

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO DEUTERONOMY

RML OVERVIEW WEEKEND AWAY • 4–6 JUNE 2010

## INTRODUCTION

- Why study Deuteronomy?
  - Its importance for understanding the Old Testament
  - Its importance for understanding the New Testament
  - Its revelation of God, his ways, and his will
- Aims and prayers for this weekend
- Plan for the weekend:

Session 1:	Saturday morning 1	Reasons to Believe
Session 2:	Saturday morning 2	A Matter of Life and Death
Session 3:	Saturday evening	The Gospel According to Deuteronomy
Session 4:	Sunday morning 1	The Law and the Christian
Session 5:	Sunday morning 2	Fulfilling the Law
- The setting of Deuteronomy
  - The story so far
- The nature of the book
  - “Law” (*torah*), but in the context of history, exhortation, and prophecy
- Structure of book and its importance for understanding the function of the law
  - Chs 1–3 Historical introduction
  - Chs 4–11 Exhortations to obedience
  - Chs 12–26 Detailed stipulations
  - Chs 27–28 Blessings and curses
  - Chs 29–34 Life after Moses

1–11:25	Israel’s past unfaithfulness, God’s past faithfulness, and exhortations to obey
11:26–32	Blessings and curses
12:1–26:19	Central legal “core”
27:1–28:68	Blessings and curses
29:1–34:12	Israel’s future unfaithfulness, God’s future faithfulness, and exhortations to obey

## TALK 1: REASONS TO BELIEVE

### INTRODUCTION

- A surprising introduction
  - “Moses undertook to explain the law, saying:” (1:5)
  - But the law isn’t mentioned again until chapter 4!
  - Why start with three chapters of history?
  - The importance of context for understanding the law

- The importance of remembering the past
- But why *these* particular details?
  - The appointment of judges because the people were so numerous (1:9–18)
  - Israel’s rebellion and its consequences (1:19–46; 3:23–29)
  - Passing through Edom, Moab, and Ammon (2:1–23)
  - The defeat of Sihon and Og and the possession of their territory by the 2½ tribes (2:24–3:22)
- Powerful reasons for faith

### 1. GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES

- “Go in and take possession of **the land that the LORD swore to your fathers**, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their offspring after them” (1:8).
  - Cf. 1:35; 6:10, 18, 23; 7:13; 8:1; 10:11; 11:9, 21; 19:8; 26:3; 28:11; 30:20; 31:7, 20, 21, 23; 34:4; see also 4:31; 7:8, 12; 8:18; 9:5; 13:17; 26:15; 28:9; 29:13).
  - Background: the promise to the patriarchs (Gen 12:1–7; 13:14–17; 15:1–21; 17:1–8; 22:15–18; 26:3–5; 35:11–12)
  - Key elements:
    - Great nation / many offspring (Gen 12:2; 13:16; 15:5; 17:2; 22:17; 26:4)
    - Land of Canaan (Gen 12:7; 13:15; 15:18–19; 17:8; 26:3; 35:12)
    - Blessing (Gen 12:2)
    - A blessing to all nations (Gen 12:3; 22:18; 26:4)
    - Special relationship with God (17:7)
  - God’s commitment to his promises (cf. Exod 2:23–24)
  - Deut 1:9–18: God’s faithfulness to his promise to multiply Israel.

### 2. THE DANGER OF DISBELIEF

- Deuteronomy 1:19–33
  - “The people are greater and taller than we. The cities are great and fortified up to heaven. And besides, we have seen the sons of the Anakim there” (Deut 1:28)
- Giants (1:28; cf. 9:2; 3:11)
- The consequences of unbelief (1:34–35)

### 3. GOD’S PROVEN POWER

- God has a track record
  - Land given to another people (2:5, 9, 19)
  - Giants overcome (2:10, 11, 20–23; 3:11)
  - Heavily fortified cities (3:3–5)
  - Possession of Gilead (2:24–3:22)
- Faith isn’t a leap in the dark (cf. 11:1–10)

### 4. A FRESH START

- “And now, O Israel, listen” (4:1)
- Israel’s track record: “You would not listen” (1:43; cf. 1:26)
- Caleb and Joshua: going against the grain and escaping the fate of their generation (1:36, 38)

What about us?

