

DEUTERONOMY

JON KEHRER | 12 SESSIONS

**NEXT
LEVEL** 
ONLINE

OZARK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Deuteronomy

Session 1: Rethinking “Law”

How is the Hebrew word “torah” usually translated? What does it actually mean?

In Genesis 26:4-5, God says, “I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.” The last word there, “laws”, is a form of the Hebrew word “torah.” What did keeping the “torah” look like for Abraham?

Look up Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, and 31. What sentence appears in each of these verses?

Now, look up Genesis 3:6. What is the result of a human seeing that something is “good”?

Much of the story of Scripture could be explained as the attempts of individuals to decide what is good for themselves. Why does it make sense to let God choose what is good for our lives?

What does the word “shema” mean? What did God want Israel to do when he asked them to “shema”?

What are some of the ways you have seen the Old Testament separated from the New Testament?

The video explained that the story of the Old Testament actually fits with the story of the New Testament. What are some of your reactions to this idea?

If part of the task of Deuteronomy is to move us to become a people who obey God, what is one thing from this video that you can obey today?

Deuteronomy

Session 2: Word #1 - No Other Gods

How did you do in obeying the word since the last session?

Word #1 is “No other gods.” What does this mean?

What do you think about the Ten Words functioning as a “Bill of Rights,” but one that protects other people from me? How does that change your perspective of this document?

What kind of symbiotic relationship existed between people and their gods in the ancient Near East?

In Genesis 1-2, it mentions “and God said” 10 different times. In the plagues, God strikes the land of Egypt 10 different times. Throughout the wilderness, the people test God 10 different times (Numbers 14:22). In light of all these “10s,” what is significant about God giving the people the 10 Words?

Read Deuteronomy 8:1-10. How would you describe the abundance the people are about to experience? How do they protect their hearts in the midst of it?

Read Deuteronomy 6:16-19. How would you describe the unbelief mentioned here? What is God’s remedy for the unbelief?

Read Deuteronomy 6:13-15. How would you describe God’s command about syncretism, or going after other gods? What does God want from his people?

Summarize Deuteronomy 5:7 in your own words and write it out here.

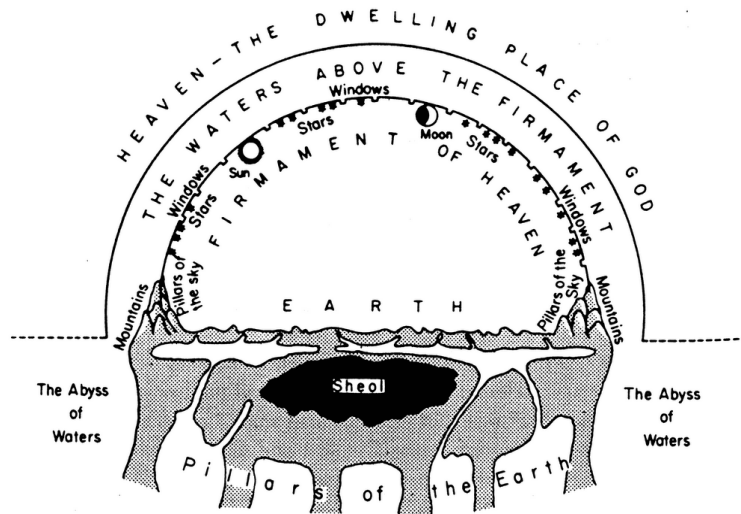
What is one specific way you can obey this word today?

Deuteronomy

Session 3: Word #2 - No Idols

How did you do in obeying the word since the last session?

See the picture of an ancient Israelite worldview.¹ How do Psalm 24:1-2 and Psalm 104:1-3 fit with this idea?



Read Jonah 2:2-7. How does this fit with this way of seeing the world?

Throughout Scripture, God seems to communicate to people using the science of their time. How is this perspective of the world different from how you picture the world?

Why is God so concerned that his people not make images or idols to worship?

What is the “image of God” in Genesis 1? Why is that significant?

¹ Image from James L. Christian, *Philosophy: An Introduction to the Art of Wondering*, 11th ed. (Boston: Wadworth, 2011), 543.

Read Exodus 32:1-6. Which of the Ten Words did the people break here?

In Exodus 32, who were the Israelites trying to replace: Moses or Yahweh?

What does Deuteronomy 12 guard against? How does it help us understand proper worship?

What is one specific way you can obey this word today?

Deuteronomy

Session 4: Word #3 - No Dishonoring the Name

How did you do in obeying the word since the last session?

In Hebrew, what does it mean to *nasa'* something?

Psalm 16:4 says, “The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or *nasa'* their names on my lips.” This is one of the few places where *nasa'* means “say.” Why does it suggest “say” here?

In light of Exodus 28:29, what does it mean to *nasa'* a name?

Perhaps Word #3 could be translated as “do not wear the name of Yahweh dishonorably.” How is this different from how you have thought about this word before?

What is a common link drawing together texts from Deuteronomy 13-14 with Word #3?

With this connection in mind, read Leviticus 24:10-17. This is one of the only times in Scripture that Yahweh is referred to as “the Name” (see verse 11). How did this man violate Word #3?

