



2017 TERM 4

DEUTERONOMY

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SERIES COMPANION



**4 HEAR, O ISRAEL: THE LORD OUR GOD,
THE LORD IS ONE. 5 LOVE THE LORD
YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND
WITH ALL YOUR SOUL AND WITH ALL
YOUR STRENGTH.
DEUTERONOMY 6:4-6**

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 11 days 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

camps 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 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 his speeches 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, and he reminds them of their regular unfaithfulness.

The speeches 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' speeches 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 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

At the end of the Old Testament the promised 'circumcision of 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.

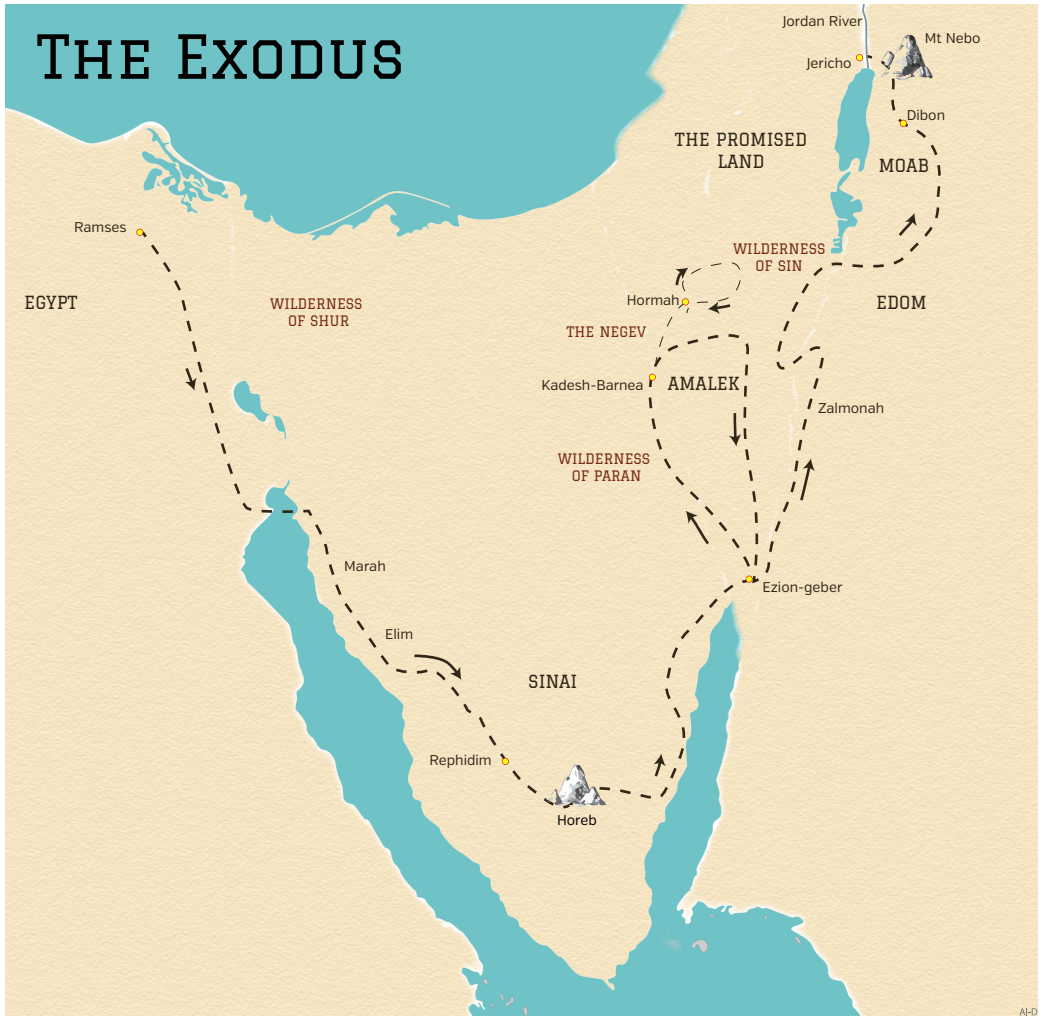
Jesus calls Israel back to the Deuteronomy ideal of loving God with all their hearts, and he goes on to pour out the Holy Spirit who makes this wholehearted love possible.

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 4:6-7]

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.

THE EXODUS



AL-B

01 NO NEED FOR FEAR

KICK OFF

Remind yourself of the important events of the first half of Acts.

