

WARNING TO THE DESCENDANTS

CORE PASSAGES: DEUTERONOMY 32:1-9,44-47

CONTEXT

Deuteronomy means “second law.” This book records Moses’s final words to the second generation of Israelites after leaving Egypt. They were about to enter the promised land, though Moses would not enter because of his disobedience at Meribah (Numbers 20:1-13). On the plains of Moab, Moses repeated the law to the new generation before his death. Deuteronomy ends with the Song of Moses (chapter 32), his blessings for each of the twelve tribes (chapter 33), and his death (chapter 34). The book is a beautiful reminder that God keeps His covenant in every generation.

KEY CONCEPT

God’s people must never forget or ignore God’s words of life.

As you examine Deuteronomy 32:1-9,44-47:

- Identify ways that God has blessed us and called us His people without us deserving it.
- Consider how Moses called on God’s people to remember His goodness and take God’s words—our life—to heart.



TIMELINE

God Sends Judgment Through Snakes and Heals Through a Bronze Snake (Numbers 21)

Moses Recounts the Journey and Calls the Israelites to Obedience (Deuteronomy 1–31)

Moses Dies and Joshua Takes His Place (Deuteronomy 34)

Balak Hires Balaam to Curse God's People, but God Turns Every Curse into Blessing (Numbers 22–24)

SESSION STUDY: Moses Warns the Descendants to Stay Faithful in Following God (Deuteronomy 32)

Daily Readings

- Day 1:** Deuteronomy 1:1–8:20
- Day 2:** Deuteronomy 9:1–15:23
- Day 3:** Deuteronomy 16:1–21:23
- Day 4:** Deuteronomy 22:1–26:19
- Day 5:** Deuteronomy 27:1–34:12
- Day 6:** Psalm 90



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

DEUTERONOMY 32:1-9

GOD IS THE FAITHFUL CREATOR AND SUSTAINER OF ALL THINGS, AS SEEN THROUGH HIS WORD.

Underline similes (comparison using “like” or “as”) and circle metaphors (comparison not using “like” or “as”) used in this passage.

1 Pay attention, heavens, and I will speak; listen, earth, to the words from my mouth. **2** Let my teaching fall like rain and my word settle like dew, like gentle rain on new grass and showers on tender plants. **3** For I will proclaim the LORD’s name. Declare the greatness of our God! **4** The Rock—his work is perfect; all his ways are just. A faithful God, without bias, he is righteous and true. **5** His people have acted corruptly toward him; this is their defect—they are not his children but a devious and crooked generation. **6** Is this how you repay the LORD, you foolish and senseless people? Isn’t he your Father and Creator? Didn’t he make you and sustain you? **7** Remember the days of old; consider the years of past generations. Ask your father, and he will tell you, your elders, and they will teach you. **8** When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance and divided the human race, he set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the people of Israel. **9** But the LORD’s portion is his people, Jacob, his own inheritance.

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

GOD IS FAITHFUL: God’s faithfulness means He keeps His word and always fulfills His promises (1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Timothy 2:13; 1 Peter 4:19). God’s faithfulness is demonstrated in His fulfillment of the promises He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The apostle Paul linked the attribute of “faithful” to God’s coming through on His word in 1 Thessalonians 5:24. We reflect God by keeping the promises we make to Him and to others.

Key Concept: God's people must never forget or ignore God's words of life.



Many understand this song of Moses to be similar in literary style to the form of a lawsuit. God, through Moses, is giving a defense and a testimony on His own behalf against the people of Israel, with Moses as His witness. God was and has always been faithful, just, and true. But the Israelites have treated Him unjustly, disrespectfully, and wrongfully. God has been a Rock but the people have been like disappearing waves in the sea. Interestingly, this is the first time in Scripture “Rock” is used as a name for God.

What characteristics of rocks make this an appropriate name for God?

God's stability and permanence stood in stark contrast to Israel's corruption, foolishness, and senselessness.

