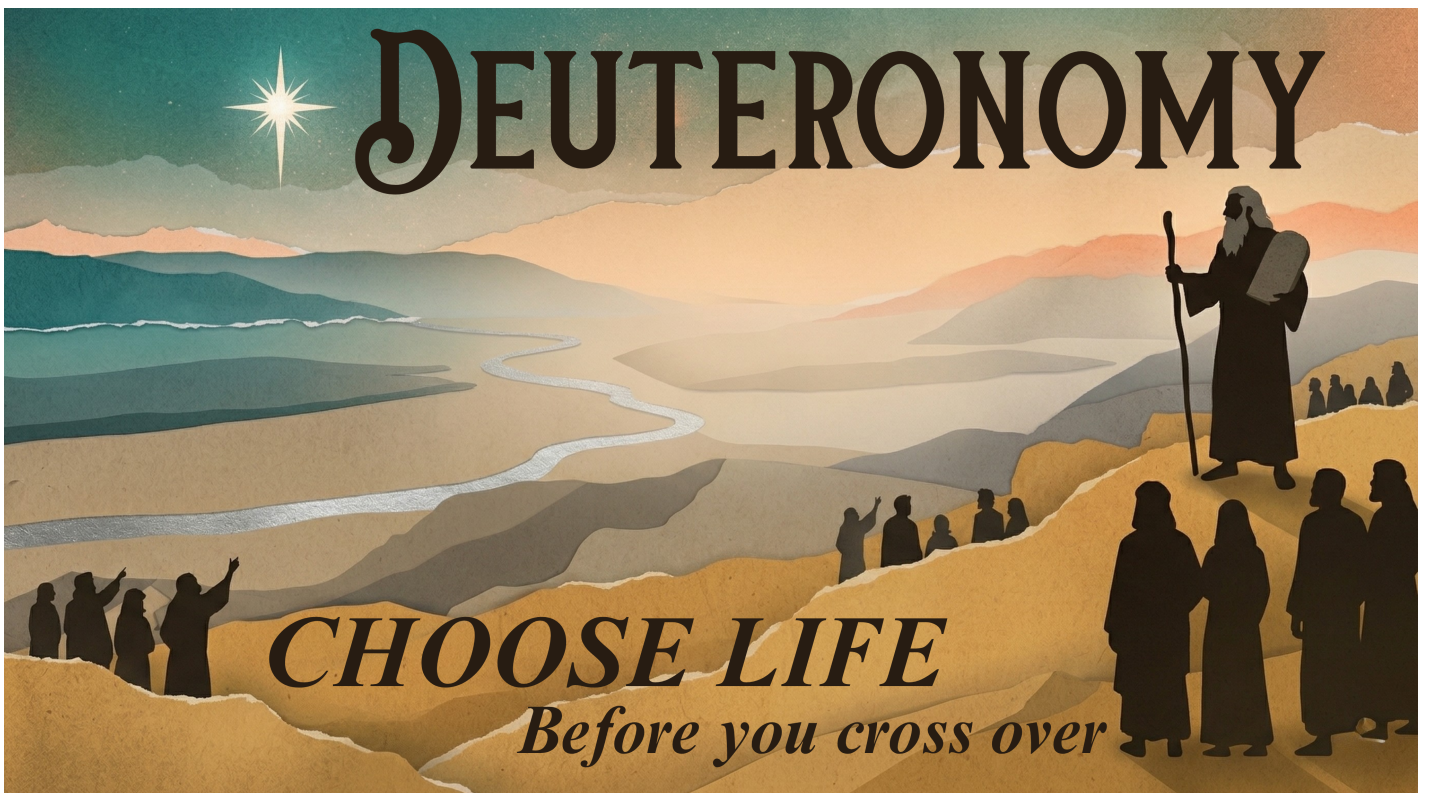


# DEUTERONOMY

Bible studies

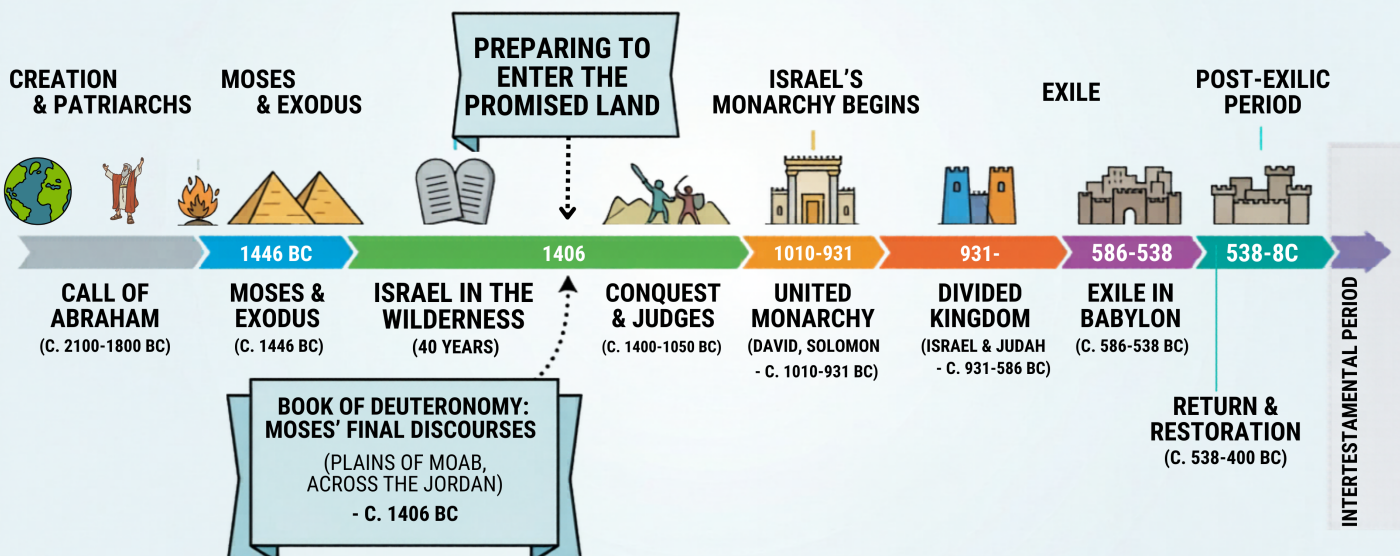
Term 2 2026



Our vision is to glorify God by meeting together to hear His word, and respond to it through prayer, discipleship and evangelism.

