

# DEVOTED

STUDIES IN

DEUTERONOMY

PART 2



TOONGABBIE  
ANGLICAN  
CHURCH

# STUDY 4 - DEUTERONOMY 6

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## THE SHEMA



### Launch Question

Can you think of a quote you've tried to put to memory? Maybe it was up on your wall at home, on your fridge, as a tattoo or on your socials?



### Read Deuteronomy 6:1-6

1. In verse 1-3 what are the specific promises God gave to his people if they obeyed him?

2. How do these promises fit with the big picture of Scripture?

3. Verse 2 tells us to fear the Lord and yet we're also to 'love the Lord'. How are both fear and love essential motivations for us?

**The Shema** is the Hebrew word meaning 'hear' – found in verse 4. The Shema prayer (v4-9) is recited daily in the Jewish tradition. When Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was, he answered firstly with the Shema (see Mark 12:28-30).

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4. Why do we have such a hearing problem? Why do we struggle to properly listen to our God?

5. Describe what such loving devotion to God (in verse 5) would look like in practice. Share a moment when you've observed someone who was devoted like this.



### **Read Deuteronomy 6:7-19**

6. Draw what Moses told the people to do in verse 7-9. This was so that they would better remember to keep the commandment to love God.

7. Brainstorm together what specific things you could do to remember God's word in your life.

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8. As Moses pleads to the people to love and fear God, he reminds them again that our God is a jealous God. Why is this a good thing? Or put another way, would it be so bad if God were not a jealous God?

9. The Israelites were reminded of how easy it is to take God's gifts for granted (see v10-12) Name some gifts and blessings from God which you can tend to take for granted?



## Read Deuteronomy 6:7-19

10. Why do you think Moses puts such a focus on teaching children?

11. What events in our history as Christians should we be passing on to the next generation?

12. As we gather as a church, how can we intentionally pass God's truth on to future generations?



## Pray

Pray in light of Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

# STUDY 5 - FOLLOWING A HOLY GOD

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## UNDERSTANDING THE LAW PART 1



### Launch Question

What is the purpose of law (think generally and even regard to modern laws)?



### Read Deuteronomy 8:1-20

1. What are the motivations given to Israel to follow the law?
2. Note we can think of these motivations with respect to:
  - Future (v1)
  - Past (v5-6)
  - Present (v11-15)
3. Moses is very aware of the trappings of the heart. What are they and how does he address them? (e.g. v2-3, 17)



## Read Deuteronomy 9:1-6

4. How are we to understand the removal of those from the promised land with respect to those in the land and Israel? What does this say of God?



## Read Deuteronomy 9:7-25 and 10:11-16

5. What do you make of God's holy and righteous anger and Moses' intercession?

6. How does this relate to Moses' plead for Israel to respond rightly?



## Read Romans 8:33-35

7. How does understanding the character of God in Deuteronomy and now through Jesus help us respond rightly to God? When we compare ourselves as followers of Jesus to Israel hearing Deuteronomy, what's the same and what's different?



## Pray

# STUDY 6 - FOLLOWING A HOLY GOD

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## UNDERSTANDING THE LAW PART 2

This study is a little different. We will dig a little deeper into the specifics of some of the laws in Deuteronomy. Some of these are strange for us, but it's good for us to be aware of them and be able to place them within the story of scripture. We'll use some category headings to place some of these laws. Such categories are not necessarily inherent to Deuteronomy, but help us make sense of them.

### Moral Laws

Deuteronomy contains moral laws that govern personal conduct and ethical behaviour.



#### **Read Deuteronomy 5:16-20, 23:21 and 25:13**

1. What do these say about God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What do these say about Israel?

### Civil Laws

Deuteronomy also includes civil laws that provide guidelines for the administration of justice and the regulation of society. These laws cover various aspects of communal life, including property rights, marriage and divorce, inheritance, and the treatment of slaves.