- God’s promises to us:
  - forgiveness of sins (Heb 4:15–16; 1 John 1:9)
  - answers to prayer if we ask God (Matt 7:7–11; 21:22; Luke 11:5–13; John 14:13–14; 16:23–24; 1 John 3:22; 5:14–15).
  - our needs met if we seek first God’s kingdom and his righteousness (Matt 6:31–33; cf. Heb 13:5)
  - eternal life if we give up our life in this world (Mark 8:35; John 12:25)
  - eternal rewards for sacrificial service now (Luke 14:12–14)
  - etc. etc.
- Our barriers to belief:
  - the magnitude of our sin
  - the magnitude of our task
  - the magnitude of the opposition
- God’s track record
  - Nothing is too hard for God (Deut 7:17–18; cf. Jer 32:17)
  - Biblical history
  - Christian history and biography
- The danger of defeatism
- Don’t be afraid or stop fighting (3:12–22)
- Don’t be discouraged or impatient with slow progress (cf. 7:22)
- The obedience which comes from faith

## TALK 2: A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

### INTRODUCTION

- Is the function of the law positive or negative? Or both?
- “The very commandment which was for life, it proved to me to be for death” (Rom 7:10).

### 1. THE LAW IS GOOD

- Righteous (Deut 4:5–8)
  - “And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?” (Deut 4:8).
  - Cf. Rom 7:12: “the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good.”
- Not obscure or inaccessible: Deut 30:11–14

### 2. THE LAW OFFERS LIFE

- “. . . so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land” (5:33; cf. 4:1; 4:40; 6:3, 18; 8:1; 11:8–9)
- “Now choose life, so that you and your children may live” (30:19).
- “For it is no empty word for you, but your very life, and by this word you are to prolong your days in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess” (32:47).
- But according to the law, “life” is conditional on obedience.
  - “Walk in all the way that the LORD your God has commanded you, *so that* you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess” (5:33; cf. 4:1; 4:40; 6:3, 18; 8:1; 11:8–9).

- *“Because you listen to these rules and keep and do them, Yahweh your God will keep with you the covenant and steadfast love that he swore to your fathers” (7:12).*
- Disobedience leads to destruction (8:19–20; cf. 4:25–26; 6:14–15)
- Blessings and curses (11:26–28; 27–28)
  - *“See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known” (11:26–28).*

### 3. THE LAW RESULTS IN DEATH

- Israel’s rebellious past (9:7–24)
  - *“You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you” (Deut 9:24).*
- Israel’s rebellious future (31:16–18, 24–29)
- The law serves as a witness against Israel (31:26)
- Romans 7:10: *“I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death.”* Literally, *“The commandment which was for life, it proved for me to be for death.”*
- The law’s “ministry of death” (2 Cor 3:7) and “ministry of condemnation” (2 Cor 3:9).
- The symbolism of Moses’ death outside the land
- Why the law can’t bring life: Galatians 3:21–22; Rom 8:3.
  - The fault is not with the law (cf. Heb 8:8; Rom 7:7–8)
- Does the law teach justification through works of the law? See Rom 10:5 and Gal 3:12, quoting Lev 18:5
  - Yes and no (cf. Deut 6:25)

#### IMPLICATIONS:

- The goodness of the law and Christian apologetics
- The goodness of the law and Christian living
- Justification by works (or indeed faith plus works) does not work. *“No—one will be declared righteous in [God’s] sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin” (Rom 3:20).*

## TALK 3: THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO DEUTERONOMY

### INTRODUCTION

- So far we’ve seen, among other things, that:
  - The blessing of the law is dependent on obedience (11:26–28)
  - Israel has a track record of disobedience (9:24)
- So what hope is there?

