

Deuteronomy

Chapter 1

After wandering in the desert for 40 years, the Israelites reached the land of Canaan.

Moses then assembled the people and recalled all that had happened over the past 40 years:

"When God first told us to take this land, I said to you: Do not be afraid. God goes ahead of you and will be fighting on your side, as he did in Egypt.

I also said how God carried you, as a man carries his child, all along the road you travelled to this place.

But you did not trust God and God closed the door to Canaan for 40 years, causing us to wander in the desert until now."

Dear God, please help me to trust you a bit more

Chapters 2, 3, 4

Moses continued his talk to the Israelites:

"God has been with us these 40 years,
watching over us and providing for us.

God gave us many victories
and continually told us not to be afraid of any enemies.

So now, Israel, do not forget God's goodness
and help and laws.

Do not forget the things your eyes have seen.
Make sure to tell these things to your children's children.

God has brought you out of Egypt to be his special people.

If you seek God with all your heart and soul
you will find him.

Understand this today, therefore, and take it to heart:
The Lord is God indeed,
in heaven above as on earth below, he and no other.

Keep his laws and commandments
as I give them to you today,
so that you and your children may prosper and live long
in the land that the Lord your God gives you forever."

Lord, please help me to seek you with all my heart

Chapter 5

Moses reminded the people of the Ten Commandments:

1: I am the Lord your God.

Do not worship anyone or anything else.

2: Use my name with respect. Do not insult my name.

3: Make the Sabbath a holy day each week.

4: Honor your father and your mother.

5: Do not kill.

6: Do not commit adultery.

7: Do not steal.

8: Do not tell lies about other people.

9: Do not lust after someone else's wife.

10: Do not desire what belongs to someone else.

Dear God, please help us
to put these commandments into practice

Chapter 6

Moses continued his speech to the people:

"Listen Israel. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength.

Let these words I urge on you today be written on your heart.

You shall repeat them to your children and say them when you are resting in your house or going for a walk, when you are lying down and when you get up.

You shall fasten them on your hand as a sign and on your forehead as a circlet.

You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

Dear Lord, please help us to love you with all our hearts

Chapter 7

Moses continued his speech to the people:

"You are a people consecrated to the Lord your God.
It is you that the Lord our God has chosen
to be his very own people out of all the peoples on the earth.

But know this:
if the Lord set his heart on you and chose you,
it was not because you outnumbered other peoples.
In fact you were the least of all peoples.

It was for love of you
and to keep his promise to our ancestors
that the Lord chose you.

Listen then to these ordinances, be true to them and observe
them, and in return the Lord your God will be true to you.

He will love you and bless you and increase your numbers.
He will bless the fruit of your body and the produce of your
soil, your corn, your wine, your oil, the issue of your cattle,
the young of your flock.

No man or woman among you shall be barren,
no male or female of your beasts infertile.

The Lord will keep all sickness far from you.

Be loyal then to the Lord and have nothing to do
with the religious practices of the people you will conquer."

Dear God, please help us to love you as we should

Chapter 8

Moses continued his speech to the people:

"Remember how the Lord your God led you for 40 years in the wilderness, to humble you, to test you, to know your inmost heart - whether you would keep his commandments or not.

He humbled you, he fed you with manna, to make you understand that we do not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Learn from this that the Lord your God was training you as a man trains his child.

Keep the commandments of the Lord your God. Follow his ways and reverence him.

When you become prosperous in the land that God is giving you, do not become proud and say your own efforts have brought you success.

Take care and do not forget the Lord your God."

Dear Lord, don't let me ever forget
all you have done for me

Chapter 9

Moses continued his speech to the people:

"Listen, Israel, you are soon to cross the Jordan River, to dispossess nations greater and stronger than yourself.

Know that the Lord your God will go in front of you.

So often in the past you forgot the Lord.

So often you were rebels and did not obey the Lord.

In future you must rebel no more."

Dear Lord, please don't let me ever rebel against you

Chapter 10

Moses continued his speech to the people:

"And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you?

Only this: to love and honor the Lord, to follow all his ways, to serve him with all your heart and all your soul, to keep the commandments and laws of the Lord that for your good I set before you today.