# Notes & Timeline

## OLD TESTAMENT TIMELINE (FOCUS ON DEUTERONOMY)



# Overview

## About This Booklet

This Bible Study booklet has been produced for our preaching series through Deuteronomy. The studies are available for Quirindi Anglican Parish Bible study groups and individuals.

Many of us believe the best way to get the most out of God's word — and the preaching of it — is to be familiar with Sunday's passage before we arrive at church. Hence, the Bible studies are usually worked through before the preaching on any given Sunday.

## How to Use These Studies

Each study follows a four-part pattern:

### **Getting Started**

A warm-up question to open discussion and engage the heart.

### **Investigate**

Questions that work carefully and closely through the Bible text.

### **Apply**

Questions that bring the passage to bear on life and faith today.

### **Gospel Connection**

Questions that trace how the passage points to and is fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Read the passage before coming to your group. Have your Bible open throughout. The aim is not merely information but formation — to be shaped by God's word into people who love him and love one another.

## Getting Acquainted

Deuteronomy — the title is Greek for 'second law' or 'second giving of the law' — is best understood as a national covenant document: a founding charter for the new life Israel is about to begin in the Promised Land. Forty years earlier, God had rescued Israel from slavery in Egypt and established his covenant with them at Sinai (Horeb). But when they reached the threshold of Canaan, they refused to enter. Unbelief and disobedience sent them back into the wilderness for four decades.

Now, at the end of those forty years, Israel stands on the edge once more — on the plains of Moab, east of the Jordan. Moses is 120 years old and knows he will not cross over. The book of Deuteronomy is his farewell: a sweeping, passionate address calling Israel to live out their covenant identity in the land they are about to receive.

# Overview (cont.)

But Deuteronomy is also, at its deepest level, a book about what God does for Israel rather than what Israel does for God. The call to obedience (chs. 4–26) is always rooted in God's prior redemptive action (chs. 1–11). Even as the book reckons honestly with Israel's brokenness and persistent tendency to fail (chs. 29, 31–32), it holds out an unshakeable hope grounded entirely in God's own faithfulness and love (chs. 30, 32–33).

## Placing Deuteronomy in the Larger Story

To read Deuteronomy is to enter an epic story midstream. Back in Genesis, God made three interlocking promises to Abraham: his descendants would become a great nation, they would enjoy a covenant relationship with God, and they would dwell in the land of Canaan (Gen. 17:6–8). These promises reach back even further — to the garden of Eden, where a holy God walked with a holy people in a holy place. What Adam forfeited through disobedience, God promises he will still provide.

By the time we reach Deuteronomy, the nation exists and the covenant has been established at Sinai. What remains is the land. Deuteronomy stands on that threshold and calls Israel to the obedience that leads to genuine life with God — in contrast to Adam's choice of death.

But Israel ultimately chooses death, just as Adam did, and is eventually removed from the land (as the books of Judges through Kings record). This is why Deuteronomy points beyond itself — to the true Adam and the true Israel, Jesus Christ, who obeyed God perfectly on our behalf and won the ultimate fulfilment of every promise: eternal life in the presence of God. The holy kingdom that Deuteronomy foreshadows, Jesus brings.

## A Note on Authorship and Date

Deuteronomy records that Moses wrote the law and gave it to the priests and elders (31:9; see also 31:22, 24). The core of the book was composed by Moses shortly before his death — traditionally dated to either 1406 or 1220 BC. There are a small number of later editorial notes (the framing introduction of 1:1–5, the account of Moses' death in ch. 34, and brief comments such as 2:10–12). These do not diminish the book's authority; they reflect how God saw fit to preserve and present Moses' words for every subsequent generation of his people.

The core of the book was available in written form throughout Israel's history — both for their instruction (17:18; 31:10–13) and as a witness against them when they disobeyed (31:19, 26).

# Deuteronomy 1-3

## Remember the Journey

*Deuteronomy opens with Israel camped on the edge of the Promised Land. Moses is about to die. His farewell address begins not with new commands but with a retelling of the journey — a journey marked by both God's faithfulness and Israel's failure. Before they step into the future, they must look honestly at the past.*

## GETTING STARTED

1. Think of a time when remembering a past experience — good or bad — shaped how you approached something new. What was that like?

## INVESTIGATE

2. Read Deuteronomy 1:1–8. What is the setting for Moses' speech? What significance do the details of time and place carry? (Note the 'eleven days' in v. 2 — what does this detail say about the journey Israel actually took? See also Numbers 13–14.)

3. In 1:9–18, Moses recalls appointing leaders. What problem prompted this, and what was Moses' vision for justice and leadership among God's people?

4. Read 1:19–46 carefully. What did God command Israel to do? What did the spies report? Why did the people refuse to enter the land?

5. How does Moses describe Israel's core failure in 1:26–33? What had they forgotten about who God was? What had God already done that should have given them confidence?

6. Notice the imagery Moses uses in verse 31 — God carrying Israel 'as a father carries his son.' What does this picture of God communicate about Him? Why does Moses place it right in the heart of the accusation of unbelief?