READ DEUTERONOMY 1:1-8

1. Where and when does this introduction place the book of Deuteronomy?
2. Verse 8 picks up on the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Remind yourself of these promises by reading Genesis 12:1-3. Which of the promises are referred to in Deuteronomy 1:6-18, and at what stage of fulfilment are they?

READ DEUTERONOMY 1:18-48

3. These verses recount the Israelites first attempt to take to take the promised land, soon after they came out of slavery in Egypt. Why is this attempt such a failure [see especially v28]?
4. What is the result of the failed attempt to take the land?

Deuteronomy 2 goes on to record some of the nations Israel passed through as they spent their 40 years wandering in the desert. Chapter 3 then records the conquest of Sihon and Og, the Kings of two nations on the eastern side of the Jordan river. As Israel's journey and conquests are recorded, there are a number of significant notes about the nations they have contact with.

DEUTERONOMY 1-3

5. Use the following table to summarise the historical notes about the nations.

VERSES	SUMMARY
Deuteronomy 2:9-12	
Deuteronomy 2:19-23	
Deuteronomy 3:11	

6. What is emphasised in these three notes?
7. Why is this information relevant to the Israelites as they are about to begin the main campaign to conquer the promised land [compare with Deut. 1:28]?

THINKING IT THROUGH

The original generation of Israelites who God rescued from Egypt missed out on the promised land because they were too scared to trust God. In particular, they were terrified of the inhabitants of the promised land who appeared as powerful as a legendary giant race, the Anakites.

As a new generation of Israelites is presented with an opportunity to take the promised land, Moses wants them to know that God really can overcome their enemies and give it to them. As he repeatedly points out in the historical notes, God overcame Anakites like people many times in the past. The Moabites, the Ammonites and Esau's descendants have all been given victory over fierce enemies, and even the Israelites themselves have overcome Ogg, the last remaining descendant of the mighty Rephaim.

Whoever or whatever stands in their way, the Israelites can be confident that if God has promised to give them the land he is able to deliver, and they can proceed without fear.

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 for God's people throughout the Old and New Testaments.

8. How does Proverbs 29:25 speak about the wise attitude to fear and trust?
9. 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?
10. How does Jesus give even more reason for God's people to trust him rather than fear others?
11. What fears keep you from trusting and obeying God?
12. How can the history of Israel and the coming of Jesus strengthen us to be bold in trusting God?

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

DEUTERONOMY 1-3

02 THE GOD WHO SPEAKS

KICK OFF

Have you ever got to know someone well without seeing them face to face?

READ DEUTERONOMY 4:1-8

1. What does Moses want the Israelites to do with the words he is giving to them?
2. How do the commandments and statutes make Israel unique?

READ DEUTERONOMY 4:9-20

In these verses Moses is recalling the most significant day in the history of the nation of Israel, the day God made a covenant with them at Mt Horeb.

3. How did Israel experience God?
4. What does Israel's experience at Mt Horeb teach them about how they are to relate to and worship God?

READ DEUTERONOMY 4:21-31

5. What danger faces Israel in the future? How is Moses' own experience a warning for them?
6. What is the hope in the midst of grim outlook for the future?

DEUTERONOMY 4

READ DEUTERONOMY 4:32-40

7. As Moses again reflects on the uniqueness of Israel's relationship with God, what particular parts of the relationship does he mention?

READ DEUTERONOMY 4:41-49

This final section of Moses' first speech in Deuteronomy begins by setting up the cities of refuge on the eastern side of the Jordan, a way of making this land a real home for the tribes that were to remain there. Then Moses finishes his speech by again running through the conquests that God has already given the Israelites before they have crossed the Jordan into the promised land proper.

Looking back to the main section of this chapter, Moses has emphasised that God did not appear to the Israelites in a physical form, he spoke to them. It is this speaking, along with the great rescue from Egypt, that makes Israel's relationship with God so unique. No other nation has ever heard God speak to them so personally and at such close quarters.

God's words continue to be at the heart of his relationship with his people right the way through the Old Testament, especially as he sends prophets with many messages about how they should relate to him.

This pattern of relating to his people is then ultimately fulfilled when God sends his son 'the word' into the world to display his glory in a complete and final way

READ JOHN 1:14

8. If it's true that no other nation has heard the voice of God and lived, what does this tell us about the significance of Jesus, the word of God?
9. The main implication of God speaking to the Israelites, rather than appearing physically, is that they are not to make any idols or graven images. These would be a distortion of who God is.
10. What kind of distorted images of God are popular in our culture [Hint: they might not be physical idols, but distorted concepts of God]? Do you find it tempting to worship any of these images?
11. How can we relate to God in a way that avoids distorted images of what he is like?

