

Deuteronomy 26:1 - 29:8

This translation was taken from the JPS Tanakh

Chapter 26

¹ When you enter the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a heritage, and you possess it and settle in it, ² you shall take some of every first fruit of the soil, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, put it in a basket and go to the place where the Lord your God will choose to establish His name. ³ You shall go to the priest in charge at that time and say to him, "I acknowledge this day before the Lord your God that I have entered the land that the Lord swore to our fathers to assign us."

⁴ The priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down in front of the altar of the Lord your God.

⁵ You shall then recite as follows before the Lord your God: "My father was a fugitive Aramean. He went down to Egypt with meager numbers and sojourned there; but there he became a great and very populous nation. ⁶ The Egyptians dealt harshly with us and oppressed us; they imposed heavy labor upon us. ⁷ We cried to the Lord, the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our plea and saw our plight, our misery, and our oppression. ⁸ The Lord freed us from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents. ⁹ He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰ Wherefore I now bring the first fruits of the soil which You, O Lord, have given me."

You shall leave it before the Lord your God and bow low before the Lord your God. ¹¹ And you shall enjoy, together with the Levite and the stranger in your midst, all the bounty that the Lord your God has bestowed upon you and your household.

¹² When you have set aside in full the tenth part of your yield — in the third year, the year of the tithe — and have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat their fill in your settlements, ¹³ you shall declare before the Lord your God: "I have cleared out the consecrated portion from the house; and I have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, just as You commanded me; I have neither transgressed nor neglected any of Your commandments: ¹⁴ I have not eaten of it while in mourning, I have not cleared out any of it while I was unclean, and I have not deposited any of it with the dead. I have obeyed the Lord my God; I have done just as You commanded me. ¹⁵ Look down from Your holy abode, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the soil You have given us, a land flowing with milk and honey, as You swore to our fathers."

¹⁶ The Lord your God commands you this day to observe these laws and rules; observe them faithfully with all your heart and soul. ¹⁷ You have affirmed this day that the Lord is your God, that you will walk in His ways, that you will observe His laws and commandments and rules, and that you will obey Him. ¹⁸ And the Lord has affirmed this day that you are, as He promised you, His treasured people who shall observe all His commandments, ¹⁹ and that He will set you, in fame and

renown and glory, high above all the nations that He has made; and that you shall be, as He promised, a holy people to the Lord your God.

Chapter 27

¹ Moses and the elders of Israel charged the people, saying: Observe all the Instruction that I enjoin upon you this day. ² As soon as you have crossed the Jordan into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones. Coat them with plaster ³ and inscribe upon them all the words of this Teaching. When you cross over to enter the land that the Lord your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, promised you — ⁴ upon crossing the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I charge you this day, on Mount Ebal, and coat them with plaster. ⁵ There, too, you shall build an altar to the Lord your God, an altar of stones. Do not wield an iron tool over them; ⁶ you must build the altar of the Lord your God of unhewn stones. You shall offer on it burnt offerings to the Lord your God, ⁷ and you shall sacrifice there offerings of well-being and eat them, rejoicing before the Lord your God. ⁸ And on those stones you shall inscribe every word of this Teaching most distinctly.

⁹ Moses and the levitical priests spoke to all Israel, saying: Silence! Hear, O Israel! Today you have become the people of the Lord your God: ¹⁰ Heed the Lord your God and observe His commandments and His laws, which I enjoin upon you this day.

¹¹ Thereupon Moses charged the people, saying: ¹² After you have crossed the Jordan, the following shall stand on Mount Gerizim when the blessing for the people is spoken: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. ¹³ And for the curse, the following shall stand on Mount Ebal: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphthali. ¹⁴ The Levites shall then proclaim in a loud voice to all the people of Israel:

¹⁵ Cursed be anyone who makes a sculptured or molten image, abhorred by the Lord, a craftsman's handiwork, and sets it up in secret. — And all the people shall respond, Amen.

¹⁶ Cursed be he who insults his father or mother. — And all the people shall say, Amen.

¹⁷ Cursed be he who moves his fellow countryman's landmark. — And all the people shall say, Amen.

¹⁸ Cursed be he who misdirects a blind person on his way. — And all the people shall say, Amen.

¹⁹ Cursed be he who subverts the rights of the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. — And all the people shall say, Amen.

²⁰ Cursed be he who lies with his father's wife, for he has removed his father's garment. — And all the people shall say, Amen.

²¹ Cursed be he who lies with any beast. — And all the people shall say, Amen.

²² Cursed be he who lies with his sister, whether daughter of his father or of his mother. — And all the people shall say, Amen.

²³ Cursed be he who lies with his mother-in-law. — And all the people shall say, Amen.