Verse 5 seems to say, “these children are so different from God, they can't possibly be His.” “This is their defect” could refer to the people's wickedness in that it was like a spot or blemish which they could not have inherited from God.

Even though God was their “Father and Creator” (v. 6), they repaid Him with disobedience and dishonor. Moses entreated them to remember the days of old when God chose Israel to be His people,

when He blessed Abraham and promised to make him a great nation. Although twice during the wilderness wanderings God had threatened to destroy the people and make Moses a great nation instead (see Exodus 32:10; Numbers 14:12), Israel was still God's people and Jacob His chosen inheritance.

How does “remembering the days of old” strengthen you as you face the days to come?

WORD STUDY

THE MOST HIGH: While “the Most High” (*elyon*) is a common name for God throughout the Old Testament, this is the only time it is used in Deuteronomy. It was first used by Melchizedek when he blessed Abram in Genesis 14:19.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

DEUTERONOMY 32:44-47

GOD'S WORD WARNS US AGAINST SIN AND CALLS US TO FAITH SO WE MAY HAVE LIFE IN CHRIST.

Underline two reasons Moses gives for reciting this song to the people.

44 Moses came with Joshua son of Nun and recited all the words of this song in the presence of the people. **45** After Moses finished reciting all these words to all Israel, **46** he said to them, "Take to heart all these words I am giving as a warning to you today, so that you may command your children to follow all the words of this law carefully. **47** For they are not meaningless words to you but they are your life, and by them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess."

CHRIST CONNECTION

Moses recorded his song and the Law as a whole so the people of God could always remember God's faithfulness to them, often in spite of their own faithlessness. These were meaningful words of life for their faith and obedience. Yet the Law was intended to point to Jesus, the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17). He is the Word of life in whom we believe and whom we obey (1 John 1:1-3).

Key Concept: God's people must never forget or ignore God's words of life.

The word “all” is repeated five times in verses 44-46. All the words of the song were spoken to all the people so they could take them all to heart and teach them all to their children. There was nothing in the song meant for a select few. These verses stand as a bookend to Israel’s foundational declaration of faith in Deuteronomy 6:4-7. There, the word “all” is also prominent. Israel was to love the Lord their God with all their heart and with all their soul and with all their strength. There as well is the exhortation to take these words to heart and to teach them to your children.

God’s words are not meaningless words. The Bible is a book like no other. It is more than good advice, more than sage wisdom, more than practical principles, more than moral precepts. These words were to be the life of God’s people. God’s promise to Israel was that through these words—not just the Song of Moses but the entirety of God’s Word—they would live long in the promised land. And they are life for us today as well.

If someone asked you what makes the Bible different from any other religious text, what would you say?

It is significant that Joshua is mentioned here. Moses has concluded his song. Soon he will die, and Joshua will take his place and lead the new generation into the promised land. Joshua had been Moses’s right-hand man from the beginning. He was first mentioned in Exodus 17:9, when Israel was facing its first attack from an enemy nation since leaving Egypt. He was with Moses when Moses received the Ten Commandments from the Lord (Exodus 20–32). Finally, he was one of the twelve spies sent out to explore Canaan and was one of the two (along with Caleb) who trusted God and believed they could take the land (Numbers 14:6).

Who is your “Joshua?” Who are you preparing for leadership from the next generation?

FIGURE STUDY

JOSHUA: Joshua’s name means “Yahweh saves” in Hebrew. In Hebrew, the name of Jesus is spelled and pronounced the same way. In Matthew 1:21, the angel of the Lord told Joseph to name his son Jesus (Yeshua) because “he will save his people from their sins.”

GROUP EXPERIENCE



MY HEART REMEMBERS

From Deuteronomy 32, write a brief phrase summarizing each set of verses, pinpointing its theme and your response to it.

