

LEADER GUIDE

DEUTERONOMY

A CHALLENGE TO A NEW GENERATION

GOD'S CHARACTER DEMONSTRATED IN WORSHIP

BIG IDEA: When we worship God, we reflect on His love for us.

DATE: Sunday, June 28, 2026

SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 10:20-22; 11:7-14, 18, 26-28

OPENING QUESTION

On the whiteboard write "To me, worship is..." As group members arrive, ask "How would you complete this sentence – "To me, worship is..." Invite people to write their responses on the board as they arrive. Or call for responses and write them on the board as they share.

Read the following worship quotes to your group:

"True worship both leads to a genuine encounter with God and results from such an encounter. People ought not to be leaving church worship services unaffected." Henry Blackaby

"The direction of worship is from believers to God. We magnify God's name in worship by expressing our love and commitment to Him." Rick Warren

"Worship is perhaps the most important action of the human experience. The human heart is designed to find someone or something to hold in highest esteem. God's intention from the beginning was to hold that esteemed position in our lives." Thom Rainer

"Here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say that You're my God. You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy, altogether wonderful to me." "Here I Am to Worship" song lyrics

Review the responses written on the board. Discuss reactions to the quotes about worship. Ask: *Which response or quote shared speaks to you the most? Why?*

Introduce the session with this statement: *When we worship God, we reflect on His love for us. We can express worship to God in every aspect of our lives.*

SETTING THE STAGE

In Deuteronomy 10:12-13, Moses outlined several basic requirements for God's people as they prepared to enter the Promised Land: *fear the Lord by walking in all His ways, love Him, worship the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul, and keep the Lord's commands and*

statutes. Life was going to be very different for the Israelites – a new leader, a new terrain and new enemies to fight. God wanted them to remember His love and provision for them so that they would trust and obey Him.

SCRIPTURE READING

Deuteronomy 10:20-22; 11: 7-14, 18, 26-28 (CSB)

²⁰You are to fear the LORD your God and worship him. Remain faithful to him and take oaths in his name. ²¹He is your praise and he is your God, who has done for you these great and awe-inspiring works your eyes have seen. ²²Your ancestors went down to Egypt, seventy people in all, and now the LORD your God has made you numerous, like the stars of the sky.

¹¹⁷Your own eyes have seen every great work the LORD has done.

⁸"Keep every command I am giving you today, so that you may have the strength to cross into and possess the land you are to inherit, ⁹and so that you may live long in the land the LORD swore to your ancestors to give them and their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰For the land you are entering to possess is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and irrigated by hand as in a vegetable garden. ¹¹But the land you are entering to possess is a land of mountains and valleys, watered by rain from the sky. ¹²It is a land the LORD your God cares for. He is always watching over it from the beginning to the end of the year.

¹³"If you carefully obey my commands I am giving you today, to love the LORD your God and worship him with all your heart and all your soul, ¹⁴I will provide rain for your land in the proper time, the autumn and spring rains, and you will harvest your grain, new wine, and fresh oil.

¹⁸"Imprint these words of mine on your hearts and minds, bind them as a sign on your hands, and let them be a symbol on your foreheads.

²⁶"Look, today I set before you a blessing and a curse: ²⁷there will be a blessing, if you obey the commands of the LORD your God I am giving you today, ²⁸and a curse, if you do not obey the commands of the LORD your God and you turn aside from the path I command you today by following other gods you have not known.

DISCUSSION

REMEMBER AND WORSHIP

READ: Deuteronomy 10:20-21

Review the descriptions of worship recorded on the board at the beginning of this session.

Ask: After reading these verses how would you alter or expand your personal definition of what it means to worship God? (Often, we think of singing worship songs or times of prayer as worship, but these verses tell us it is much more. We worship God when we fear/revere Him, obey Him, remain faithful, keep the covenants made in His Name, when we adore Him for who He is and remember and thank Him for what He has done for us.)

REMEMBER AND OBEY

READ: Deuteronomy 11:7-12

Write "Remember and Obey" on the board.

Ask: *What do remembering and obedience have to do with worshiping God? How is worship connected to what God has done for us?*

Call for a volunteer to read aloud **Deuteronomy 11:7-12**.

