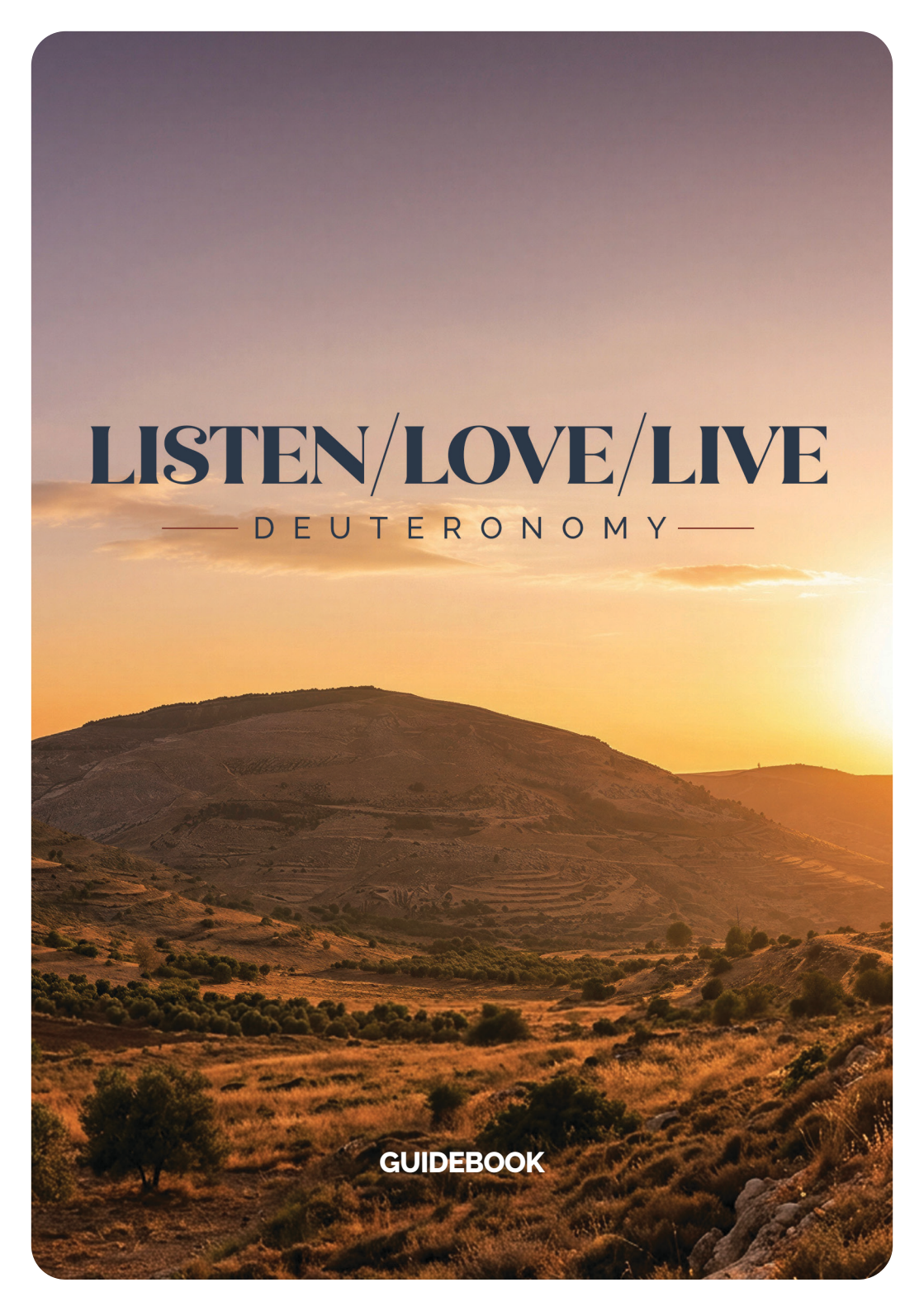




LISTEN/LOVE/LIVE

— DEUTERONOMY —

GUIDEBOOK

LISTEN/LOVE/LIVE

— D E U T E R O N O M Y —

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. Deuteronomy 6:4-5

The Setting of Deuteronomy

The name Deuteronomy means 'second law', and while this is not necessarily the best summary of the content of the Book, it is a helpful pointer to the historical context in which it is set.

Deuteronomy is set about 40 years after the Exodus when God, through his leader Moses, led the people of Israel out of slavery in Egypt. Although it is only an 11 day-journey from Egypt to the Promised Land, it has taken the Israelites 40 years to get there.

The reasons for the 40 years of wandering will become clear as we start to read the book, but as Deuteronomy begins, the generation of Israelites who left Egypt has entirely died out and a whole new generation of Israelites is camped on the border of the promised land, ready to begin the conquest.

The Content of Deuteronomy

To prepare them for the momentous events that lie ahead, Moses gives a final set of speeches (sermons) to urge them to continue to listen to the word of the LORD, to love him above all else and to live for him faithfully.

In these sermons Moses reminds the Israelites of what the LORD has done since he freed them from Egypt, he reminds them of the Law that he gave them at Mt Horeb (otherwise known as Mt Sinai), and he reminds them of their regular unfaithfulness.

These sermons reach their climax with Moses setting out the stark choice the Israelites face between the blessings of obedience and the curse of disobedience. He urges the Israelites to love and live for the LORD every day of their lives in the land that God is going to give them.

