

Deuteronomy 11 - Love and Obedience Rewarded

II. Second sermon: What Israel must do for God (Deut 4:41—26:19)

(2) The Law, its essence, and application in light of the impending conquest of Canaan (Deut 5:1—11:32)

(C) Application in light of impending Canaanite conquest (Deut 7:1—11:32)

(e) Consequences for disobedience and rewards for obedience (11:1-32)

(i) Understanding God's grace leads to obedience (11:1-7)

(ii) Command to take Canaan (11:8-12)

(iii) Blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience (11:13-17)

(iv) Necessity of teaching children (11:18-25)

(v) Law of blessing and curses (11:26-32)

Deuteronomy 11

(e) Consequences for disobedience and rewards for obedience (11:1-32)

(i) Understanding God's grace leads to obedience (11:1-7)

1 "You shall therefore love the LORD your God, and always keep His directive, His statutes, His ordinances, and His commandments.

1 "You shall therefore love the LORD your God, and always keep His charge, His statutes, His ordinances, and His commandments.

1 "Therefore love the LORD your God and be very careful to keep his injunctions, statutes, ordinances, and commands all the time.

1 Therefore thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, alway.

- Once again Moses laid special stress on the inseparability of love and obedience (Cf. 6:5-6; 7:9; 10:12-13; 11:13,22; 19:9; 30:6,8,16,20)

— The ultimate test of an Israelite's love for God was whether he obeyed Him (Cf. John 14:15)

— In Hebrew the command to "love the Lord" means to choose Him for one's most intimate relationship and then to express that choice in obedience to His revealed will.

— All of Israel's history had been guided by the Lord for the purpose of motivating them to love Him unreservedly

2 Know this day that *I am not speaking* with your sons who have not known and who have not seen the **discipline** of the LORD your God—His greatness, His mighty hand, His outstretched arm,

2 Know this day that *I am not speaking* with your sons who have not known and who have not seen the discipline of the LORD your God—His greatness, His mighty hand and His outstretched arm,

2 Keep in mind today that I am not speaking to your children, who neither were aware of nor did they witness the discipline of the LORD your God, that is, his great and far-reaching power,

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,

- "...discipline" - the discipline of the Lord refers to God's moral education of His people — Because of the waywardness of the human heart, diligent and drastic measures were needed to quell that waywardness.

3 and His signs and His works which He did in the midst of Egypt to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and to all his land;

3 and His signs and His works which He did in the midst of Egypt to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and to all his land;

3 including: the signs and works that he did within Egypt to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and to all his land;

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;

4 and what He did to Egypt's army, to its horses and its chariots, when He made the water of the Red Sea engulf them while they were pursuing you, and the LORD completely eliminated them;

4 and what He did to Egypt's army, to its horses and its chariots, when He made the water of the Red Sea to engulf them while they were pursuing you, and the LORD completely destroyed them;

4 what he did to the Egyptian army, its horses and chariots, when he caused the waters of the Reed Sea to engulf them as they pursued you; how the LORD destroyed them, even to this day;

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;

5 and what He did to you in the wilderness, until you came to this place;
5 and what He did to you in the wilderness until you came to this place;
5 what he did for you in the desert until you came to this place;
5 And what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came into this place;
- So God sent Israel "to school" in Egypt so that she might learn of His majesty and power (mighty hand and outstretched arm; Cf. 4:34; 5:15; 7:19) and respond with grateful obedience for her deliverance from Pharaoh
— Israel was given distinct signs (11:3; the 10 plagues) so that she might understand her experience
— The incident at the Red Sea (lit., "Sea of [Papyrus] Reeds") and the consequent lasting ruin brought on the Egyptians (Deut 11:4) could be explained only by God's miraculous deliverance and judgment
- After the Egyptian experience the Lord then sent His children "to school" in the desert for 40 years
— Here their moral education was further refined as they had to depend on Him totally for all their needs
— The vague reference "what He did unto you" recalled God's miracles for His people in the wilderness, including the water from the rock (Ex 17:1-7), the manna, and the quail (Ex 16)

