

Deuteronomy Chapter 11

Verses 1-32

This section continues the portion of God's requirement of Israel with an appeal to the past, depicting the relation of obedience to blessing in (verses 1-9), and then conveying the thought that Yahweh's blessing in the Promised Land is only for obedient people (verses 10-25).

“Charge”

Occurs only here in Deuteronomy and means that which is to be guarded or observed in relation to God.

In other Pentateuch books, it is frequently used of the charge of the tabernacle (Lev 8:35; 18:30; 22:9; Num. 9:19, 23), or more generally to any demand Yahweh may make (Gen. 26:5; Joshua 22:3; 1 Kings 2:3).

“Chastisement is the Hebrew word *musar*.

In Proverbs it occurs 36 times, and conveys the ideas of chastening, correcting, instructing, and providing (Prov. 1:7-8; 3:11-12; 8:10; 15:5, 32; 22:15).

The “therefore” (of verse 8), emphasizes the fact that Yahweh's claim to Israel's obedience rests on what He has done for them.

The conjunction “that” (in Hebrew “in order that”), adds a strong contingency.

The fulfillment of the promise was not automatic.

That is why, beginning (in verse 26), there is laid before “you” [them] “this day a blessing and a curse”, they must choose what it will be.

This topic is dealt with (in chapter 27).

“Gerizim ... Ebal” were the two most prominent hills in the natural center of Palestine used to represent symbolically the blessing and the curse.

Gerizim was on the south, or right-hand side as one looked east.

This was considered the side of favor, and therefore the side of blessing.

Ebal was on the north.

Verses 1-7:

The people's firsthand knowledge of what the LORD had done for them in Egypt, in the wilderness, and in destroying "Dathan and Abiram" for their rebellion (Num. chapter 16; Psalm 106:16-18), should have caused them to "love the LORD" and to "keep ... His commandments, always".

Observe the relationship of these two.

Thou shalt love the LORD, and keep his charge.

Love will work in obedience, and that only is acceptable obedience which flows from a principle of love (1 John 5:3).

Moses recounts some of the great and terrible works of God which their eyes had seen.

What our eyes have seen, especially in our early days, should affect us, and make us better long afterwards.

Deuteronomy 11:1 "Therefore thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always."

Because he is so great and glorious in himself, and because he had done such great and good things for them, the Israelites.

Particularly in the multiplication of them, the last thing mentioned.

"And keep his charge":

Whatsoever the LORD had charged them to observe, even what follows.

"And his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always":

All his laws, ceremonial, judicial, and moral.

And that constantly and continually, all the days of their lives.

This is very similar to the last lesson.

Perhaps Moses is repeating this to drive home the lesson of how important it is to obey the LORD.

They must first know who the LORD is, before they completely turn their will over to the will of the LORD.

It is their love for the LORD that will cause them to keep His statutes, judgments, and commandments.

Deuteronomy 11:2 "And know ye this day: for [I speak] not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the LORD your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched out arm,"

“Your children”:

Moses distinguished between the adults and the children in his audience.

The adults were those who had seen the Exodus from Egypt as children and had experienced the LORD’s discipline in the wilderness.

It was to these adults that Moses could say, “Your own eyes have seen all the great work of the LORD which He did” (verse 7).

It was that specially blessed generation of adults that were called to pass on the teaching of what they had learned to their children (verse 19).

On this 40 year journey through the wilderness, the LORD had revealed to them His love and His care for them.

But He had also, been teaching them the importance of being faithful to Him.

He had shown them His great power, His greatness, and the works of “His Mighty Hand” continuously.

Even the chastisement of them had been for their learning process.

Just as a mother spans a child to teach him or her not to run in the road, the LORD taught them what they were not to do.

The law taught them the things to observe. The chastisement taught them what they were not to do.

Deuteronomy 11:3 "And his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land;"

The miraculous works done there.

The ten plagues inflicted on the Egyptians for refusing to let Israel go.

"Unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land":

For those plagues not only affected him and his court, and his metropolis, but all parts of the land, the inhabitants of it everywhere.

Some of the people had been born on the way to the Promised Land.