7. What was God's response to Israel's rebellion (1:34–40)? What does this teach us about how seriously God takes unbelief and disobedience? Where do we see grace even within the judgment?

8. Read 1:41–46. After hearing the judgment, the people try to go up anyway. What does this tell us about the difference between genuine repentance and self-willed presumption?

9. Read chapters 2–3. How does Moses present the successful military campaigns as evidence of God's faithfulness? Pick out two or three moments where God's direction was decisive.

10. In 3:23–29, Moses pleads to enter the land — and is refused. What does God's response reveal about his justice? What comfort, if any, is offered to Moses?

## **APPLY**

11. Looking back over this history, Moses is essentially saying to Israel: 'God has been faithful; you have not.' In what ways do Christians need to regularly rehearse both God's faithfulness and their own failures? Why might churches neglect this?

12. The generation who refused to enter the land had seen God's miracles firsthand (1:30-33) — and still didn't trust him. What does this warn us about the relationship between witnessing God's power and genuine faith?

## **GOSPEL CONNECTION**

13. How does the New Testament picture Jesus as the one who succeeds where Israel (and Moses) failed? Consider Hebrews 3:1–4:13 if time permits. What does Jesus' perfect faithfulness give us that Israel's faithlessness could never provide?

# Deuteronomy 4

## The God Who Speaks

*Chapter 4 is one of the theological highpoints of the entire Old Testament. Moses draws out the profound implications of what happened at Horeb: Israel heard the voice of the living God. This unique experience carries enormous weight — it defines who God is, exposes the folly of idolatry, and anchors Israel's entire life to the covenant. The chapter is both a warning and a breathtaking invitation.*

### GETTING STARTED

1. What do you think most people around you today believe God (or 'a god') to be like? Where do those ideas come from?

### INVESTIGATE

2. Read Deuteronomy 4:1–8. What two commands does Moses give, and what reasons does he provide? What does Moses mean when he says the law demonstrates Israel's wisdom to the nations?

3. Verse 9 is pivotal: 'Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely.' What specific danger is Moses warning against? What does the repeated phrase 'so that you do not forget' tell us about human nature?

4. In verses 10–14, Moses returns to the Horeb experience. What was the decisive feature of that encounter — what did Israel experience, and critically, what did they not experience? Why does Moses emphasise this so strongly?

5. Read verses 15–20 closely. How does Moses' argument against idolatry flow directly from what Israel heard but did not see at Horeb? What is he saying about the nature of God himself?

6. In verses 25–31, Moses looks ahead to exile — long before it happens. What will cause it? And what remarkable promise does he make in verses 29–31? What do these verses tell us about God's character even in the midst of judgment?

7. Read verses 32–40 — Moses' great rhetorical climax. List the rhetorical questions he asks in verses 32–34. What is the implied answer to every one of them? What conclusion does he draw in verse 35?

8. How does verse 37 ground Israel's election entirely in love rather than merit? What are the implications of this for how Israel — and we — should think about themselves?

9. The chapter ends with a 'therefore' in verses 39–40. What is the link Moses draws between who God is and how his people should live? Is this a burden or a freedom?

### **APPLY**

10. Idolatry in the ancient world was a matter of visible images. How does idolatry work today — in what ways do we substitute created things for the living God? Where are you tempted to 'make an image' of God in your mind — imagining he is comfortable with things he has clearly spoken against?

11. Moses says God's word and nearness set Israel apart from all nations (vv. 7–8). How does the same logic apply to the Christian community, which has the completed Scriptures and the Spirit of Christ?

### **GOSPEL CONNECTION**

12. Jesus is described as the one who has made God fully known (John 1:18 — the one who is 'in the Father's bosom'). How does Jesus reveal the Father in a way that goes even further than the voice at Horeb?

13. Read Hebrews 12:28–29. God is still described as 'a consuming fire' in the new covenant. How should this shape our gratitude and our worship?

# Deuteronomy 5-6

## Love the LORD Your God

*At the heart of Deuteronomy is a question: what does it mean to love God? Chapters 5 and 6 give us the answer in two movements. First, God restates the Ten Commandments — the shape of covenant faithfulness. Then comes the Shema, Israel's great confession, and the command that towers over all others: love the LORD your God with everything you are. Jesus would later call this the greatest commandment of all.*

## GETTING STARTED

1. What does wholehearted love look like in a human relationship — a marriage, a close friendship, a parent and child? How does that picture help us understand what it means to love God?

## INVESTIGATE

2. Read Deuteronomy 5:1–5. Why does Moses insist 'this covenant was not made with our ancestors but with us, with all of us who are alive here today' (v. 3)? What is he doing with the past generation's experience?

3. Read the Ten Commandments in 5:6–21. How do they naturally divide into loving God (commandments 1–4) and loving neighbour (commandments 5–10)? What does this structure reveal about the shape of a life well-lived before God?

4. Compare the Fourth Commandment here (vv. 12–15) to its form in Exodus 20:8–11. What is different, and what theological reason does Moses give? What does this change reveal about how God's commandments speak freshly to each new generation?

5. In 5:22–33, Israel asks Moses to be their mediator. Why? What does their response to God's direct voice reveal about the proper human response to God's holiness?

6. Read 6:1–3. What is the stated purpose of the commands? Notice the layers — fear leads to obedience, obedience leads to blessing. Is this a works-based religion? How does it fit with the grace already established in 5:6 ('I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt')?

7. Read the Shema carefully (6:4–5). What does 'The LORD is one' actually assert about God? What does it mean that this great monotheistic confession leads directly into a command to love?

8. In 6:6–9, Moses describes a life thoroughly soaked in Scripture. What are the different means of transmission he describes? What cumulative picture emerges of what it would mean for God's word to genuinely permeate everyday life?

