

Deuteronomy 11:1-12
Until You Came to this Place
January 10, 2021

“Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always. ² Know today that I do not speak with your children, who have not known and who have not seen the chastening of the LORD your God, His greatness and His mighty hand and His outstretched arm— ³ His signs and His acts which He did in the midst of Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to all his land; ⁴ what He did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and their chariots: how He made the waters of the Red Sea overflow them as they pursued you, and how the LORD has destroyed them to this day; ⁵ what He did for you in the wilderness until you came to this place; ⁶ and what He did to Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben: how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, their households, their tents, and all the substance that was in their possession, in the midst of all Israel— ⁷ but your eyes have seen every great act of the LORD which He did.

⁸ “Therefore you shall keep every commandment which I command you today, that you may be strong, and go in and possess the land which you cross over to possess, ⁹ and that you may prolong your days in the land which the LORD swore to give your fathers, to them and their descendants, ‘a land flowing with milk and honey.’ ¹⁰ For the land which you go to possess is not like the land of Egypt from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and watered it by foot, as a vegetable garden; ¹¹ but the land which you cross over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water from the rain of heaven, ¹² a land for which the LORD your God cares; the eyes of the LORD your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year.

One of the things I try to do when teaching, especially during the weekly Bible studies, but also at times during the sermons, is to highlight the errors of various scholars. This is not simply nitpicking them, but it rather serves a purpose.

In knowing where the error is, one then might be able to deduce why the error was made. When Thomas Edison was confronted with all of his unsuccessful trials in making a lightbulb, his response was, “I didn’t fail. I just found two thousand ways to not make a lightbulb. I only needed to find one way to make it work.”

When a point of theology doesn’t work, we can then continue searching to find what does work – what does fit – to come to a proper conclusion. Some of these scholars I cite rank as the finest in all of church history, simply because they have several traits about them.

The first is that they hold to the word of God (at least in varying degrees) as inspired. They believe it truly is the word of God. To be a great Bible scholar, this first precept is absolutely necessary.

The next trait is that they take the word as a unified whole. Without doing this, one cannot see how all things weave together into one large picture of the redemptive narrative. At the same time, they do their best to take what is being presented at any given time in its proper context. Just because the Bible is a unified whole, individual passages have individual contexts. Whether people want to admit it or not, 2 Chronicles 7:14 has a specific context, as do all such memorable passages. In removing the context, a pretext is then formed.

Another trait of these great scholars is that they have a resource of previous scholars – good and bad alike – that they refer to and build upon. In this, they demonstrate wisdom in contemplating the efforts of those who came before them.

There are other things needed to make a great scholar, but these are a good starter. But, as I said, these men refer not only to good scholars that they always agree with, but also to those who may not be so good. Even bad scholars can have good insights.

As you probably know, I rank the Old Testament scholars at Cambridge at the bottom of the barrel of those I refer to each week. And yet, I refer to them each week. They do not hold to the word of God as inspired. They constantly claim, “This was inserted later,” “This is spurious,” “Moses didn’t write this,” and so on.

From this first error, all of the rest of their theology is tainted. And yet, in their time-consuming attempts to nitpick apart the word of God, they bring forth insights that nobody else would, simply because the other scholars wouldn’t think so perversely. In this, they then miss things that would naturally not seem odd.

The lesson that I give concerning such people is to not throw the baby out with the bathwater. Just because I disagree with John Calvin on major points of doctrine (because he is wrong), it doesn’t mean he doesn’t have great insights here or there.

Text Verse: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. ¹⁶ But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.” 2 Timothy 2:15, 16

A couple things about this text verse come to mind. First, I cringe when I see someone doing a Bible study, and these words of Paul are posted on the board behind the teacher. Anyone who is teaching the Bible would be stupid to not think they were rightly dividing the word. “Ok, we’re going to study the Bible completely out of context today, as we always do.”