God is very concerned about his reputation throughout Scripture. However, one day, God promises to do something amazing. Read about it in Isaiah 44:1-5. What are some of the things that will happen in this time?

The “tattoo” of Isaiah 44:5 matches the writing on the high priest’s turban: “to Yahweh.” What would it look like for you to wear the name of Yahweh so prominently?

Summarize Deuteronomy 5:11 in your own words and write it out here.

What is one specific way you can obey this word today?

Deuteronomy

Session 5: Word #4 - Guard the Sabbath

How did you do in obeying the word since the last session?

Word #4 is “Guard the Sabbath.” What did this look like for Israel?

Exodus 20:8-11

Remember the day of the Sabbath, to keep it holy. Six days you will do all your work, and the seventh day: a Sabbath to the Lord your God! You will not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your animal or your sojourner who is in your gates, because six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all which is in them, and he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the day of the Sabbath and he made it holy.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15

Guard the day of the Sabbath, to keep it holy, **just as the Lord your God commanded you.** Six days you will do all your work, and the seventh day: a Sabbath to the Lord your God! You will not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant **or your ox or your donkey or any of your animals or your sojourner who is in your gates, in order that your male servant and your female servant might rest like you. And you will remember that slaves you were in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore, the Lord your God commanded you to do the day of the Sabbath.**

What changes do you notice between the Sabbath word from Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 (note that below, all of the differences in Deuteronomy are in bold)?

Why do you think the shifts are made in Deuteronomy?

Read Numbers 15:32-36. This is one of the only recorded times Moses asks for God's help in deciding a legal decision. While this seems unusually harsh, some think it was meant to set a precedent: don't mock the Lord by intentionally working on the Sabbath day. Do you agree or disagree? Does this seem to be an important issue to God?

Read Amos 8:4-6 and Isaiah 56:1-2. How do these texts help us understand God's intentions for Sabbath?

What are some ways Deuteronomy 14-15 connect with the word about the Sabbath?

Summarize Deuteronomy 5:12-15 in your own words and write it out here.

What is one specific way you can obey this word this week?

Deuteronomy

Session 6: Word #5 - Honor Parents

How did you do in obeying the word since the last session?

Word #5 deals with honoring your mother and father. What age group was this directed towards? How do you know?

Why was it important to honor or respect parents in ancient Israel?

Read Mark 7:1-13. What was the problem with the religious leaders? How does Jesus claim they are in violation of Word #5?

Deuteronomy 17:8-13 deals with issues surrounding honoring authority in ancient Israel. How does this text encourage respect?

Deuteronomy 17:14-20 lists several rules for the king. What is the king expected to do?

What purposes are listed in Deuteronomy 17:19-20 for the king's "copy work"?

Read Psalm 1:1-3. The word used for "law" in verse 2 is *torah* in Hebrew, the same word used for what the king should copy in Deuteronomy 17. What advantages does Psalm 1 list for meditating on these words?

**How does Deuteronomy 21:18-21 envision Word #5 being worked out in the community?
How would this account encourage people to honor their parents?**

What is one specific way you can obey this word this week?

Deuteronomy

Session 7: Word #6 - No Murder

How did you do in obeying the word since the last session?

Word #6 involves willful taking of life in my own personal interests. How does Genesis 9:6 help us understand this word?

What was a “city of refuge,” and what protections did they offer in ancient Israel?

Deuteronomy 19 envisions a world where injustices are set right and fairness prevails. How does this help us understand the way that God intended anger to be dealt with?

In ancient Israel, how does Word #6 protect the rights of your neighbor? How do the parallel texts in Deuteronomy help us understand that more than just “murder” is in mind?

Read Judges 19. How does this story demonstrate a lack of care for Word #6?

Notice the words of the people in Judges 19:30 who hear what has happened: “such a thing has never happened or been seen from the day that the people of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt until this day.” What does this tell us about the moral state of the people of Israel?

What do the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:21-26 have to add to our understanding of anger? How can this shape our attitudes towards anger?

Think about the last week of your life. Did you have any moments when you found yourself getting upset, frustrated or angry? How might God want you to handle those situations if you faced them again?

What is one specific way you can obey this word this week?

Deuteronomy

Session 8: Word #7 - No Adultery

How did you do in obeying the word since the last session?

Word #7 says that adultery is forbidden. The Hebrew word for “adultery” suggests sexual relations with a woman who is committed to someone else. Why is that important?

Are sexual sins really private, both in biblical times or in our times? Can you think of some moments from Scripture and from our own culture when private sexual sins have become public issues?

Read Genesis 1:27-28 and Genesis 2:22-25. What do these texts suggest about the institution of marriage?

In the video, the Song of Songs is referenced. This book is a celebration of love within the confines of marriage. How is that celebration different from messages we often hear from others in our culture?

Read Song of Songs 8:6. What does this say about the power of love?

Often we think of Word #7 in the negative (“do not commit adultery”). How could we reword Word #7 in the positive? In other words, what does it seem that Yahweh is protecting when he speaks this word to his people?