Ask: *What did God want the Israelites to remember? Why? In verse 8, what did God promise if the people would obey His commands?*

Direct attention to verses 10-12 again. Ask: *What did God say about the land the people were about to possess? How was God going to take care of the people and their crops? How does remembering help you obey?*

The people of Israel were moving into a land where they would have to raise crops. The manna that God had been providing for 40 years was about to cease. This generation of Israelites knew little about agriculture because nomads are never still long enough to harvest food—plus the wilderness was not fertile. Even so, God cared enough for them to promise to bless their crops. Agriculture in Egypt consisted of transporting water from the Nile to the place where the gardens were located. But God was taking them into a land where He would personally watch over their gardens and send them rain. But it will still take faith to believe God could take care of them in the wilderness.

GOD WANTS TO BE WORSHIPED

READ: Deuteronomy 11:13-14

When you think of unconditional love, who do you think of? Who has loved you with no strings attached? (perhaps it is a grandparent, parent, child or even a pet!)

God's love is unconditional. There's nothing we can do to earn it. But God's blessings are conditional. That means that God promises to bless us if we will obey and worship Him. (vv. 13-14)

God wants us to worship Him. God has given each of us the ability to make choices. He doesn't force us to love Him or obey Him. It would be sad if God made us carbon-based androids so that when He wanted to be worshiped, He only had to press a computer key in heaven, and we would fall on our knees in worship. God wants our worship to be motivated by our love for Him.

All choices have consequences. If you put a child in a room with a jar of candy and tell him not to touch the jar, the child has a choice. If instead you lock the jar in a cabinet and tell the child not to touch it, the child has no choice. That's that way it is with God. **If God removed all the bad choices, we would have no freedom to choose.** Instead, He loves us so much that He gives us the freedom to choose.

Why is freedom of choice the ultimate expression of love? What are the benefits of choosing to worship God?

READ: Deuteronomy 11:18

Remind learners of the similar passage from Deuteronomy 6:6-9:

These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. ⁷ Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol

on your forehead.⁹ Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates.

Ask: How can we imprint God's Word on our hearts and in our minds? What does this have to do with worship? Compare this with what Paul said in Colossians 3:1-2, "So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."

BLESSINGS AND CURSES

READ: Deuteronomy 11:26-28.

Ask: How do these verses apply to us today? (Just like the Israelites, we have consequences to our sin, while our obedience brings blessing.) Where have you seen this play out in your life?

Explain that the Israelite's obedience to God would be a witness to the other peoples with whom they would come in contact within the land of God's promise.

Ask: What is the "land" God has placed before you in which your obedience to God can serve as a witness?

RESPONSE

Take time this week to remember what God has done for you. Reflect on His love and provision for you. Adore Him for who He is. Listen to worship music that declares the truth of the Bible. Then live out a life of worship by obeying Him. By focusing our lives on the One who alone is worthy of worship, we establish a sure foundation for a holy life characterized by love and service.

JBS 2015 Personal Study Guide Deuteronomy. LifeWay Press. Retrieved from <https://read.lifeway.com>

COMMENTARY

The Canaanite civilizations of the Old Testament worshiped gods who did not exist and ended up corrupting their entire worldview. By contrast, Israel worshiped the one true God who had revealed Himself to them. By focusing our lives on the One who alone is worthy of worship, we establish a sure foundation for a holy life characterized by love and service.

10:12-22. Moses had brought Israel to the brink of the promised land. Though he couldn't personally lead the Israelites across the Jordan River, his words could go with them and guide them to lasting blessings in Canaan.

As Moses explained it, Israel needed to know two things: First, they had to know their God—His magnificence, His character, and what He had done on their behalf. Second, Israel needed to know what their God wanted from them. His guidance can be summarized in four words: respect, obedience, love, and worship (10:12,20). Respect for God is demonstrated when people **fear the LORD** (10:12). Obedience is shown when people are **walking in all His ways** (10:12). What's more, the obedience was to be both internal, not just external. Figuratively speaking, the Israelites were to **circumcise their hearts** (10:16), that is, to cut all improper thoughts and desires out of their minds and wills.

Just as Yahweh loved Israel, Israel was to **love Him** (10:12). The term translated *love* is a general one in biblical Hebrew—about as broad as the American word for love. The use of that word here suggests that our love for the Lord should involve both our emotions and our intellect.