They were not in Egypt when God turned the water to blood, or when He sent the plague of frogs, or when darkness filled the land.

Moses is repeating these miracles several times, and reminding them of these things.

The first few plagues that the LORD sent affected all of Egypt.

It even affected the Israelites.

The last few plagues had no effect on Israel.

They just affected the Egyptians.

The last one of course, killed all the firstborn of Egypt.

All of these things were for the benefit of the Israelites.

Deuteronomy 11:4 "And what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots; how he made the water of the Red sea to overflow them as they pursued after you, and [how] the LORD hath destroyed them unto this day;"

At the Red sea, when they pursued Israel in order to bring them back or destroy them, after they had let them go, which army was very numerous (see Exodus 14:7).

"How he made the water of the Red sea to overflow them":

Or to flow over their faces.

"As they pursued after you":

So that they could not see their way, nor steer their course after them.

And not only so, but were covered with the waters of the sea, drowned in them, and sunk to the bottom of them.

"And how the LORD hath destroyed them unto this day":

Either continued to destroy them yet more and more by one means or another.

Or else the destruction made by the several plagues upon them, and particularly that of their army at the Red sea.

Which was the strength and glory of the nation, was so general and extensive, that they never recovered it to that day.

And so were in no capacity of coming out against them, and attacking them, and doing them any hurt, all the forty years they had been in the wilderness.

Of which no doubt they had knowledge, and of their condition and circumstances there.

In the last few lessons, we have spoken of the LORD opening the Red sea for the Israelites to walk over on dry land.

This is speaking of the destruction of the Egyptian army, their chariots and their horses, when the LORD let the water come back into the Red sea and drown them.

God had held off the army of the Pharaoh, until all Israel was passed over.

When God removed His fire and allowed the Egyptians to pursue Israel into the sea, He let the water go, and it drowned all of them.

Deuteronomy 11:5 "And what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came into this place;"

Meaning not so much the good things he did for them in different places, as the chastisements and corrections he had exercised them with for their murmurings, rebellions, idolatry, and uncleanness.

As at Taberah, Kibroth-hattaavah, on the coast of Edom, and plains of Moab; by fire, by sword, by plagues, and fiery serpents.

The instances both before and after being of this sort.

The manna that fed them, the water from the Rock that they drank, and all of the other miraculous happenings must be remembered.

He even killed some of the people in the wilderness, when they disobeyed Him and turned to false gods.

Deuteronomy 11:6 "And what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben: how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the substance that [was] in their possession, in the midst of all Israel:"

“Dathan and Abiram”:

These two sons of Eliab, of the tribe of Reuben, had rebelled against the authority of Moses, the LORD’s chosen leader.

The basis of their complaint was that Moses had brought Israel out of Egypt, a fertile and prosperous land, and not brought them into Canaan.

Because of their rebellion against Moses, God had judged them by having the earth open and swallow them up (see Num. 16:12-14, 25-27, 31-33).

God's judgment of their rebellion was spoken of here by Moses in the context of his contrast between the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan (verses 10-12).

They had led an uprising against Moses, Aaron, and the LORD.

God was swift in punishing them.

They and all they possessed were swallowed into the pit.

This was their families, their tents, and all else they possessed.

Deuteronomy 11:7 "But your eyes have seen all the great acts of the LORD which he did."

Even all before related, with many others.

And therefore the instruction they should learn from thence should be as follows.

God has not kept these things secret from His people.

He showed them who He is, and what He is capable of doing in all of this.

They should fear and obey Him.

Verses 8-12

The most obvious and impressive difference between the lands of Canaan and Egypt was in the source of water.

"Egypt" was extremely productive for two reasons:

- (1) The normal flow of the Nile River delivered sufficient water for the daily needs of its populace and for foot-powered irrigation.
- (2) The Nile's floods renew the soil and minerals every year. On the other hand, "the land" of Canaan (which they would "go to possess"), drinks "water from the rain of heaven".

Deuteronomy 11:8 "Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go to possess it;"

For the reasons before suggested, as well as for what follow.

"That ye may be strong":

Healthful in body, and courageous in mind, for sin tends to weaken both.