### 1. GOD’S MERCY

- *“The LORD your God is a merciful God; he will not abandon or destroy you or forget the covenant with your forefathers, which he confirmed to them by oath” (4:31).*

## 2. GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM

- “The land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their offspring after them” (1:8; cf. 1:35; 6:10, 18, 23; 7:13; 8:1; 10:11; 11:9, 21; 19:8; 26:3; 28:11; 30:20; 31:7, 20, 21, 23; 34:4; see also 4:31; 7:8, 12; 8:18; 9:5; 13:17; 26:15; 28:9; 29:13). See Gen 12:1–7; 13:14–17; 15:1–21; 17:1–8; 22:15–18; 26:3–5; 35:11–12.
- When the covenant is broken, Moses pleads the promise to the patriarchs (Deut 9:27).
- A vital distinction between the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants.
  - Cf. Gal 3:15–21: the law was added alongside the promise to Abraham, without modifying it.

Brothers, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no-one can set aside or add to [*epidiatassetai* = add provisions or instructions to] a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case.<sup>16</sup> The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” meaning one person, who is Christ.<sup>17</sup> What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise.<sup>18</sup> For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise.<sup>19</sup> What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added [*prosetethē* = put alongside] because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.<sup>20</sup> A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.<sup>21</sup> Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.<sup>22</sup> But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

- The reason God is giving Israel the land is not their righteousness (9:4, 6) but his promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (9:5).
- There is a degree of tension at this stage in history between the two covenants:
  - Abrahamic covenant: promise (unconditional)
  - Mosaic covenant: law (conditional)
  - But the tension is resolved through Jesus and the new covenant, because Jesus is both the true offspring of Abraham (Gal 3:16) and the one who perfectly keeps the law.
- Even while the law is in effect, salvation is by faith alone.
  - No-one is saved through the Mosaic covenant but they may still be saved by faith on the basis of the Abrahamic covenant (cf. Rom 4; Gal 3).
    - E.g. Moses (cf. Heb 11:24–28); Abraham (Heb 11:9–10, 14–16) etc.

## 3. A NEW MOSES

- The importance of the original Moses
  - Intercessor
    - “The LORD listened to me” (9:19; 10:10).
    - Be assured that prayer makes a difference
      - “Therefore he said he would destroy them—had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him, to turn away his wrath from destroying them” (Ps 106:23).
  - Prophet (18:15)
  - Leader (29:5; cf. Num 27:12–21)
- How will Israel survive without Moses (cf. 31:27)?
  - Joshua (31:3; 7; 34:9) and afterwards (Judges 2:7–11)

- Joshua dies so he can't guarantee Israel's continual possession of the land.
- The prophet like Moses: Deut 34:10–12; cf. Deut 18:15–19
- Christ the prophet like Moses, who always lives to make intercession for us (Heb 7:25)

#### 4. THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART

- Deut 30:1–10
  - “And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live” (30:6).
- Circumcision of the heart as a defining characteristic of God's new covenant people
  - “For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God” (Rom 2:28–29; cf. Jer 31:33; Ezek 36:26–27; 2 Cor 3:3, 6; Phil 3:3; Col 2:11).
- The exhaustion of the curse (Gal 3:13–14)

### TALK 4: THE LAW AND THE CHRISTIAN

Hopefully two things are clear by now:

1. The law is good, not obscure or intrinsically unkeepable, and potentially life-giving.
  2. But sinful people won't keep the law fully, and so will not obtain life through it. On the contrary, it puts them under the curse and serves as a witness against them.
- Hence, Rom 7:10: “That which was *for life* proved to be *for death* to me.”

We need to maintain both these truths about the law.

- It is a good gift from God which has the potential to bless.
- But its primary purpose in salvation-history was never that people would actually obtain life through it, but rather that it would bring death and a realisation of their sin.

Both these things come into play when we consider the role of the law in the Christian life.

1. The law plays no part in our salvation, apart from revealing our need for it.
2. But the law still remains a good thing, reflecting God's character. It was no fault of the law that it brought death (cf. Rom 7). Hence, the ethical standards it reflects may still guide us (the so-called “third use of the law,” the first two being to restrain evildoers and to convict people of sin).

This is a difficult area but in practice most people agree:

- a) that we relate to the OT law differently from Israel
- b) that the law nevertheless has value as scripture in guiding our ethical decisions
- c) that it's not always easy to apply the law (in fact this was true even in Moses' day: cf. Exod 18:26; Deut 1:17; 17:8).