So, there is no need to make the claim. Secondly, it makes the arrogant assumption that he is, in fact, rightly dividing the word. But if he isn’t, how would he know? However, in making the claim, even while he isn’t rightly dividing, he is then saying that someone who may be rightly dividing is actually wrong – when, in fact, he is actually right.

Another thing about Paul’s words is that we don’t want to use the commentaries of just anyone. When I refer to Cambridge, it is because they are actually trained in theology, and they are schooled in the Hebrew and Greek. And further, despite not accepting the Bible as fully inspired, they do hold to proper orthodoxy in their main theological presentations.

One should not follow the teachings or commentaries of those who fail to do this. As Paul says of them, such people only increase to more ungodliness. We need to first learn what is considered standard orthodoxy, and then go forward.

If someone doesn’t teach the Trinity – for example, they teach Oneness Pentecostalism – there is no reason at all to read any of their other work. They have departed from an established norm, and all of their other theology will follow with this taint.

Be reasonable in your theology, be careful not to toss out what is good, just because of the source, keep things in context, and be sure – above all else – to accept the word of God as both fully inspired and as inerrant in all it teaches.

With this, you will be in the sweet spot. Such truths as these are to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. His Signs and His Acts (verses 1-7)

The words in this passage, especially in verse 2, are extremely complicated. After spending about an hour on it in the morning, later in the day Sergio, Rhoda, and I spent more than an hour on that one verse, even going to the Dead Sea Scroll fragments to determine what is missing or wrong. In the end, the coming analysis includes our very best efforts.

Also, verses 1-8 form a chiasm that gives us insights into what is being conveyed. In going over it, it will – hopefully – help you to grasp what we will be going through in those verses. If nothing else, it reveals the rather poor nature of many translations of these verses. A very logical and orderly progression of thought is seen, but that is obscured, particularly by insertion of words into verse 2 by many translations – words which are incorrect.

Deuteronomy 11:1-8 (The Acts of the Lord)

From Egypt to the Bank of the Jordan (11/9/2020)

- a. “Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always
- b. And you have known today ... His greatness and His mighty hand and His outstretched arm—His signs and His acts which He did
- c. in the midst of Egypt
- d. to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to all his land; what He did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and their chariots: how He made the waters of the Red Sea overflow them as they pursued you, and *how* the LORD has destroyed them to this day (judgment on Egypt via the waters)
- x. what He did for you in the wilderness until you came to this place
- d. and what He did to Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben: how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, their households, their tents, and all the substance that *was* in their possession (judgment on Israel via the earth)
- c. in the midst of all Israel
- b. but your eyes have seen every great act of the LORD which He did

a. “Therefore you shall keep every commandment which I command you today

With this in mind, let us proceed into today’s passage by first going back. To end the previous chapter, Moses said, *“You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name. ²¹ He is your praise, and He is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. ²² Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude”* (Deuteronomy 10:20-22).

The Lord had shown Himself faithful to this small band of people who had grown into a great multitude. His plan was promised, it was set, and it was sure to come to pass. And indeed, it had come to pass. The promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were kept, Israel was at the border of their inheritance, and Moses was reminding them of this. It is with this context in mind that we come to the opening verse of Chapter 11 –

“Therefore you shall love the LORD your God,

As is normal, the word translated as “therefore,” is simply, “and.” It is a continuance of the previous thought –

“Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude. And, you shall love the Lord your God.”

Further, the pronouns are singular. Because of what He has done for you (collective Israel), you shall love the Lord your God. It is to be a willful, volitional love based upon what the Lord has done. He has proven Himself trustworthy. Therefore, the nation is to respond in kind. In order to demonstrate this love, they are to act. Moses explains what that means, saying...

¹ (con’t) and keep His charge.

The word is *mishmereth*, and it refers to a watch or observance as would be kept by a sentry at his post. But it is not their post; it is His. This is the only time that this *mishmereth*, or charge, is spoken of in Deuteronomy. Only the horrible scholars at Cambridge even made a note of this. The other scholars wouldn’t normally bother checking that out because it appears irrelevant to the narrative.