Whereas observance of the commands of God contributes to the health and strength of the body, and the rigor of the mind.

Both which were necessary to the present expedition they were going upon.

"And go in and possess the land whither ye go to possess it":

The land of Canaan, they were marching towards in order to possess it.

And nothing would more inspire them with courage, and cause them to enter it manfully without fear of their enemies, than obedience to the commands of God.

Whose presence being promised them on that account, they might expect it.

And so had nothing to fear from the inhabitants of the land.

Moses has given them a very good reason why they must do this.

If they are to go in and possess the land, they must have the power of God within.

God will cause them to be victorious, if they love and obey Him.

Deuteronomy 11:9 "And that ye may prolong [your] days in the land, which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land that floweth with milk and honey."

Not only enter it, and take possession of it, but continue in it for a long time.

Which depended upon their obedience to the laws of God.

"Which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed":

Had promised with an oath, so that they might be assured of the enjoyment of it.

Though they could not be of their continuance in it, unless they obeyed the divine commands.

"A land that floweth with milk and honey":

Abounds with all good things, whose fruits are fat as milk, and sweet as honey; so the Targum of Jonathan.

The land will continue to be theirs, as long as they are faithful to God.

The LORD will fulfill His promise to their fathers, when they receive the land.

To keep the land will be their responsibility.

The land will be theirs, as long as they fear and obey the LORD.

Verses 10-11

“The land, whither thou goest in to possess it”:

The land of Canaan was different from Egypt.

The land of Egypt depended upon the Nile River for its fertility.

By contrast, the land of Canaan depended upon the rains that came from heaven for its fertility.

Deuteronomy 11:10 "For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, [is] not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst [it] with thy foot, as a garden of herbs:"

“Wateredst it with thy foot”:

Probably a reference to carrying water to each garden or the practice of indenting the ground with foot-dug channels through which irrigating water would flow.

In Egypt, the only production of a crop they had was from their own efforts.

This land is a gift to them from God.

The crops are abundant, because of the blessings of God upon them.

Deuteronomy 11:11 "But the land, whither ye go to possess it, [is] a land of hills and valleys, [and] drinketh water of the rain of heaven:"

And so could not be watered by the overflow of a river, and by canals cut out of it.

And in the manner Egypt was.

Which was for the most part a plain and flat country, but not so Canaan, in which were many hills and mountains, as those about Jerusalem, Carmel, Tabor, Lebanon, and others.

And plains and valleys, as the valley of Jezreel, etc.

And which made it more delightful and pleasant for prospects (see Deut. 8:7).

"And drinketh water of the rain of heaven":

By which it was watered, refreshed, and made fruitful.

Not by means of men, but by the LORD himself.

And so with much more ease to men, and without the toil and labor they were obliged to in Egypt, as well as it was both more healthful and pleasant.

For the damps that arose from the overflow of the Nile were sometimes prejudicial to health.

And during the season of its overflow, which was in the summer, they were obliged to keep in their houses.

And could not walk abroad for weeks at a time.

To which inconveniences the land of Canaan was not subject.

But then, as its fertility depended on rain from heaven, the Israelites would be under the greater obligation to observe the commands of God.

Who could give and withhold it at his pleasure, and as they conducted themselves.

Which seems to be the general drift of this passage.

Egypt was a desert land that had to be artificially watered.

The land of promise is a land that God Himself, waters.

It is a green fertile land.

The flatlands of the desert had grudgingly grown anything.

This land is made up of hills and valleys.

Deuteronomy 11:12 "A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God [are] always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year."

In a very particular and special manner, otherwise he has a general care of the whole world, and all the parts of it.

For as the earth is his, and the fullness thereof, his providential care reaches everywhere.

But as this spot was what he had chosen for his own residence, and the place of his worship, and for a habitation for his peculiar people. He exercised a more peculiar care over it, to make it fruitful, commodious, and pleasant.

Or which "he seeketh"; that is, the good of it, and to make it convenient, useful, and delightful to his people.

Yea, which he sought for and desired for his own habitation (Psalm 132:13).

