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When You Come to the Land

26: 1-11

When you come to the Land DIG: What are the Israelites asked to do? What was the purpose of the tithe? How might that be hard for the farmer? What were the Israelites confessing? Why? What was the climax of the confession?

REFLECT: What would you offer to God as a firstfruits offering? How do you recognize the hand of God in your life? God asks us to give the best of what we have because He gave us the best of what He has, His one and only Son. We need to remember to give Him the best of what you have, and not just the leftovers?

Parashah 50: Ki Tavo (When you come) 21:10-25:19
(See [Af](#) - Parashah)

The Key People: Moshe, speaking to all Isra'el.

The Scene: In the wilderness east of **the Promised Land**, ready to **cross over the Jordan**.

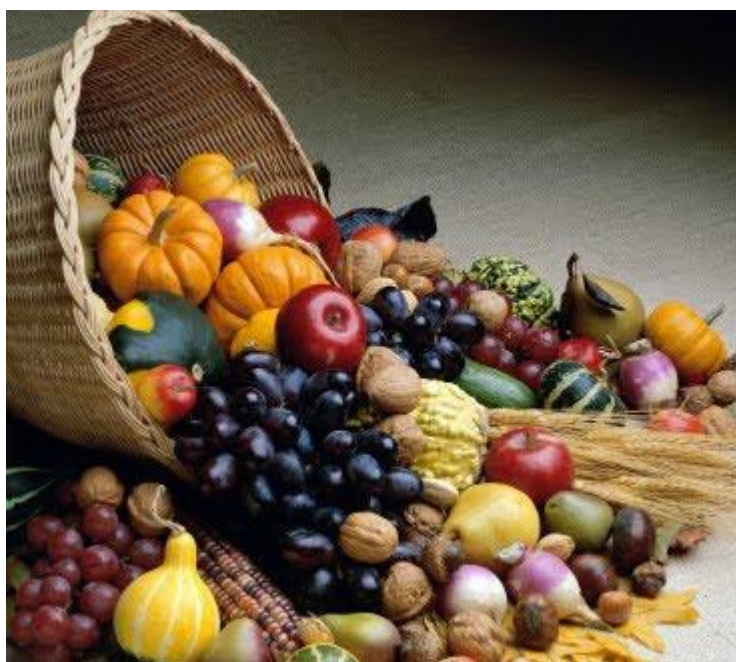
The Main Events: this parashah includes **Moshe's** words about what to do when **the people** entered **the Land of Promise**: offer **firstfruits** and **tithes**, obey **God's** commands, inscribe **Torah** on **stones**, and proclaim **blessings** from **Mount Gerizim** for obedience, and **curses** from **Mount Ebal** for disobedience; covenant renewal and invincibility as **God** keeps **His** lovingkindness.⁵⁶¹

As we have studied the various commandments beginning with **Chapter 12** (see [Cr](#) - **The Second Address: The Specific Stipulations of the Covenant**), we have seen many applications to the Scriptures covering all aspects of our lives. Now, we come to a beautiful section of **Deuteronomy** that lies between the end of those specific stipulations of the Covenant in **Chapter 25** and the curses mentioned in **Chapters 27** and **28**. Here we come to **Chapter 26**. It is like a refreshing oasis, an outburst of thanksgiving and dedication from the people of **God**.⁵⁶²

Once Isra'el had settled in the Promised Land they were to bring their firstfruits of

the harvest to the central sanctuary, and there, remember the faithfulness of ADONAI.

As the narrative is presented here, the entry into **the Promised Land** was still in the future. But **Moshe** needed to explain this ceremony before **Isra'el** crossed the Jordan because **he** knew **he** wouldn't be there to preside over it (see [Ax - Moshe Pleads](#)). This ceremony was expected the first time any **Jew** brought his **firstfruits** offering to **YHVH**. It should not be confused with the annual **firstfruits** offering (**Deuteronomy 16:4; Exodus 23:19, 34:26; Leviticus 23:10-17; Numbers 15:18-20, 18:12-13**). Not only was this special ceremony a confession of **God's** goodness to **Isra'el**, and to **the Jew** personally, but it was also a declaration that **the Jewish** man had, at that time, claimed his inheritance in **the Land**. He had worked **the Land** and received a harvest, and brought the first and the best to give to **the LORD**. **The basket of fruit** sitting by the altar was a witness to the faithfulness of **Ha'Shem** to **His people**. The entire ceremony foreshadowed the words of **Yeshua** when **He** said: **Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you** (Matthew 6:33).



