



# REFLECTIONS

November 25, 2018

**When the Lord your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you — a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant — then when you eat and are satisfied, be careful that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.**

*Deuteronomy 6:10-12*

## Love Without End

The radio played the tune, George Strait sang the words: *Let me tell you a secret about a father's love /A secret that my daddy said was just between us /He said daddies don't just love their children every now and then /It's a love without end, amen.*

As those words began to settle in, my mind was drawn to the familiar parable Jesus told of the Prodigal Son. The story has been the subject of many sermons addressing the irresponsibility of a wayward son, a father's heartfelt emotion when the son returned, and the older brother's contempt over the celebration of it. But my thoughts skipped past those messages to one heard less often. Why did the father submit to his son's request to receive his inheritance early? Given what happened afterwards to his reckless son, why would a loving father to do such a thing? Then I recalled God's caution to remember "...*be careful that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.*"

The Lord expressed his love for the Israelites when He led them out of slavery into the land He promised. There they inherited flourishing cities they did not build, houses filled with all kinds of good things they did not provide, wells they did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves they did not plant. But He warned them not to forget where it came from. It's human nature for something earned to be more valued than something free.

Now it's also human nature for a father to protect his children from loss, suffering and pain. And surely the father expressed love for his son when he granted his request. But he also knew in his heart when the riches were gone, and his son wallowed in despair, that he, like our Father in heaven, would still be there to receive him with open arms and...

love without end. Amen.

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard +*

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Your comments are welcomed and encouraged. Richard may be reached at [richard@reflectingthesavior.org](mailto:richard@reflectingthesavior.org).