"The eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year":

His eyes of providence, to give the former and the latter rain.

And that there be seedtime and harvest in their seasons, and that the fruits of it be produced at their proper time.

Some at the beginning, others at the end of the year, and others in the intervening months.

And all wisely suited to the good of the inhabitants of it.

This speaks of the special care of God for this land.

God actually dwelled in this land, in the temple in Jerusalem.

It is a place He has chosen above all the other lands of the world.

It is called the Holy Land, because of the presence of God here.

In the Bible, everything is measured from Jerusalem (the city of God).

This land is always in the view of God.

Verses 13-17

Although Yahweh's promise was, "I will give you the rain of your land", all was conditioned on the people's obedience and dedication to the LORD.

If the people turned their "heart" from the LORD, He might well "shut up the heaven".

Deuteronomy 10:12 "And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,"

In the name, and by the authority of the LORD, the only lawgiver.

"To love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul":

See (Deut. 10:12).

Jarchi interprets this of prayer; but it is not to be restrained to that only, but includes the whole service of God.

In all the parts of it, performed from a principle of love to him, and in sincerity and truth (compare 6:5).

The condition of God's covenant with them, is they must hearken diligently unto His commandments.

They must love the LORD more than anything or anyone else, and serve Him from a pure heart.

Deuteronomy 11:14 "That I will give [you] the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil."

“I will give you the rain of your land”:

Since the land of Canaan was dependent upon the rainfall for its fertility, God promised in response to Israel’s obedience to give them the rain necessary for that fertility (verses 16-17).

“The first rain and the latter rain”:

The early rain was the autumn rain from Oct. to Jan.

The latter rain was the spring rain which came through Mar. / Apr.

This is the promise from God.

God controls all the elements.

He controls the rain.

He can send it to whom He wants to, as often as He wants to.

The rain is under the command of the LORD.

Rain and sunshine at the proper time bring abundant crops.

There was an early harvest in the spring, and a later harvest in the fall.

To have a really good year, both crops must produce.

In other words, they can live or die, because of the rain.

The former and the later rain is, sometimes, speaking spiritually of the out pouring of the Spirit on man.

There was a former rain at Pentecost, and there will be an end time pouring of the Spirit in abundance on all flesh.

Deuteronomy 11:15 "And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full."

By giving plentiful showers of rain at proper times, to cause it to spring up and grow.

That so there might be food for the cattle of every sort, greater or lesser (see Psalm 104:13).

"That thou mayest eat and be full":

Which refers to the preceding verse as well as to this.

And the sense is, that the Israelites might eat of and enjoy the fruits of the earth to being full.

Namely, their corn, wine, and oil.

And that their cattle might have grass enough to supply them with.

God will bless them with plenty to eat, if they follow Him.

The grass for the animals, in turn, feeds the people.

Deuteronomy 11:16 "Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;"

By observing the influence of the heavens upon the fruitfulness of the earth, and so be drawn to the worship of the host of them, the sun, moon, and stars.

Or by the examples of nations round about them.

And by the plausible arguments they may make use of, taken from the traditions of ancestors, from antiquity.

And the consent of nations, and the great numbers of worshippers, and the like.

"And ye turn aside":

From the true God, and the worship of him.

Or from the law, as Jarchi.

Which directs to the worship of one God, and forbids idolatry, or the worshipping of images.

"And serve other gods, and worship them":

Other gods than the one and only living and true God; gods that made not the heavens and the earth.

And which cannot give rain, nor any blessing and mercy of life, nor help and deliver their worshippers when in distress.

They must determine in their hearts to stay faithful to their LORD.

It is so easy to be deceived, if they just let themselves get the least bit slack.

1 Peter 1:13 "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;"

They must guard their hearts, as you would a tremendously valuable treasure.

The LORD must remain uppermost in their hearts.

False gods lead to destruction.

It is easy to be deceived.

Deuteronomy 11:17 "And [then] the LORD'S wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and [lest] ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you."

For their idolatry, nothing being more provoking to him than that, it being contrary to his nature and being, as well as to his will, and to his honor and glory.

"And he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain":

The treasures and storehouses of it there, or the windows of it.