A Future Hope

Not only do Moses' words contain a passionate call for wholehearted commitment to the LORD, they also contain prophesy about the future of Israel's relationship with him.

Based on past events Moses can see that Israel will not succeed in obeying God, and so the curses that come with unfaithfulness to the LORD are inevitable.

As depressing as this might seem, Moses not only foresees Israel experiencing the curses of the covenant. He also looks beyond the coming curses to a time when God will do something new for Israel. Moses foresees that in the end God will change his people on the inside so that they will be able to love him and live for him faithfully, and so experience all the blessings.

Deuteronomy and the Gospel

As we read through Deuteronomy you will discover that it's quite 'law-heavy'. And yet that law comes in response to the saving work of God. What we have in Deuteronomy is the framework of 'covenant relationship' where God has lovingly chosen a people for himself, and these redeemed people are called to love him with their whole heart! Far from dead law-keeping, Moses' sermons bring to us how we should understand the gospel!

Deuteronomy also anticipates Jesus by showing us the trajectory of the nation of Israel. At the end of the Old Testament, it is still the case that the call in Deuteronomy for 'circumcised hearts' and accompanying faithfulness and blessing are yet to arrive. It is only the coming of Jesus Christ that finally heralds the hope of new hearts.

Jesus calls Israel back to the Deuteronomy ideal of loving God with all their hearts, and he goes on to pour out the Holy Spirit who makes this wholehearted love possible. As the apostle Paul says about Jesus' work:

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6)

As Christians we can hear the exhortations of Deuteronomy to Listen to God, Love God and live for God with the confidence that comes from the Spirit of Jesus in our hearts.

Thanks!

These studies have been prepared with assistance from:

The Deuteronomy Studies prepared by Mitchelton Presbyterian Church, *'Life in the Promised Land'*; The Deuteronomy Studies prepared by Cairns Presbyterian Church, *'Listen-Love-Live'*, and the Matthias Media Deuteronomy Studies, *'The One and Only'* by Bryson Smith.

STUDY 1

No Need For Fear

DEUTERONOMY 1-3

 **KICK OFF** - Have you ever had the experience of having to go back and do something again to try to get it right? Share some stories with your group.

Read Deuteronomy 1:1-8

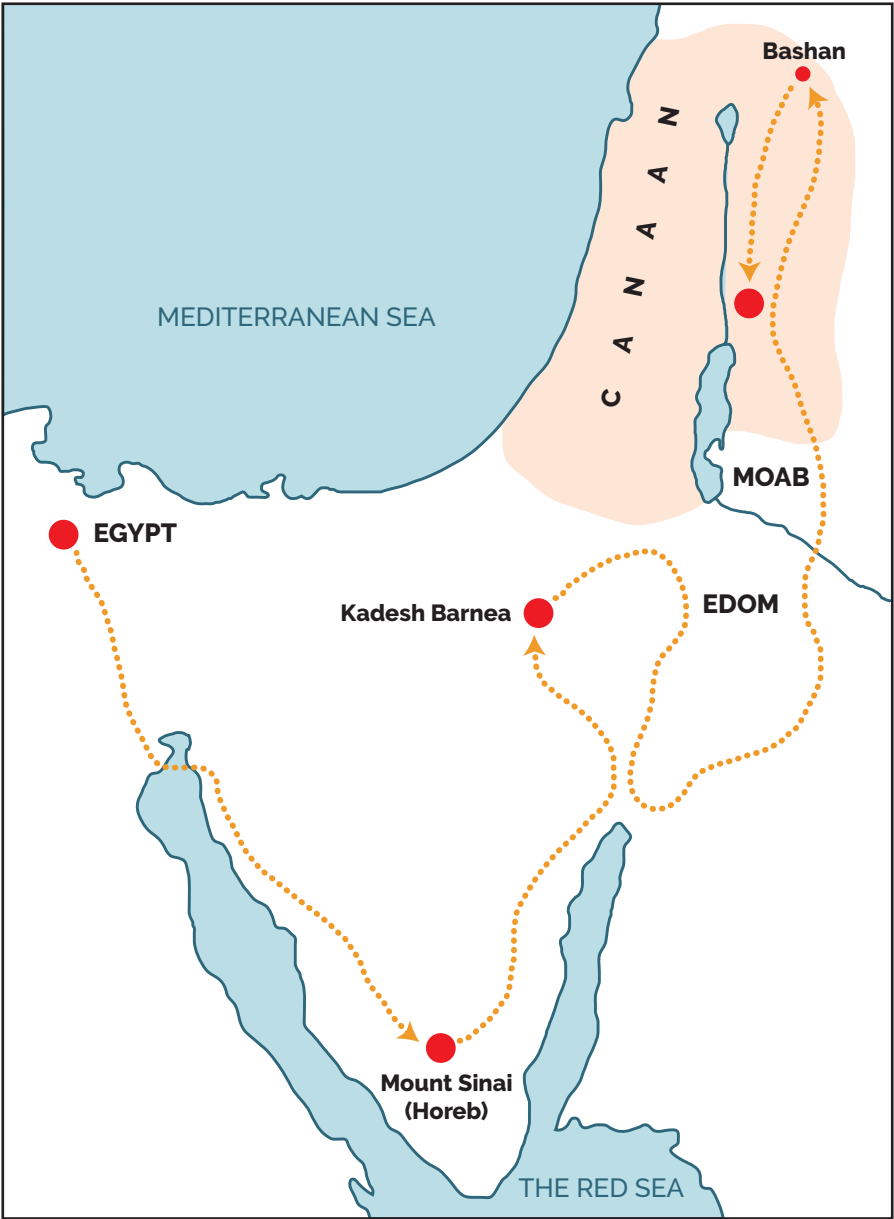
1. When they first came to Mount Horeb (Mt Sinai), what did God tell the Israelites to do (v7-8)?

