October 29th
A HISTORY LESSON FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

"*See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today? "Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children—*"
DEUTERONOMY 4:5-9

Ever heard any of these statements? "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it (George Santayana)." How about this one: "History repeats itself because no one listened the first time (Erik Qualman)." Yup, that just about sums it up. No matter if we enjoy history or hate history, we can't avoid its truth telling. History teaches us about past mistakes and how to avoid them the next time. However, here in Deuteronomy God doesn't just remind His people about our mistakes, He drives them to look at His protection of them despite their sinful ways. What does God teach us here?

As Deuteronomy contains these five sermons of Moses, we see in the first four chapters that he works purposefully to remind God's people where they had been. He doesn't sugar coat things. Moses reminds them of their sin of forsaking God's protection and provision. But He also reminds them about God's victories for them. He reminds them of His promises. He even reminds them of His promise to preserve Esau and Lot's families from annihilation. They must be careful to follow God's Word. The first few verses of Deuteronomy give us a timestamp: "In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses spoke to the people of Israel according to all that the Lord had given him in commandment to them…". Their journey in the desert was complete. Now was the time to enter the land that God had promised them.

Moses' words in Deuteronomy 4 are pivotal for the Israelites and for us. They are called to "keep their souls diligently" so that they do not forget what their eyes had seen in the wilderness. It appears that God knows His people really well! Isn't it easy for us to forget what God has done in our lives? We can be so discouraged at the mountains that we face our disgruntled with the obstacles that we encounter. It all begins with being diligent to remind ourselves about our God's character and our God's actions on our behalf. As it's said by Moses, "what kind of God would do this?" It's a key question. There is no one like our God! We must work at keeping God's Word in front of us. Think about it this way…do you show up at work without your tools and toolbelt? Do you leave your work computer at home? Of course not! In the same way, we must take with us our battle tools that will protect our hearts. It's not an option for us. If we desire to be faithful to our King, we must "be careful" to remember who God is and what He has done. Men, what is your plan and strategy to remember your God today?

Spend some time confessing to the Lord ways that you have been lazy to guard your heart. Ask Him for grace to guard it more purposefully today.

For Further Reading: Deuteronomy 4:7-40