



Deuteronomy

January 4 - February 12, 2015

Mountain Brook Baptist Church

www.mbbc.org



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Project 119 is the new Bible reading initiative that we are launching at Mountain Brook Baptist Church. Our hope is that every member of our church body would be encouraged in his or her relationship with Jesus Christ through the regular reading of God's Word. We are kicking off this new Bible reading initiative by providing you a reading guide for the book of Deuteronomy. This guide includes a reading schedule that will challenge you to read one chapter of Deuteronomy for six days of the week and a New Testament passage on the seventh day of the week. Our hope is that this format will help you see how the Old Testament connects to the New Testament and will enrich your understanding of the Christian life. To learn more about Project 119, visit www.mbbc.org/project119.

WHY READ DEUTERONOMY?

The book of Deuteronomy is one of the most important books in the Old Testament. It provides an account of God entering into a covenant agreement with Israel prior to their conquest of the promised land. This covenant agreement was an essential part of the Israelites' relationship with God and the peoples' failure to keep their part of the covenant explains much of the Old Testament storyline. However, the narrative of the Old Testament is not merely the story of the judgment the people experience due to their disobedience. It is also the story of God's steadfast, covenant love. God continues to pursue his people even in their disobedience and offers them forgiveness if they repent and return to him.

Fast Facts:

Name: Deuteronomy means 'second law'.

Setting: The Israelites are on the plains of Moab, on the edge of Canaan, preparing to enter into the land God has promised. After wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, Moses leads the people in renewing their commitment to God's covenant prior to entering the promised land.

Keyword: Renewal



Deuteronomy 1-6

January 4 - January 10, 2015

This week we'll be reading Deuteronomy chapters 1 through 6 and Matthew 22:34-40. One of the most important passages in this section is Deuteronomy 6:4-5. There we read:

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." (NIV)

The Israelites were monotheists, that is, they worshipped only one God. This made them distinct from their pagan neighbors who worshipped a plethora of deities. We also learn that the Israelites were supposed to love God with all of their hearts. Unfortunately, the Israelites often turned their relationship with God into one that was marked by duty rather than delight. But, in these verses, we see that God desired more than obedience. He desired that the Israelites would love him with all of their hearts.

In Matthew 22:34-40, Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:5 when answering the question, "What is the greatest commandment in the law?" Rather than giving them a command that focused on actions, Jesus gave them a command that focused on the condition of their hearts. If we love God, then we will want to obey him. Apart from love, our attempts at obedience will be nearly impossible. As you read this week, consider how you might grow in your love for God and for others. What are some of God's characteristics that fill you with love and awe for him? How have you seen God's faithfulness in your life? Ask God to give you a greater love for him and for other people and to help this love lead you to greater levels of faithfulness in your relationship with him.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4 - DEUTERONOMY 1

MONDAY, JANUARY 5 - DEUTERONOMY 2

TUESDAY, JANUARY 6 - DEUTERONOMY 3

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7 - DEUTERONOMY 4

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8 - DEUTERONOMY 5

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9 - DEUTERONOMY 6

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10 - MATTHEW 22:34-40

Pray for Open Eyes

Each day this week spend some time in prayer before reading the Bible. A great, simple prayer to pray would be:

"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law."

-Psalm 119:18



Deuteronomy 7-12

January 11 - January 17, 2015

This week we'll be reading Deuteronomy 7 through 12. In chapters 8 and 9, the Lord reminds the Israelites of the importance of remembering. You see, the Israelites were about to conquer their enemies and take possession of the promised land. They were about to transition from wilderness living, a time when they were very aware of their dependence upon God, to living in a land of plenty. They would be tempted to think that they had accomplished all of this on their own. They would be tempted to think that they deserved the blessings of God. So, in chapters 8 and 9, the Lord commands the Israelites to remember that he chose them by his grace and provided them with the blessings they would enjoy in the promised land.