2. From verse 8, what is special about this land?

3. On this first attempt, which is described in the book of Numbers, the Israelites travelled from Horeb to Kadesh to launch their campaign. How long does this trip normally take (v2)?

4. Now, on their second attempt, they are approaching the promised land from the east side of the Jordan River. How long has THIS trip taken (v3)?

These days it's hard to pin down the exact locations that are mentioned, but this rough map might help. In summary, the failure of Israel's first attempt to enter the land God promised them has turned an 11-day job into a 40 year disaster. That's quite a mess-up! So what went wrong? Moses is going to make that very plain...



Read Deuteronomy 1:9-46

5. So what went wrong for Israel?

6. What's at the heart of the problem in v26-27 and v32?

7. How did the Israelites make things even worse, v41?

Read Deuteronomy 2:1-23

Deuteronomy 2 records some of the nations Israel encounters as they spend their 40 years wandering in the desert. We're told about various tribal neighbours – Esau, Moab and Ammon and in fact they have some striking things in common.

8. How were the Israelites told to treat these nations and why (v5, v9, v19)?

9. Remember the Israelites failed to take their God-given land because they heard that the people were giants! (1v28). So compare that with the history of Esau, Moab and Ammon. What kind of people had been in their lands before them and what God had done for them (v10-12, 20-22)?

Call them whatever you like – Rephaites, Anakites, Emites, Zamzummites, everyone had a different name for them, but these guys were huge. But they weren't as tough as they looked. As the Lord God prepared and gave places to each of these other tribal nations, the tough looking big guys who had so terrified the Israelites have been sent running. Oddly, it's only God's own special chosen nation, the Israelites, who have failed. And it's because they refused to trust God's promises and obey his call to action.

In Deuteronomy 2:24-3:11 we're given the account of Israel's military victories east of the Jordan River, against King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan. That land is divided up for two of the Israel's tribes, the Reubenites and the Gaddites, but they can't settle there until they cross the Jordan River with the rest of their brother Israelites and fight alongside them.

Moses has given two big reasons why the Israelites can be bold as they take over the promised land. First, the Edomites, the Moabites and the Ammonites had beaten the giants in the area before them, and second, they've already taken down King Og and Sihon as well. They have every reason to be confident... they just had to remember one thing.

10. Read the words Moses said to Joshua in Deuteronomy 3:21-22. Why is there no reason to be frightened?

One of the great tragedies of Israel's journey to the promised land is that Moses, the great leader, won't make the final stage with them. We'll get to his death at the end of Deuteronomy. Like the rest of his generation, and because of his own disobedience to God, he'll remain outside the land. However, in 3:27-29, God allows him to see the land from a distance.

Application

Fearing their enemies more than they trusted and feared God proved disastrous for the first generation of Israelites. It caused them to miss out on the promised land. However this generation is not alone in their fear. It is a common temptation.

a. How does Proverbs 29:25 speak about the wise attitude to fear and trust?

b. Have a look at Acts 4:23-31. How do the first Christians face a similar choice to the Israelites on the edge of the promised land? How do they respond?

c. How does Jesus give even more reason for God's people to trust him rather than fear others?

d. What fears keep you from trusting and obeying God?

e. How can the history of Israel and the coming of Jesus strengthen us to be bold in trusting God?

Prayer

Let's make sure our study of Deuteronomy leads to prayer – prayer for our own heart towards Jesus our Saviour, prayer for His church, and prayer for those who don't yet know Jesus. We don't want knowledge for knowledge's sake. As the apostle Paul says, *'If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.'* 1 Corinthians 13:2.

As a group, let's use the helpful prayer acronym ACTS each week to help guide our prayer time:

Adoration – Let the passage shape how you come to God to praise Him and adore Him for who He is - His sovereignty, His holiness, His faithfulness, His grace, etc.

Confession – How does the passage bring home to you the gravity of sin? We have the gospel of Jesus so we remember cleansing and forgiveness in Jesus, but it's right to come to our Heavenly Father with our confession.

Thanksgiving – How does this passage remind you of the many blessings that are yours in Christ. God is a giver of good things so it's right to express thanksgiving, even in hardship.