6 and what He did to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben, when the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, their households, their tents, and every living thing that followed them, among all Israel—
6 and what He did to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben, when the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, their households, their tents, and every living thing that followed them, among all Israel—
6 and what he did to Eliab's sons Dathan and Abiram, descendants of Reuben, when the ground opened up and swallowed them, their households, their tents, and every living thing belonging to them in the full sight of Israel.
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:
- God's discipline, however, was not always positive
— In the Exodus experience the people learned about God's grace and power, and in the desert they learned of His providential care
- In the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram (Num 16) Israel learned about God's holiness
— Had it not been for Moses' intercession, the Lord would have "put an end to" the entire nation (Num 16:45) for their grumbling unbelief (Num 16:41)

7 but your own eyes have seen all the great work of the LORD which He did.

7 but your own eyes have seen all the great work of the LORD which He did.

7 Your very own eyes saw all the great things that the LORD did."

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

- Moses exhorted the people to learn from their past, for God had constructed their history with a didactic purpose

— The stress on your own eyes and the double mention of the children not seeing the events of this period hint at the parents' responsibility to set an example of obedient living for their children and to pass on the truths learned from these experiences

(ii) Command to take Canaan (11:8-12)

8 "You shall therefore keep every commandment which I am commanding you today, so that you may be strong and go in and take possession of the land into which you are about to cross to possess it;

8 "You shall therefore keep every commandment which I am commanding you today, so that you may be strong and go in and possess the land into which you are about to cross to possess it;

8 "Keep all the commands that I'm giving you today, so you can be strong enough to enter and possess the land that you are crossing over to inherit

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;

9 and so that you may prolong *your* days on the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give to them and to their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey.

9 so that you may prolong *your* days on the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give to them and to their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey.

9 and so you'll live long in the land that the LORD your God promised by an oath to give your ancestors and their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey.

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.

- Moses wanted the people to draw an important conclusion from his brief review of their history (v1-7)

— Since God had designed Israel's past experiences to bring about her moral education, it should have been plain to the nation that their experiencing the Lord's grace or judgment depended on their moral behavior

— Therefore they could prosper in the new land only by observing (obeying) all God's commands

- The strength of the Israelites was directly related to their obedience
- So the supernatural ability to conquer enemies stronger than they and the ability to live long in the land (Cf. 4:40; 5:16; 6:2; 25:15; 32:47) was ultimately a question of ethics, not military skill

10 For the land, into which you are entering to possess it, is not like the land of Egypt from which you came, where you used to sow your seed and water it by your foot like a vegetable garden.

10 For the land, into which you are entering to possess it, is not like the land of Egypt from which you came, where you used to sow your seed and water it with your foot like a vegetable garden.

10 For the land that you are about to enter to inherit isn't like the land of Egypt that you just left, where you plant a seed and irrigate it with your feet like a vegetable garden.

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:

11 But the land into which you are about to cross to possess it, a land of hills and valleys, drinks water from the rain of heaven,

11 But the land into which you are about to cross to possess it, a land of hills and valleys, drinks water from the rain of heaven,

11 Instead, the land that you are crossing over to inherit is a land of hills and valleys that drinks water supplied by rain from heaven,

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:

- Mentioning the contrasts between the Promised Land and Egypt might have been prompted by the reference to Dathan and Abiram (v6)

— These men had referred to Egypt as “a land flowing with milk and honey” and complained that Moses had not given them anything better (Num 16:12-14)

12 a land for which the LORD your God cares; the eyes of the LORD your God are continually on it, from the beginning even to the end of the year.

12 a land for which the LORD your God cares; the eyes of the LORD your God are always on it, from the beginning even to the end of the year.

12 a land about which the LORD your God is always concerned, because the eyes of the LORD are continuously on it throughout the entire year.”

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.

(iii) Blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience (11:13-17)

13 "And it shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul,

13 "It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul,

13 "If you carefully observe the commands that I'm giving you today, to love the LORD your God and serve him with all your heart and soul,

13 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,

14 that He will provide rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, so that you may gather your grain, your new wine, and your oil.