DEUTERONOMY 4

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

DEUTERONOMY 4

DEUTERONOMY 4

03 THE MEANING OF THE LAW

KICK OFF

Can you list the ten commandments from memory?

STARTING WITH THE BIG PICTURE

As you may remember from Studies 1 and 2, the book of Deuteronomy is a record of the speeches 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 focusses on the actual content of the laws and decrees that the Israelites are to obey.

Begin by briefly discussing any questions that were raised as you read the passage yourself.

READ DEUTERONOMY 5:1-27

1. According to verse 1, what is Moses wanting to do in this speech?
2. Make a quick list of the ten commandments. Can you divide the commandments into any subgroups?

DEUTERONOMY 5-6

3. Moses takes some time both before and after listing the 10 commandments to remind the Israelites of how they were given at Mt Horeb.
 - a. What particular things does Moses highlight about the Israelites experience at Horeb
 - b. How will remembering the events at Mt Horeb motivate the Israelites to keep the commandments?
4. What specific motivations are given for obeying each of the first 5 commandments?
5. Finish the following sentence:

Israel should keep God's law because...

READ DEUTERONOMY 5:28-33

Looking at verses 28-29, what does God want for Israel and the commandments?

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

DEUTERONOMY 5-6

they are to keep the commandments, and he goes on to explain in chapter 6.

READ DEUTERONOMY 6:1-19

6. In Deuteronomy 6, Moses expands particularly on the first of the 10 commandments, to have no other god's before the LORD.
 - a. How does the new teaching in verses 4-5, compare with the original first commandment?
 - b. What attitude are the Israelites to have as they obey the commands?
7. What advice does Moses give to help Israel remember and keep the commandment?

READ DEUTERONOMY 6:20-25

8. What are the Israelites to say when asked to explain the meaning of the statutes and laws?
 - a. Is this surprising?
 - b. What does the answer tell you about the motivation for keeping the commands?
9. Having looked at chapter 6, would you change/add anything to your sentence from question 5?

The famous command to love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and strength adds a positive dimension to the primarily negative commands in chapter 5. Relating to God is

DEUTERONOMY 5-6

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 keeping the commands so essential.

APPLICATION

10. 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?

READ COLOSSIANS 3:1-14

11. How does the motivation to live for God in Colossians compare to the motivation to live for God given in Exodus 5-6?
12. How can this motivation help us when living for God feels restrictive and difficult?
13. Are there any particular areas where you need to renew your motivation for living for God?

DEUTERONOMY 5-6

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

DEUTERONOMY 5-6

DEUTERONOMY 5-6

04 THE DANGER OF DISOBEDIENCE

KICK OFF

As you might remember from the previous study, Deuteronomy 5-26 contains a long speech from Moses urging the Israelites to serve God and keep his commandments as they live in the promised land.

Briefly review the start of the speech in chapters 5-6. What was the key motivation for the Israelites to obey God's commands, and how were they to obey them?

OBSERVATION

In Deuteronomy 7-9, Moses highlights a series of dangers or temptations that might stop the Israelites from keeping God's commands, and some solutions and/or motivations that will help the Israelites to overcome these dangers and temptations.

1. Use the following table to summarise the different dangers and solutions Moses highlights (You might like to divide the passages between the group).

PASSAGE	DANGER/ TEMPTATION	SOLUTION/ MOTIVATION
7:1-16		
7:17-26		
8:1-20		

DEUTERONOMY 7-11

9:1-10:5		
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2. If you divided the passages, share your findings with the rest of the group.
3. When it comes to serving God, do Christians face any similar dangers or temptations to those Israel faced?
4. Israel's history, especially the incident of the golden calf, does not give great hope that the people will be successful in resisting temptation. According to Hebrews 4:14-16, what extra power do we as Christians have to help us deal with temptation?

READ DEUTERONOMY 11

Moses finishes this first half of his speech by again urging the Israelites to keep God's commands. In much the same way he has done since chapter 5 he reminds Israel of their rescue from Egypt, of the amazing land which God is giving them and highlights the blessings and cursings associated with obedience and disobedience.

5. Looking particularly at verses 18-21, how are the Israelites to take God's laws to heart?
6. How are you going at fixing God's word in your hearts and minds and talking about it with your family and others? What kinds of things do you find help you make God's word central to your thinking?

DEUTERONOMY 7-11

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

DEUTERONOMY 7-11

DEUTERONOMY 7-11

05 A PLACE FOR GOD'S NAME

KICK OFF

Do you have any places that are especially associated with a particular person?