Salvation – If you're familiar with the ACTS acronym you might notice something different here! S usually stands for Supplication, an old-fashioned word for humbly coming to our Heavenly Father with our requests. But let's make sure we direct some of our supplications for people in our lives who've yet to discover salvation in Jesus. As the apostle Paul asks for prayer – *'...pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honoured, just as it was with you.'* (2 Thess 3:1-2)

(A)

Adoration

*Praising God for
who He Is*

(C)

Confession

*Acknowledging
your Sin*

(T)

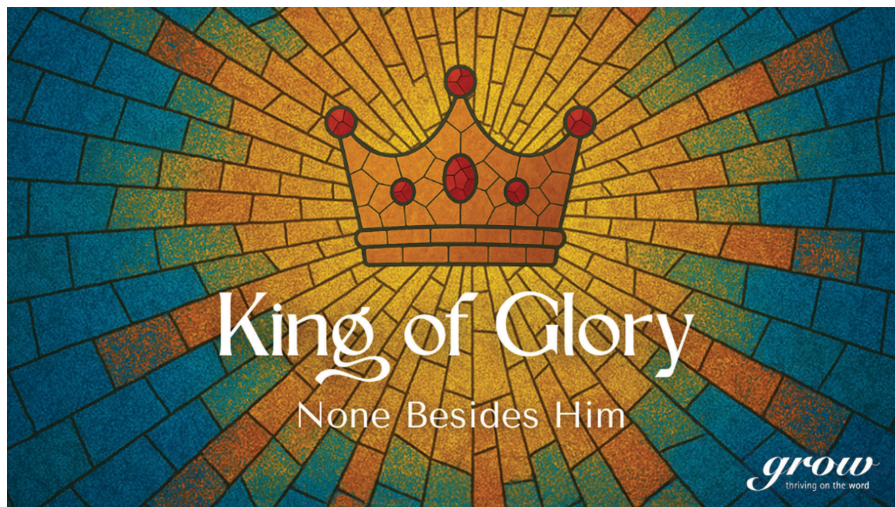
Thanksgiving

*Good gifts from
God you enjoy*

(S)

Salvation

*1-3 People who
don't know Jesus*



GROW Women's Conference

Saturday 1st August

Are you in awe of God?

There is none besides Him:
Steadfast in glory, unrivalled in majesty,
Sovereign over nations and hearts alike.
In His hands are power and authority.

From the LORD of rebellious Israel to His unveiled glory in
Christ, there is no ruler like our God.

Who is the king of YOUR heart?
Do YOU live as though God alone reigns?

Come to GROW 2026 and marvel at the King of Glory.

Talks from 1 Samuel 4-8 and Revelation 1.



DEUTERONOMY 1-3

13

STUDY 2

The LORD Speaks

DEUTERONOMY 4

 **KICK OFF** - Have you ever got to know someone well without seeing them face to face?

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In Deuteronomy 4 Moses continues his great speech on the edge of the promised land. He reminds them how the LORD revealed himself in the past, speaks of dangers they will face when they come into the promised land, and speaks of a future time ahead.

Read Deuteronomy 4:1-24, and as you read through write down notes on the following areas to then share as a group:

Israel's great privileges

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How The LORD reveals himself and does not reveal himself?

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What is the dangerous temptation that the Israelites need to watch out for?

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What the LORD is like?

The One and Only

Moses proclaims: *'The Lord is God; besides him there is no other'* (4:35, 39).

Whenever we read 'LORD' in capital letters in the Old Testament, it refers to the personal name of God: 'Yahweh'. This is the name God used to introduce himself to Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3). It is the personal name of God which the Jews came to consider so holy that they would never write it down or even pronounce it.

1. In the light of 4:35, (ie. that Yahweh alone is God), why are the commands against making idols so important?

2. From this passage, what are some of the major differences between idols and Yahweh?

Read Deuteronomy 4:25-40

3. What will the consequence be if they or their children or grandchildren start worshipping any kind of idol? (v25-28)

Moses paints a dark picture of a future smashed and scattered Israel – even before they've come into the land. They can't say they haven't been warned! Their future security in the promised land depends on whether they're prepared to trust the words of the only true God who has spoken, and are not tempted to replace him with a 'god they can see' in the form of the kind of idols that all the nations serve.

4. But even if (or when) the worst comes to the worst, what reassurance does Moses give in verses 29-31?

5. Why will God be merciful to these people?

6. Why has God redeemed these people from slavery? (There's one key reason!)

7. Notice in this part of Deuteronomy how much again 'hearing the voice of God' comes up in this part of Deuteronomy 4 – v33, 36. What must the Israelites do in response?

God's Word – To Us

Because God is a 'God of Word', his people are to be 'all ears'! They are to pay attention to his word, be thankful for his covenant promises, and obey his laws and decrees. Most of all, they need to realise that he is the ONLY God. There is no other! Idols made by human hands might be solid and visible – but they didn't bring Israel out of slavery, they didn't speak from the fire, they didn't perform awesome deeds in the wilderness...and they won't keep Israel safe in the promised land! **They need to take notice of God's word!**

Application

Moving from the Old Testament to the New Testament is like going from black and white TV to full HD widescreen 3D! The way God revealed himself back then has been far surpassed – by the coming of Jesus.

a. Read John 1:1,14,18. How can we get to know the unseen God?

b. What are some popular 'images and idols' that people use to try to get an impression of what God is like?

c. How can we relate to God in a way that avoids distorted images of what he is like?

Prayer

Let's make sure our study of Deuteronomy leads to prayer – prayer for our own heart towards Jesus our Saviour, prayer for His church, and prayer for those who don't yet know Jesus. We don't want knowledge for knowledge's sake. As the apostle Paul says, 'If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.' 1 Corinthians 13:2.

As a group, let's use the helpful prayer acronym ACTS each week to help guide our prayer time. If you'd like, turn back to p10 for more information.



