

1. Welcome & Prayer
2. Introduction: Our lives are made up of thousands of experiences, many fairly ordinary and forgettable. But every so often, something profound happens that alters the course of our life, or fundamentally changes our perspective. Describe a pivotal moment in your Christian walk. Maybe it was a conversation, an example, a Bible verse, or an experience you had. What happened? How did you feel? How did it change you? In tonight's passage, God invites the people of Israel to first look back before they move forward. Many of us may feel like we'd just as soon forget the past. But one of the keys to faithfulness and fruitfulness is to have a healthy view of the past.
3. Review: Like many legal documents, the book of Deuteronomy begins with a Preamble. It includes the reason, intent, and historical background of the contract. Moses was the mediator of the Old Covenant and Jesus is the mediator of a new and greater covenant.
4. Prayer for guidance (Psalm 119:9-16)
5. "See, I have set the land before you." An invitation to conquer the land (1:6-8; see map)
6. Numerical growth brings the need for "wise and experienced men" (1:15; cf. Titus 1:5-9). In verse 16, Moses sets up what we could call the judicial branch of government. The elders will serve in a role similar to county courts and appeals courts, while Moses himself will serve as the Supreme Court. The purpose of the judicial system is not to create new laws, but rather to interpret and apply the existing law to specific situations. In the case of Israel, it will begin with the law code in chapter 5.
7. Key Events of these chapters
  - Rebellion at Kadesh Barnea (1:26-27, 29-32)
  - Massacre at Seir (1:41-45)
  - God's provision in Sinai (2:7)
  - 38 years pass (2:14)
  - Victory over Heshbon (2:24-3:37)
  - Victory over Bashan (3:1-22)
  - Moses prohibited from entering the land (3:23-29)
  - An interesting summary of these events is found in Nehemiah 9:13-24
8. Questions for discussion
  - What lessons did Israel learn from these early experiences as a nation?
  - What lessons did the surrounding nations learn?
  - List five evidences of God's faithfulness in the past week; the past year.
  - How should we handle guilt and regret that may haunt our past? See Psalm 51.
  - Looking at the past will help uncover certain patterns of our "former manner of life" (Eph. 4:17-24). What is one habit that sometimes rears its ugly head?
  - Do you tend to be optimistic or pessimistic about the future? How can our view of the past help us prepare for the unknowns of the future?
  - Instead of living in the past, we must concentrate on what God is doing in the present and will do in the future (Is. 26:3-4; Is. 42:10; 2 Cor. 5:17). What are those things?
  - How do you think looking back affected Paul's ministry? Timothy? Peter? John? See for example 1 Timothy 1:12-17; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Luke 9:51-56; John 21:15-19.
9. Our next study will be chapter 4 on Friday, Oct. 27.



**NATURAL REGIONS OF ANCIENT PALESTINE**

- City
- City (uncertain location)
- ▲ Mountain peak