The reason Cambridge even included it was to supposedly demonstrate that the use of this word came from a priestly source and was inserted many years later. As stupid as that sounds, it is of note that they even mentioned it as only being cited here.

The reason isn’t because it was inserted later, but because of what Moses just said at the end of the previous chapter. He surely uses this word now to connect it to the fact that the Lord kept His watch over the promise to the fathers, and to the people of Israel, for four hundred and thirty years. As this was so, they were to now keep His watch, guarding what was entrusted to them. This included...

¹ (con’t) His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments

The statutes are those things which are prescribed, as in ordinances. The judgments are those things which are judicially determined. In this case, as in divine law. And the commandments are those things that are spoken forth by the Lord directly, or through Moses. They are binding precepts. These are to be kept...

¹ (con’t) always.

kal ha’yamim – “all the days.” As this is His charge, the people are to act in accord with the nature of the Lord and never let slip what He would be attentive to. The substance of this thought is summed up in Psalm 121 –

“He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber. ⁴ Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.” Psalm 121:3, 4

It is the same thought conveyed by Jesus to His disciples in Matthew 28, where He uses the same term in Greek, *pasas tas hēmeras*, or “all the days” –

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20

The Lord never slumbers, and He is carefully watching over His people. In response, His people are to observe His watch and be obedient to all those things that have been directed by Him.

² Know today that I do not speak with your children,

vidatem ha'yom ki lo eth benekem – “and you (all) know the day for no with your children.” The words now are in the plural, “you all,” and they will continue in the plural through verse 9. Moses addresses all of those who had seen the events he will now relay.

Also, the words of this clause lack any verb or predicate, and so a verbal thought either has to be supplied by the reader’s mind, or there is simply no thought that performs an action, even though an action is implied in the structure of the verse.

Various suggestions have been given, but the inserted words of the NKJV “I do not speak” do not convey the right sense. The word spoken forth is for all. To say he is not speaking to the children is to ignore them, something he will not do. Young’s gives the most literal translation, conveying the intent much more precisely –

“and ye have known to-day -- for it is not your sons who have not known, and who have not seen the chastisement of Jehovah your God.”

As you can see, an entire portion of verse 2 is then parenthetical. Offsetting the parenthetical words, it would read, *“And you (all) know today (for it is not your sons, who have not known, and who have not seen the chastisement of Yehovah your God) His greatness and His mighty hand and His outstretched arm.”*

Moses is not ignoring the children, but he is saying that the children were ignorant of the events because they were not alive at the time. Because of this, Moses will give the remedy for their state of ignorance when we get to verse 19, saying –

“You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.”

It is the children who are ignorant of the ways of the Lord, and who will then need to be instructed in them. And this instruction goes both ways, positively and negatively.

² (con’t) who have not known and who have not seen the chastening of the LORD your God,

Here, Moses uses a new word, *musar*. It is derived from the verb *yasar* which signifies chastisement, through blows or words, leading to instruction. Thus, this is the state of instruction that is so transmitted.

The Greek translation of the verse uses the word *paideia*, signifying the molding of a child into an ideal member of the society. To get the sense of the word, Solomon uses it twice in a row, changing its position in relation to the word “wisdom,” in order to define what is conveyed –

*“The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel: ² To know wisdom and **instruction**, To perceive the words of understanding, ³ To receive the **instruction** of wisdom, Justice, judgment, and equity.” Proverbs 1:2, 3*

Moses is saying that the Lord has provided Israel with a type of moral education through His instruction, which involves both punishment and mercy, discipline and tender care, and chastisement and protection.

The younger children have not been so instructed. Therefore, it will be incumbent on the elders to ensure the children are properly educated in what they have learned by experience, which was of..

² (con’t) His greatness and His mighty hand and His outstretched arm—

The Hebrew is more emphatic: *yado ha'khazaqah u-zeroo ha'netuyah* – “hand the mighty and arm the outstretched.”