What follows is my own understanding:

#### 1. THE LAW NO LONGER BINDS US AS A COVENANT

- Christians are not “under [the] law.”
  - “[The law] was added because of transgressions, *until* the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made” (Gal 3:19; cf. Heb 8:13).
  - “You are not under law but under grace” (Rom 6:14; cf. 1 Cor 9:20).

- “Under the law” does not just mean “under the *condemnation* of the law.”

“The law is binding on a person only as long as he lives. . . . You also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code” (Rom 7:1–6).

- We’re no longer obliged by *covenant* relationship to keep the law *per se*.
- Christ replaces the law as the one to whom we are bound (cf. Rom 10:4; 1 Cor 9:20–21)

## 2. THE LAW STILL GUIDES US AS *SCRIPTURE*

- Even Paul still quotes from the law as an authoritative expression of what’s pleasing to God.
  - “Children, obey your parents in the LORD, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother.’ This is the first commandment with a promise: ‘that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land’ (Eph 6:1–3).
- The laws given to Israel reflect God’s eternal character, but also the particular situation of Old Testament Israel. So we need to separate the context-specific elements from those with lasting application.
  - An analogy: the Pastoral Epistles
- The traditional threefold classification between moral, civil, and ceremonial laws is still helpful, even if there are (a few) hard cases.
  - “The moral law ... is the true and eternal rule of righteousness, prescribed for men of all nations and times, who wish to conform their lives to God’s will.  
The ceremonial law was the tutelage of the Jews, with which it seemed good to the Lord to train this people, as it were, in their childhood, until the fullness of time should come, in order that he might fully manifest his wisdom to the nations, and show the truth of those things which then were foreshadowed in figures.  
The judicial law, given to them for civil government, imparted certain formulas of equity and justice, by which they might live together blamelessly and peaceably.”<sup>1</sup>
  - Possible objections:
    - The unity of the law
    - Not practical to categorise the laws
  - But
    - Both the OT and NT distinguish different types of laws (e.g. Mark 7:18–23; Hos 6:6)
    - “Motive clauses” also suggest a distinction (compare Lev 20:24–25; Exod 22:26–27)
    - The law is like an opera: a unity but made up of different kinds of material
    - In practice there aren’t that many really hard cases
    - Hard cases don’t invalidate the categories (cf. tax cases concerning tomatoes / jaffa cakes)
  - Of course, ceremonial and civil laws still have things to teach us even if we don’t apply them directly today.
- Examples of the way the New Testament uses Old Testament laws:
  - some laws are simply reaffirmed:

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<sup>1</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Volume 2 (ed. John T. McNeill; trans. Ford Lewis Battles; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), 4.20.14 (pp. 1502–3).

- “Honour your father and mother” (Deut 5:16, quoted in Matt 15:4; Mark 7:10; Eph 6:2–3).
    - “Do not commit adultery” (Deut 5:18, quoted in Matt 5:27)
    - “Do not covet” (Deut 5:21, alluded to in Matt 5:28)
    - “Do not murder” (Deut 5:17; quoted in Matt 5:21).
  - Others have a different application but the principle remains:
    - “Purge the evil [one] from your midst” (Deut 13:5; 17:7, 12; 19:13, 21:21; 22:21, 22, 24; 24:7).
      - In Deuteronomy, normally accomplished through execution
      - But quoted in 1 Cor 5:13 in support of a punishment of excommunication (cf. 1 Cor 5:5, 9, 11)
      - The principle is the same but the application is different because of the different nature of the community of God’s people—no longer a holy (political) *nation*.
    - “You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain” (Deut 25:4).
      - Quoted by Paul in 1 Cor 9:9 and 1 Tim 5:18 in support of financial provision for Christian workers.
      - Principle the same (worker needs to eat), application extended.
    - “A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established” (Deut 19:15).
      - Quoted in Matt 18:16 and 1 Tim 5:19 in connection with accusations of sin against a fellow Christian or an elder.
      - Again, different context, same principle.
  - So the law contains good principles of justice, morality, right relationships etc. which we can and should apply in other contexts.
- Hard cases
  - Don’t panic!
  - Is there a motive clause or other obvious reason for the law?
  - Does the New Testament refer to the law or shed light on its purpose or application?
  - Beware two wrong approaches:
    - the law is only binding if it is reaffirmed in the NT
    - the law is binding unless it is revoked in the NT
  - More obscure laws are more likely to be ceremonial.
  - If you’re really stuck (or even if not!), look in commentaries for explanations of the law in its near Eastern context.
  - The Sabbath: a particularly hard case?
    - “One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.” (Rom 14:5)
    - A clear ethical component: treatment of others.
 