OBSERVATION

With the familiar phrase, “these are the decrees and laws’, Deuteronomy 12 begins a major new section of Moses’ speech. Unlike previous sections begun with this phrase, Deuteronomy 12-26 really does contain a detailed discussion of the the decrees and laws Israel is to follow as they live in the promised land.

The simplest way to understand this section of the speech is as an expansion of the 10 commandments that God gave at Mt Horeb. It is not perfectly in order of the commandments, especially towards the end of the section, but the topics that

Moses discusses basically follow the commandments as follows
Use the following table to summarise the different dangers and solutions Moses highlights (You might like to divide the passages between the group).

COMMANDMENT	VERSES
1 and 2	Chapters 12-13
3	14:1-21
4	14:22-16:17
5	16:18-18:22
6	19:1-22:12
7	22:13-23:19
8	23:20-25:4
9	25:5-19

DEUTERONOMY 12-13

We will be looking at these chapters in two studies covering Deuteronomy 12-13 and Deuteronomy 14-26

READ DEUTERONOMY 12:1-14

1. According to v1, what context are these laws given for?
2. How is the Israelites' worship of the LORD to be radically different from the previous inhabitants of the land?
3. How is the Israelites' worship of the LORD to be different from their current practice?
4. Why do you think there is such an emphasis on worshipping in the one chosen place?
5. How does this section relate to commandments 1 and 2?

READ DEUTERONOMY 12:15-32

6. In ancient cultures all butchering was considered 'sacred' activity and the blood of animals was considered to have magical properties. In this context, what is the purpose of the instructions about eating meat?

There is only one right way to worship the one true God. That is why all worship is to be conducted at the one place. The concession about eating meat is to ensure that people don't feel compelled to treat every animal they kill as some kind of sacrifice.

Following on from the discussion about where to worship, Deuteronomy 13 takes up the a different aspect of having no other God's apart from the LORD

READ DEUTERONOMY 13

7. What basic problem is this chapter dealing with?

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

THINKING IT THROUGH

As the Old Testament progresses, 'the place' God chooses to be worshipped is the temple in Jerusalem. However it is a constant temptation for the Israelites to set up their own local shrines to worship God and other idols. The biggest failure in this area is when Jeroboam leads the Northern tribes of Israel in a breakaway kingdom and sets up two official places of worship in the North.

DEUTERONOMY 12-13

These Northern shrines remain active for a thousand years right up to the time of Jesus, and in John 4 Jesus discusses the issue with the Samaritan woman at the well.

READ JOHN 4:19-24

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

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

HOMEWORK

Next week we will be dealing with a longer section of Deuteronomy and so you will find it very helpful to take some time to read through the chapters before hand and make a note of any comments or questions. The chapters are Deuteronomy 14-26

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

DEUTERONOMY 12-13

DEUTERONOMY 12-13

06 LAWS FOR LIVING IN THE LAND

KICK OFF

If you were going to start a new nation, what would be the first 3 rules?

If you had to choose 3 crimes that would receive the death penalty what would they be?

INTRODUCTION

This week we come to Moses' detailed explanation of the laws Israel is to follow as they live in the promised land. Some of these laws are difficult for us to understand because our context is so different from that of the ancient Middle East. However, even though our context has changed, we serve the same God as the Israelites and so we can learn a lot from these laws.

To try and get our head around the laws it is helpful to remember that the laws are basically ordered according to the ten commandments. It is also helpful to understand that most of the laws concern 3 key areas – God, other people and the land.

THE DETAILS

1. Instead of trying to go through all the chapters together, take a section of the laws each (or in pairs) and answer the following Questions
 - a) List the major topics covered

b) Which laws have the most serious consequences for disobedience?

c) Are there reasons given for obeying the law?

d) What do the laws teach about relating to God, other people and the land?

e) Can you see any link between the laws in this section and the ten commandments [see the table in the previous study. Don't worry if you can't see anything obvious]?

f) What questions do you have?

PASSAGE	ANSWERS
14:1-21	
14:22-16:17	
16:18-18:22	

DEUTERONOMY 14-26

19:1-22:12	
22:13-23:19	
23:20-25:4	
25:5-19	

In Deuteronomy 26 Moses finishes the detailed discussion of the laws by giving the Israelites a special ceremony they are to perform to remember where God has brought them from, to celebrate their life in the land and to commit themselves to follow him.