Adoration

*Praising God for
who He Is*



Confession

*Acknowledging
your Sin*



Thanksgiving

*Good gifts from
God you enjoy*



Salvation

*1-3 People who
don't know Jesus*



Discover

Starts Wednesday 19 August

Our first night of Discover commences in August.
Please pray for Discover coming up.





Sunday 2 August

DEUTERONOMY 4

19

STUDY 3

The Meaning of the Law

DEUTERONOMY 5-6

 **KICK OFF** - Have a go at listing the ten commandments from memory.

As you may remember from Studies 1 and 2, the book of Deuteronomy is a record of the sermons that Moses gave to the people of Israel as they are camped on the edge of the promised land, preparing to go in and conquer it.

Deuteronomy 5:1 begins Moses' second speech to the Israelites — a speech that goes all the way to chapter 26. As we will discover, this whole speech is focused on the 'Decrees and Laws' which God wants Israel to obey as part of their relationship with him. The speech can be divided up into two main sections: chapters 5–11, which focus mainly on the importance of the law and the dangers of disobedience, and then chapters 12–26 which focus on the actual content of the laws and decrees that the Israelites are to obey.

Read Deuteronomy 5:1–6:3

Quick Questions (Less than 5 Minutes)

1. According to verse 1, what is Moses wanting to do in this speech (5:1, 6:3)?

2. How did God introduce himself when giving the law (5:6)?

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3. Why should they rest on the seventh day (5:15)?

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4. Why should they not worship idols (5:10-11)?

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5. Why should they honour their parents (5:16)?

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6. What was Israel's initial reaction (5:23-26) and how did God rate it (5:28-29)?

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Law & Life

7. Did Israel have to earn their salvation by keeping the law? Or did God save them before he gave them his law?

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Finish this sentence: *Israel should keep God's law because...*

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The idea of laws and commandments can sound restrictive and impersonal to us. We hate the idea of God as a cosmic policeman standing at a roadside with his radar gun, ready to ping us for any little mistake. However Moses reminds the Israelites that God's laws and commandments are completely different to a cosmic speed camera. The God who is giving them the commandments is the God who has rescued them from slavery in Egypt, appeared to them personally in all his glory, and who longs for life to go well for them and their children forever.

But Moses doesn't stop with reminding the Israelites of the 10 commandments that God gave them 40 years earlier. He has a new word from God to help them understand why and how they are to keep the commandments, and he goes on to explain in chapter 6.

Law & Love

Read Deuteronomy 6:1–25

8. In Deuteronomy 6, Moses expands particularly on the first of the 10 commandments, to have no other gods before the LORD.

a) How does the new teaching in verses 4–5 compare with the original first commandment?

9. What advice does Moses give to help Israel remember and keep the commandment?

10. What are the Israelites to say when asked to explain the meaning of the statutes and laws (v20–25)? Is this surprising?

Having looked at chapter 6, would you change/add anything to your sentence from question 7?

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The famous command to love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and strength adds another dimension to commands in chapter 5. Relating to God is not just about avoiding offending him. It's about wholehearted love and submission. The motivation for this attitude however, remains exactly the same as in chapter 5. When the Israelites explain the meaning of the commands and laws to their children, they are not to start with consequences for obedience and disobedience, they are to talk about the amazing rescue from Egypt and the generous gift of the land that God has given them. It's this relationship with God that is the key to keeping his commands.

Application

a. As Gentile Christians, we no longer look back to the Exodus or God's appearance at Mt Sinai in the same way as the key events in our relationship with God. How has God saved us and revealed his glory to us?

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Read Colossians 3:1–14

b. How does the motivation to live for God in Colossians compare to the motivation to live for God given in Deuteronomy 5–6?

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c. Are there any particular areas where you need to renew your motivation for living for God?

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d. How do you think Moses' instructions about impressing the LORD's commandments upon the children (6:4-7), relates to Christians today?

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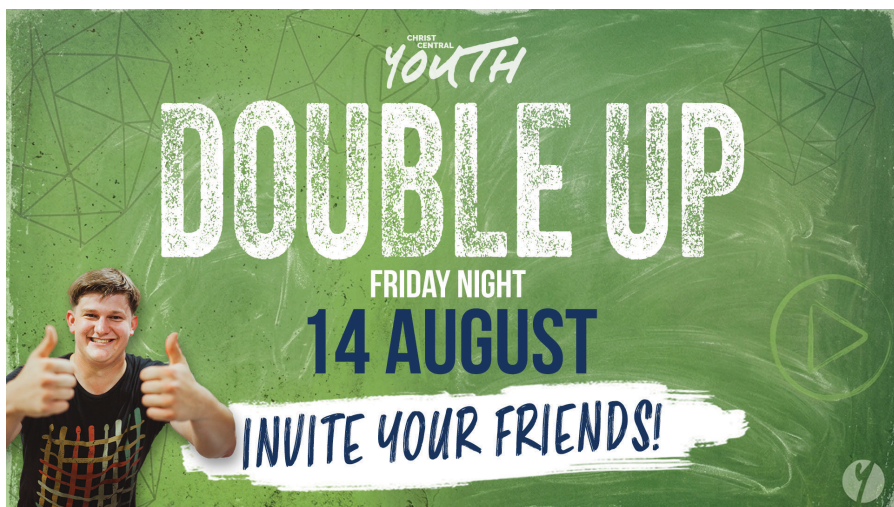


Prayer

Let's make sure our study of Deuteronomy leads to prayer – prayer for our own heart towards Jesus our Saviour, prayer for His church, and prayer for those who don't yet know Jesus. We don't want knowledge for knowledge's sake. As the apostle Paul says, *'If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.'* 1 Corinthians 13:2.