14 that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil.

14 then he will send rain on the land in its season—the early and latter rains—then you'll gather grain, new wine, and oil.

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.

- However, the land of Canaan had far more potential for agriculture

— Whereas the people in Egypt had to depend on irrigation, God's people would have rain from heaven, for He watches over the land year-round

— But this rain, unlike irrigation, did not depend on human ingenuity or skill, but rather on the will of Israel to obey the commands of the rain's Giver

— This involved loving and serving Him (Cf. Deut 10:12)

- The autumn rains (also called the early rains) come in September-October, and the spring rains are in March-April (Cf. Joel 2:23)

— Those rains begin and end the rainy season

— The rains are necessary to help crops and trees grow, including grain (wheat, flax, and barley), grapevines (wine), olive trees (oil), and grass in the fields

15 He will also provide grass in your field for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.

15 He will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.

15 He will provide grass on the fields for your livestock, and you'll eat and be satisfied.

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

16 Beware that your hearts are not easily deceived, and that you do not turn away and serve other gods, and worship them.

16 Beware that your hearts are not deceived, and that you do not turn away and serve other gods and worship them.

16 Be careful! Otherwise, your hearts will deceive you and you will turn away to serve other gods and worship them.

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

17 Otherwise, the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the sky so that there will be no rain, and the ground will not yield its produce; then you will quickly perish from the good land which the LORD is giving you.

17 Or the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its fruit; and you will perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.

17 The wrath of God will burn against you so that he will restrain the heavens and it won't rain. The ground won't yield its produce and you'll be swiftly destroyed from the good land that the LORD is about to give you.

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.

- Through Moses, God again warned Israel against worshipping other gods

- This was appropriately related to v13-15, because many of the gods worshiped in Canaan were fertility deities, that is, gods of grain, oil, rain, etc.

- Unless the people of Israel were extremely careful they could easily be enticed by their pagan neighbors to enter into the sensual worship of these deities

- It would simply be a matter of transferring their trust in the Lord for the fertility of their land to one or more of those false gods

- And this worship, which was divorced from the realm of ethics and which emphasized ritual sex, was so appealing to human hearts that careless and morally undisciplined Israelites would be drawn into its fatal web

- The wrath of God expressed in famine (He will shut the heavens) could be avoided by abstaining from worshipping false gods

- This was ironic, for Israel's attempt to guarantee rain by worshipping Canaanite gods would result in God's withholding rain!

(iv) Necessity of teaching children (11:18-25)

18 "You shall therefore take these words of mine to heart and to soul; and you shall tie them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets on your forehead.

18 "You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets on your forehead.

18 Take these commands to heart and keep them in mind, tying them as reminders on your arm and as bands on your forehead.

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.

19 You shall also teach them to your sons, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk along the road, when you lie down, and when you get up.

19 You shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up.

19 Teach them to your children, talking about them while sitting in your house, walking on the road, or when you are about to lie down or get up.

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.

20 And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates,

20 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates,

20 Also write them upon the doorposts of your house and gates

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

- However, their will to avoid this sin was so weak that it could only be sustained by diligent attention to the words of Moses concerning divine grace and deliverance as well as sin and judgment

— They were to fix those words...in their hearts (Cf. 6:6) and minds [on attaching those words to their hands and foreheads, see comments on 6:8]

- Only by letting God's words invade every area of their lives and homes and by diligently teaching them to their children (Cf. 6:7) could the nation hope to escape the seduction of false worship and find permanent prosperity in the land of promise given by the Lord on oath to their forefathers [see comments on 1:35]

— The same principle applies to Christians today

— Commitment to know and obey the Scriptures keeps believers from contemporary forms of false worship (Cf. 2 Tim 3:1-9 with 2 Tim 3:14-17)

— Therefore Paul exhorted all Christians to "let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col 3:16)

21 so that your days and the days of your sons may be increased on the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth.

21 so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens *remain* above the earth.

21 so that you and your children may live long on the land that the LORD promised to give your ancestors—as long as the sky remains above the earth."