Finally, Israel was to **worship** (literally, “to serve”) **the LORD their God with all their heart and all their soul** (10:12). The Hebrew word translated *heart* almost always refers collectively to the different parts of the human personality—thoughts, emotions, and will. All of us are called to make our personal experiences with God our best memory and our contemplations of God our most intriguing thoughts. The Lord is to be the spark of light in our eyes and the dynamo driving our emotions. Pleasing Him must become the focused purpose of our lives and the ultimate goal of our existence.

Moses also called the Israelites to worship the Lord with all their *soul*. The Hebrew term refers in a general sense to the throat, life-giving breath, and the life force within a being. Worshiping God with our **entire souls** seems to refer in a general sense to **using our overall life experience as an act of worship** directed to the Creator and Savior of our lives. Yahweh was to be Israel’s pride and praise; He was for all time to be their **God** (10:21) and ours.

11:1-12. At the core of the Bible’s teachings is one simple truth: human beings should not only believe that there is a God, they must devotedly love Him. Jesus taught that no task is more important than this one (Matt. 22:36-38). No Old Testament book emphasizes this point more emphatically than Deuteronomy; five times in this book, including the opening verse of this section, Moses ordered people to love the **love the LORD their God** (6:5; 11:1,13; 13:3; 30:6).

Moses also reminded the Israelites that love for God is more than a matter of words; it must be a matter of obedient action. And so Israel must **always keep His mandate and His statutes, ordinances, and commands** (11:1). Obeying God would not only keep Israel from painful judgment, it would also be the key to living **long in the promised land** (11:9).

Canaan, the land Israel was **entering to possess** (11:10), was very different from Egypt, the country from which they had come. **Egypt** was an irrigated (11:10) land watered by the Nile River. Canaan, on the other hand, was a **land of mountains and valleys** (11:11). Israel had to rely on God to give them rain. They need not worry about the land being destroyed by divine neglect, for **the LORD their God cares for it, and He is always watching over it** (11:12).

11:13-17. Because adequate rainfall for the crops, flocks, and villages was a major concern in Canaan, it is not surprising that the most important pagan deity among the Canaanites was Baal, a rain god. But Moses did not want Israel to put its trust in any false god. Instead, Israel must be faithful to fulfill that basic command to **love the LORD their God**, expressing that love in part through wholehearted **worship** (11:13). The same God who created Canaan would **provide rain for their land in the proper time** (11:14). He would also provide His people with **grain, new wine, and oil** (11:14) and their flocks with **grass in the fields** (10:15). The Lord’s bountiful provision meant that Israel would **eat and be satisfied** (10:15).

The pagan nations in and around Canaan worshiped gods that were thought to control the forces of nature. Their idols looked awesome, their practices were enticing, and their theology was credible to the pre-scientific mind. But it was all a lie, and Israel must **be careful** or they would be **enticed to turn aside, worship, and bow down to the worthless gods** of their neighbors (11:16). If they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, then undesirable consequences would follow. The Lord loved Israel too much to let them continue in their lie; His **anger would burn against** the covenant people and warnings in the form of acts of God in nature could be expected. God had used nature as a judgment tool against the Egyptians and, if needed, He would use it again against Israel (11:17). And when He did, there would **be no rain; the land would not yield its produce**, and Israel would

perish quickly (11:17).

11:18-32. With an urgent tone, Moses tried to impress on the Israelites the absolute importance of knowing the words of the Lord and following them. God's guiding word must be on their **hearts and minds**; it must be as obvious as a **sign on their hands** and a **symbol on their foreheads** (11:18). More than that, the Israelites needed to transfer that truth to the next generation; they must **teach** the word of God to their **children** (11:19). This was such a vital task that it was to be carried out from early morning till bedtime. Succeeding at this task meant that the next generation's **days** would be **many in the land the LORD swore to give** the patriarchs (11:21).

Obedying God meant that the Lord would work with Israel to **drive out of Canaan nations greater and stronger** than they were (11:23). Being **careful to follow all the statutes and ordinances** Moses passed along to them (11:32) also meant God's people would be positioned to receive a **blessing** (11:27; see also 28:4-14).

But just as surely as the Israelites would receive blessings for obeying God, they would receive a **curse** for disobedience (11:28; see 28:15-68). The promised blessings and the threatened curses were real and significant, and **they were not to be ignored**. Therefore, Moses directed the Israelites to proclaim them in the land at a special assembly that would be held at Mount Gerizim **and** at Mount Ebal (11:29).