The words here are similar to verse 7:19 where the “greatness” is explained. There it said, *“the great trials which your eyes saw, the signs and the wonders, the mighty hand and the outstretched arm, by which the Lord your God brought you out.”*

The greatness here can then be equated to the “*signs and the wonders,*” along with anything else that Moses will further explain as he continues...

³ His signs and His acts which He did in the midst of Egypt,

There is a play on the word *asah*, to do or make, here. Moses uses the word *maasav*, works, which is derived from *asah*, and he then follows it with that root, *asah*. It thus shows the superlative nature of what the Lord has accomplished: *v'eth ototav v'eth maasav asher asah b'tok mitsrayim* – “and His signs and His workings which He worked in midst Egypt.”

Not only did the Lord show forth signs, but He actively worked His workings to confirm those signs. This was before Israel to see, but they were put forth...

^{3 (con't)} to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to all his land;

Egypt was their captor, and Pharaoh ruled Egypt. And yet, Israel was released from his rule and from the bondage they were in. It was not by their rebellion and insurrection. Nor did an invading army come in and destroy Egypt. And yet, Israel was freed.

When they were powerless, and with none to plead their cause but the Lord, they were brought out. It was solely by His greatness and workings that this came about. Moses reminds them now of...

⁴ what He did to the army of Egypt, to their horses and their chariots:

Moses again uses the word *asah* (did), defining the Lord's next great act. The first was in the midst of Egypt. Moses next turns to what happened outside of the land when Egypt pursued Israel in the wilderness, to the shore of the Red Sea.

He reminds them of the great force that came against them, saying: *v'asher asah l'khel mitsrayim l'susav u-l'rikbo* – “and which worked to army Egypt, to horses, and to chariots.” In other words, the defenseless escapees faced an entire army that was fitted out with strong animals and chariots.

An entire group of people, completely undefended, and with their backs to an impassable sea, faced this onslaught of power. They saw this with their own young and impressionable eyes, and Moses reminds them of...

^{4 (con't)} how He made the waters of the Red Sea overflow them as they pursued you,

Without explaining the parting of the Red Sea, Moses simply treats it as a known quantity that it was parted, that they passed through it, and that Egypt followed them in.

And when they did, Israel, safely on the other side watched as *hetsiph eth me yam suph al penehem b'radephm akharekem* – “He made flow water Sea Ending upon their faces as they pursued after you.”

In this, Moses introduces a rare verb, *tsuph*. It will be seen only three times, and it signifies to flow or swim. He is graphically reminding Israel that the waters they had just gone through, and which stood solidly as a wall, reverted to flowing waters, covering the faces of the Egyptians, even as they pursued after Israel. When this occurred, it became a definitive, lasting act...

^{4 (con't)} and how the LORD has destroyed them to this day;

During all of the time of their wilderness wanderings, right up until the time that they now stood there on the banks of the Jordan, ready to pass through, Egypt had never recovered enough to come against them again. As John Lange pithily states it, “Perfect redemption.” With this remembered, Moses continues on...

⁵ what He did for you in the wilderness until you came to this place;

Here, we come to the middle of the chiasm that is found in this passage. Again, Moses uses the word *asah* (did). He reminds them of how the Lord worked in the wilderness. It is the central thought of what Moses is saying, and it is to be taken in conjunction with what has been said about Egypt so far, and with what will be said in the next verses.

In Exodus 13:18, prior to crossing the Red Sea, it said –

“So God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt.”

And in Exodus 15:22, after crossing it, it said –

“So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.” Exodus 15:22

As you can see, the wilderness here is being used as an all-encompassing term to describe what occurred both with Egypt, and of the events yet to be described. In other words, the Lord did great works in both contexts.

Further, He did countless things – both positive and negative – toward Israel. They were to remember them all. He gave them manna, quail, the Sabbath, water from the rock, and protection from Amalek. He gave them the law, making a covenant with them. He forgave their transgression in the making of the golden calf, and He renewed the covenant, promising them to never utterly reject them as a people.