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.

22 For if you are careful to keep all of this commandment which I am commanding you to do, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and cling to Him,

22 For if you are careful to keep all this commandment which I am commanding you to do, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and hold fast to Him,

22 "If you carefully observe all of these commands that I'm giving you to do—to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cling to him,

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;

- At this point in his speech Moses turned from the theme of longevity in the land to the successful conquest of the land

- The people were to love the Lord (Cf. 6:5)

— Obedience to the specific commands was essentially an expression of one's love for God (Cf. 11:1)

— And consistent allegiance to Him (hold fast to Him; Cf. 10:20; 13:4; 30:20) was an evidence of love

23 then the LORD will dispossess all these nations from you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you.

23 then the LORD will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you.

23 then the LORD will dispossess all these nations before you and you'll dispossess nations that are even greater and stronger than you.

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

24 Every place on which the sole of your foot steps shall be yours; your border will be from the wilderness to Lebanon, *and* from the river, the river Euphrates, as far as the western sea.

24 Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours; your border will be from the wilderness to Lebanon, *and* from the river, the river Euphrates, as far as the

western sea.

24 Every place upon which the soles of your feet tread will be yours as boundaries—from the desert to Lebanon and from the River (that is, from the Euphrates) to the Mediterranean Sea.

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.

- In return for their obedience the Lord would grant Israel supernatural success against superior (larger and stronger) enemy armies

25 No one will *be able to* stand against you; the LORD your God will instill the dread of you and the fear of you in all the land on which you set foot, just as He has spoken to you.

25 No man will be able to stand before you; the LORD your God will lay the dread of you and the fear of you on all the land on which you set foot, as He has spoken to you.

25 No one will be able to stand against you. The LORD your God will instill terror and fear of you throughout the entire land wherever you go, just as he promised you.

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.

- He would put a terror and fear in their enemies so that they could not fight successfully against Israel

- Rahab's words to the spies, "I know that the Lord has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us" (Josh 2:9), are one example of the fulfillment of this promise (Cf. Ex 15:15-16; Deut 2:25; 28:10; Josh 2:11,24; 5:1)

— Had Israel continued to obey God faithfully, her boundaries would have been enlarged (Deut 11:24) to fulfill the promise made to Abraham (Gen 15:18). But because of Israel's disobedience the fulfillment of the whole land promise is still future.

(v) Law of blessing and curses (11:26-32)

26 "See, I am placing before you today a blessing and a curse:

26 "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse:

26 Look! I'm about to grant you a blessing and a curse—

26 Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse;

27 the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am commanding you today;

27 the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am commanding you today;

27 a blessing if you obey the commands of the LORD your God that I'm giving you today,
27 A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day:

28 and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following other gods which you have not known.

28 and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following other gods which you have not known.

28 or a curse if you don't obey the commands of the LORD your God, by turning from the way that I'm commanding you today and following other gods whom you have not known."

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.

29 "And it shall come about, when the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, that you shall place the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.

29 "It shall come about, when the LORD your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, that you shall place the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.

29 "When the LORD brings you to the land that you are about to enter to inherit, repeat the blessings on Mount Gerizim and the curses on Mount Ebal.

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.

30 Are they not across the Jordan, west of the road toward the sunset, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh?

30 Are they not across the Jordan, west of the way toward the sunset, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh?

30 They're across the Jordan River to the west, aren't they, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah opposite Gilgal near the Oak of Moreh?

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?

31 For you are about to cross the Jordan to go in to take possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall possess it and live in it,

31 For you are about to cross the Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall possess it and live in it,

31 For you are about to cross the Jordan River to go in and possess the land that the LORD your God is about to give you to inherit and live in.

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.

32 and you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the judgments which I am placing before you today.

32 and you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the judgments which I am setting before you today.

32 Be careful to obey all the statutes and ordinances that I'm placing before you today."

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

- v26-32 form a fitting conclusion to this section of Moses' speech

— Once again he emphasized that the history of Israel would be determined by her ethical relationship to the Lord