In Ephesians 2:1-10, Paul wrote to the Ephesians to remind them of the truth that they had been saved through faith in Jesus Christ. This gift of salvation was given to them on the merits of Jesus' life, death and resurrection and was not something they had earned through their own good works. This truth that our salvation is purely a gift of God's mercy and grace is one that we need to remember daily. It keeps us from being proud or arrogant and gives us the motivation that we need to walk in the good works that God has prepared for us. Thank God this week for the grace and mercy you have received through faith in Jesus!

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11 - DEUTERONOMY 7
MONDAY, JANUARY 12 - DEUTERONOMY 8
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13 - DEUTERONOMY 9
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14 - DEUTERONOMY 10
THURSDAY, JANUARY 15 - DEUTERONOMY 11
FRIDAY, JANUARY 16 - DEUTERONOMY 12
SATURDAY, JANUARY 17 - EPHESIANS 2:1-10

Keep It Up!

We're in week two of our Deuteronomy Bible Reading Plan. Chances are, you've already missed a day or two. If you've fallen behind, don't get discouraged. If you can, catch up on past readings. If not, just pick up with today's reading and keep moving forward.



Deuteronomy 13-18

January 18 - January 24, 2015

In Deuteronomy 13-18, we read some of the specific covenant stipulations the Israelites were to follow when they had settled into the promised land. In Deuteronomy 16, we see that one of these stipulations was to celebrate the feast of Passover. This feast commemorated the work of salvation that God accomplished on behalf of the Israelites in the land of Egypt. When God passed through Egypt, all of the firstborn Egyptian males died, but the Lord spared the firstborn sons of Israel as long as they had the blood of the lamb on their doorposts. Following this 10th and final plague, the Egyptians allowed the Israelites to leave their land.

In 1 Corinthians 5:6-8, the Apostle Paul states that Jesus Christ is our Passover Lamb. As we think about the salvation that we have received through the blood of Jesus Christ, Paul writes that we should pursue holy living in response to all that we have received through Jesus. For many, the word 'holiness' brings to mind the idea of legalism. However, this was not the case for the writers of the New Testament. For them, holiness was the only proper response for those who had received the salvation Jesus offers. A pursuit of righteous living that flows from the gratitude we feel for the salvation that we have received through Christ should characterize our lives. Spend some time this week thinking about areas of your life in which you need to pursue greater levels of obedience to God. Ask God to fill you with gratitude for the salvation you have received through Jesus and to empower you to live a holy life.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18 - DEUTERONOMY 13
MONDAY, JANUARY 19 - DEUTERONOMY 14
TUESDAY, JANUARY 20 - DEUTERONOMY 15
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21 - DEUTERONOMY 16
THURSDAY, JANUARY 22 - DEUTERONOMY 17
FRIDAY, JANUARY 23 - DEUTERONOMY 18
SATURDAY, JANUARY 24 - 1 CORINTHIANS 5:6-8

Write it Down

Many of us retain things longer if we write them down. As you read the Bible this year, you might want to consider keeping a journal and writing down what God is teaching you. This will help you remember what you've learned and serve as a record of God's faithfulness throughout the year.



Deuteronomy 19-24

January 25 - January 31, 2015

Many of us struggle with reading the Old Testament because we get bogged down in sections like Deuteronomy 19-24. In this section of the book, we read more of the covenant stipulations that were supposed to govern the Israelites' behavior in the promised land. These laws were designed to set the Israelites apart from their pagan neighbors. They were to obey the law because they loved God and wanted to live in a way that pleased him.

When we turn to the New Testament, we learn Old Testament laws are no longer binding on Christians. Why is this the case? Are we simply picking and choosing which parts of the Bible we think we should obey? Read Luke 22:14-20. In this passage, Jesus institutes what we have come to know as the Lord's Supper. Jesus breaks the bread, he pours the wine and tells the disciples that these elements represent his broken body and shed blood. In verse 20, he says that the cup that is poured out is the new covenant in his blood. When we place our faith in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we become members of God's new covenant people. Jesus perfectly fulfilled the Old Testament laws on our behalf. His righteousness is credited to us. So, we no longer obey Old Testament commandments, except for those that are ratified in the New Testament.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25 - DEUTERONOMY 19
MONDAY, JANUARY 26 - DEUTERONOMY 20
TUESDAY, JANUARY 27 - DEUTERONOMY 21
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28 - DEUTERONOMY 22
THURSDAY, JANUARY 29 - DEUTERONOMY 23
FRIDAY, JANUARY 30 - DEUTERONOMY 24
SATURDAY, JANUARY 31 - LUKE 22:14-20

Walk and Pray

Do you find it difficult to sit still and pray for a significant amount of time? If so, consider changing your strategy. Take a walk, or run, around your neighborhood and pray as you go. You may just find that your prayer life will benefit from a change in scenery.