9. Read 6:10–15. What specific danger does Moses anticipate once Israel enters the land and receives its abundance? Why is prosperity sometimes more spiritually dangerous than hardship?

10. In 6:20–25, Moses anticipates a future child asking 'Why do we have these laws?' What is the answer? What does this tell us about the relationship between redemption and obedience — which must come first?

### **APPLY**

11. Verses 6–9 paint a picture of faith passed on through daily life — at home, walking, at bedtime, rising up. What are the modern equivalents of these rhythms? What makes intentional, everyday faith formation difficult, and what might help?

12. Moses warns Israel they will be tempted to attribute their prosperity to their own effort (vv. 10–12). In what areas of your own life are you most tempted to forget God's grace and take credit yourself?

### **GOSPEL CONNECTION**

13. Jesus called Deuteronomy 6:5 the greatest commandment, and added Leviticus 19:18 alongside it (Matthew 22:36–40). How does loving your neighbour flow from loving God with everything? What happens when we try to do one without the other?

14. The gospel tells us Jesus loved the Father perfectly on our behalf. How does this good news both convict us and free us in our pursuit of wholehearted love for God?

# Deuteronomy 7-11

## Not Because of You

*These chapters address a critical question: Why did God choose Israel? And why would he give them the land? Moses' answer is both humbling and liberating — it had nothing to do with Israel's size, merit, or righteousness. It was entirely grace. But grace carries a responsibility: remember, obey, and don't become proud. The twin dangers of syncretism and self-congratulation are in view throughout.*

## GETTING STARTED

1. Have you ever been given something significant that you hadn't earned? How did it feel, and how did it affect your relationship with the person who gave it?

## INVESTIGATE

2. Read 7:1–6. The command to completely destroy the Canaanite peoples shocks modern readers. What reasons does Moses give in these verses? How does verse 6 ('a people holy to the LORD') frame the command — is this about Israel's superiority, or something else entirely?

3. In 7:7–11, Moses explains God's choice of Israel. What two explicit reasons does he give? What two things explicitly did not motivate God's choice? What does this reveal about the nature of divine grace?

4. Read 7:12–26. How does Moses describe the blessings of covenant faithfulness? And what warnings does he give about the temptation to make accommodations with idolatry, however small?

5. In 8:1–10, Moses describes the wilderness experience. How does he reframe what might have seemed like hardship and deprivation? What was God achieving through the desert years? How does verse 3 redefine what human beings actually live on?

6. Read 8:11–20. What is the subtle danger Moses identifies in prosperity (v. 17)? What phrase in verse 18 directly contradicts the attitude of self-sufficiency? How does this chapter speak to both individual and national pride?

7. Read 9:1–6 carefully. Moses says three times that Israel should not think their righteousness is why they are given the land. Why does he repeat this so emphatically? What does he say is the real reason?

8. In 9:7–29, Moses immediately recounts the golden calf incident as evidence that Israel is not righteous. What do we learn about Moses as a mediator from verses 18–20 and 25–29? What does his intercession foreshadow?

9. Read 10:12–22. What does Moses say God requires — and then what does he say about God's own character in verses 17–18? How do these two things connect and reinforce each other?

10. Chapter 11 draws a striking contrast: Egypt required constant human irrigation effort, while Canaan depends on rain from heaven (11:10–12). Israel could not 'irrigate' their way into God's blessing. Which 'land' — self-effort or grace-dependence — are you most naturally trying to live in?

### **APPLY**

11. 'Not because of you' is the logic of grace throughout these chapters. Why is spiritual memory — actively remembering your own unworthiness and God's kindness — so important? What practical habits help you remember God's grace, especially during a busy or prosperous season?

### **GOSPEL CONNECTION**

12. The same 'not because of you' logic runs powerfully through the New Testament gospel. Read Ephesians 2:1–10 or Titus 3:3–7. What difference should it make to how Christians think about themselves — their standing before God, their achievements, their future?

13. Deuteronomy 8:3 ('man does not live on bread alone') is quoted by Jesus in the wilderness temptation (Matthew 4:4). Where Israel failed the wilderness test, Jesus passed it. What does his success mean for our confidence before God?

# Deuteronomy 12-16

## Worship Rightly

*How should God's people worship? And what does faithful worship shape them to be? These chapters contain what scholars call the Deuteronomic Code — detailed laws covering sacrifice, clean food, tithes, the cancellation of debts, treatment of servants, and the great festivals. At the centre of it all is one repeated command: worship at the place God chooses, and let that worship shape your generosity, justice, and memory.*

## GETTING STARTED

1. What things shape how our church worships — its music, format, location, frequency? Have you ever thought about why those choices matter?

## INVESTIGATE

2. Read 12:1–14. The command to worship at 'the place the LORD your God will choose' is central to this whole section. What problem is this solving? What is the danger of everyone doing 'as they see fit' (v. 8)?

3. In 12:29–13:18, Moses warns against false prophets and those who lead Israel into idolatry. How severe is the required response meant to be? What does this severity communicate about the seriousness of spiritual adultery?

4. Read 14:1–21 (the clean and unclean food laws). These rules marked Israel as distinct from surrounding nations. What does the principle in verse 2 ('you are a holy people') suggest is the underlying purpose of these dietary distinctions?

5. Read the tithe laws in 14:22–29. What were the different tithes for, and who were they intended to benefit? What picture of community life and mutual care does this paint?

6. Read Deuteronomy 15:1–18. The seventh-year debt cancellation and the release of servants are remarkable economic provisions. What motivation does Moses give for these laws (e.g., vv. 11, 15)? What does this tell us about how Israel's own history should shape their ethics?

7. In 15:7–11, Moses addresses the temptation to withhold generosity as the seventh year approaches. What does verse 9 warn against specifically? What is the connection between a person's inner attitude and their outward action?