He again gave them quail after departing Sinai, He burned among them when they rebelled. He brought them to the door of Canaan, and He offered them the land. He punished them for refusing to simply accept His offer by faith. He directed them back into the wilderness, sentencing them to death while preserving them as a people in accord with His word.

He sent vipers among them, and He gave them the grace of the bronze serpent on the pole. On and on and on, in numerous ways, He trained them – giving them instruction as a Father to His child. These were the workings of Yehovah toward Israel in the wilderness.

Now, in conjunction with that same thought, Moses next singles out one instance of divine judgment upon the people to remind them, and to instruct them...

6 and what He did to Dathan and Abiram

And again, Moses uses the word *asah* (did) to reveal the workings of the Lord. The event here is described in great detail in Numbers 16. It is an account generally known as “Korah’s Rebellion,” because Korah is both the first named offender, and because he was of the tribe of Levi, attempting to erase the distinction between Levi in general and those of the Aaronic priesthood.

However, Moses doesn’t even mention him. Instead, he focuses on what Yehovah *asah l’dathan v’la’aviram*, or “did to Dathan and to Abiram.” The obvious question is, “Why would Moses completely skip over Korah and focus only on only these two miscreants?” The answer must be, at least partially, because of the next words...

6 (con’t) the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben:

These two were not of Levi, but were of the tribe of the firstborn, Reuben. Levi was just mentioned in the previous chapter as a single unit, despite the priestly line of Aaron –

“At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister to Him and to bless in His name, to this day. ⁹ Therefore Levi has no portion nor inheritance with his brethren; the LORD is his inheritance, just as the LORD your God promised him.)” Deuteronomy 10:8, 9

Korah, being a Levite, only attacked the arrangement of the order and structure found within the tribe of Levi. However, Dathan and Abiram had attempted to usurp the entire structure of the leadership of the people and the mediatorial role of Levi – between the people and the priests and the priests and the Lord. Because of this, Moses calls to memory how they were destroyed...

6 (con’t) how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, their households, their tents,

The exciting details are found in Numbers 16, where they focus on Korah rather than these two –

“Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, ³² and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods. ³³ So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly. ³⁴ Then all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for they said, ‘Lest the earth swallow us up also!’” Numbers 16:31-34

They went alive into *sheol* and were gone, with both their households and their tents...

6 (con’t) and all the substance that was in their possession,

Here is an idiomatic expression: *v’eth kal haiqum asher b’raglehem* – “and all living thing which in their feet.” This is not referring to their stuff, but their people. All who followed after them and who were under their authority went down alive. The feet signify the sphere of authority. It is seen, for example, in Psalm 8 –

*“You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet.” Psalm 8:6*

These two families were utterly consumed and disappeared from Israel. However, such is not the case with Korah. The sons of Korah are noted elsewhere, including as being the authors of eleven psalms. It provides a second reason why Moses refers only to these two and not to Korah.

Because the descendants were not utterly destroyed along with Korah, Moses skips over the name, revealing the mercy that was found in the midst of the Lord’s workings. Moses says that all of this was accomplished...

6 (con’t) in the midst of all Israel—

It speaks of the entire event, but it may also give a third indicator as to why Korah is overlooked. His action was in and against Levi, of whom he belonged. The actions of Dathan and Abiram were against Levi, to whom they did not belong.

Theirs was an attack against all of Israel as all of Israel was ministered to by Levi – both Levite and priest. Therefore, the term, “in the midst of all Israel,” is doubly pertinent to them. They offended against (in the midst of) all Israel, and the judgment was complete against them among (in the midst of) all Israel when they were entirely wiped out from the people.

7 but your eyes have seen every great act of the LORD which He did.

Here, we have the completion of the thought from verse 3. There it referred to “*His signs and His workings which He worked,*” using the plural of the word *maaseh*, and the word *asah*.