“That your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you” (Deut 5:14).
    - A ceremonial component:
 

“You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, ‘Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a *sign* between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the LORD, sanctify you. You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you. . . . Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. It is a *sign* forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.’” (Exodus 31:13–17).



“Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, as a *sign* between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them” (Ezekiel 20:12).

- A civil component in the fixing of the particular day?
- The N.T. seems to present this as an area of freedom (Rom 14:5; Gal 4:10; Col 2:16)
- A case-study: Deut 22:1–12
  - In groups, ask what principles are reflected and how this law might shape our behaviour today.
  - Use the table on the back page of the handout.

## TALK 5: FULFILLING THE LAW

### 1. THE BASIS OF OBEDIENCE

- The special relationship between God and his people
  - “You are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth” (Deut 7:6; cf. Exod 19:5; Deut 4:20; 5:6–7; 10:14–15).
  - “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Pet 2:9).

### 2. THE NATURE OF OBEDIENCE

- External and internal
  - Actions: keep the law “by doing it” (e.g. 7:11; 17:19; 19:9)
  - But actions flowing from an *attitude* to God:

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good? (10:12–13).

    - Fear the LORD your God (cf. 4:10; 5:29; 6:2; 6:13, 24; 8:6; 10:20; 13:5; 14:23; 17:19; 28:58; 31:6, 12, 13)
    - Walk in all his ways (cf. 8:6; 11:22, 19:9; 26:17; 28:9; 30:16)
    - Love him (cf. 5:10; 6:5; 7:9; 11:1, 13, 22; 13:4; 19:9; 30:6, 16, 20)
    - Serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul (cf. 6:13, 10:20; 11:13; 13:4, 28:47).
    - Keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD (cf. 4:5–6, 40; 5:1; 6:17; 7:11; 11:32; 12:1; 17:19; 26:16–17).
  - Some specific laws are explicitly concerned with our thoughts and attitudes, for example:
    - “Do not covet your neighbour’s house; do not desire your neighbour’s wife; etc.” (Deut 5:21).
    - “Do not hate your brother in your heart” (Lev 19:17).
- Wholehearted worship of the LORD alone
  - No rival Gods
    - “You must not have other Gods besides me” (5:7; cf. 4:23–24; 5:7; 6:13–15; 7:1–6).
  - “All your heart and soul”
    - “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (6:4–5; cf. 4:29; 10:12; 11:13; 13:4; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10).

- Disobedience is idolatry
  - “. . . if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known” (11:28).
  - “. . . and do not turn aside from any of the words that I command you today, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them” (28:14).
- Do we worship God uniquely / wholeheartedly, or do we have other gods alongside him?
  - Which idols are we tempted to serve / fear / listen to?