²⁴ Cursed be he who strikes down his fellow countryman in secret. — And all the people shall say, Amen.

²⁵ Cursed be he who accepts a bribe in the case of the murder of an innocent person. — And all the people shall say, Amen.

²⁶ Cursed be he who will not uphold the terms of this Teaching and observe them. — And all the people shall say, Amen.

Chapter 28

¹ Now, if you obey the Lord your God, to observe faithfully all His commandments which I enjoin upon you this day, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. ² All these blessings shall come upon you and take effect, if you will but heed the word of the Lord your God:

³ Blessed shall you be in the city and blessed shall you be in the country.

⁴ Blessed shall be the issue of your womb, the produce of your soil, and the offspring of your cattle, the calving of your herd and the lambing of your flock.

⁵ Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

⁶ Blessed shall you be in your comings and blessed shall you be in your goings.

⁷ The Lord will put to rout before you the enemies who attack you; they will march out against you by a single road, but flee from you by many roads. ⁸ The Lord will ordain blessings for you upon your barns and upon all your undertakings: He will bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. ⁹ The Lord will establish you as His holy people, as He swore to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in His ways. ¹⁰ And all the peoples of the earth shall see that the Lord's name is proclaimed over you, and they shall stand in fear of you. ¹¹ The Lord will give you abounding prosperity in the issue of your womb, the offspring of your cattle, and the produce of your soil in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers to assign to you. ¹² The Lord will open for you His bounteous store, the heavens, to provide rain for your land in season and to bless all your undertakings. You will be creditor to many nations, but debtor to none.

¹³ The Lord will make you the head, not the tail; you will always be at the top and never at the bottom — if only you obey and faithfully observe the commandments of the Lord your God that I enjoin upon you this day, ¹⁴ and do not deviate to the right or to the left from any of the commandments that I enjoin upon you this day and turn to the worship of other gods.

¹⁵ But if you do not obey the Lord your God to observe faithfully all His commandments and laws which I enjoin upon you this day, all these curses shall come upon you and take effect:

¹⁶ Cursed shall you be in the city and cursed shall you be in the country.

¹⁷ Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

¹⁸ Cursed shall be the issue of your womb and the produce of your soil, the calving of your herd and the lambing of your flock.

¹⁹ Cursed shall you be in your comings and cursed shall you be in your goings.

²⁰ The Lord will let loose against you calamity, panic, and frustration in all the enterprises you undertake, so that you shall soon be utterly wiped out because of your evildoing in forsaking Me. ²¹ The Lord will make pestilence cling to you, until He has put an end to you in the land that you are entering to possess. ²² The Lord will strike you with consumption, fever, and inflammation, with scorching heat and drought, with blight and mildew; they shall hound you until you perish. ²³ The

skies above your head shall be copper and the earth under you iron. ²⁴ The Lord will make the rain of your land dust, and sand shall drop on you from the sky, until you are wiped out.

²⁵ The Lord will put you to rout before your enemies; you shall march out against them by a single road, but flee from them by many roads; and you shall become a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. ²⁶ Your carcasses shall become food for all the birds of the sky and all the beasts of the earth, with none to frighten them off.

²⁷ The Lord will strike you with the Egyptian inflammation, with hemorrhoids, boil-scars, and itch, from which you shall never recover.

²⁸ The Lord will strike you with madness, blindness, and dismay. ²⁹ You shall grope at noon as a blind man gropes in the dark; you shall not prosper in your ventures, but shall be constantly abused and robbed, with none to give help.

³⁰ If you pay the bride-price for a wife, another man shall enjoy her. If you build a house, you shall not live in it. If you plant a vineyard, you shall not harvest it. ³¹ Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your ass shall be seized in front of you, and it shall not be returned to you; your flock shall be delivered to your enemies, with none to help you. ³² Your sons and daughters shall be delivered to another people, while you look on; and your eyes shall strain for them constantly, but you shall be helpless. ³³ A people you do not know shall eat up the produce of your soil and all your gains; you shall be abused and downtrodden continually, ³⁴ until you are driven mad by what your eyes behold. ³⁵ The Lord will afflict you at the knees and thighs with a severe inflammation, from which you shall never recover — from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.

³⁶ The Lord will drive you, and the king you have set over you, to a nation unknown to you or your fathers, where you shall serve other gods, of wood and stone. ³⁷ You shall be a consternation, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples to which the Lord will drive you.

³⁸ Though you take much seed out to the field, you shall gather in little, for the locust shall consume it. ³⁹ Though you plant vineyards and till them, you shall have no wine to drink or store, for the worm shall devour them. ⁴⁰ Though you have olive trees throughout your territory, you shall have no oil for anointment, for your olives shall drop off. ⁴¹ Though you beget sons and daughters, they shall not remain with you, for they shall go into captivity. ⁴² The cricket shall take over all the trees and produce of your land.