Here, using the same words, but with *maaseh* singular this time, it says: *ki enekem ha’root eth kal maaseh Yehovah ha’gadol asher asah* – “*For your eyes the seers every working Yehovah, the great which He worked.*”

Translating the word *ki* as “but” here makes all of these verses sound as if they are based on a contrast between them and what the children didn’t see. This is incorrect. Rather, it should be translated as “for.” In this, it complements and confirms that the people he has been speaking to are the ones who saw these things.

*What is it that will bring me life?
What thing must I do to be right with my God?
What will end this enmity and strife?
How shall I conduct my affairs on this path I trod?

Shall I stand before God and boast in what I have done?
Shall I rely on my deeds accomplished under the law?
Shall I reject the perfection of His Son?
Am I able to stand on my own, without spot or flaw?

Not on a bet would I so determine to do!
A single misdeed and I would be done in
I will trust in the work of the Lord, holy and true
Only through Him will I be freed from the penalty of sin

Thanks be to God for Christ Jesus my Lord
Only in Him will I to the judgment seat step forward*

II. A Land for Which the Lord Your God Cares (verses 8-12)

8 “Therefore you shall keep every commandment which I command you today,

And now, these words take us back to verse 1 to complete the chiasm. There, he spoke in the plural – statutes, judgments, and commandments. Now he refers to them in the singular: *kal ha’mitsvah*, or “all the commandment.”

It is a single, unified commandment made up of all of the various parts. In both, the force of the words is the same – “Here is what you have been instructed, and these are (this is) what you are to do.” Let nothing of it fail.

Moses has given justification as to why they were to do as so instructed. Their own eyes were the seers, the witnesses, of all that had transpired. They could not deny that it was the Lord who had done these things, and they were therefore obligated to respond to His kindnesses and judgments with respect, honor, and obedience. Further, in obedience to this word, there is to be a positive outcome...

8 (con’t) that you may be strong,

l'maan tekhezqu – “to end purpose, that you may be strong.” Here, the idea is that in obedience to what is prescribed, they will be encouraged or fortified in their conduct and abilities. The obvious implication is that in failing to obey, they will not be.

He has just shown an example of the Lord’s power to destroy an enemy nation for their sakes. He has also shown an example of the Lord’s power to remove enemies within the nation when they are disobedient. The sword cuts in two directions and the reason for its use for or against comes down to one thought – obedience. Moses next says...

^{8 (con’t)} and go in and possess the land which you cross over to possess,

The Lord destroyed Egypt, and He can destroy the nations of Canaan as well. They failed to believe this in Numbers 14, and it cost an entire generation their lives. Instead of entering in and possessing, they were exiled into the wilderness.

Moses tells them that the Lord will cause the opposite to occur if they simply accept the words and act accordingly. They will go in, and they will possess, but it is conditional based on their relationship with the Lord.

And, once they are in the land, their remaining there is also a guarantee to continue, or a guarantee to end, based solely on how they perform in that relationship...

⁹ and that you may prolong your days

u-l'maan taariku yamim – “to end purpose you may prolong days.” In obedience, the days will be prolonged. In disobedience, the opposite will be true. And this prolonging of days is...

^{9 (con’t)} in the land

It does not say, “in the land.” Rather, it says: *al ha’adamah* – “upon the ground.” This is an important distinction. Moses isn’t just referring to exile from the land of Canaan, but of living upon the ground in Canaan. In disobedience, some will not even get the opportunity to be exiled, but they will simply die where they are.

This could be from famine, pestilence, inner tribal conflict, or being slain by enemy nations. In disobedience, their days will be cut short. It is this ground, comprising the land of Canaan...

^{9 (con’t)} which the LORD swore to give your fathers, to them and their descendants,

Again, Moses brings in the fathers as he so regularly does. It is to remind Israel of the Lord’s covenant faithfulness. And that covenant faithfulness then extends to their descendants. The land is Israel’s inheritance. It is given to them, but the possession of it is conditional – both for individuals, and for the nation.

