

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Our Old Testament reading is from the fifth book of the Torah, the Book of Deuteronomy.

Moses is speaking to the Israelites in the Promised Land, urging them to remember their past.

Telling them not to forget the LORD, Yahweh, their creator and liberator.

I am reading from chapter 26.

When you have come into the land that Yahweh your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that Yahweh your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that Yahweh your God will choose as a dwelling for God's name.

You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to the priest,

"Today I declare to Yahweh your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us."

When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of Yahweh your God, you shall make this response before Yahweh your God:

"A wandering Aramean was my ancestor who went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number.

And there they became a great nation, mighty and populous.

When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, we cried to Yahweh, the God of our ancestors;

Yahweh heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression.

Yahweh brought us out of Egypt
with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm,
with a terrifying display of power,
and with signs and wonders;
and Yahweh brought us into this place
and gave us this land,
a land flowing with milk and honey.

So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground
that you, O Lord, have given me."

You shall set it down
and bow down before Yahweh your God.

Then you, together with the Levites
and the aliens who reside among you,
shall celebrate with all the bounty that Yahweh your God
has given to you and to your house.

Here ends the reading.

May Yahweh, our God,
bless our hearing with understanding