Circumcise your heart and be obstinate no longer.

The Lord your God is great and good.

He it is you must praise, he is your God.

It is he who sees justice done for the orphan and widow, who loves the stranger and gives him food and clothing.

You too must love the stranger, for you also were strangers in the land of Egypt."

Dear Lord, please help me to love you as I should

Chapter 11

Moses continued his speech to the people:

"You must love the Lord your God.

Remember this day, how it was you who heard these words, not your children.

It is your eyes that have seen the great works God has done.

Keep the Lord's commandments,
so that you may have strength
to conquer the land God is giving you.

That land is a land of hills and valleys
watered by rain from heaven.

If you love the Lord your God with all your heart
the Lord will give your land its rain in due season,
autumn and spring,
so that you may harvest your corn, your wine and your oil.

But if you forget the Lord your God and worship other gods,
then the heavens will be closed and produce no rain.

See, I set before you today a blessing and a curse:
a blessing if you obey the commandments of the Lord our God;
a curse if you disobey the commandments of the Lord our God."

Dear Lord, please help us to obey you and never forget you,
and please give rain to places that urgently need it

Chapters 12, 13

Moses continued his teaching:

"Be faithful in keeping all the instructions that I give you, so that you and your children after you may be happy, always doing what is good and right in the eyes of the Lord your God.

If anyone, even someone from your own family, tries to get you to worship a false god, have nothing to do with that person. That person must be punished."

Dear God, please don't let anyone
influence me to forget you

Chapters 14, 15

Moses' teaching:

"There are certain animals you must not eat, including pigs.

At the end of every 7 years, you must cancel all debts.

If there is a poor person among you, do not harden your heart or close your hand against that person.

Always be generous to anyone in need."

Dear Lord, make me more generous towards poor people

Chapters 16, 17, 18

Moses' teaching:

"Remember the special feasts
and days that you must observe.

Appoint judges for the people. Do not pervert the law.

You must be fair, you must not take bribes.

No bribes, no corruption.

Do not practise divination, soothsaying.

No one may be an augur or sorcerer.

Do not use charms, do not consult ghosts or spirits.

Instead, be entirely faithful to the Lord your God."

Dear Lord, please help people avoid
astrology and fortune tellers

Chapters 19, 20, 21

Moses' teaching:

"A life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,
a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot.

When you go to war,
the following men are excused from fighting:

a man who has not yet dedicated his newly-built house;

a man who has planted a vineyard
and not yet enjoyed its fruit;

a man who is engaged to be married;

a man who is fearful and faint of heart."

Dear Lord, help me to understand how Jesus taught us
to love our enemies and not to take revenge

Chapters 22 – 25

Moses' teaching:

"You shall not commit adultery or fornication.

You must avoid all forms of prostitution.

You may demand interest on a loan to a foreigner, but do not practise usury among yourselves.

Be honest in all your dealings."

Dear Lord, please give me a clean heart

Chapter 26

Moses' teaching:

"When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, you must take the first-fruits of your produce to the priest then in office and say:

'Today I declare to the Lord my God that I have come to the land the Lord swore to our fathers he would give us.'

After the priest receives your offering, you must declare:

'My father was a wandering Aramaean.

He went down to Egypt to find refuge there, few in number.

But then he became a nation, great and strong.

The Egyptians ill-treated us, they gave us no peace and inflicted harsh slavery on us.

But we called on the Lord our God who heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression.

The Lord our God then brought us out of Egypt with mighty hand and outstretched arm, with signs and wonders.

He brought us here and gave us this land,
a land where milk and honey flow.

So I now bring the first-fruits of my produce
that you, Lord, have given me.'

You are then to share these gifts with your household
and with the Levite and stranger who live among you."

Dear Lord, help me to show gratitude for all your gifts,
by sharing what I have with those less fortunate than I

Chapters 27, 28

Moses' teaching:

"Be silent, Israel, and listen.

Today you have become a people for the Lord your God.

A curse on anyone
who breaks the commandments of the Lord.

Blessings on everyone
who keeps the commandments of the Lord.

If you obey the voice of the Lord your God
you will be blessed in the town and blessed in the country.

Blessed will be the fruit of your body,
the fruit of your soil, the issue of your livestock.