⁴³ The stranger in your midst shall rise above you higher and higher, while you sink lower and lower: ⁴⁴ he shall be your creditor, but you shall not be his; he shall be the head and you the tail.

⁴⁵ All these curses shall befall you; they shall pursue you and overtake you, until you are wiped out, because you did not heed the Lord your God and keep the commandments and laws that He enjoined upon you. ⁴⁶ They shall serve as signs and proofs against you and your offspring for all time. ⁴⁷ Because you would not serve the Lord your God in joy and gladness over the abundance of everything, ⁴⁸ you shall have to

serve — in hunger and thirst, naked and lacking everything — the enemies whom the Lord will let loose against you. He will put an iron yoke upon your neck until He has wiped you out.

⁴⁹ The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, which will swoop down like the eagle — a nation whose language you do not understand, ⁵⁰ a ruthless nation, that will show the old no regard and the young no mercy. ⁵¹ It shall devour the offspring of your cattle and the produce of your soil, until you have been wiped out, leaving you nothing of new grain, wine, or oil, of the calving of your herds and the lambing of your flocks, until it has brought you to ruin. ⁵² It shall shut you up in all your towns throughout your land until every mighty, towering wall in which you trust has come down. And when you are shut up in all your towns throughout your land that the Lord your God has assigned to you, ⁵³ you shall eat your own issue, the flesh of your sons and daughters that the Lord your God has assigned to you, because of the desperate straits to which your enemy shall reduce you. ⁵⁴ He who is most tender and fastidious among you shall be too mean to his brother and the wife of his bosom and the children he has spared ⁵⁵ to share with any of them the flesh of the children that he eats, because he has nothing else left as a result of the desperate straits to which your enemy shall reduce you in all your towns. ⁵⁶ And she who is most tender and dainty among you, so tender and dainty that she would never venture to set a foot on the ground, shall begrudge the husband of her bosom, and her son and her daughter, ⁵⁷ the afterbirth that issues from between her legs and the babies she bears; she shall eat them secretly, because of utter want, in the desperate straits to which your enemy shall reduce you in your towns.

⁵⁸ If you fail to observe faithfully all the terms of this Teaching that are written in this book, to reverence this honored and awesome Name, the Lord your God, ⁵⁹ the Lord will inflict extraordinary plagues upon you and your offspring, strange and lasting plagues, malignant and chronic diseases. ⁶⁰ He will bring back upon you all the sicknesses of Egypt that you dreaded so, and they shall cling to you. ⁶¹ Moreover, the Lord will bring upon you all the other diseases and plagues that are not mentioned in this book of Teaching, until you are wiped out. ⁶² You shall be left a scant few, after having been as numerous as the stars in the skies, because you did not heed the command of the Lord your God. ⁶³ And as the Lord once delighted in making you prosperous and many, so will the Lord now delight in causing you to perish and in wiping you out; you shall be torn from the land that you are about to enter and possess.

⁶⁴ The Lord will scatter you among all the peoples from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, whom neither you nor your ancestors have experienced. ⁶⁵ Yet even among those nations you shall find no peace, nor shall your foot find a place to rest. The Lord will give you there an anguished heart and eyes that pine and a despondent spirit. ⁶⁶ The life you face shall be precarious; you shall be in terror, night and day, with no assurance of survival. ⁶⁷ In the morning you shall say, "If only it were evening!" and in the evening you shall say, "If only it were morning!" — because of what your heart shall dread and your eyes shall see. ⁶⁸ The Lord will send you back to Egypt in galleys, by a route which I told you you should not see again. There you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but none will buy.

⁶⁹ These are the terms of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to conclude with the Israelites in the land of Moab, in addition to the covenant which He had made with them at Horeb.

Chapter 29

¹ Moses summoned all Israel and said to them:

You have seen all that the Lord did before your very eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his courtiers and to his whole country: ² the wondrous feats that you saw with your own eyes, those prodigious signs and marvels. ³ Yet to this day the Lord has not given you a mind to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.

⁴ I led you through the wilderness forty years; the clothes on your back did not wear out, nor did the sandals on your feet; ⁵ you had no bread to eat and no wine or other intoxicant to drink — that you might know that I the Lord am your God.

⁶ When you reached this place, King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan came out to engage us in battle, but we defeated them. ⁷ We took their land and gave it to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh as their heritage. ⁸ Therefore observe faithfully all the terms of this covenant, that you may succeed in all that you undertake.

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