

Deut. 11:1 ¶ Therefore thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, alway.

This is the third time that Moses instructed the people to love the LORD and at least the thirteenth time he has told them to keep God's commandments. If repetition is any sign of the importance of a particular instruction, I think this would put submission and obedience at the top of the list. When I looked at the Hebrew for *alway*, it seemed to emphasize that this is a daily process—day after day after day for perpetuity.

Deut. 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,

Deut. 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;

Deut. 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;

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

Deut. 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:

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

Moses points out that he is not speaking to the children, but to the adults who had witnessed the mighty acts of God's deliverance, provision and judgment. These adults would have ranged in age from 40-60, since all those 20 and over had been sentenced to die before the nation would be allowed to take possession of the land. Many but not all of this older generation would have seen and remembered the amazing miracles that God performed in Egypt to get Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go. I'm sure any of those old enough to remember would still have a vivid recollection of passing through the walls of water in the Red Sea and then seeing Pharaoh's army destroyed as the walls of water came crashing down upon them. They would have remembered the many evidences of God's miraculous powers as they wandered through the wilderness—from giving water from a rock to providing manna from heaven to feed them to sending judgment in the form of fiery serpents and then providing for healing of those who would lift their eyes to look at the brass serpent on the pole to the awesome display of His presence at Sinai and on and on.

Dathan and Abiram were in league with Korah in questioning God's appointment of Moses and Aaron to leadership. God spectacularly confirmed His choice of Moses and Aaron and caused the earth to open up and swallow the troublemakers and all that belonged to them. These people had seen this with their own eyes.

Again, I often make comparisons and judgments as I read these accounts. It's just hard to fathom that men were that brazen and rebellious in consideration of the undeniable power and authority of God. I can't help but think that I could

never be that stupid. I have to admit that although I haven't seen the same type of miracles, I cannot deny the miracles that abound around us. There is no denying God's sovereign power and authority, yet I have found myself rebellious and disobedient just as surely as were they. I am so thankful for the mercy and forgiveness of God and that I am securely held in the grip of the Savior.

Deut. 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;

Deut. 11:9 And that ye may prolong *your* days in the land, which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

"Therefore" = Based on all you have witnessed of the mighty hand of God in action....

Moses is declaring that there is absolutely no other right response to God than to obey Him. Their strength as a nation and their ability to go in and possess the land is directly connected to their obedience. It will also have direct bearing on their maintaining possession of the land. The land is theirs to inherit as promised to their forefathers. The description of the land flowing with milk and honey (a poetic way of saying that it abounds with everything they need) might be referencing the blessings pronounced by Jacob upon his sons (Genesis 49).

Deut. 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:

Deut. 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:

Deut. 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.

This is a statement of contrast; in Egypt it had been necessary to carry water to nourish the seeds that were planted. Canaan was a land of hills and valleys where the water ran freely and was continually supplied by the rains of heaven. In fact, this land had been singled out for God's favor among all other places on planet earth just as surely as the people of Israel had been among all other peoples. The Hebrew for "careth for" states to "tread or frequent." In other words, He specifically saw to it that it was carefully nourished from year to year. It made me think of a gardener taking pride in His special garden. (8/08) I still can't help but wonder if it is connected to the Garden of Eden.

Deut. 11:13 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,

Deut. 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.

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

Though God is going to give them possession of a land of plenty, its continued abundant provision would be directly dependent upon the people of Israel keeping their covenant with God—to be careful to obey God and serve Him from a heart of love. Their obedience would result in sufficient rain as needed each season and timed to facilitate planting and harvesting. It would also serve to ensure there was abundant grass for the cattle to provide meat for sustenance.

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

Deut. 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.

Again Moses warns the people not to let themselves be deceived into turning away from God and serving and worshipping “other gods.” The consequences if they allowed that to happen—the LORD would become angry and withhold the rain that would in turn result in no harvest and no food for sustenance.

It is very clear in the wording of these verses that the LORD held them accountable regarding falling for deception. He had carefully ensured that they were made knowledgeable about His word and His expectations. He had given them Moses to lead and instruct them. Joshua had been prepared to assume that responsibility after the death of Moses. There was no acceptable excuse for allowing themselves to be deceived.

This is a truth that should be recognized by believers today. God has preserved His written word for our instruction. He has provided the Holy Spirit to lead and teach us. We have no excuse for allowing ourselves to be deceived by false teachers except by choice. If we are not diligent to hide the word away in our heart or make it part of our daily sustenance, we are choosing to set ourselves up to be deceived. If we just go through the motions to present a front and conform to the letter of the law with no heart involvement, we are choosing to set ourselves up to be deceived. If we never seek the Lord in prayer to seek His guidance and instruction through the Spirit, we are choosing to set ourselves up to be deceived. If our priorities are dominated by accommodating the flesh and accumulating worldly riches, we are choosing to set ourselves up to be deceived. It all boils down to our choices, and we are accountable to God for those choices.