#### **Read Deuteronomy 5:16-20, 23:21 and 25:13**



## **Read Deuteronomy 16:18-20, 15:12-18, 24:7 and 22:22-24**

3. What do these say about God?

4. What do these say about Israel?

### **Ritual Laws**

The book of Deuteronomy contains laws concerning religious rituals and practices. These laws concern the worship of God, the construction and maintenance of the sanctuary, the observance of festivals and sacrifices, and the appointment and duties of priests.



## **Read Deuteronomy 12:1-14, 16:1-17 and 18:1-8**

5. What do these say about God?

6. What do these say about Israel?



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## Other Laws

There are also some other laws that are hard to categorise.



### Consider Deuteronomy 22:6-11

7. What might these laws say about God and people?

## Making sense of all this within the whole story of Scripture and Jesus

In the very beginning, Adam and Eve were asked to obey one law: not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:17). The rule at least called Adam and Eve to acknowledge their dependance on God and to trust Him to teach them such things in their relationship with Him. They over-reached in their desire to be like God (3:5). God judged them accordingly (albeit with mercy).

We too are called to obey God. Although we are not bound by the 613 commands of the Torah (Genesis to Deuteronomy) for they have all been fulfilled in Christ who we follow.



### Read Galatians 3:24-25

If we were to use the same categories as above we could say:

- Ritual laws are no longer relevant because Christ is the one true sacrifice (Hebrews 10:1-2,11-14) and we are now all part of the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:5-9)

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- Civil laws are not longer relevant because Christ is our forever king. We are called to honour the governments within our freedom of living ultimately for Christ (Romans 13:1-7)
  - Moral laws are summed up in what it means to love God and love our neighbour (see also John 14:15, 1John 5:3).



## Pray

Give thanks that God has liberated us from the law that only condemned (even as it called us to righteousness) and that God has now made us righteous in Christ and given us his Spirit to transform us in holiness (cf Romans 8:1-4, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Titus 3:5-7).

## STUDY 7 - DEUTERONOMY 30

# BLESSINGS & CURSES

In keeping with God's promise to Abraham, that there would be a significant people from him, a land in which they will live, and blessing which they will enjoy (God's people in God's place under God's rule and blessing), God raised up his deliverer / rescuer Moses, who would deliver them from slavery in bring them to the land which he promised.

They are now about to enter the land (take 2). Moses has been speaking to God's people about God's plan, promise, purpose, provision and protection; and is wrapping up his sermon with some application for them.

The context of Chapter 30 are the curses and blessings they will encounter as they respond to the LORD. God is God and Sin is serious – Judgement is real, however mercy is available. Will they trust him or not?

To continue to not trust in God's plan, provision, rescue and deliverance into the land will mean they will look elsewhere for their security, meaning, significance, identity, satisfaction etc.... But in doing so, it will mean turning away from and spurning the one who has set his love on them, rescued and delivered them; and who has promised to be with them, shield them, deliver them and bring them 'home'.



### **Briefly skim Deuteronomy 27-29**

1. What do you note about the curses and blessings?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. To what extent does e.g illness, sickness, failed crops, diseases represent the curse of God today?

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3. How does Genesis 3:17,18, Matt 5:45 and John 9:1-3 speak to this? (Maybe get 3 people to check these and share with the group.)

**Optional notes - Putting blessings and curses given to the Israelites in their context.**

The fact is that this world is a good world gone bad – we enjoy the blessings of God’s providential care, yet, we all suffer. We all suffer in different ways, depths and times, because we live in a broken (cursed) world.

However, there were specific curses and blessings given to the nation of Israel under the Old Covenant, which were very particular. They were also outward, visible; undeniable – and they were also temporary. They were given to show them, and us that God is God; sin is serious; judgement is real, and yet mercy is available.

4. In contrast, how does Paul describe the New Covenant blessings in Ephesians 1:3-14?

The Old Covenant blessings and curses were outward, tangible and temporary – played out in their history; pointing to and showing us that God is faithful in keeping his promise, so that we could be sure in trusting the New Covenant promises in Christ – the blessings being inner and eternal... as we look forward to the new heavens and earth where we will have new bodies and dwell forever with the LORD and his people.