WORDS OF WISDOM	MY RESPONSE
VERSES 3-4	
VERSES 7-9	
VERSES 46-47	

Which set of verses is most encouraging to you right now?
Share how you intend to respond.



Key Concept: God's people must never forget or ignore God's words of life.



HEAD

What can we learn from songs of old, whether in the Psalms or elsewhere in Scripture?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE



Read Psalm 90, attributed to Moses. Meditate on verses 14-17, focusing on the first few words of each verse: satisfy us, make us rejoice, let your works be seen, and let the favor of the Lord be on us.

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



HEART

What will help you move from merely reading God's Word to hiding it in your heart (Psalm 119:11)?



HANDS

How can I point someone to the truth of the Word of God this week?



EIGHT PRACTICES TO HELP NEWCOMERS FEEL THEY BELONG

By Lifeway Adults

When people visit your group for the first time, they come with all sorts of questions: “Will we like it?” “Will we connect with the people there?” “Will this be helpful for us?” It can be intimidating for new people entering a group dynamic because they don’t know how they’ll be received, if they’ll feel like they fit, or if they’ll want to return.

Most people feel less than relaxed entering a new social situation with new people. There are things that you can do as the group leader to help ease any tension newcomers may be feeling and help them feel more at home. Here are eight practices to help newcomers feel more comfortable, received, and accepted in your group:

1) Warmly welcome newcomers into your group.

Learn a little about them as you greet them, and do your best to remember facts they share about who they are, names and ages of their kids, and how they found your group. On this note, one of the most simple and powerful ways of helping a newcomer feel at home in your group is to call them by their first name each time you refer to them.

2) Don’t over-focus on them.

Most guests like to be acknowledged but don’t want to stand out or be spotlighted before the whole group. If you keep things normal, your group will feel more natural and comfortable toward newcomers.

3) Don’t over-accommodate.

Be yourself and allow your group to be itself. For example, don’t hesitate to pray or worship if newcomers are present. (Sometimes this is exactly what God uses to gather spiritually-unconvinced people to Himself—see Acts 2:46-47.) If somebody needs prayer, pray for them. If you are going to worship, just do it. Don’t over-explain for newcomers. They likely want to see things how they really are and would rather not have you disrupt the flow of what you do on their account.

4) Help newcomers get to know a few others in your group.

The more a newcomer senses a possible connection with your group members, the more likely it is they will want to return. The likelihood of first-time guests returning increases dramatically if they experience a sense of belonging through their connection with others. This can be cultivated by

highlighting things the newcomer holds in common with other group members and a timely follow-up.

5) Find out what subjects your guests have enthusiasm or expertise in and talk about that!

People like to talk about things they know about. Newcomers will feel more empowered and comfortable talking about things of interest to them. If you listen with interest, you will show that you are interested in them as a person and they will not feel like a project.

6) When you have newcomers, leave plenty of time for people to socialize at the end of your group meeting.

First-time guests will probably feel inclined to be more personal toward the end of a group meeting rather than at the

The likelihood of first-time guests returning increases dramatically if they experience a sense of belonging through their connection with others.

beginning. This will give time to introduce your group members to guests and have relaxed conversations.

7) Be sure to thank your new guests for being with you at the end of your meeting time.

Let them know it was great having them and you'd love to have them come back. If they participated in the conversation, tell them you appreciated their input and insights. Offer to connect with them briefly before your next meeting, and be sure you relay your contact info.

8) Follow up with newcomers before your next meeting to let them know you hope to see them again.

Sometimes group leaders hold off from following up in this way because they're afraid of being intrusive or coming across as pushy. However, guests appreciate this act of kindness, and it makes your group more welcoming overall. If you do not risk the remote possibility of coming across as intrusive in your follow-up, newcomers may feel like they are intruding.

As you model these practices, you'll not only help newcomers feel like they belong, but you'll build a welcoming culture in your group that will inspire your group members to be more invitational as well. This will ensure that your group doesn't turn inward on itself but grows in health and makes a greater impact for God's kingdom.

