

## **Deut 10:12–11:32 What Does the Lord Require of You?**

Deut is a series of exhortations from Moses to Israel. He's exhorting the people to love God, to serve him alone, and to obey his commandments.

As you read through the book of Deut, you'll notice that Moses repeats himself, especially regarding Israel's need to love and obey God. Much of what Moses says here he's already said.

Someone mentioned that Moses' hammer-like repetitive style shows the intensity of the Lord's desire to remold his people to prepare them for the conquest and settlement of Canaan.<sup>1</sup>

In chapters 8-9, Moses had cited a whole list of sins that Israel was guilty of—stubbornness, rebellion, idolatry, independence, and self-righteousness. And so he is emphasizing the need for that to change as they face the prospect of conquering the PL. Their track record for faithfulness was not very good. In light of their previous failures, he's exhorting them toward personal spiritual revival.

Moses asks a question at the beginning of this passage (10:12): “what does the Lord your God require of you?” This is a very profound question that we can apply to ourselves—what does God want of me? All of us should spend some time thinking about and answering that question—what does God require?

Moses is asking this question of the nation of Israel. We must remember that what God requires of Israel as a nation is not necessarily the same thing that he requires of us as Christians in the church age. However, many of these requirements are the same; God still has a set of requirement for his people today. As we read through the passage, we should consider whether we are meeting these requirements. Perhaps we need some personal spiritual revival ourselves.

What does God require of Israel, and what can we learn from this set of requirements?

I. God requires genuine, sincere faith and obedience. 10:12-11:1

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<sup>1</sup> Earl S. Kalland, “Deuteronomy,” in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 87.

Deut 8 showed the perils of prosperity and independence; chapter 9 showed the perils of self-righteousness, rebellion, and stubbornness. They were guilty of serious sins, including idolatry. So that has to change as they begin the conquest. They need a revival of genuine, personal faith. If they continue in their stiff-necked rebellion, it will spell disaster for them.

A. What does it mean to have genuine faith? .12-13

1. Fear the Lord—show proper respect, reverential awe for God
2. Walk in all his ways—live a godly lifestyle; live morally.
3. Love him—to love God is to remain committed to him. This is primarily a choice, not an emotion.
4. Serve the Lord your God—this speaks of proper worship
5. Keep his commandments and statutes—fear, love, and service for God naturally leads to obedience to his commands. You can't claim to love God if you are habitually disobedient.
6. 12end And do all this “with all your heart and with all your soul.” Not just as a ritual or as a duty; this is a heart-felt commitment to God and his ways.

**App:** This is what true, sincere, genuine faith looks like.

I wonder if this is what your faith looks like. Is your life characterized by the sins listed in chapters 8-9 or by the genuine faith described here? Perhaps a personal revival of genuine faith is what we need. This is what God requires of his people.

Cf. “Ye must be born again.” This is true, heart-felt faith.

B. Why is genuine faith a requirement?

1. .14 Because of God's transcendent sovereignty

God is the creator of the universe and the owner of all the nations. Perhaps the most significant reason for us to obey God is that God is the creator; he owns everything. Moses bases obedience in the creation order; we as creatures must obey our creator.

People deny God as the creator because they do not want to think of themselves as obligated to him. If there is no creator, then there is no law-giver, no ultimate authority. We must retain a strong commitment to God as creator and owner of all things—that's a foundational truth that we dare not compromise.

2. .15 Because of God's choice of Israel—God chose the patriarchs; he loved them. God owns everything (.14) and he could have chosen anyone, but he chose “only... your fathers.” God's choice of them is the only reason Israel exists.  
God chose both the fathers and “their descendants after them.” So the covenant still pertains to the next generation.
3. .17 Because of God's power, might, and glory. God is great; he has authority over me. Therefore, I must obey his commands.
4. .17end-18 Because of God's justice and love. God is impartial and does not take bribes; he cares for the needy. God is worthy of obedience because he does what is best for us.

**App:** These are all legitimate reasons for us to trust in God and obey his word. He's the creator, he chose us as his people, he has authority over us, and he is good. God is worthy of our love and commitment.

C. What are the results/consequences of genuine faith?

1. .16 Circumcise your heart—they don't need another *physical ritual*; they need *spiritual revival*. They need an inner transformation, a personal renewal of their commitment to God. If their heart were right with God, their actions would also be right. Right actions come from a right heart.  
Circumcision of the heart means being open, responsive, and obedient to the Lord, in contrast to being stiff-necked—being stubborn and rebellious.<sup>2</sup>
2. .16end Stop being stiff-necked. Quit your rebellion and disobedience.