2. Looking at Deuteronomy 26:16-19 What are all these laws designed to show?

DEUTERONOMY 14-26

SUMMING UP

The laws were designed to help Israel live a holy life as God's special people. The overall thrust of the laws is to provide justice for all and to keep the people loyal to the LORD.

Ultimately though, the law was unsuccessful in keeping Israel faithful to their covenant with God and the Israelites were unfaithful and suffered the judgement of exile.

READ ROMANS 8:1-11

3. How does Paul describe the law in these verses?
4. How is Jesus different from the Law?
5. Why do followers of Jesus no longer need a list of laws like that in Deuteronomy?

DEUTERONOMY 14-26

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

DEUTERONOMY 13-26

DEUTERONOMY 14-26

07 A DAY FOR DECISIONS

KICK OFF

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

INTRODUCTION

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.

READ DEUTERONOMY 27:1-13

1. What ceremony is Israel to do on the two mountains once they get into the land?
2. What will this ceremony remind the people
3. Look through Deuteronomy 28 and make a list of the blessings and curses that will result from obedience and disobedience

DEUTERONOMY 27-30

BLESSINGS	CURSES

- 4. Which list is longer? Why do you think this is?
- 5. According to verse 68, what is the ultimate result of the curses?

Although there are both blessings and curses in Deuteronomy 28, the list of curses far outweighs the list of blessings and sets an ominous tone for the future of Israel. In Chapter 29 Moses gives a quick review of Israel's history going back to the Exodus and then some further exhortation about the consequences of rejecting the covenant with God. But in chapter 30 he turns from warning about possibilities in the future to more explicit prophecy about the future.

DEUTERONOMY 27-30

READ DEUTERONOMY 30:1-9

6. 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.

7. What do these prophets foresee?
8. As Christians how do we experience the fulfilment of the hopes of Moses, Jeremiah and Ezekiel?
9. How should our motivation to make a decision to follow God be different from that of Israel?

DEUTERONOMY 27-30

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

DEUTERONOMY 27-30

DEUTERONOMY 27-30

08 A DAY FOR DECISIONS

KICK OFF

Goodbyes are tough, especially when you're anxious about what lies ahead. Thinking back to last week's study, what would Moses be anxious about as he says goodbye to the Israelites?

READ DEUTERONOMY 31:1-8

1. Who is going to take over from Moses as leader of the Israelites and what advice does Moses have for him and the Israelites?

READ DEUTERONOMY 31:9-30

2. What familiar themes from earlier in the book are emphasised here at the end of Moses' life?
3. Moses is instructed to write a song – Why?

The song that Moses writes in Deuteronomy 32 is a history of the people of Israel going right back to Jacob. Unfortunately it's not a flattering history.

4. Deuteronomy 32:3-6 sums up the theme of the song. What is it?
5. What note of hope is there at the end of the song in Deuteronomy 32:39-43?

DEUTERONOMY 31-34

6. How according to verse 43, what is God going to do for his people and his land and what does this mean?

In Deuteronomy 33, Moses gives his final blessing to the people of Israel. This is very similar to the blessing that Jacob gave to his sons at the end of Genesis as he mentions each tribe by name and prays that they will enjoy the blessings of covenant life.

Finally in Deuteronomy 34, Moses comes to the end of his life.

READ DEUTERONOMY 34

7. How is the life of Moses summed up in verses 10-12
8. In what ways is Moses unique in the Old Testament?

READ HEBREWS 3:1-13

9. How does Jesus compare to Moses?
10. According to Hebrews, how should we respond to the fact that Jesus is greater than Moses (v7-13)

This brings us to the end of our studies in Deuteronomy.

11. What have been some highlights for you along the way?
12. How would you say the book of Deuteronomy is relevant for us today as Christians?

DEUTERONOMY 31-34

NOTES AND PRAYER POINTS

DEUTERONOMY 31-34

DEUTERONOMY 31-34

TERM PLAN FOR DEUTERONOMY

DATE	PASSAGE	TITLE
8th October	Deuteronomy 1-3	No Need for Fear
15th October	CafeNitechurch	
22nd October	Ross Farley - TEAR	Poverty - It's not what you think
29th October	Deuteronomy 4	The God who Speaks
5th November	Deuteronomy 5-6	The meaning of the Law
12th November	Deuteronomy 7-11	The Danger of Disobedience
19th November	Deuteronomy 12-13	A place for God's Name
26th November	Deuteronomy 14-26	Laws for Liiving in the Land
3rd December	Deuteronomy 27-30	The Heart of the Matter
10th December	Deuteronomy 31-34	Looking to the Future