8. Read 16:1–17, the three great pilgrimage festivals (Passover/Unleavened Bread, Weeks, Booths). What does each festival commemorate? What role does communal celebration play in Israel's ongoing life with God?

9. Verse 16:16–17 closes the festival section: 'No one should appear before the LORD empty-handed.' What principle does this embody about the relationship between worship and giving?

## **APPLY**

10. The clean food laws are set aside for Christians (Acts 10; Mark 7:19), but the principle of being a 'holy people' — visibly distinct from surrounding culture — remains (1 Peter 2:9–12). In what ways should Christian communities look noticeably different from secular society today?

11. The generosity laws in chapter 15 are grounded in remembering that Israel was once a slave (v. 15). How does remembering your own need of grace motivate generosity? Where are you tempted to close your hand (v. 7)?

12. The great festivals were moments of communal joy, remembrance, and thanksgiving. What does it look like for a local church to cultivate this kind of shared memory and celebration? What might be missing in your church's current practice?

## **GOSPEL CONNECTION**

13. Paul calls Jesus 'our Passover lamb' who 'has been sacrificed' (1 Corinthians 5:7). How does Jesus fulfil and replace the Passover festival? And how does John 4:21–24 reframe the whole question of 'the place where we ought to worship'?

# Deuteronomy 17-21

## Leaders Among God's People

*What does good leadership look like among the people of God? These chapters address judges, priests, prophets, and kings — the leadership structures Israel would need in the land. What is remarkable is how countercultural God's vision of leadership is: kings are to be humble, subject to the law, and not self-aggrandising. The section also contains one of the most important Messianic promises in the entire Old Testament — a prophet greater than Moses is coming.*

## GETTING STARTED

1. Who has been a genuinely good and godly leader in your life? What specifically made their leadership godly rather than merely competent or impressive?

## INVESTIGATE

2. Read 17:8–13. What role do the priests and judges play in Israel's legal system? What is the significance of the command that verdicts must be followed — and the warning against the person who 'shows contempt for the judge' (v. 12)?

3. Read the law of the king in 17:14–20 carefully. What does Moses permit and what does he explicitly prohibit? What do the three prohibitions — horses, wives, gold — reveal about the typical patterns of failure in human leadership?

4. What is the king commanded to do in 17:18–20, and for what purpose? What kind of king does this envision — and how does it compare to the kings of surrounding nations who answered to no law above themselves?

5. Read 18:1–8. The Levites receive no land inheritance — God himself is their inheritance (v. 2). What does this radical provision model for Christian ministry? In what sense is God's provision for ministers both counter-cultural and deeply freeing?

6. Read 18:9–13. Moses lists forbidden practices — divination, sorcery, consulting the dead. Why are these forbidden? What do they represent as alternatives to trusting the God who speaks?

7. Read the great prophetic promise in 18:14–22 very carefully. Who is this prophet? What credentials will authenticate him? Why is this passage so important for understanding Jesus? See how Peter quotes this in Acts 3:22–23 and how John's Gospel develops it — John 1:21, 6:14, 7:40.

8. Read 19:1–13, the cities of refuge. What problem do these cities solve? What is the careful distinction between manslaughter and premeditated murder? What does this distinction reveal about how God's law holds justice and grace together?

9. Read 19:14–21, the laws on boundaries and false witnesses. What principle underlies both of these laws? What does the 'eye for an eye' principle (v. 21) actually mean in its legal context?

10. Read 21:22–23. The one 'hanged on a tree' is 'under God's curse.' What is the significance of this principle for understanding what happened at the cross?

### **APPLY**

11. The king law of 17:14–20 was written to prevent exactly what went wrong with Israel's kings — accumulating military power, foreign alliances, and personal wealth, while departing from the word. In what ways are the same temptations present for Christian leaders today? How does a church guard against them?

12. What 'false prophets' — voices urging you to quietly set aside God's word — exert the most influence in your own life or community today? How do we stay under the word?

### **GOSPEL CONNECTION**

13. Deuteronomy 18:18–19 is explicitly fulfilled in Jesus (Acts 3:22–23). Knowing that Jesus is the ultimate prophet — the one who speaks God's very words — what should that mean for how you treat his words today? Are there words of Jesus you are finding difficult to obey?

14. Paul quotes 21:22–23 in Galatians 3:13: 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.' How does this reframe the shocking image of the cross? What did Jesus absorb there?

# Deuteronomy 22-26

## Holy Living in the Everyday

*These chapters can feel like a bewildering catalogue of specific laws — everything from building parapets to mixing fibres in cloth. But beneath the detail lies a coherent vision: every area of life belongs to God. The holiness of his people is to be expressed not only in solemn worship but in their farming, sexuality, business dealings, family life, and treatment of the vulnerable. The everyday is the arena of covenant faithfulness.*

## GETTING STARTED

1. Do you tend to divide life into 'sacred' and 'secular' categories? What areas of life do you find hardest to think of as genuinely belonging to God?

## INVESTIGATE

2. Read 22:1–12. These miscellaneous laws cover lost animals, cross-dressing, birds' nests, rooftop safety, and mixed materials in clothing. What underlying principle seems to connect them? What does the repeated phrase 'do not ignore it' (vv. 1, 3, 4) keep pressing on us?

3. Read 22:13–30 on sexual ethics. These laws assume that both virginity and faithfulness in marriage matter greatly to God. What does this tell us about how God views the body and human sexuality? How does this contrast with surrounding cultures — then and now?

4. Read 23:1–8 (who may enter the assembly) and 23:15–16 (runaway slaves). These might seem contradictory — exclusions followed by radical inclusion. What distinguishes the two situations? What does 23:15–16 reveal about God's heart toward the vulnerable?