The clouds, which when opened let it down, but when shut withhold it.

The key of rain is one of the keys which the Jews say the LORD keeps in his own hand.

And with it he opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens (see Deut. 28:12).

"And that the land yield not her fruit":

Which is unavoidably the case when rain is withheld.

"And lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you":

For if the land does not yield its fruits sufficient to support the inhabitants of it, they must in course perish.

Those who are deceived and follow after false gods, find the LORD'S wrath upon them.

The verse above, is the curse that comes when they follow false gods.

The land will not produce for them, and the land will be taken away from them.

Verses 18-21

For the children and all subsequent generations, God's great acts had not been seen "with their own eyes", as had been the case for that first generation.

God's acts were to be "seen" for them in the Word of Scripture.

It was to be in Moses' words that the acts of God would be put before the eyes of their children.

The first priority, therefore, was given to Scripture as the means of teaching the law and grace of God. (compare 6:6-9).

These demands regarding obedience and applied teaching in children's lives repeat the demands in 6:4-9.

Not only was repetition an effective means of teaching in the Hebrew Bible, but very important instructions were often delivered in twos for emphasis.

Deuteronomy 11:18 "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes."

Treasure up the laws of God delivered to them in their minds.

Retain them in their memories, and cherish a cordial affection for them.

Which would be an antidote against apostasy, idolatry, and other sins (Psalm 119:11).

"And bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes":

Of this and the two following verses (see notes on Deut. 6:7; 6:8; and 6:9).

This is just speaking of keeping God's Words ever before them.

The Word of God keeps a person from being deceived.

We must hide His Word in our hearts and minds to not be deceived.

The Word of God (Bible), should be in our hand.

We must never be far away from our Bible (God's Word).

It is the Word stamped into our hearts and minds that keeps us believing the right thing.

Deuteronomy 11:19 "And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

Let all be directed by the three rules here given (see notes on Deut. 6:7).

1. Let our hearts be filled with the word of God. There will not be good practices in the life, unless there be good thoughts, good affections, and good principles in the heart.
2. Let our eyes be fixed upon the word of God, having constant regard to it as the guide of our way, as the rule of our work (Psalm 119:30).
3. Let our tongues be employed about the word of God. Nor will anything do more to cause prosperity, and keeping up religion in a nation, than the good education of children. All parents, not just these Israelites, should teach the Word of God to their children. God's Word should be the subject of our conversation. It should be read aloud to the family on a regular basis. Diligent study of God's Word will keep you in His will. We should not do this just for a few minutes of our day. It should be part of our being.

Deuteronomy 11:20 "And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:"

(See notes on Deut. 6:9).

The Word of God on the gates is a constant reminder of God, when they are going out or coming in.

Deuteronomy 11:21 "That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth."

Long life being a very desirable blessing, and which is promised to those that obey and keep the law (see Deut. 30:19).

"And the days of your children":

Which are dear to parents, and the continuance of whose lives, next to their own, is most desirable.

Yea, as desirable as their own. And especially it is desirable that they might have a posterity descending from them, to enjoy for ever their estates and possessions.

As it was to the people of Israel, that they might have a seed always to dwell:

"In the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give them":

The land of Canaan, so often spoken of as the promise, oath, and gift of God.

"As the days of heaven upon the earth":

That is, as long as the heavens and the earth shall be, and the one shall be over the other, as they will be to the end of time.

This would bring about a peace that generally is only experienced in heaven.

The blessings of God would be so great, that it would be like heaven here on the earth if they did this.

Deuteronomy 11:22 "For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;"

Observe and take notice of them, even all of them.

And so as not merely to have a theory or hypothetical knowledge of them, but to put them in practice.

"To love the LORD your God":

And show it by obeying his commands.

And which is the end of the commandment, and the principle from which all obedience should flow.

"To walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him (see Deut. 10:12).

Deuteronomy 11:23 "Then will the LORD drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves."

By little and little, even all the seven nations which then inhabited the land of Canaan.

And this he would do to make room for them, that they might inherit the land (see Deut. 7:1).

