

## Season 7: Deuteronomy

### Episode 11: Remember One Greater than Moses (Chapters 31-34)

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**Felicity:** We're so thankful for 10ofthose and Kaleidoscope sponsoring us this season. And as you've been listening along, you'll have been hearing us talk about various Kaleidoscope products. We love what they're doing as they seek to bridge the gap between the adult Bible and the kids Bibles. And they really are publishing so many books of the Bible Bible in this way. If you've been wondering what they actually look like, do go along to their website, readKaleidoscope.com and you can see inside of the books. You can forget their products at ten of those, both in the UK and the US, but you can check them out at their website.

**Sarah:** Welcome to two sisters in a cup of tea. My name is Sarah, I live in the UK. This is my sister Felicity, she lives in the States. And today we're into our final chunk of Deuteronomy. Can you believe it? We finally got here. Chapters 31 through to 34. But don't worry, next week we're excited to be talking to Jen Wilkin as we round up the book and seek to really drive the whole of Deuteronomy to our hearts. But for now, Felicity, we're into the final chunk. Got anything with your cup of tea today?

**Felicity:** Oh, yes, I do. It was my husband's birthday yesterday and so there is cake in the house and his request was actually zucchini cake, which is Cosette cake, which usually I kind of try and stick to the English kind of vocab, but I've got to say, zucchini just sounds a whole lot cooler and better than Cosette. I mean, they taste the same, but the boys, my children, were so excited that it was his birthday cake that we had to put then sprinkles on the zucchini bread, so it's got a slight kind of unexpected twist. It's good, though. What about you? Any delights over there?

**Sarah:** I've got a flowering tea, of course.

**Felicity:** The tea of the season right there, the flowering tea.

**Sarah:** I'm not too sure how many I've drank during this, during actually recording, but have got a backup as well, because, as expected, the tea is not as promised. It's smelling a little funny, tasting even worse and looking very sad and weed like. So I've just got a backup as well, which is delightful.

**Felicity:** That is so lukewarm. About to see if you've got a backup. That's brilliant.

**Sarah:** I didn't want to chance it and then be stuck with a bad tea.

**Felicity:** It's wise, it's wise. It just says quite a lot about the tea that you're backing up.

**Sarah:** I know, dear Felicity, it's been a really significant time in Deuteronomy, hasn't it? I mean, how do we keep its significance as we go from here, as we begin to kind of wrap it up? And as I said, we've got another episode next week. But how do we keep its significance in our hearts going forward?

**Felicity:** That's such a good question, because that's what something we've been talking about, is it? Feels like we've only just kind of brushed the surface of Deuteronomy as we've been in it over the course of the last few weeks, and I don't want that to be the end. And I think I've been reassured that's not the end, because God's word is still at work in our heart, even as we move on from it. We're not actually moving on from it, are we? So I think what I've really noticed that I've been in Deuteronomy is just how much this book is evident in other parts of the Bible. So I feel like I'm going to be reminded of it in various other books and so that's going to be a good thing. And I think this has really given me confidence to come back to it. Devotionally. I think I would dip into it, which I would never have done previously, I think. So I'm hopeful that those are going to help me stay in it, even as we move on. What about you? What's your strategy?

**Sarah:** I don't know about a strategy. I think it is very tempting to think I look at the book of Deuteronomy in my journal Bible now and go, oh, look at all these highlights, look at all those notes, I've done it, I've kind of conquered it, and that couldn't be further from the truth. And the object is not for me to conquer this book for, actually, it to kind of master my

heart and for this word to keep doing its work in my heart. And I'm really aware of that. This is just the beginning. What I've noticed is that in my Bible, read through, I'm kind of in Chronicles at the moment, and all the way through, I've just been seeing Deuteronomy. It's like my eyes have been opened in a whole new way as I've been reading through the Bible again. So I think that's been really exciting and it makes me really excited to keep reading as I see it, time and again, come through and just remembering those pithy lines of this word of your life and just kind of really taking that to heart and praying that throughout and, yeah, there's so much, isn't there? But I think it's become a good friend, hasn't it's? Become a good friend. We're not going to leave it forever. I do feel sad that it's come to an end, though.

**Felicity:** I know we've both been feeling a bit like, oh, no, but it is not the end and it is the beginning in so many ways, in a good way.

**Sarah:** But I think what's weird is that this end of Deuteronomy is a bit flat and it's a bit of a funny end and I think that's what's made us feel a bit kind of what's going on here. Anyway, let's get into it, shall we? You're going to read for us?