5. Read 24:1–4. Jesus refers to this passage in Matthew 19:1–9. What does Jesus say this concession reveal about Israel's heart? What does Jesus say God's original design for marriage is?
  
6. Read 24:5–22. Identify as many specific provisions for the vulnerable as you can. What different groups are protected? What is the repeated reason given for these protections (v. 18, 22)?
  
7. Read 25:1–3. The law limits the number of blows in a flogging. What principle is being protected here? See how Paul alludes to this in 2 Corinthians 11:24. What does this reveal about how God's law preserves human dignity even in punishment?
  
8. Read 25:17–19 (blot out the memory of Amalek) and then 26:1–11 (remember you were a wandering Aramean). The contrast is striking — one memory to destroy, one to rehearse forever. What is the effect of placing these two passages side by side? What does the juxtaposition say about the shape of Israel's identity?
  
9. Read the covenant declaration in 26:16–19. How does Moses summarise the relationship between God and Israel? What does Israel declare about God, and what does God declare about Israel?

## **APPLY**

10. The law of the parapet (22:8) — building a fence on your roof to prevent accidents — enshrines a principle of proactive care for neighbour. What are the 'no parapet' situations in your own life — places where your inaction could genuinely harm others?

11. The protections for the poor, widow, orphan, and foreigner in chapter 24 are grounded in Israel's own story of redemption (v. 18, 22). How does remembering your own need of grace shape your attitude toward the most vulnerable people in your community?

12. 26:1–11 is a creed — a spoken confession of what God has done. The Israelite was to recite this history of grace when bringing the firstfruits. What would it look like to build similar moments of recited, communal gratitude into your own life or your church?

## **GOSPEL CONNECTION**

13. Paul quotes Deuteronomy 25:4 in 1 Corinthians 9:9 and 1 Timothy 5:18, applying the principle of the unmuzzled ox to the support of gospel workers. How does the New Testament pick up these everyday laws and find enduring principles in them? What does this suggest about how we should read the law today?

# Deuteronomy 27-28

## Blessing and Curse

*These two chapters form the dramatic centre of Deuteronomy's covenant structure. At Mount Ebal and Gerizim, Israel is to inscribe the law on plastered stones and gather to hear the blessings and curses of the covenant. Chapter 28 is one of the longest and most sobering passages in the Bible — the curses escalate in horrifying detail. Yet they must be read in light of the gospel, which announces that in Christ, the curse has been borne.*

## GETTING STARTED

1. Have you ever signed a contract or made a serious promise and felt the full weight of what you were committing to? What gives that kind of commitment its gravity?

## INVESTIGATE

2. Read 27:1–8. What is Israel instructed to do when they cross the Jordan? Why do you think Moses commands the law to be written on stone and set up publicly? What does this public inscription say about the covenant's nature?

3. Read 27:9–26. What is the repeated structure of this section ('Cursed is the one who...')? Notice that many of these curses target secret sins — things done 'in secret' (vv. 15, 24). What does this reveal about the scope of God's moral law?

4. Read 28:1–14 (the blessings). What portrait of national flourishing is painted? How comprehensive is it — what areas of life does it cover? What is the stated condition for receiving these blessings (vv. 1, 2, 9, 13)?

5. Read 28:15–68 (the curses). How do the curses compare to the blessings in length and graphic detail? What does the imbalance suggest about the seriousness of disobedience and the real difficulty of consistent covenant faithfulness?

6. Verses 36–37 and 64–68 speak of exile and scattering among the nations. At the time of Deuteronomy, this has not happened yet. What does Moses anticipate about Israel's future faithfulness? Does this make the covenant seem hopeless — and if so, what does it set up?

7. Read 28:45–48. What is identified as the root cause of all the covenant curses? Notice especially verse 47 — what kind of obedience was required, and what was evidently missing in Israel's heart?

8. Look at the overall arc of chapters 27–28. Given the bar set for blessing (full, consistent obedience — v. 1, 14) and the sheer breadth of the curses, what is Moses implicitly preparing Israel — and every reader — to see that they desperately need?

## **APPLY**

9. The curses of chapter 28 are gruelling to read. What should it do to us to sit with these before rushing to the gospel? Is there a kind of seriousness about sin and its consequences that we lose when we skip to grace too quickly?

10. Deuteronomy 28:47 says the problem wasn't just that Israel didn't obey — it's that they didn't obey 'with joyfulness and gladness of heart.' This suggests the issue is as much a heart posture as a list of actions. What does joyful, glad obedience look like? Is that how you experience your walk with God?

## **GOSPEL CONNECTION**

11. Paul quotes Deuteronomy 27:26 in Galatians 3:10 to argue that everyone who relies on law-keeping is under a curse — because no one keeps it perfectly. He then quotes 21:23 in Galatians 3:13: 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.' How does this transform what you've just read in chapters 27–28? What did Jesus absorb so that we don't have to?

◆ *Take a moment to thank God together for the redemption purchased at the cross — that the full weight of the curse described in chapter 28 fell on Jesus, and not on those who are hidden in him.*

# Deuteronomy 29-30

## Choose Life!

*These chapters are among the most gospel-rich in the entire Old Testament. Moses renews the covenant with the generation about to enter the land, but he is also looking far ahead — to exile, and beyond exile to restoration. The great promise of 30:1–10 speaks of a day when God will circumcise hearts, gather his scattered people, and make it possible for them to love him with everything. This is the new covenant hope that the prophets and ultimately the New Testament will unfold.*

## GETTING STARTED

1. Have you ever experienced a broken relationship that was genuinely restored? What made restoration possible — and who took the initiative?

## INVESTIGATE

2. Read 29:1–9. Moses is renewing the covenant and again rehearsing the journey. What does verse 4 say Israel still lacks, even after all they have witnessed? What does this reveal about the limits of outward religious experience alone?