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 Adoration <i>Praising God for who He Is</i>	 Confession <i>Acknowledging your Sin</i>	 Thanksgiving <i>Good gifts from God you enjoy</i>	 Salvation <i>1-3 People who don't know Jesus</i>
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DEUTERONOMY 5-6

26

STUDY 4

The Danger of Disobedience

DEUTERONOMY 7-11

⏻ KICK OFF - 'The Christian life is a life of faith'. Now have a go at using three different words or phrases to fill in the blank:

The Christian life is a life of

The Christian life is a life of

The Christian life is a life of

By the time we get to Deuteronomy 12 and onwards next week, we'll be into the long list of sometimes very specific laws for Israel that can seem very foreign to us. So it's important we keep seeing the context for all of this and the real reasons that the Israelites should obey. In Moses' speech on the edge of the promised land, we come to chapters which remind Israel that Israel has already been saved by God, and they have every reason to choose obedience and life, instead of death. God's grace in the past and God's grace in the future are both strong reasons for them to keep God's law. But Moses needs to warn them of the dangers that lie ahead, and how to handle them.

For the following 3 passages think about...

1. The dangers/temptations that Israel will soon face and
2. What's the solution/motivation to obey

► Deuteronomy 7:1-11

Dangers/Temptations:

.....

Solution/Motivation to obey:

.....

► **Deuteronomy 7:17-26**

Dangers/Temptations:

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Solution/Motivation to obey:

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► **Deuteronomy 8:10-20**

Dangers/Temptations:

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Solution/Motivation to obey:

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1. When it comes to our relationship with God, do Christians face any similar dangers or temptations to those Israel faced?

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In Deuteronomy 9:22-23 Moses reminds the people about four events during their wilderness wanderings that displays their sinful, stiff-necked hearts (*Taberah* - see Numbers 11:1-3; *Massah* - see Exodus 17:1-7; *Kibroth Hattaavah* - see Numbers 11:31-35; and *Kadesh Barnea* – see Numbers 13-14), but from Deuteronomy 9:25 onwards, Moses goes on to describe in much more detail their great rebellious catastrophe at Mt Horeb/Sinai (Exodus 32).

2. Why do you think Moses is reminding them of these events?

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Read Deuteronomy 10:12-11:1

3. Thinking about Israel's past (and even thinking about the future of Israel from what we know of the rest of the Old Testament!), should we be hopeful for the nation of Israel, that they will be able to *'circumcise their hearts and not be stiff-necked any longer?'* (v16)?

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4. In this study we started with that statement

'The Christian life is a life of

So isn't it amazing that this supposedly legalistic, law-ish part of the bible is rich in words and phrases that we could use for describing the Christian life! Does this surprise you? What phrases particularly stand out for you?

As Christians, we're not supposed to take on all the laws and regulations that were designed for life in the promised land. But so many of the motivations we've thought about from Deuteronomy 7-11 very much ring true for our new Spirit-filled life in Christ. And you'll remember from our last study, in Colossians we're told to "put to death" lust, greed and idolatry which lead to sexual impurity, anger, malice, slander and lies, the things in which we used to live (3:6-9). We need to clear them out to make room for compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience and forgiveness like Christ's (3:12-14). So like the Israelites in Deuteronomy, we too are called to live a new life in a new place. So we should take seriously the instructions from Moses on how to do that...

 Application

a. Do you think prosperity leaves us open to forgetting God?

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b. How are you going at fixing God's word in your hearts and minds and talking about it with your family and others? It's ok to say you struggle! You could also share with your group the positive things you seek to do.

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c. How often do you consciously consider your sinful attitudes so you can put them to death?

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Prayer

Let's make sure our study of Deuteronomy leads to prayer – prayer for our own heart towards Jesus our Saviour, prayer for His church, and prayer for those who don't yet know Jesus. We don't want knowledge for knowledge's sake. As the apostle Paul says, *'If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.'* 1 Corinthians 13:2.

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*1-3 People who
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Sunday 16 August

DEUTERONOMY 7-11

31

True Worship & Real Joy!

DEUTERONOMY 12-13



KICK OFF - Do you have any places that you especially associate with a particular person?

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With the familiar phrase 'these are the decrees and laws', Deuteronomy 12 begins a major new section in Moses' speech that will go all the way to chapter 26. Let's remember that the Israelites are about to cross the Jordan River and take over the land God has promised their ancestors. Moses has been warning them about the consequences of taking the land and then ignoring the God who saved them – when they prosper, it will be easy to forget that their success has come from God and not themselves. More than that, there will be a huge temptation to compromise, and take on the 'worship habits' of the people who live in the land already.