The promise stands, but it is based upon performance. Israel must accept this. But as an enticement, Moses then again says...

^{9 (con’t)} ‘a land flowing with milk and honey.’

It is the second of six times he will remind them of the quality of the land. The blessings are there, and they await Israel, if only Israel will heed. Here, the word for “land” is *eret*. In this context, it speaks of the land as a whole. With that in mind, Moses continues with the marvelous description of what Canaan is like...

¹⁰ For the land which you go to possess is not like the land of Egypt

The words now go to the singular. Moses is speaking to the nation. The land which you, Israel, go to possess is not like the land of Egypt. Your (singular) land is so much better than that land...

^{10 (con’t)} from which you have come,

Only in this clause of this verse does it go again to the plural: *asher yesatem misham* – “which you (all) have come (out) from.” Moses is being precise, probably waving his hand across the multitudes and acknowledging the great number of Israel who were there before him. He then returns to the singular, saying...

^{10 (con’t)} where you sowed your seed and watered it by foot, as a vegetable garden;

In this, Moses reminds the people what it was like in Egypt. There was little rain, and so the water source was predominantly the Nile and any canals that flowed from it. From there, water had to be carried in buckets by foot, or smaller channels could be dug out with spades with the foot pressing them into the earth.

Some believe this could also be referring to pumping wheels that were powered by foot in order to bring up water. No matter what, it was a laborious task to have water brought into one's property in order to water the vegetable garden. This is a new word, *yaraq*, coming from *yereq*, meaning green. Thus, it speaks of the vegetable, herb, and so on.

Instead of the laborious labors of Egypt, Moses says...

11 but the land which you cross over to possess is a land of hills and valleys,

Again, Moses returns to the plural – “which you (all) cross over to possess.” He is playing on what he just said. “You all have come out from Egypt, and now you all are going to cross over to possess.” There is no error in the text; it is alive and vivid.

“This land isn’t at all like Egypt. There are hills and valleys. And it is this land through the constant watchfulness and caring providence of the Lord...”

11 (con’t) which drinks water from the rain of heaven,

It is, at the same time, a note of joy and of warning. Little effort will be needed to raise an abundance of crops. Trees will grow without care; abundance will flow down from the hills and into the valleys. There will be joy and delight because the Lord sends the rains.

And yet... it is the Lord who sends the rains. Without His open hand of grace, there would be no water at all, not even by foot. The land itself is brought alive or brought to its end through the Lord's care of it via the rains.

And that care was based upon Israel's obedience to His word. The notable effects of this condition are to be seen in our closing verse today. For now, Moses continues with his words. It is...

12 a land for which the LORD your God cares;

It reverts to the singular, your (singular) God. He is Israel's God, and Moses says He *doresh*, or seeks after the land. His eyes search it out, He observes it, and He cares for it. As Canaan is typical of entrance into Christ, and thus the heavenly promise, the words of Jesus are clearly seen in this –

“I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know.” John 14:1, 2

The Lord cared for Canaan for the sake of Israel. He, likewise, has a place prepared for His people which He has tended to. Both require crossing over the Jordan, meaning demonstrating faith in the Lord. In this, the land is received. As for the earthly Canaan, Moses says...

*12 (fin) the eyes of the LORD your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year.

Both clauses are idiomatic. The meaning of the first is that the Lord is attentive to it as if He was sitting there and watching it, never taking His eyes off of it. The meaning of the second clause is that this wasn't just continuous, but it is unceasing. The beginning of the year comes at the ending of the previous year. And so, there is never a time that the Lord isn't searching out the land.

But this is, like the other words, a double-edged sword. There is no place and no time that His eyes are not on the land. As this is so, then they are also on the people of the land. Their actions are what will drive the Lord's response to how He treats the land.

