

- We're fast forwarding a bit from where we were before. The 40 years of wandering around in the desert are over now.
- God has told Israel that they are to finally cross over the Jordan River and into the promised land (**Deuteronomy 9:1**). Notice he says "this day."
- In all the chapters in between that one and the ones we are on today, in fact in all of the rest of this book God is giving very specific instructions to them about how to conduct themselves once they are in the land. This is basically a bunch of rules conveyed at one time in a single day. On Wednesday night for example, we talked about the cities of refuge.
- Moses is still alive, but remember that he must eventually die before going into the land of Israel because that was his punishment from God for disobeying God. (**Numbers 20:10-12**)
- This chapter starts with Moses reminding the Israelites that they must keep God's commands which he is giving to them "that day." (**Deuteronomy 27:1**)
- God tells them to build an altar out of stones on which they will offer their sacrifices, to cover the stones with plaster, and write all the words of this law on those stones very plainly. (**Deuteronomy 27:2-8**)
- That is a lot of words, but God is telling them to do that because he knows they won't just remember it all, and they will always have something to refer to when they need it. Just like today lawyers have the law in books and on the internet because they can't remember it all.
- Moses reminds people not just to write the law down, but to follow it (**Deuteronomy 27:9-10**)
- God divides the 12 tribes of Israel. Remember that these 12 tribes were named after Jacob's 12 sons because each tribe is descended from one of the sons, with the exception of Joseph, who actually spawned two tribes, so it's really 13 tribes even though we always say 12. But remember that the Levites (descended from Levy) were the tribe of priests.
- These twelve sons came from four wives. (**Genesis 36:5:23-26**) This is important in this chapter. The wives were:
 - Leah who had Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun
 - Rachel who had Joseph (from whom came the tribes of both Ephraim and Manasseh), and Benjamin
 - Bilhah (Rachel's maid): Dan, Naphtali
 - Zilpah (Leah's maid): Gad, Asher
- He puts six tribes on one mountain, and six on the other. The mountains were right next to each other and God tells the Levites in the middle to read the law and six will hear the blessings (you

are blessed if you do “x”) and six will hear the cursing (you will be cursed if you do “y”).
(Deuteronomy 27:12-13)

- Notice that one on of the sides (the one to hear the cursings) he put the four sons from the handmaidens. He also adds the tribe of Reuben to this side, most likely because he was cursed from sleeping with one of his father’s wives (Genesis 25:22) and (I Chronicles 5:1). He also adds Zebulun and I don’t really know why because he was from Leah, maybe because God wanted six on each side and Zebulun happened to be the youngest son.
- In any case, there is an analogy here. While under this old law, God is clearly making a separation between people born to “slave” women and “free women,” (Galatians 4:23) under the new law with Christ we are all as if we were born free (Galatians 4:31).
- All the specific activities which are cursed under the law are listed, and all the people have to acknowledge that they have heard and agreed (Deuteronomy 27: 15-26)
- Moses reiterates that obeying God will result in blessings (Deuteronomy 28:1-2)
- Specific blessings are listed. (Deuteronomy 28:3-6)
- God will make enemies fear and run from them. (Deuteronomy 28:11-13)
- God goes back to listing some things not to do, or they will be cursed. (Deuteronomy 28:15-19)
- God mentioned a long list of very specific punishments they will incur if they do things they shouldn’t. Among the punishments: they will get very sick, their enemies will kill them, their possessions will be taken from them, their kids will go into slavery, their plants won’t grow, the food they have stored will be eaten up. (Deuteronomy 28:20-68)
- God reminds them that they have seen His power in Egypt. (Deuteronomy 29:1-3)
- God reminds them that they have seen His power during the 40 years in the wilderness. (Deuteronomy 29:6-8)



- We also learn from this that they did get some land before they have crossed over into the Promised Land. The map here at left shows how they will eventually divide up the promised land between the tribes, but note that three (actually two and half) of the tribes have land that is BEFORE they have crossed the Jordan into Canaan. Here we are learning the reason. (Deuteronomy 29:8)

- God says that it is not just the Israelite adult men who need to hear and do this, but all the woman, kids, and even any “strangers” among them. (Deuteronomy 29:9-18)

- He tells them this because he wants everyone to have no excuses. He mentions two examples: he destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim (we almost always only remember the first two but really there were four cities that were destroyed) and the way that they were punished when they worshipped other gods. (Deuteronomy 29:19-28).

- God tells them that things that are revealed are for us all to remember, but if not, don't worry about it. So when people ask questions that we can't answer like (“what does God actually look like”) or (“why did God create man in the first place”) just remember that the “secret things belong to God” and that is enough. Remember, one of the reasons we study the Old Testament is to understand God's nature, which we get through verses like this. (Deuteronomy 29:29).
- God tells Israel that all the nations of the earth will see his power through them. (Deuteronomy 30:1). This is further fulfilled by Christ in the great commission he gave us as they very last thing he said (Matthew 28:19-20).
- God tells Israel that He will have compassion on them if they turn back to Him after they have been scattered because of their infidelity to Him, and will bring them back together and they will prosper again. (Deuteronomy 30: 2-10)
- God reminds them that his commandments are accessible to them and very present. They are clear and close, not hidden and far off in the future. (Deuteronomy 30: 11-16)
- God reminds them that they now have a choice to follow Him or turn away. He reminds them of the impact of each choice. (Deuteronomy 30: 17-20)

Questions:

1. What are they to build as soon as they go over into the Promised Land and what materials are they to use?
2. What are they to write up on the thing that they build?
3. Why does God divide the children of Israel into two halves by tribe?
4. When He the divides the tribes, how does God choose which tribes to put where?
5. What is the impact to how we are "born" (i.e. – what is the analogy Paul uses to describe how the tribes are divided?)
6. What will happen to the enemies of Israel if Israel is obeying God's commandments?
7. What are some of the punishments God promises for the Israelites if they don't obey His commandments?
8. What things did God remind them of that showed them his power?
9. What tribes inherited land before the Israelites crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land?
10. How many cities were destroyed by God back in Genesis and what were their names?
11. What things are we accountable for?
12. Who do the secret things belong to?
13. Who do we need to show God's power to?
14. What will God do if the Israelites return to worshipping Him after they have been scattered?
15. What kind of access do people have to God's commandments?