(2/10) Of note is the fact that God declares He would withhold rain as judgment because of the people's sin. People today don't like to consider events in nature as being possible judgment for sin—but isn't it interesting that the accepted terminology for describing these things is as an “act of God.”

Deut. 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.

“Therefore” = Because I hold you accountable for allowing yourselves to be deceived...

You should hide my words in your heart and soul. In other words, memorize them and treasure them; have them always before you. I think I noted previously, that it is from this instruction that Jewish phylacteries were worn. According to Webster, these phylacteries (little boxes strapped on the head or left arm) contain the following scriptures.

Ex. 13:2 Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, *both* of man and of beast: it *is* mine. And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this *place*: there shall no leavened bread be eaten. This day came ye out in the month Abib. And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day *shall be* a feast to the LORD. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters. And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, *This is done* because of that *which* the LORD did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the LORD'S law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.

Deut. 6:4-9 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Deut. 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.

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

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

Not only are the people to take personal accountability for knowing and obeying God's instructions and commands, they are to teach them to their children.

How? By example. His word should be a common topic of discussion in the home. Obedience to His word should be reflected in the daily life of the parent. They should show how they value His word through incorporating it into their

nightly and morning routines. His word should adorn their homes and property. It should be obvious to all that the LORD is revered and His word valued in the home. The application to the believer today is obvious.

By serving God in love and obedience and teaching their children to do the same, they would ensure their continued possession of the land that God is giving to them as promised to their fathers.

“as the days of heaven upon the earth” – I can read a couple of thoughts into that phrase.

- ❖ A reference to time without end.
- ❖ A reference to earthly blessings that will make them feel like they are experiencing heaven on earth.

Deut. 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;

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

“if” – Unlike God’s covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, this covenant is conditioned upon their obedience to Him from a heart of love. The Hebrew for *cleave* states “to catch by pursuit...follow close...pursue hard.” In other words, their actions will prove their desire. If they keep their part of the covenant, they can be confident that God will empower them to drive out the great and powerful nations that are in the land and take possession of it even though the odds against them seem impossible.

Deut. 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.

Though I’m not sure exactly how much land is being referenced, the boundaries are described as stretching from the wilderness (in the south) to Lebanon (in the north) and from the Euphrates (on the east) to the Mediterranean (on the west). Never has the nation of Israel properly occupied that territory. Scripture does tell us that Solomon had dominion over that territory, but only as a sovereign over other nations—not as king over the territory as apportioned to the twelve tribes.

2Chr. 9:26 And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.

Deut. 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.

Again, Moses emphasizes that not one of your enemies will be able to stand against you. Why? Because YHWH, the God of Israel, will empower you to strike fear in their hearts. Moses continues to drive home the truth that their success will be due entirely to God. Without Him, they had no chance of victory whatsoever.

This is an important truth. It takes diligence to guard against the sin of pride and its terrible consequences. I believe pride is the root sin from which all sins are birthed. Jesus too affirms the important truth that we are powerless without Him.

John 15:5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for **without me ye can do nothing.**

Deut. 11:26 ¶ Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse;

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

Deut. 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.

The LORD has Moses make a clear distinction regarding choosing to obey God vs. choosing to disobey Him.

Obedience = blessing

Disobedience = curse

There are no shades of gray; it is clearly a black or white choice.

Deut. 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.

Deut. 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?

Moses now instructs the people to make two of the mountains in the Promised Land monuments to this truth. There are to designate Mount Gerizim (on the south) the mount of blessing; it faces Mount Ebal (on the north), the designated mount of cursing. The location of these two mounts is designated as “where the sun goeth down,” which would be toward the west. The city of Shechem is located in the valley between them. Another landmark associated with them was their proximity to the plains of Moreh, one of the places that God affirmed His promise to give the land to Abraham.

Gen. 12:6 ¶ And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto **the plain of Moreh**. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land.

Gen. 12:7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

Deut. 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.

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

As this chapter ends, Moses declares that they will pass over the Jordan River in taking possession of the land that “the LORD your God giveth you.” It is spoken of as a deed already accomplished—“ye shall possess it and dwell therein.”

Moses also declares confidently that they will keep their covenant with YHWH according to the instruction of Moses. It’s like Moses was trying to impart his

faith to the people as he taught them. Or maybe these words form a prayer to the Almighty even as He seeks to strengthen their commitment with his words of confidence.