Blessed will you be coming in, and blessed going out.

But if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God,
you will be accursed in the town and accursed in the country.

Accursed will be the fruit of your body,
the fruit of your soil and the issue of your livestock."

Dear God, please help us to obey your words
... and be blessed

Chapters 29, 30

Moses called the whole of Israel together and said to them:
"Keep the words of this covenant and observe them
and you will thrive in all you do.

Let there be no man or woman among you, no clan or tribe,
whose heart turns away from the Lord your God
to go and serve the gods of the nations.

If ever you are scattered from the land God is giving you,
God will bring you back when your hearts turn back to him.
The Lord will circumcise your hearts
until you love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.
This Law I enjoin on you today is not beyond your strength
or beyond your reach.

It is not in heaven, so that you need to wonder
'who will go up to heaven for us and bring it down to us
so that we may hear it and keep it?'

Nor is it beyond the seas, so that you need to wonder
'who will cross the sea for us and bring it back to us,
so that we may hear it and keep it?'

No, the Word is very near to you.

It is in your mouth and in your heart for your observance.
See, today I set before you life and prosperity,
death and disaster.

If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God,
if you love the Lord your God and follow his ways,
if you keep his commandments, his laws, his customs,
you will live and increase,
and the Lord your God will bless you
in the land which you are entering to make your own.

But if your heart strays, if you refuse to listen,
if you let yourself be drawn into worshipping other gods

and serving them,
I tell you today, you will most certainly perish;
you will not live long in the land
you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.
I call heaven and earth to witness against you today:
I set before you life or death, blessing or curse.
Choose life, then, so that you and your descendants
may live in the love of the Lord your God,
obeying his voice, clinging to him.
For in this your life consists,
and on this depends your long stay in the land
which the Lord swore to your fathers
Abraham, Isaac and Jacob he would give them."

Dear Lord, please help more and more people to choose
life and blessings...and not to turn their backs on you

Chapter 31

Moses said to the people:
"I am 120 years old and can no longer come and go as I will.
The Lord has told me I will not cross the Jordan."
Moses then said to Joshua in the presence of all the people:
"Be strong, stand firm. You are going with this people
into the land promised by the Lord.
The Lord himself will lead you; he will be with you;
he will not fail you or desert you.
Have no fear; do not be disheartened by anything."

Dear Lord, please help me remember
that you are with me every day.
Please don't let anything or anyone dishearten me

Chapter 32

The Song of Moses:

Listen, O heavens, and I will speak;
let the earth hear the words on my lips.
May my teaching fall like the rain,
my speech descend like the dew,
like rain drops on the young green,
like showers falling on the grass.

For I shall praise the name of the Lord.
O give glory to this God of ours!
The Rock - his deeds are perfect, and all his ways are just,
a faithful God, without deceit, a God who is right and just.

Those whom he begot unblemished
have become crooked, false, perverse.
Is it thus you repay the Lord,
O senseless and foolish people?
Is he not your father who created you,
he who made you, on whom you depend?

Remember the days of old,
consider the years that are past;
ask you father and he will show you,
ask your elders and they will tell you.

When the Most High gave the nations their heritage
and disposed men according to his plan,
in fixing the boundaries of the nations
he thought first of Israel's sons.
For Israel was the Lord's possession,
Jacob the one he had chosen.

God found him in a wilderness,
in fearful, desolate wastes;
he surrounded him, he lifted him up,
he kept him as the apple of his eye.

Like an eagle that watches its nest,
that hovers over its young,
so he spread his wings; he took him,
placed him on his outstretched wings.
The Lord alone was his guide
and no other god was with him.

Dear Lord, thank you for life and all your love and care

Chapters 33, 34

Before Moses died, he blessed the twelve tribes of Israel.

Moses then went up Mount Nebo, opposite Jericho,
where the Lord showed him the whole land
that the Israelites would possess.

Moses was buried in the land of Moab.

After the people mourned Moses for 30 days,
Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom,
since Moses had laid his hands on him.

From that time there has never been a prophet like Moses,
the man who knew the Lord face to face.

Dear God, thank you for the life of Moses.
May civic and church leaders be more like him,
filled with love for you and for the people