Before we embark on this section of Deuteronomy, it's worth noting that chapters 12-26 in some ways unpack and apply the 10 commandments that God gave at Mt Horeb (and we saw those 10 commandments in Deuteronomy 5). They were the 10 commandments given to the slaves set free from Egypt. But now this is the law applied to actual life in the good land that God has saved them for. In chapter 12-13 the focus is on the first commandment applied - *'You shall have no other gods before me!'*

1. Israel is meant to displace the evil nations who worship their false gods under big trees and on high hills. They dance to the goddess Asherah and make sacrifices on stone altars. What other terrible things do they do, according to Deuteronomy 12:30-31?

2. What are the Israelites meant to do to these 'worship places' when they take the land? (Deuteronomy 12:3)

3. What's the danger if they don't do this? (v4)

4. What safeguard does God describe in verse 5 and 6?

Looking forward...

As we'll eventually discover, the place God chooses as the one central place to worship him is Jerusalem. But that's not going to be for another few hundred years. Later on, after Jerusalem's temple has been established, there's a huge split between Judah (the south, where Jerusalem is located) and the northern tribes who break away to set up their own places of worship, and as predicted these people end up worshipping other gods.

By the time we get to Jesus, that northern land is known as Samaria, and in John 4 Jesus discusses the issue of 'place of worship' with a Samaritan woman.

Read John 4:19-26

5. According to Jesus, how is worship going to change now that he is here?

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6. How should we as Christians honour Deuteronomy's concern that God is worshipped in the right way?

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7. It's worth noting the repeated word of 'rejoice' in Deuteronomy 12 (v7, 12, v18). God has redeemed Israel, chosen and saved them for great blessing in the land. Therefore, following God and his law is not a deadening begrudging rule-keeping thing, it's a source of great joy! Do you think that joy is part of your worship of God? What will it mean to express joy for all the blessings you have in Jesus?

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Read Deuteronomy 13

8. What basic problem is this chapter dealing with?

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9. The laws dealing with this problem seem extreme to us. Why do you think such drastic measures are required?

This chapter has focused on the dreamer/false prophet, a beloved family member and a whole town. The Israelites are given warnings for radical treatment because the disease of false-god worship can disastrously spread so quickly. **Paul says something remarkably similar in Galatians 1:6-9.** What is his point?

Even if an angel turns up at church with a different message, we must not be impressed or influenced! It's a good thing to remember whenever someone comes with an impressive sounding 'new message from God.' As Christians, we're no longer tied to Jerusalem as the place to worship the one true God. But we are tied to Jesus! There's no other way to be right with God, there's no other way to come to Him, there is no sacrifice to make to impress God – Jesus has already done the sacrificing for us. And so, no matter what anyone else says or does, no matter what impressive signs they give us...we simply stay put!



Application

a. What tempts you most to 'let go' of Jesus?

b. What questions has this study raised for you about 'how we worship'?

Prayer

Let's make sure our study of Deuteronomy leads to prayer – prayer for our own heart towards Jesus our Saviour, prayer for His church, and prayer for those who don't yet know Jesus. We don't want knowledge for knowledge's sake. As the apostle Paul says, *'If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.'* 1 Corinthians 13:2.

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Please pray for Discover.





Sunday 23 August

DEUTERONOMY 12-13

37

STUDY 6

Laws for Living

DEUTERONOMY 14-26



KICK OFF - If you were going to start a new nation, what would be the first three rules?

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If you were responsible for creating the laws of a new nation, which offences would you consider for the most severe punishment?

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This week we come to Moses' detailed explanation of the laws Israel is to follow once they finally cross the Jordan River and settle in the land. As a taster, read this section of Deuteronomy 22:4-12, and then discuss the possible reasons for these laws:

⁴ If you see your fellow Israelite's donkey or ox fallen on the road, do not ignore it. Help the owner get it to its feet.

⁵ A woman must not wear men's clothing, nor a man wear women's clothing, for the Lord your God detests anyone who does this.

⁶ If you come across a bird's nest beside the road, either in a tree or on the ground, and the mother is sitting on the young or on the eggs, do not take the mother with the young. ⁷ You may take the young, but be sure to let the mother go, so that it may go well with you and you may have a long life.

⁸ *When you build a new house, make a parapet around your roof so that you may not bring the guilt of bloodshed on your house if someone falls from the roof.*

⁹ *Do not plant two kinds of seed in your vineyard; if you do, not only the crops you plant but also the fruit of the vineyard will be defiled.*

¹⁰ *Do not plow with an ox and a donkey yoked together.*

¹¹ *Do not wear clothes of wool and linen woven together.*

¹² *Make tassels on the four corners of the cloak you wear.*

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If at some points you can understand reasons for these laws, while at other times, you struggle to make sense of them - you're not alone! But we have to realise our context is different from the ancient Middle East. But as we come to look at these laws that Moses gives the people of Israel (and today we'll only examine a sample!) let's be alert to the reasons for obedience – sometimes with a clear logic and motive given – often to do with 3 key areas: God, other people, and the land.

Break into pairs or groups of three, choose a passage to read and then answer the questions that follow.

Deuteronomy 14:1-21

Deuteronomy 21:1-21

Deuteronomy 14:22-15:18

Deuteronomy 22:13-23:14

Deuteronomy 15:19-16:22

Deuteronomy 24:6-25:4

1. Which laws have the most serious consequences for disobedience?

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2. Are there reasons given for obeying the laws?