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<sup>2</sup> Earl S. Kalland, “Deuteronomy,” in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 86.

3. .19 Love the stranger

The word “stranger” refers to resident aliens living within Israel.

Leviticus 19:34 *The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt:...*

**App:** This brings up an important point that has an impact in our contemporary world. Cf. immigration—are we still obligated to love the stranger? What does this principle imply for us? Yes, we are still obligated to love the stranger.

However, 1) Israel was a theocracy; we are not. 2) Strangers would have adopted the faith and lifestyle of the Jews. 3) Israel was getting ready to conquer and destroy the Canaanites.

Sincere faith has practical results. Our commitment to God has social implications. When we retain our commitment to God, we’ll also be concerned for our neighbors. Cf. Mt 19:19.

4. .20 Fear the Lord, serve him, hold fast to him, take oaths in his name.

To “hold fast” to the Lord and to take oaths in his name means that one retains loyalty to God. Retain your loyalty and allegiance to the covenant with God.

D. What should motivate genuine faith?

1. .21 God has done great and awesome things for you. Many of the Israelites had experienced the miraculous works of God on their behalf.

2. .22 God made Israel into a great nation. They began as about 70 people, but now they number about 2 million.

3. God, who had done such great things for them, was certainly worthy of their love and loyalty.

E. 11:1 What does it mean to have genuine faith? (summary, repetition)

1. Genuine faith means that you love God.

**Quote:** 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.<sup>3</sup>

I describe the one you love as the object of your highest concern. Cf. Mt 6:33; 1 Cor 10:31

2. Genuine faith means that you obey God.
  - a) Keep his charge (מִשְׁמֶרֶת), statutes (חֻקִּים), judgments (מִשְׁפָּטִים), commandments (מִצְוָה). The word of God is very important.
  - b) Always—consistently, normally. Obedience to God's commands is especially important as they enter the PL.

Conquering the land depended more on their *morality* than it did on their *military*. Love for and commitment to God were the keys to success both personally and as a nation.

**App:** That is still true today. Genuine faith today looks much like what it did 3500 years ago. True faith loves God, is loyal to him, and obeys his commands. We need to fear him, serve him, and hold fast to him from our hearts.

The proof of our love for God is obedience to his commands.

1Jo 2:5 *But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.*

**Trans:** The first thing God requires is genuine, sincere faith and obedience. We should do a little self-evaluation to see if our faith is the kind of faith Moses describes here.

II. God requires that we learn from the past. 11:2-7

- A. .2 You've seen God's greatness, mighty hand, outstretched arm, signs, wonders—they saw all of those mighty miracles during the exodus from Egypt.

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<sup>3</sup> Jack S. Deere, "Deuteronomy," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 281.

Remember that at this point, a whole generation of people had died in the wilderness. All the men of war who were over 20 years old when they refused to enter the PL at KB had died. But there were many remaining who had seen all the signs and wonders that God had done in Egypt and in the wilderness—those who had been under 20 years old at Kadesh, plus all the women and girls. Cf. 14:31

- B. .3 You've seen What he did in Egypt to Pharaoh and the army.
- C. .4b You've seen how he opened the Red Sea and destroyed the Egyptian army.
- D. .5 You've seen what he did in the wilderness—God provided everything they needed, particularly manna and water.
- E. .6 You've seen what he did to Dathan and Abiram—the earth swallowed up these men along with Korah, who was the leader of the rebellion (Num 16).
- F. .7 You've seen all these things. Many people from that first generation of the exodus were still remaining. They had seen all these great acts of the Lord. They were eyewitnesses to these events; they could not plead ignorance.

Moses exhorted the people to remember what God had done in the past. God had done great, miraculous, monumental things for them over the last 40 years, and now they have to trust that God would continue to do great things for them as they enter the PL and start the conquest.

**App:** We too must learn from history. Not many of us have experienced miracles like the Israelites did, but we have still experienced God's greatness. If we have not experienced it ourselves, we have seen it in the lives of others, and we've read about it in the Bible.

What we learn from history is that God is faithful; God is reliable. Israel could trust that God would empower them to conquer the PL.

We can rely on God to empower us to fulfill our obligations. E.g., being a husband, wife, child; career; church; citizen. We may not experience God's miraculous power, but in God's providence, we will be able to fulfill our roles and obligations if we trust in God and obey his commandments. Success in all areas of life comes from faith in God and obedience to his commandments.

God has provided for us in the past, and he will continue to do so in the future. The key to success in the future is faithful obedience.