

DEUTERONOMY

Chapter 11

Love and Serve the LORD

“You shall therefore love the LORD your God and keep his charge, his statutes, his rules, and his commandments always. 2 And consider today (since I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen it), consider the discipline of the LORD your God, his greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm, 3 his signs and his deeds that he did in Egypt to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and to all his land, 4 and what he did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and to their chariots, how he made the water of the Red Sea flow over them as they pursued after you, and how the LORD has destroyed them to this day, 5 and what he did to you in the wilderness, until you came to this place, 6 and what he did to Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, son of Reuben, how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households, their tents, and every living thing that followed them, in the midst of all Israel. 7 For your eyes have seen all the great work of the LORD that he did. 8 “You shall therefore keep the whole commandment that I command you today, that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land that you are going over to possess, 9 and that you may live long in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give to them and to their offspring, a land flowing with milk and honey. 10 For the land that you are entering to take possession of it is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and irrigated it, like a garden of vegetables. 11 But the land that you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven, 12 a land that the LORD your God cares for. The eyes of the LORD your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. 13 “And if you will indeed obey my commandments that I command you today, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, 14 he will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil. 15 And he will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you shall eat and be full. 16 Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them; 17 then 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 land will yield no fruit, and you will perish quickly off the good land that the LORD is giving you. 18 “You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 19 You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. 20 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, 21 that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth. 22 For if you will be careful to do all this commandment that I command you to do, loving the LORD your God, walking in all his ways, and holding fast to him, 23 then the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you. 24 Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours. Your territory shall be from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western sea. 25 No one shall be able to stand against you. The LORD your God will lay the fear of you and the dread of you on all the land that you shall tread, as he promised you. 26 “See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: 27 the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, 28 and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known. 29 And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. 30 Are they not beyond the Jordan, west of the road, toward

the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak of Moreh? 31 For you are to cross over the Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you. And when you possess it and live in it, 32 you shall be careful to do all the statutes and the rules that I am setting before you today.

11:1 *charge ... statutes ... rules ... commandments.* God's holy ordinances, kept in response to His love. (TLSB)

11:2–7 Moses continually emphasizes the involvement of his listeners in the Lord's works of providence and deliverance. In 5:3 it was not the fathers but they themselves with whom the covenant was made. Here it is not their children but they themselves who saw God's great deeds. (CSB)

11:2 *not speaking to your children.* Moses chides the adults to listen and to obey God faithfully. (TLSB)

discipline of the LORD. God's punishment of the Egyptians. (TLSB)

11:3 God used the 10 plagues (signs) as well as the destruction of the Egyptian army (deeds) to deliver Israel. (TLSB)

11:4 By God's hand, the Egyptian army had not sufficiently recovered to pursue the Israelites. God is in charge of safe passage for the Israelites, lest they think their survival is based on anything but His grace. (TLSB)

11:7 This generation may have witnessed the exodus as children (under age 20; cf Nu 14:29). They certainly witnessed God's provision in the wilderness. (TLSB)

11:8 *going over to possess.* In God's eyes, the occupation of Canaan is an accomplished fact. (TLSB)

11:10 *is not like the land of Egypt.* Irrigation channels dug by foot and/or fed by devices powered by foot brought the water of the Nile to the gardens in Egypt, in contrast to the rains that watered Canaan (v. 11). (CSB)

Hbr refers to a water-lifting device that was operated with the feet (e.g., a treadmill or corkscrew for raising water). The feet were also used to open channels for water in the rows of soil. Egypt depended heavily on irrigation from the Nile River, so the people would have been well trained in irrigation methods. (TLSB)

11:11 *drinks.* Porous limestone soaks up water and reserves it. (TLSB)

11:12 Unlike the land of Egypt, where the Israelites struggled to irrigate the fields, God promises to attend their farmland in Canaan continually, providing rain in its season and ensuring abundant crops for His chosen people (v 14). (TLSB)

11:13 *with all your heart.* Theme repeated throughout Dt (e.g., 4:29; 10:12; 11:13; 13:3; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10) (TLSB)

11:14 *early rain and the later rain.* The rainy season in Palestine begins in October and ends in April. (CSB)

11:17 *shut up the heavens.* The all-important seasonal rains (see v. 14) were controlled by the Lord—not by Baal, as the inhabitants of Canaan thought (cf. Hos 2:8, 17). (CSB)

Today, parts of Canaan are bony and barren because God withheld the rain. C six centuries after the Israelites had entered Canaan, they turned away from God so extensively that God withheld His blessing of rain (1Ki 17:1) in a dramatic call for them to repent and return to Him. (TLSB)

11:24 *Every place on which the sole of your treads.* Israel's territory was large for a nation of that time. Their territory once included parts of Lebanon and the Sinai Desert. (TLSB)

11:25 *fear of you.* Rahab later confirms this to the Israelite spies (Jsh 2:9). *as He promised.* God keeps all His promises. (TLSB)

11:29 Cf Jsh 8:30–35 and notes. Located in the heart of Israel, Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim today continue to echo with God's curses and blessings. Ebal is barren and unproductive, while Gerizim is rich and fertile. (TLSB)

11:30 *road.* Probably the north-south road that ran parallel to the Jordan between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. (CSB)

Arabah. Canaanites who lived there controlled the territory around Gerizim and Ebal. (CSB)

Rhetorical question; the location was well known. The mountains are near Shechem, the place where God appeared to Abram and promised that his offspring would inherit the land (Gn 12:6–7; cf Gn 33:18–20). (TLSB)

Ch 11 Soon the Israelites will cross the Jordan River to begin conquering the land God had promised to Abram so many years before. We can almost hear their cries of thanksgiving! Yet Moses' warning is stern. Even today, though we have the Bible and know its teaching, we may fail to heed it. Pause today to repent and give praise to your Lord for His merciful goodness. Abundant blessings, especially eternal life (Jn 6:47), are still yours through Jesus Christ. • Lord and sustainer of life, send Your Holy Spirit to us through Your Word and Sacraments. Make us new creatures who daily see Your abundant blessings and honor You with our lives. Amen. (TLSB)