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UNIT 4

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1. Andrew Murray, *The Holiest of All: An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Company, 1894), 129.

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LAW AND LIFE

God called Moses to deliver His people from captivity and lead them to the promised land. In the wilderness, God gave His people the law to reveal His holiness. Through the tabernacle and sacrificial system, God showed that He desired to dwell among them and provide a way to forgive their sin. Yet, the people's lack of faithfulness expressed itself in constant grumblings with dire consequences. Though the previous generation would die for their sin, the new generation would enter the promised land because of God's grace. When Jesus came, He fulfilled the law perfectly and, through His sacrifice, made a way for all who believe in Him to be reconciled to the Father. This is the faithfulness of a loving God who gives us life with Him forevermore.

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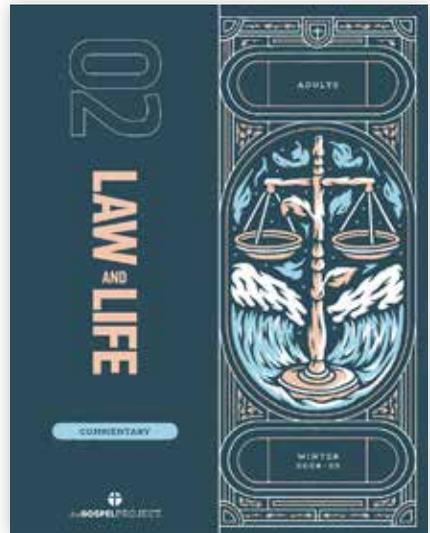
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UNIT 04 • SESSION 3

GOD'S MIRACULOUS DELIVERANCE

CORE PASSAGE: EXODUS 15:1-13

Contexts After the final plague of death to the firstborn son, Pharaoh finally let God's people go. But Pharaoh got angry and changed His mind, rallying the troops and pursuing the Hebrew people up to the Red Sea. Trapped, the people of God doubted that God could deliver. Through miraculous means however, God parted the Red Sea, led His people safely through, and defeated their enemies as the waters consumed them. Thus, God's promise to His people was fulfilled: "The Egyptians will know that I am the LORD when I receive glory through Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen" (Ex. 14:18). It was time for the Israelites to celebrate.

Key Concept: God is our faithful Deliverer, able and powerful enough to save us from all things.

DAILY READINGS

Day 1: Exodus 13:17-14:6 Day 4: Exodus 14:23-31
 Day 2: Exodus 14:5-14 Day 5: Exodus 15:1-21
 Day 3: Exodus 14:15-22 Day 6: Psalm 106

We worship, knowing God is our strength and deliverer (Exodus 15:1-10)

"Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD. They said: I will sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted; he has thrown the horse and its rider into the sea. ² The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. This is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him. ³ The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is his name. ⁴ He threw Pharaoh's chariots and his army into the sea; the elite of his officers were drowned in the Red Sea. ⁵ The floods covered them; they sank to the depths like a stone. ⁶ LORD, your right hand is glorious in power. LORD, your right hand shattered the enemy. ⁷ You overthrew your adversaries by your great majesty. You unleashed your burning wrath; it consumed them like stubble. ⁸ The water heaped up at the blast from your nostrils; the currents stood firm like a dam. The watery depths congregated in the heart of the sea. ⁹ The enemy said: "I will pursue, I will overtake. I will divide the spoil. My desire will be gratified at their expense. I will draw my sword; my hand will destroy them." ¹⁰ But you blew with your breath, and the sea covered them. They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

God Will Make a Way to Protect His People

Exodus 15 is a song of praise, which is an appropriate response to what the Israelites experienced in the Red Sea deliverance. God's faithfulness prompted songs of praise. It was clear to Moses and the entire nation that their rescue was not attributed to their might or strength but the power of God alone. It is important to note that verses 1-2 declare that God is no longer the God of the patriarchs, but the God who revealed



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