3. What do the laws teach about relating to God, other people and the land?

4. Can you see any link between the laws in this section and the ten commandments? (Remember - Moses launched this sermon with a retelling of the ten commandments in chapter 5) Don't worry if you can't see anything obvious.

5. What questions do you have?

The Days Ahead...

Scattered amongst the rules and laws that God is giving Israel, there are a number of hints of what lies ahead. If you're struggling for time, just choose one of Questions 6-8 below.

6. One day Israel will have kings. What will the King need to do and why? (17:14-20)

What do you observe when you read about King Solomon in 1 Kings 10:26-11:4?

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Jesus came as the King of Israel. How does he contrast with Solomon?

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7. What does Moses promise in Deuteronomy 18:15-18?

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According to Acts 3:17-23, who fulfils this promise?

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According to John 1:17, what's the difference between Jesus and Moses?

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8. What curse is described in Deuteronomy 21:22-23

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According to Galatians 3:13, how does Jesus fulfil this?

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The Law for Israel and Us

The laws were designed to help Israel, to live a holy life in God's promised land as God's special people, his treasured possession. Given our own context, we undoubtedly struggle to understand some of these laws, but the overall thrust

was to provide justice for all and to help keep the people loyal to the LORD. Ultimately though, the law was unsuccessful in keeping Israel faithful to the covenant with God and the Israelites suffered the judgement of exile.

9. According to Titus 3, the coming of Jesus (the promised King and Prophet) has saved us from our past slavery to our passions and pleasures (read Titus 3:3-8). How does Paul say WE are to now live, and why? (v. 8)

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10. Can you think of practical examples of how we can better reflect our redemption in the way we treat one another, those in our church family who are less well off, those in our community?

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 Prayer

Let's make sure our study of Deuteronomy leads to prayer – prayer for our own heart towards Jesus our Saviour, prayer for His church, and prayer for those who don't yet know Jesus. We don't want knowledge for knowledge's sake. As the apostle Paul says, *'If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.'* 1 Corinthians 13:2.

As a group, let's use the helpful prayer acronym ACTS each week to help guide our prayer time.

(A)	(C)	(T)	(S)
Adoration	Confession	Thanksgiving	Salvation
<i>Praising God for who He Is</i>	<i>Acknowledging your Sin</i>	<i>Good gifts from God you enjoy</i>	<i>1-3 People who don't know Jesus</i>

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Friday Prayer

DOUBLE VISION



Friday Prayer

We've been praying for people in our lives who need salvation in Jesus. Did you know that our staff team each week prays through the names of our church directory? Next time they get to your name, they would love to pray for those people in your life! Use the QR Code to let the team know.



DEUTERONOMY 14-26

44

Day for Decision

DEUTERONOMY 27-30



KICK OFF - Can you think of any significant turning point moments where you made significant decisions about your life and/or about God?

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As we've seen in the previous study, Moses has just outlined in some detail all the laws and commands that God wants the Israelites to follow as they live together in the promised land. In Deuteronomy 27 he moves on to highlight the need for Israel to make a choice about serving God and the consequences that will flow from this choice. It's all about LISTEN/LOVE/LIVE!

Read Deuteronomy 27:1-13

1. What ceremony is Israel to carry out on the two mountains once they enter the land?

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2. What will this ceremony remind the people of?

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3. Look through Deuteronomy 28 and then share with each other some of the blessing and curses that stand out to you.

Blessings

Curses

4. Which list is longer? Why do you think that is?

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In this chapter we read descriptions of Israel's grave disobedience and idolatry such as these:

Because you did not serve the Lord your God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity... (v. 47)

If you do not carefully follow all the words of this law, which are written in this book, and do not revere this glorious and awesome name—the Lord your God... (v. 58)

This chapter does not make for pleasant reading at all! Because of their sin, Israel will be besieged by another nation, starved and dragged away. And then in that foreign place they will worship foreign gods (vv. 36, 64). So it will all go wrong for Israel – hard hearts, idolatrous hearts, under God's curse, in exile.

But in chapter 30, Moses shifts from warning about possibilities in the future to speaking more explicitly about what will happen.

Read Deuteronomy 30:1-10

5. What does the future hold for Israel, both good and bad?

In Deuteronomy 30, Moses confirms what has been hinted at earlier. Israel will be disobedient, and will experience the curses of the covenant. However, there is still hope of ultimate blessing, and many years later in the midst of experiencing the curse of exile, the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel pick up on the hopes of Deuteronomy 30.

Read Jeremiah 31:33 and Ezekiel 36:24-28

6. What do these prophets foresee?

7. As Christians how do we experience the fulfilment of the hopes of Moses, Jeremiah and Ezekiel?

The nation of Israel is on the cusp of entering the promised land and Moses has been calling them to covenant faithfulness. Moses brings his final speech to a climax with his call to 'choose life'. **Read Deuteronomy 30:11-20.**

This passage offers the theme we've seen throughout this series – LISTEN/ LOVE/LIVE. The history of the nation of Israel shows us they never made that choice; they never truly turned back to the LORD. But where Israel failed, God himself provided the way for blessing to flow to all of humanity!

8. Romans 10 looks back on the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 30. **Read Romans 10:8-12** and discuss how the gospel proclamation brings the message of Deuteronomy 30:11-20 into our lives today?

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 Prayer

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Sunday 13 September

DEUTERONOMY 27-30

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