

Discussion Questions

1. Head (understanding/clarity)

1. What does Deuteronomy 26 teach about **why** Israel brings firstfruits and **how** the ceremony works? Identify the roles of priest, worshiper, and community.
2. How does the creed (vv.5–10) pull later generations into the Exodus story? Why do “wandering” and “perishing” both fit the Hebrew nuance?
3. In what ways does Deuteronomy **reframe** ancient tribute/tax into covenant celebration and neighbor-care (v.11; vv.12–14)?
4. How do orthodoxy (right confession) and orthopraxy (right action) interlock in this passage, culminating in the prayer of v.15?
5. How does the possible Pentecost connection deepen our understanding of “firstfruits” and the church’s mission today?

2. Heart (reflection/formation)

1. When have you brought God something **first and best**—and how did that shape your trust and joy? What holds you back now?
2. What part of **your** rescue story do you avoid telling because it feels “cheesy”? Ask the Spirit for humility and boldness to “embrace the cheese.”
3. Which vulnerable neighbors (local “Levite/foreigner/fatherless/widow”) stir compassion in you? What emotion rises—gratitude, reluctance, fear, joy? Why?
4. Where have God’s gifts subtly fed self-reliance (“my power, my hands”)? Confess and receive again the Giver behind every good thing.
5. How does anticipating the final feast with Jesus re-tune your desires in this season?

3. Hands (practice/action)

1. **Bring the Basket:** Choose one “first and best” act this week (first check, first hour in prayer/Scripture, first conversation as encouragement). Name it and calendar it.
2. **Tell the Story:** At your table, go around once this week: “One way God has been good to me lately is...” Keep it simple and sincere.
3. **Share the Joy:** Invite someone outside your usual circle to your table or generosity—international neighbor, single parent, student, widow(er). Plan a specific date.
4. **Release the Mercy:** Practice a “third-year tithe” impulse—direct a planned gift to a ministry serving the landless/vulnerable. Pair it with a visit or volunteer slot.
5. **Pray the Blessing:** After giving and serving, pray Deut 26:15-style: “Look down from Your holy habitation and bless...”—naming your church, city, and those you served.

Leader Tips (optional)

- Open with the five-course motif on a board: **Bring / Tell / Share / Release / Pray**. Let the group place verses, insights, and practices under each.
- Keep testimony practical: 30–60 seconds, answer **Who I was / What God did / How I’m responding**.
- Commission by praying v.15 together, then have each person state one concrete “course” action they’ll do this week.

(Guide adapted from “His Provision Is a Blessing,” Deuteronomy 26:1–15.)