Read the sad story of David’s sin in 2 Samuel 11:1-12:15. What does this story tell us about the danger of adultery?

Was David's sin private or public? Did this one sin end up leading to any other sins?

The heading of Psalm 55 says that David wrote this after his sin with Bathsheba. Read Psalm 55:1-12. What does this tell us about what God desires from us when we are caught in our sin?

What is one specific way you can obey this word this week?

Deuteronomy

Session 9: Word #8 - No Stealing

How did you do in obeying the word since the last session?

Word #8 deals with not stealing something that belongs to you. What types of things could this include?

Exodus 5:1-19 details Pharaoh's thirst for acquiring more. What do you notice about Pharaoh's attitude? What is he concerned about?

In what ways would it have been difficult for Israel to break out of the culture of production and consumption in Egypt? What events in the wilderness demonstrated their tendency to be consumed with acquiring more?

What is God suggesting about himself by discouraging a culture of scarcity?

Deuteronomy 23 discusses several different gray areas in life. List some gray areas in our culture where it may be difficult to know whether or not something is classified as "stealing."

Read Joshua 7:1-26. What happened to Israel just after they entered the Promised Land?

Read Joshua 7:11 again. What sin does God say Israel has committed?

What are some ways in which our culture is obsessed with acquiring more?

What is one specific way you can obey this word this week?

Deuteronomy

Session 10: Word #9 - No False Witness

How did you do in obeying the word since the last session?

Word #9 prohibits giving a vain or false witness against your neighbor. What types of situations might this word include?

What are your thoughts about the practicality of Exodus 23:4? How would this be difficult for you to practice if you lived in ancient Israel?

According to the video, what types of situations are included in Deuteronomy 24-25?

Take a closer look at Deuteronomy 25:5-10. What cultural elements help to enforce this practice? How does this word demonstrate the character of Yahweh?

Read the story of Ahab and Naboth's Vineyard in 1 Kings 21:1-24. How does this demonstrate a departure from Word #9?

Notice 1 Kings 21:3. Now, compare this with Leviticus 25:23. What does Naboth seem to think about the land?

What other sins have Ahab and Jezebel committed to lead them to this point?

Make a list of some ways you have been placed into a position of authority in your life.

In light of the authority you have been given, how can you work to protect those under your care? What is one specific way you can obey this word this week?

Deuteronomy

Session 11: Word #10 - No Coveting

How did you do in obeying the word since the last session?

Word #10 actually contains two separate verbs: do not *desire* your neighbor's wife, and do not *crave* anything that belongs to your neighbor. How is this word different from the others?

What kind of situations are envisioned in Deuteronomy 26:1-15? How often will these events take place?

What specific types of things are to be included in the two liturgies of Deuteronomy 26 (verses 5-10 and verses 13-15)?

Why do you think Yahweh asked the people to recite these "little liturgies" as they made their offerings? What good would it do to recite something in Yahweh's presence?

Are there any areas within our own culture where we have adopted "little liturgies" of sorts to help remind us of what's important?

The people hold on to their first-fruit and tithe until they bring them to Yahweh. Can you relate to how this might create a temptation for them to "crave" some of Yahweh's portion?

Have you ever struggled to give to the Lord when perhaps you don't feel like you have enough?

What liturgies could you adopt to help you in moments when you “desire” or “crave” things that don’t belong to you?

What is one specific way you can obey this word this week?

Deuteronomy

Session 12: Choose Life

How did you do in obeying the word since the last session?

This series has detailed the ways that the Ten Words play out in the rest of Deuteronomy. How does this arrangement help us understand the purpose of Deuteronomy?

Word #1 // Deuteronomy 6-8

Word #2 // Deuteronomy 12

Word #3 // Deuteronomy 13-14

Word #4 // Deuteronomy 14-15

Word #5 // Deuteronomy 17

Word #6 // Deuteronomy 19

Word #7 // Deuteronomy 22

Word #8 // Deuteronomy 23

Word #9 // Deuteronomy 24-25

Word #10 // Deuteronomy 26

What kind of “shema” does Yahweh desire of his people?

Throughout its history, Israel violated the Ten Words on multiple occasions. Here are just a few of the examples:

Violation of Words #1-2 in Exodus 32

Violation of Word #3 in Leviticus 24

Violation of Word #4 in Numbers 15

Violation of Word #5 in Deuteronomy 21

Violation of Word #6 in Judges 19

Violation of Word #7 in 2 Samuel 11

Violation of Word #8 in Joshua 7

Violation of Word #9 in 1 Kings 21

Violation of Word #10 in Joshua 7 and 1 Kings 21

The earliest tradition held 1-2 Samuel as one book and 1-2 Kings as one book. Therefore, every Bible book from Exodus through Kings details a way the people seem to have violated the Ten Words. In light of this, reflect on the people’s willingness to “shema into” Yahweh’s voice. How did the curses of Deuteronomy 28 play themselves out in Israel’s history?

The Deuteronomy “Formula for Life” is Hear, Fear, Do, and Live. Why is the order important? What does this say about God’s desires for his people?

In light of all that Deuteronomy has to say to us, what would it look like for you to choose life?