Bring the firstfruits of the harvest: When you have come to the Land ADONAI your God is giving you as your inheritance, taken possession of it and settled there; you are to take the firstfruits of all the crops the ground yields, which you will harvest from your Land that ADONAI your God is giving you, put them in a basket and go to the place where ADONAI your God will choose to have his name live (26:1-2 CJB).

ADONAI says, “Don’t forget **Me!** As soon as you get to **the Land**, give me **the firstfruits of the Land.**”

This is a written declaration dictated by **God**. **You will approach the cohen holding office at the time and say to him, “Today I declare to ADONAI your God that I have come to the Land ADONAI swore to our ancestors that he would give us.”** In effect, the person would be confessing, “I am here because of the promises of **God.**” Then **the cohen will take the basket from your hand and put it down in front of the altar of ADONAI your God (26:3-4 CJB).**

Remember the faithfulness of ADONAI: But **God** not only wanted **the Israelites** to remember **their** history in a general way, **He** wanted **them** to remember the details, so **the worshiper** would speak about **Jacob**. **Then, in the presence of ADONAI your God, you are to say, “My ancestor was a nomad from Aram.”** **Jacob** left home and went to Haran in northwest Mesopotamia to find **himself** a wife. After twenty years in the household of **his** father-in-law, Laban, **Jacob** obeyed **God’s** commandment and returned to **his** own **land** and settled down with his twelve sons and their families. Indeed, **Jacob** had been a “fugitive” and a “pilgrim” all those years, but **YHVH** had watched over **him** and blessed **him**. **Jacob’s twelve sons** were to become the founders of **the twelve tribes of Isra’el**, and through which **God** would **bless** the whole world (see the commentary on **Genesis Dt - I Will Bless Those Who Bless You and Whoever Curses You I Will Curse**).

How would **Ha’Shem** transform **one man’s family** into a **great nation**? By taking **them down to Egypt** where **they** were put through the “iron furnace” of suffering. **He went down into Egypt a few in number and stayed. The tally of all the people belonging to Jacob’s house who came to Egypt was 70**, it was, however, merely a symbolic number (see the commentary on **Genesis Km - Jacob’s Genealogy**). **There he became a great, strong, populous nation. But the Egyptians treated us badly; they oppressed us and imposed harsh slavery on us. So, we cried out to ADONAI, the God of our ancestors. ADONAI heard us and saw our misery, toil and oppression (26:5-7 CJB).** Therefore, years later, on the night of the **Egyptian** Passover, probably two million **Jews** marched triumphantly out of **Egypt**. Suffering and trial are often **God’s** tools for bringing blessing to **His people**, though at the time we may not understand it. The more the Enemy persecuted the early Church, the more they scattered and multiplied (see the commentary on **Acts Ay - Witness in Judea and Samaria**).

The confession mentions nothing about **Isra’el’s** complaining on their journey or their failure of faith at **Kadesh-barnea (9:23-24)**. This was a confession of faith, not of unbelief.

So, ADONAI brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and a stretched-out arm, with great terror, and with signs and wonders. Now he has brought us to this place and given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey (26:8-9 CJB). In short, the confession underscored God's miraculous working at every turn in their history. YHVH gave the people a wonderful Land that would meet their every need. During Isra'el's wilderness wanderings and rebellion, some of the Jews called Egypt, "a land flowing with milk and honey" (Numbers 16:13). It's tragic when people have gone so far astray spiritually that the things of the world (First John 2:15-16) seem more inviting than the things of God.⁵⁶³

In response to the goodness and grace of the LORD, the worshipper then presented to YHVH the first and best of his labors, for there would be no harvest apart from the blessing of God. But in presenting the firstfruits, the worshipper was actually giving the entire harvest to the LORD. It was all His to begin with. Therefore, as you see, I have now brought the firstfruits of the land which you, ADONAI, have given me." You are then to put the basket down before ADONAI your God, prostrate yourself before ADONAI your God, and take joy in all the good that ADONAI your God has given you, your household, the Levi and the foreigner living with you (26:10-11 CJB). While at the place where ADONAI chose to have his name, the worshipper and his family could bring a thanksgiving offering (see the commentary on Exodus [Fg](#) - The Peace Offering: the thanksgiving offering) to ADONAI and enjoy a feast of good things, all to the glory of God.