Deuteronomy 25-30

February 1 - February 7, 2015

In Deuteronomy 27-28, Moses lays out the blessings and curses associated with the covenant. If the Israelites obey, they will experience the blessings of the covenant. If they disobey, they will receive curses. The Israelites agree to live by this covenant agreement and assure Moses and the Lord of their intention to obey. However, much of the Old Testament tells the story of what happens when the Israelites fail to follow through on their covenant agreement.

In Deuteronomy 30, the Lord tells the people what they should do when they experience the curses of the covenant. He invites them to return to him and experience the restoration that comes through repentance and faith. Each of us knows what it is like to experience the effects of disobedience. Like the Israelites, we have sinned against the Lord and have failed to follow his commands. What are we to do when our fellowship with God is disrupted due to our sin? We are to follow the same pattern that God gave the Israelites. We are to repent and return. In 1 John 1:5-10, John teaches that each of us will sin against God. In fact, if we say that we haven't sinned, then we're lying. But, God offers us forgiveness. If we will confess our sins, God will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness because of the blood that Jesus shed on our behalf. Spend some time this week confessing your sins to the Lord. Ask him to examine your heart and reveal the ways that you have been disobedient to him. Then, ask God to forgive you and cleanse you so that you might be restored to right relationship with God.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1 - DEUTERONOMY 25
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2 - DEUTERONOMY 26
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3 - DEUTERONOMY 27
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4 - DEUTERONOMY 28
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5 - DEUTERONOMY 29
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6 - DEUTERONOMY 30
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7 - 1 JOHN 1:5-10

The Words We Need

As you spend time in confession this week, it might be helpful for you to read and pray Psalm 51. The book of Psalms is filled with prayers that we can make our own when we're not sure what to pray.



Deuteronomy 31-34

February 8 - February 12, 2015

In chapters 31-34, the book of Deuteronomy comes to a close by documenting the death of Moses and the succession of leadership in Israel. This section is heartbreaking because we see that Moses will not be able to inherit the promised land along with the rest of the Israelites. Moses disobeyed the Lord in the wilderness and is numbered among the generation of unfaithful Israel that will not get to take possession of the promised land. Moses surely experienced forgiveness and restoration following his disobedience, but he still had to suffer through the consequences of his sin. The Lord allowed him to see the promised land from a distance, but he was not allowed to enter in.

Many of us fail to remember the fact that sin has disastrous consequences. We know that the Bible teaches that God offers us forgiveness and restoration through repentance and faith in Jesus.

However, we often fail to take seriously the consequences of sin. In Hebrews 3:7-19, the writer of Hebrews reminds us of the importance of not falling away from God. The author draws on the experience of the Israelites' disobedience in the wilderness to warn us about the devastating effects of sin. In Hebrews 3:12-13, we read:

"See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness." (NIV)

Sin is deceitful. It promises to deliver happiness and joy, but it does not mention all that you will have to give up due to your disobedience. Be on the alert against sin and encourage your brothers and sisters in Christ to do the same. Don't give up the blessing of obedience for the fleeting pleasures of sin.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8 - DEUTERONOMY 31

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9 - DEUTERONOMY 32

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10 - DEUTERONOMY 33

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 - DEUTERONOMY 34

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12 - HEBREWS 3: 7-19

Where We're Headed Next

We are fast approaching the season of Lent. This special time in the church calendar affords us the opportunity to prepare our hearts to celebrate the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ at Easter. During Lent, we'll be reading through the book of Mark. The new reading plan will be available on February 18.