This is seen time and time again throughout the rest of the Old Testament as the rains came or were withheld. And, at times, the coming of rain was a judgment as well, such as in 1 Samuel 12:19 when rains came during the harvest because the people had rejected the Lord. In this, the people's response to Samuel was –

“Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, that we may not die; for we have added to all our sins the evil of asking a king for ourselves.”

This is the lesson of Israel, and because it is, it is the lesson of the law. When one is under law, he must be obedient to that law. In failure to heed, sin is the result. And with the coming of sin comes the sad expectation of judgment.

Israel's history is mapped out for us so that we can see this. But this lesson of Israel is one that takes us back even further. The first law given to man was broken, and man has suffered the effects of that ever since. Israel, and the law given to her, has been a lesson for all people to see the gravity of what occurred with Adam.

It wasn't just a sin that led to His punishment and death, but one which then spread to all men, because all men are in Adam. Israel is being used as a typological representation of this. The Person of Jesus is then provided to show us the contrast of that.

Adam failed, Israel is given to reveal the magnitude of that, and Christ, the second Man and the greater Israel, came to show us how to be released from this huge yoke we carry. Unlike Adam, He never sinned. Unlike Israel, He fulfilled the law. And because of this, the beauty of God working in Christ Jesus is then made available to us.

He is the release from the condemnation we all bear. He is the Lifter of the yoke and the Grantor of new life – eternal life. He is the embodiment of the law, and so all who are in Him are freed from the constraint of law. In Him, God is no longer counting men's sins against them.

The land of Canaan is outshined, infinitely and eternally, in the glory that God now provides in Christ. Let us not fail to heed the call, demonstrate faith in His provision, and be saved unto the glory of everlasting life in the presence of God. May it be so for you, and may it be today. Amen.

Closing Verse: “‘Also I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, And lack of bread in all your places; Yet you have not returned to Me,’ Says the LORD.”⁷ “‘I also withheld rain from you, When there were still three months to the harvest. I made it rain on one city, I withheld rain from another city. One part was rained upon, And where it did not rain the part withered.’⁸ So two or three cities wandered to another city to drink water, But they were not satisfied; Yet you have not returned to Me,’ Says the LORD.” Amos 4:6-8

Next Week: Deuteronomy 11:13-21 *So vast is the breadth and the girth...* (Like the Days of the Heavens Above the Earth) (37th Deuteronomy sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. But He also has expectations of you as He prepares you for entrance into His Land of Promise. So, follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Until You Came to this Place

“Therefore you shall love the LORD your God
And keep His charge; that always pays
His statutes, His judgments
And His commandments always

Know today that I do not speak with your children
Who have not known and who have not seen nor stood in alarm
The chastening of the LORD your God
His greatness and His mighty hand and His outstretched arm—

His signs and His acts which He did
In the midst of Egypt, which He had planned
To Pharaoh king of Egypt
And to all his land

What He did to the army of Egypt
To their horses and their chariots as they tried to race away
How He made the waters of the Red Sea
Overflow them as they pursued you, and how the LORD
-----has destroyed them to this day

What He did for you in the wilderness
Until you came to this place, back then
And what He did to Dathan and Abiram
The sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben

How the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up
Their households, their tents, and all the substance
-----that was in their possession, He of them got rid
In the midst of all Israel—
But your eyes have seen every great act of the LORD
----- which He did

“Therefore you shall keep every commandment
Which I command you today; so, to you I address

That you may be strong
And go in and possess the land which you cross over to possess

And that you may prolong your days
In the land which the LORD swore to give your fathers
-----without cost or money
To them and their descendants
A land flowing with milk and honey

For the land which you go to possess
Is not like the land of Egypt from which you have come
Where you sowed your seed and watered it by foot
As a vegetable garden; if you had a green thumb

But the land which you cross over to possess
Is a land of hills and valleys, caressed by heaven's dew
Which drinks water from the rain of heaven
Such is the land I am giving to you

A land for which the LORD your God cares
The eyes of the LORD your God are always on it
From the beginning of the year
To the very end of the year, this land to watch He does commit

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...