3. In 29:10–15, who is included in this covenant renewal? What does the inclusion of 'the one who is not here today' (v. 15) suggest about the covenant's reach across time and generations?

4. Read 29:16–28. What is the danger Moses anticipates? Notice verse 18 — the description of 'a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit.' What is the individual and community dynamic of sin at work here? What happens to a community when one person decides they can live as an exception?

5. Read 29:29 carefully. What does Moses say belongs to God and what belongs to Israel and their descendants? How does this verse help us hold together divine mystery and human responsibility without collapsing one into the other?

6. Read 30:1–5. What does Moses say will happen when the people take to heart this scenario of exile and repentance? What does God promise to do? Notice the initiative in verse 3: 'the LORD your God will restore your fortunes.' Who moves first?

7. Read 30:6 — one of the most remarkable verses in Deuteronomy. What does Moses promise that God himself will do? Why is this so significant? How does it go further than anything Israel can do for themselves? See Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Ezekiel 36:26–27 for the prophetic development of this promise. What are those passages adding?

8. Read 30:11–14. Moses says this command 'is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach.' Where is it? What does this passage suggest about the accessibility and nearness of God's word?

9. Read 30:15–20. Moses sets before Israel 'life and death, blessing and curse.' What is the actual choice being described? Why does Moses call heaven and earth as witnesses? And what is the ultimate, urgent exhortation of verse 20?

## **APPLY**

10. Deuteronomy 30:6 promises that God will circumcise hearts. This is the language the prophets develop into the new covenant promise (Jeremiah 31, Ezekiel 36). In what ways has this promise been fulfilled for Christians through the Holy Spirit? What does it actually mean that your heart has been changed — not just your behaviour?

11. Moses' final appeal is 'choose life' — love God, listen to his voice, hold fast to him (v. 20). What does it look like to make this choice not just once at conversion, but daily, in the small decisions of an ordinary week? Where in your life right now are you being called to choose life over death?

## **GOSPEL CONNECTION**

12. Paul reads Deuteronomy 30:12–14 as referring to Christ and the proclamation of the gospel (Romans 10:5–13). He says 'the word' that is near you — in your mouth and in your heart — is 'the word of faith we are proclaiming,' and that confessing Jesus as Lord is what brings the life Moses talks about. How does this reading illuminate what Moses was really anticipating? What does it say about how the law always pointed forward to the gospel?

# Deuteronomy 31-34

## Moses My Servant Is Dead

*Deuteronomy ends with endings — and yet it points beyond itself. Moses commissions Joshua, writes and deposits the law, sings a great song of witness, blesses the tribes, and then climbs Mount Nebo to see the land he cannot enter. He dies there, alone with God, and is buried in an unknown grave. The book closes with a remarkable epitaph: 'No prophet has risen in Israel like Moses.' But the very next line of the canon — Joshua 1:2 — suggests the story is not over. A greater Moses is still to come.*

## GETTING STARTED

1. Think of a great leader — in any field — whose work outlasted them. What did they put in place to ensure the work continued? And what couldn't survive without them personally?

## INVESTIGATE

2. Read 31:1–8. How does Moses hand over leadership to Joshua? Notice the repetition of 'be strong and courageous' (vv. 6, 7, 8). What is the basis for this courage? What is Moses careful to say about who is really leading Israel?

3. Read 31:9–13. Moses writes down the law and commands it to be read publicly every seven years. What is the purpose of this regular public reading? What does this tell us about the non-negotiable role of Scripture in the life of a community?

4. In 31:14–22, God himself speaks to Moses and Joshua. What does God predict will happen after Moses dies? What is the song of chapter 32 designed to do in light of this sobering prediction?

5. Read 31:24–29. Moses deposits the law beside the ark of the covenant. What is the ark? What is the theological significance of the law's placement beside it? And notice Moses' frank assessment in verse 27 — what does he say about Israel even while he is still alive?

6. Read the Song of Moses (32:1–43). It is a long poem — identify its major movements. What does the song say about: (a) God's character, (b) Israel's failure, (c) God's judgment, and (d) God's ultimate vindication of his people?

7. In 32:39, God declares: 'I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand.' How does this verse function as both a warning and a profound comfort within the song?

8. Read Moses' blessing of the tribes in 33:1–29. What is the overall vision of the people's future that Moses paints? Notice the bookend in verses 1 and 29 — how does Moses frame Israel's identity as he prepares to leave them?

9. Read the account of Moses' death in 34:1–12 slowly. What is Moses permitted to see? What is his epitaph (vv. 10–12)? The book ends with 'no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses.' What does this ending leave the reader expecting, longing for, and waiting for?

## **APPLY**

10. Moses' final view from Nebo is of a land he cannot enter. He dies on the very threshold of the promise. This has often been read as a picture of the whole Old Testament — seeing the promise from afar without yet possessing it (Hebrews 11:13–16). How does this help you understand the relationship between the two Testaments, and the finality and completeness of what Jesus has brought?

11. As we close this series, return to Deuteronomy's great theme: 'Love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul, and strength.' Having walked through the whole book — what do you understand about that command now that you didn't before? How has your understanding of God, his word, his grace, and his purposes grown or changed?