"And ye shall possess greater nations, and mightier than yourselves":

Countries whose inhabitants were more in number, and greater in strength, than they.

And therefore, the conquest of them was not to be ascribed to themselves, but to the LORD. This is often observed (see Deut. 7:1).

The word "diligently" speaks of them making a special effort upon their part to keep God's commandments, primarily because of the great love in their hearts for Him.

To love Him so much that they want to please Him, brings them great rewards.

God will drive out their enemies before them, and set them up instead.

The nations living in this land now are powerful, but God will remove them for Israel.

All He wants in return is their true love and devotion, causing them to obey His commandments.

Deuteronomy 11:24 "Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be."

“Every place ... your feet shall tread”:

In response to the obedience of Israel (verses 22-23), the LORD promised to give to Israel all of the land they personally traversed to the extent of the boundaries that He had given.

This same promise was repeated (in Joshua 1:3-5).

Had Israel obeyed God faithfully, her boundaries would have been enlarged to fulfill the promise made to Abraham (Gen. 15:18).

But because of Israel's disobedience, the complete promise of the whole land still remains, to be fulfilled in the future kingdom of Messiah (compare Ezek. 36:8-38).

These boundaries were set out in a previous lesson.

We will not deal with that here.

When they stand upon the land of promise (by faith), it will be their possession.

They must stand in faith to receive it.

Deuteronomy 11:25 "There shall no man be able to stand before you: [for] the LORD your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath said unto you."

Meaning not a single man, such a one as Og, or any of the sons of Anak, the giants.

Because it could never be thought, imagined, or feared, that one man only should be able to stand against 600,000 fighting men.

"For the LORD your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon":

That is, upon all the land of Canaan, and the inhabitants of it.

Who should hear what wonderful things had been done for them in Egypt, and at the Red sea, and in the wilderness.

And what they had done to Sihon and Og, and to their countries.

And which accordingly was fulfilled (Joshua 2:9).

"As he hath said unto you":

Had promised them (Deut. 2:25). And which was prophesied of in the prophetic song at the Red sea (see Exodus 15:14).

We just read that their enemies had larger and better armies, than they did.

Then what makes them fear the Israelites?

It is the God of the Israelites they fear.

The enemy has seen and heard how God goes before them in battle.

They are afraid of Israel's God.

Verses 26-32

As a final motive for driving home the importance of obedience and trust in God, Moses gave instruction for a ceremony which the people were to carry out when they entered the Land.

They were to read the blessing and the curses of the covenant on Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal (see 27:1-14) as they actually would do later (Joshua 8:30-35).

This section forms a fitting conclusion to this part of Moses' speech.

Deuteronomy 11:26 "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse;"

Meaning the law of God, and the statutes, judgments, and commandments of it.

Which, if obeyed, blessings would be bestowed upon them.

But if disobeyed, they would be liable to the curses of it, as the following words explain it (see Deut. 30:15).

Every one of the Israelites were called upon to see and consider this matter, it being an interesting one to them all.

They can take whichever they choose.

God will not overrule their will.

They must choose to follow Him and be blessed, or they will automatically have chosen the curse.

Deuteronomy 11:27 "A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day:"

That is, a blessing should come upon them.

Even all temporal blessings they stood in need of.

They should be blessed in body and estate.

In their families, and in their flocks, in town and country (see Deut. 28:1).

"Which I command you this day":

This repeated afresh to them, and enjoined them the observation of it in the name of the LORD.

The blessing from the LORD can be theirs, but they must choose the blessings by obeying His commandments.

Deuteronomy 11:28 "And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known."

Accursed in body and estate, in basket and store.

In their families, flocks, and herds.

Within doors and without; in city, and country; going out, or coming in; in this world, and that to come.

If divine goodness prevents not (see Deut. 28:15).

"But turn aside out of the way which I command you this day":

Which the law he gave them, and repeated to them and directed them to walk in.

"To go after other gods, which ye have not known":

To serve and worship the gods of other nations.

Strange gods, which neither they nor their fathers knew anything of, or ever received any good thing from.

And which indeed are no gods, and nothing in the world, as an idol is.