### 3. THE STRUGGLE OF OBEDIENCE.

- Obedience can't be taken for granted.
  - Note how often Deuteronomy says “take care” / “be careful” / “beware” (4:9, 15, 19, 23; 5:1, 32; 6:3, 12, 25; 7:11; 8:1, 11, 17; 11:16, 22, 32; 12:1, 13, 19, 28, 30, 32; 15:5, 9; 16:12; 17:10; 19:9; 23:23; 24:8; 26:16; 28:1, 13, 15, 58; 29:18; 31:12; 32:46).
  - Be careful . . .
    - to do as the LORD your God has commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left (5:32)
    - lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen (4:9)
    - lest you act corruptly (4:16)
    - lest you . . . be drawn away and bow down to [the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven] and serve them (4:19)
    - lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God (4:23)
    - lest you forget the LORD (6:12; 8:11)
    - lest your heart be deceived (11:16)
  - “Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor 10:12).
  - Teach your children (4:9; 6:7; 32:46)
  - Teach yourself
    - “Lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul” (11:18; cf. 4:39; 6:6).
- Blessing brings particular dangers (8:7–14; 17–20)
  - God's blessing may be more obvious when it is less abundant
  - God's discipline is kind (8:1–6; 15–16)
    - The purpose of the wilderness journey
      - Testing (8:2; cf. Exod 16:4)
        - Cf. Gen. 22:1; Exod. 20:20; Deut 13:3; Judges 2:22; 3:1, 4; 2 Chr. 32:31
        - James 1:13; 1 Cor 10:13
    - Teaching (8:3)
      - “He oppressed you and made you hunger” (8:3)
      - “To do you good in the end” (8:16)
    - Cf. Heb 12:5–11
    - Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust Him for His grace;  
Behind a frowning providence  
He hides a smiling face. (From William Cowper, “God Moves In a Mysterious Way”)
  - Expect hardship
  - Rejoice in hardship as God's loving discipline (cf. Rom 5:3; James 1:2)

- There is no room for compromise
  - The destruction of the Canaanites
    - Admittedly a difficult issue
    - “It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God will drive them out before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” (Deut 9:5).
    - Indeed God let his people suffer for 400 years in Egypt before bringing them out to dispossess the Canaanites, because “the sin of the Amorites [was] not yet complete.” This suggests that God was scrupulous not punish them until the punishment was fully deserved.
    - The danger of assimilation
      - “Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, for they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods, and the LORD’s anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you” (7:3–4).
  - False prophets: “For the LORD your God is testing you, to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (13:3)
  - Family members (13:6–8).
  - Don’t flirt with sin.
- Guard your heart

#### 4. THE OBLIGATIONS OF OBEDIENCE

- Some particular priorities in Deuteronomy:
  - Worshipping the LORD alone (5:7; 11:16; 13:1–3; 17:2–5).
  - Worshipping him only in the way he prescribes (Deut 12).
    - Not the way that other people worship their gods (12:30).
    - This perhaps explains some of the more puzzling laws, e.g. Deut 14:1:
 

“You are the children of the LORD your God. Do not cut yourselves or shave the front of your heads for the dead.”
  - Love for one’s neighbour (22:1–4)
  - Sexual purity (22:13–30; 24:1–4), etc.
  - Generosity to the poor and to slaves (Deut 15:1–18; 23:15–16; 19–20; 24:10–13; 19–22)
- In groups of 3 or 4, look at the verses listed in the last bullet point and discuss what they might teach us. How does the law strike a balance in this area?

## QUESTIONS?

Deut 22:1–12	Principles reflected	Possible applications today
<p><sup>1</sup> You shall not see your brother's ox or his sheep going astray and ignore them. You shall take them back to your brother. <sup>2</sup> And if he does not live near you and you do not know who he is, you shall bring it home to your house, and it shall stay with you until your brother seeks it. Then you shall restore it to him. <sup>3</sup> And you shall do the same with his donkey or with his garment, or with any lost thing of your brother's, which he loses and you find; you may not ignore it.</p> <p><sup>4</sup> You shall not see your brother's donkey or his ox fallen down by the way and ignore them. You shall help him to lift them up again.</p> <p><sup>5</sup> A woman shall not wear a man's garment, nor shall a man put on a woman's cloak, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God.</p> <p><sup>6</sup> If you come across a bird's nest in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs and the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. <sup>7</sup> You shall let the mother go, but the young you may take for yourself, that it may go well with you, and that you may live long.</p> <p><sup>8</sup> When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring the guilt of blood upon your house, if anyone should fall from it.</p> <p><sup>9</sup> You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest the whole yield be forfeited, the crop that you have sown and the yield of the vineyard. <sup>10</sup> You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together.</p> <p><sup>11</sup> You shall not wear cloth of wool and linen mixed together.</p> <p><sup>12</sup> You shall make yourself tassels on the four corners of the garment with which you cover yourself.</p>		