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## Part 1: The Promise of God's Blessing



### Read Deuteronomy 30:1-10

5. Summarise what God is saying will happen to them in:

- Verse 2
  
- Verse 3
  
- Verse 6 [1]
  
- Verses 7-10

6. Who has promised to do these things?

7. Why is obeying and following the LORD so significant?

8. Where do you struggle to trust /follow Jesus?

*[1] Physical circumcision was a sign of Israel's covenant with God; circumcision of the heart, therefore, would indicate Israel's being set apart to love God fully, inside and out. The idea is found in Romans 2:29. It refers to having a pure heart, set apart for God. However, as the heart is sinful, physical circumcision is of little value. A circumcised body and a sinful heart are at odds with each other. Only God can change (or circumcise) the heart.*

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## Part 2: The Closeness of God's Word



### Read Deuteronomy 30:11-14

9. What does it mean when it says, this command today is not too difficult for you to understand or beyond your reach? V11. Also consider v14 in this.

10. Does this mean that the people of Israel could and would perfectly keep it all the time?

11. Does this mean that their “salvation” was somehow earned or merited to them as they kept it?

12. How do you meaningfully engage with God’s word, and what might you need to do to take God’s word into your heart?

#### **Optional Notes - Putting verses 11-14 together**

In v11 and 14, Moses is claiming that understanding and obeying are both within their reach! Not necessarily perfectly though; nor in a way to achieve merit before God (God had already saved them).

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Verse 14 helps give us a clue to understanding this better when it refers to the word being near and in their heart so that they would be able to live in a way that pleases God who graciously saved them and despite their brokenness, frailty and shortcomings. The word being near and in their heart also speaks to God's powerful word that renews us within and points to God circumcising their heart (v6) and ultimately replacing our heart of stone with a living heart; the Holy Spirit.

You might like to read or note Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36:26-27, which speak of the New Covenant's inward work of the Spirit, fulfilled in Christ and the coming of the Spirit – even to the nations – in keeping with God's promise to Abraham (see also Acts 3:18-26).

### **Part 3: The Challenge of Choice**



#### **Read Deuteronomy 30:15-20**

13. What are the choices for God's people here?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
14. What are the implications of each choice?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
15. Which aspects of God's character have been prominent to Deuteronomy, and how should they help you in your Christian trust and obedience?

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## Part 4: Pointing to Jesus

16. What do the following tell us about blessings and curses?

- Galatians 3:10-14
- 2 Corinthians 1:20
- Ephesians 1:3-14
- Revelation 21:3,4



### Pray

Spend some time praying through these things.



## STUDY 8 - DEUTERONOMY 31:14–32:20, 33:26–29

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### HAPPILY EVER AFTER?

Moses' sermon is now finished and here we read of his final acts for Israel before he passes away in the end of Deuteronomy.



#### Read Deuteronomy 31:14–23

1. Why is God so sure that the Israelites will turn to other Gods?
2. Why doesn't he change the outcome?



#### Read Deuteronomy 31:24–32:4

3. How are we to read this purpose for the Ark of the Covenant and the song Moses sings? Are we to rejoice or weep at them?
4. Why is it significant to know that Moses wrote and recited every single word?



#### Read Deuteronomy 32:5–20

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5. Where do we see the faithfulness of YHWH?
  6. Where do we see the unfaithfulness of Israel?
  7. What is YHWH's judgment in v19-20?
  8. What themes would we assign to Moses' song?



### **Read Deuteronomy 33:26–29**

9. Has anything changed about God's relationship with Israel? What has changed?



### **Reflect**

10. How should we deal with language that speaks of God acting out of fear, jealousy, rage, etc.?

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11. Is wrath/anger an attribute of God? How would you articulate how it relates to him?

12. How does Romans 9-11 help frame our understanding of the function of Deuteronomy 32 in Salvation History?

13. Our culture can be described as a culture of affirmation. What are the positives and negatives of doing so, and how do we communicate human depravity effectively to a generation raised to believe that humanity is fundamentally good?

14. How would you apply the Song of Moses to the people you serve today in light of Christ's life, death, and resurrection?