To not obey, brings the curse.

It is their own choice to make.

False gods cannot help anyone.

They are nothing.

The only thing they can do, is bring a curse upon you from the True God.

Deuteronomy 11:29 "And it shall come to pass, when the LORD thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt put the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal."

Which is often observed, as being near at hand.

And when and where many things were to be done, which could not be done in the place and circumstances they now were.

Particularly what follows:

"That thou shall put the blessing on Mount Gerizim, and the curse upon Mount Ebal":

That is, pronounce the one on one mountain, and the other on the other mountain, or at least towards them, or over against them.

Mount Gerizim sits on one side of a valley, and mount Ebal sits on the other.

Shechem was in the valley between them. Ebal was probably used as the mountain of the curse, because it had nothing growing on it.

Gerizim was a fertile land with much growth.

The two mountains symbolized life (Gerizim), and death (Ebal).

It is their choice to have life or death.

Deuteronomy 11:30 "[Are] they not on the other side Jordan, by the way where the sun goeth down, in the land of the Canaanites, which dwell in the champaign over against Gilgal, beside the plains of Moreh?"

A memorable passage, as attesting the true position of the speaker, east of Jordan, over against Jericho.

The sun has been seen by travelers from that very spot going down exactly in the remarkable gap between Ebal and Gerizim.

"The plains of Moreh":

Rather, the oaks or terebinths of Moreh (See Gen. 12:6).

The Promised Land lay on the west side of the Jordan River.

This is explaining that the sun comes up in the east.

The land of Canaan was on the west side of the Jordan.

Deuteronomy 11:31 "For ye shall pass over Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein."

They were now near it, and by this they are assured they should pass over it, in order to take possession of the land God had given them.

And which gift of his was a sufficient title to it.

"And ye shall possess it, and dwell therein":

Should not only take possession of it, but make their abode in it.

They are assured hereby of continuance in it, on condition they obeyed the laws of God, as follows.

We remember, the actual Promised Land will be inhabited of 9-1/2 of the tribes.

Reuben, Gad, and the 1/2 tribe of Manasseh will possess land on the east of the Jordan.

The Promised Land itself, lies on the western side of the Jordan.

Deuteronomy 11:32 "And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and judgments which I set before you this day."

Take notice of them, and heed unto them, so as to practice them.

"Which I set before you this day":

Repeated in order to them, on the observance of which depended their continuance in the land of Canaan.

And therefore, this is so often repeated and urged.

We have studied in this lesson, that their possession of the land is dependent upon their faithfulness to God.

They must fear Him and keep His commandments, to be blessed with the land.

The message was given to them as a remembrance of God's law by Moses.

Deuteronomy Chapter 11 Questions

1. Why does the author believe Moses is repeating this?
2. What will cause them to keep His statutes, judgements, and commandments?
3. What was the purpose of the 40 year journey?
4. What had His chastisement of them been for?
5. What were some of the things God had done in Egypt, to get the release of Israel?
6. Who was affected by the plagues?
7. What was the tenth, or last, plague on Egypt?
8. What did the LORD do to the army of Egypt?
9. How had they been fed in the wilderness?
10. What was the sin of Abiram and Dathan?
11. What was their punishment?
12. What must they have within, to possess the land?
13. How long will the land be theirs?

14. How were they assured of a crop to eat in Egypt?
15. How did this land differ from Egypt?
16. What is verse 12 speaking of?
17. The conditions of God's covenant with them were what?
18. What special promise was made to them in verse 14?
19. _____ and _____ at the proper time bring abundant crops.
20. What, spiritually, do the former and latter rains mean?
21. Take heed to yourselves, that your _____ be not deceived.
22. The _____ of God keeps a person from being deceived.
23. The Word of God is in our _____.
24. When should we teach God's ways to our children?
25. What will God do to Israel's enemies, if Israel stays faithful to God?
26. What does the word "diligently" mean?
27. If their enemies are larger and greater than Israel, why do they fear Israel?
28. What two things did Moses set before them?
29. How can they choose to be blessed?
30. What two mountains were mentioned in verse 29?
31. Which of them symbolized life?