

March 5-11

## **Week 10**

This week we will finish Numbers and move into Deuteronomy, where Israel is finally poised to enter the land of promise.

Deuteronomy, meaning “second law,” is Moses’s retelling of Israel’s short history and especially a recounting of its covenant with God, told to a new generation during the final weeks before crossing into the land of Canaan. As you read, watch for emphases on God’s uniqueness (he is One and the one true God), God’s covenant love for Israel, the call for obedience so that the covenant people would reflect God’s character and be blessed in their relationship with him, and the dangers of disobedience. Watch for ways God’s people were to model his righteousness as they related to God and to one another and for ways they should care for foreigners, widows, and orphans.

Keep in mind where we are in the story of Scripture. The laws of God make sense only in the context of the grand story of God.

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**Day 1****Read Numbers 29-32****Act 2 - Scene 3 - Reading 26**

The holy war described in this passage can be disturbing to modern readers. How should we, followers of the Prince of Peace, read such passages?

1. Remember that the Midianites had attacked Israel and played a part in seducing the nation to worship Baal. The people who lived in Canaan at this time were violent and worshiped fertility gods through perverted sexual rites.
2. This is God's war, and thus this holy war served not only to protect God's people but also to deal with the Midianites. They join in the evil attempt to take out God's people, and as a result they are taken out. God reserves the right to fight for and protect his children from the attacking forces of evil.
3. God would eventually war against sin and Satan, who is trying to take all of us out, by taking the consequences of all sin upon himself in Jesus, his Son.

*How did God's instructions to kill the Midianite men and burn their cities reflect his larger purposes for the Hebrew people?*

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## **Day 2**

### **Read Numbers 33-36**

#### **Act 2 - Scene 3 - Reading 27**

As Numbers concludes, the primary focus is on the division of the land. Think about the fact that God has gifts of inheritance for his people, a place for them to live.

*In John 14:2 Jesus said, “I am going to prepare a place for you.” What is the inheritance God has provided you?*

Two special situations are mentioned in today’s verses.

1. God provided for the Levites in a way that is different from the other tribes, in accordance with their unique role among the Israelites.
2. God established cities of refuge among the Levites’ cities. Read about these cities with an eye for God’s concern for justice—punishment of the guilty and protection of the innocent.

*In what ways should we be concerned for justice today?*

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**Day 3**

**Read Deuteronomy 1-3**

**Act 2 - Scene 3 - Reading 28**

As we move into the book of Deuteronomy, Moses, standing on the brink of the promised land, recounted the beginning of Israel's time in the wilderness. Notice why Israel was not to destroy Edom, Moab, and Ammon: they were Israel's relatives, and God had given them their land. These other nations had already done what Israel was poised to do, having taken possession of the land from the pagan people. When Israel defeated Sihon and Og, God again instructed them to destroy the people. If Israel did not destroy the idolatrous people, idolatry would destroy Israel's purpose for existence.

*Do you understand God's purpose for your life?*

*Do you recognize the importance of your obedience in staying faithful to God's purpose?*

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**Day 4**

**Read Deuteronomy 4-7**

**Act 2 - Scene 3 - Reading 29**

Notice today the emphasis on the word of God. God's commands and instructions laid the foundation for the nation as it entered the land. Pay careful attention to why God gave the nation these words.

*Evaluate your own commitment to the Word of God.*

*Renew your commitment to read the Word daily, seeking to understand it and apply it to your life.*

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**Day 5****Read Deuteronomy 8-11****Act 2 - Scene 3 - Reading 30**

Notice the centrality of God's word in the book of Deuteronomy. God could have given the people many things as they entered the land—riches, power, miracles—and these accompanied the Israelites in some ways. Yet he primarily gave them his words.

*Track all of God's purposes for the word as expressed in these chapters.*

*Read Jesus's temptation in the wilderness concerning bread (see Matthew 4:1-4) against the backdrop of Deuteronomy 8:1-5. Jesus, the Son, succeeded where Israel, the "son," failed. Worship him today.*

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**Day 6**

**Read Deuteronomy 12-15**

**Act 2 - Scene 3 - Reading 31**

Today's reading begins a brief section on laws for worship practices. Notice the central place, both in location and in importance, of the tabernacle, "the place the Lord your God chooses from all your tribes to put his name for his dwelling" (Deuteronomy 12:5).

Right worship lays the foundation for right living. God's people were to live differently from others in the world by whom they worshiped; by the way they worshiped; by the way they ate; and by the way they treated the poor, the debtor, and the slave.

*How might you, as one of God's people, live distinctly in the world today?*

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**Day 7**

**Reading Summary for Week 10**

The last chapters of Numbers included both laws and narrative, taking us up to the edge of Israel's entrance into the promised land. Then we became observers of the aged Moses, as he retold a new generation of Israelites about God's faithfulness. As he also recounted the laws—and "Deuteronomy" means "Second Law"—he reminded Israel of the greatest commandment: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5).

**Prayer/Meditation**

Lord, I need your wisdom and help in knowing how to relate to all these commandments. I know I cannot be saved by keeping them. But help me understand that your love for people means that you ask people to love you in return, and that in loving you back I am actually keeping your commands. Help me see that obeying your commands is possible because it is what you do in me, and is truly LIFE. I recognize that living any other way is death. Please come into my heart and live your life out through me, such that I experience the joy and delight you have for me. Amen.

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