## **GOSPEL CONNECTION**

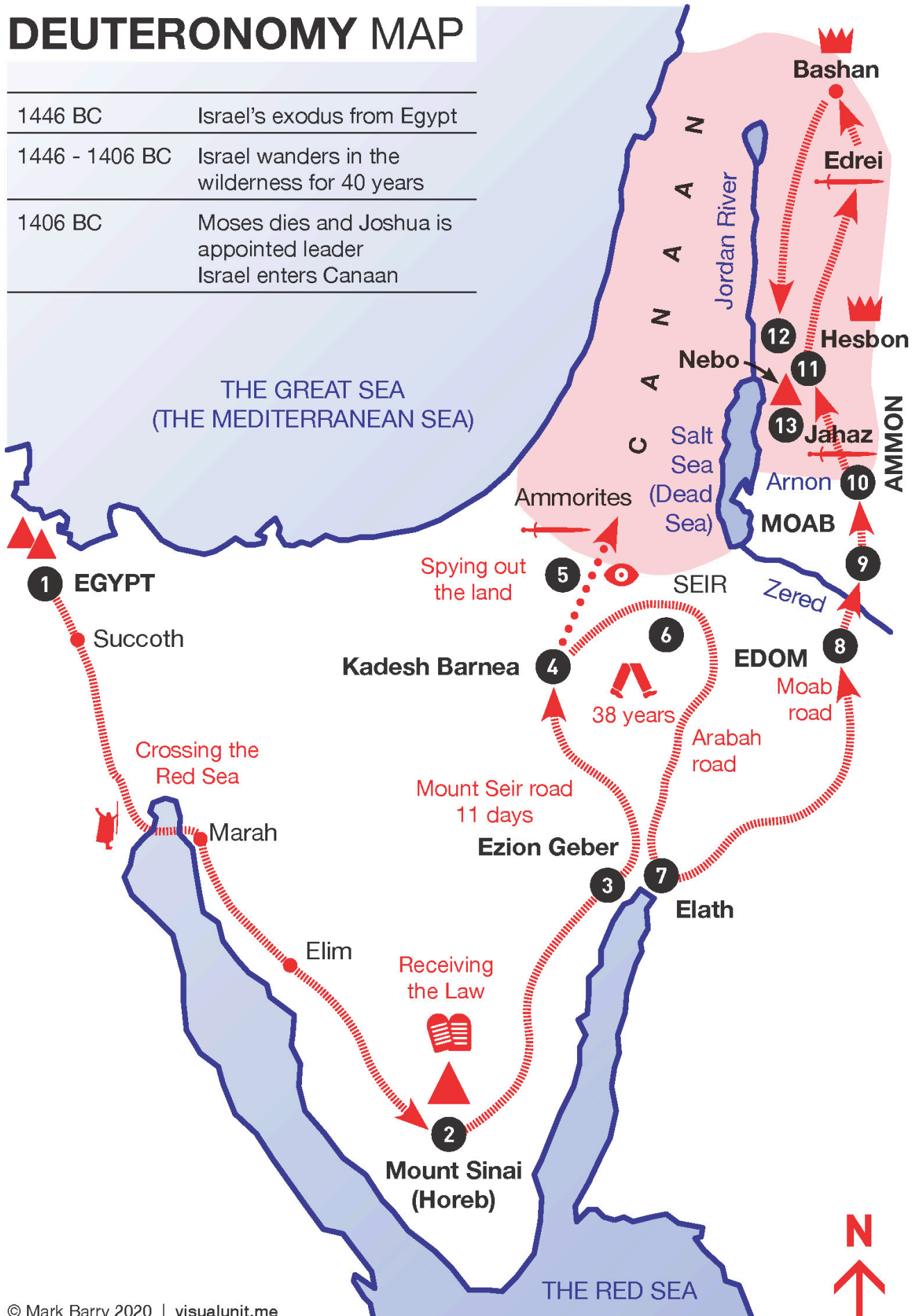
12. Deuteronomy 34:10 says Moses knew God 'face to face.' Yet Jesus is described as the one who has made God fully known — the one who is 'in the Father's bosom' (John 1:18). Hebrews 3:3–6 explicitly compares Moses and Jesus — Moses was faithful as a servant in God's house; Jesus is faithful as the Son over God's house. How is Jesus greater than Moses? What is the 'more' that Jesus brings — and what does it mean for you personally that this Greater Moses has come?

◆ *Close in prayer together: Thank God for his word, which has been near you throughout this series. Ask him to circumcise your hearts further — to make you people who choose life daily, who love him with everything, and who hold fast to him. He is your life.*

# Map

## DEUTERONOMY MAP

1446 BC	Israel's exodus from Egypt
1446 - 1406 BC	Israel wanders in the wilderness for 40 years
1406 BC	Moses dies and Joshua is appointed leader Israel enters Canaan





# HOW TO BE A GOOD BIBLE STUDY MEMBER

## BE THERE

**1** The power of just turning up to encourage others is phenomenal. We don't think of our groups as events we might go to, but people we do life with. Seek to commit yourself to your small group family weekly. The blessings we give and get from one another are of eternal value!



## BE ACTIVE

**2** It's true, the more you put in, the more you'll get out of your small group. Look through the study or passage before the group meets. Engage in conversation, answer questions, share opinions, be willing to pray, read, lead, help set-up or pack-up. Jesus wasn't lying when he said "it is more blessed to give than to receive".



**2**

## BE OPEN

**3** Be open about yourself, your joys and your struggles. One of the greatest blessings of a small group is knowing others and being known more personally. So share and listen openly. Similarly, be honest about when you don't understand a question or part of scripture. Chances are, someone else has been through a similar experience and appreciates you sharing it, or had a similar question to you but were too shy to ask it



## BE CONCERNED for others

**4** Resist the temptation to think "the group must serve my needs" before asking, "how can I serve the needs of others?" It's also not just the leaders' role to care for the needs of the group; Each member plays their part as we all care for one another. Be concerned for how people are travelling. Ask questions about their week and their life and be active in caring for them as they share. Seek to connect with members outside of the meeting.



**4**

## BE ON ABOUT GOD

**5** One of the temptations of a good small group is to get caught up in each other's interests and end up talking about lots of not-so-meaningful things. Be on about God and what He's doing in each other's lives. Share His word with each other, pray for each other, encourage mission and godly living, rebuke, correct and train one another in righteousness.