**Felicity:** Yes.

**Sarah:** So we're talking about chapters 31 through to 34, but you're going to read chapters 31 for us.

**Felicity:** Yes. Here we go. Chapter 31. Then Moses went out and spoke these words to all Israel I'm now 120 years old, and I am no longer able to lead you. The Lord has said to me, you shall not cross the Jordan. The Lord your God himself, will cross over ahead of you. He will destroy these nations before you, and you will take possession of their land. Joshua also will cross over ahead of you, as the Lord said, and the Lord will do to them what he did to sayon and OG the kings of the Amarites, whom he destroyed along with their land. The Lord will deliver them to you, and you must do to them all that I have commanded you. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of the them. For the Lord your God goes with you. He will never leave you, nor forsake you. Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the Lord swore to their ancestors to give them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance. The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you. He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid. Do not be discouraged. So Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the Levitic school priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord and to all the elders of Israel. Then Moses commanded them at the end of every seven years in the year for counseling deaths during the festival of the Tabernacles, when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place he will choose, you shall read this Lord before them in their hearing. Assemble the people, men, women and children, and the foreigners were dying in your towns so that they can listen and learn to fear the Lord your God, and follow carefully all the words of this law. Their children who do not know this law must hear it and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess. The Lord said to Moses, now the day of your death is near. Call Joshua and present yourselves at the tent of meeting where I'll commission him. So Moses and Joshua came and presented themselves at the tent of the meeting. Then the Lord appeared at the tent in a pillar of cloud, and the cloud stood over the entrance to the tent. And the Lord said to Moses, you're going to rest with your ancestors, and these people will soon prostitute themselves to the foreign gods of the land they are entering. They will forsake me and break the covenant I made with them. And in that day I will become very angry with them and forsake them I will hide my face from them. And they will be destroyed. Many disasters and calamities will come on them, and in that day they will ask, have not these disasters come on us because our God is not with us? And I will certainly hide my face in that day because of all their wickedness in turning to other gods. Now write down this song and teach it to the Israelites and make them sing it so that it may be a witness for me against them. When I've brought them into the land flown with milk and honey, the land I promised on oath to their ancestors. And when they eat their fill and thrive, they will turn to other gods and worship them, rejecting me and breaking my covenant. And when many disasters and calamities come on them, this song will testify against them, because it will not be forgotten by their descendants. I know what they are disposed to even before I bring them into the land I promised them on

oath. So Moses wrote down this song that day and taught it to the Israelites. The Lord gave this command to Joshua, son of none, be strong and courageous, for you will bring the Israelites into the land I promised them on oath, and I myself will be with you. After Moses finished writing in a book the words of this law from beginning to end, he gave this command to the Levites, who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord. Take this book of the Lord and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God. There it will remain as a witness against you, for I know how rebellious and stiffnecked you are. If you have been rebellious against the Lord, why, I am still alive. I'm with you. How much more will you rebel after I die? Assemble before me all the elders of your tribes and all your officials so that I can speak these words in their hearing and call their heavens on the earth to testify against them. For I know that after my death, you are sure to become utterly corrupt and to turn from the way I've commanded you. In days to come, a disaster will fall on you, because you will do evil in the sight of the Lord and arouse his anger by what your hands have made.

**Sarah:** Wow. Thank you for the Steve, I don't know about you, but what really strikes me hearing that red again is the real contrast between God's faithfulness and his character of love and the kind of refrain of our never leave or forsake you. And he's giving them all that they need. And then we get this huge contrast of the people and just a really sad, sobering reality that they're going to prostitute themselves towards other gods and they're going to forsake the Lord and that all that Moses a priest of love. 30 chapters is they're going to forsake it and they're going to go either way.

**Felicity:** Like Gussing. Really? Moses has just given his all, literally given his whole life in order to pastor and persuade these people to keep God's commands. And then he says at the end there, when he says, you know, you rebelled when I was alive, how much more are you going to rebel after I've died? And that's just what what a thing then, to be handing on to Joshua, my poor Joshua. I got a feel for him.

**Sarah:** Yeah, course. You need to be strong and courageous. This is a massive task you're taking on, knowing the failure that's going to happen. I mean, it's extraordinary, isn't it? And then what's amazing is that basically the Lord gives this song to Moses. That's to be repeated amongst the people. And what's so striking is that this song is to be a witness against them, it's to testify against them. It's like their national anthem that you're giving them for these people, and yet it's to remind them of how sinful they are and how much they will forsake the Lord, and yet how gracious God is in the midst of that. And that's just, again extraordinary, isn't it?

**Felicity:** Isn't it? And I think there's something really striking about the fact that it's a song. There's something in the way that we sing almost like we are what we sing in a way. And as they sing this, then they are hearing the word of God in that. And I think one of the striking things about chapter 31 is the word is still powerful, God is still faithful and His Word is still active. And I was struck in verse 26, he says, take this book of Lord and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God. And the word God's words and the covenant are inseparable. And so as the people take this song into the land and they're going to speak God's words, essentially, actually, that's a proclamation of God's covenant with them ongoing, despite the fact they're going to prostitute themselves to other gods. And while it's condemning in that it's a witness against them, it's also the hope as well, isn't it? Because their only hope is God, because it's evident they've got nothing to offer themselves, it is only God.

**Sarah:** And I think that's what's really striking about the song, isn't it? That actually it starts talking about how glorious the Lord is. It then goes on to talk about his grace, his provision, his blessing towards the people and how much he's given them, all that the Lord is. It then talks about how far Israel have fallen from Him and from that and how they've rebelled. And then it ends with this extraordinary note of hope in verse 43. Well, really, from 39 three to 43, where it says, he will take vengeance on his enemies and make atonement for his land and people. And just that the beauty. Yeah. In verse 39 as well, there is no God besides me. I put to death, I bring life, I have wounded and I will heal. And just that is the gospel in miniature, isn't it? That is the gospel that they are having to sing. God is glorious, man is not. Their only hope is in the Lord. And just seeing that fleshed out is beautiful. And yet

again, striking just that it's to be as a kind of witnessed against them when they're in the land.

**Felicity:** It's so beautiful, isn't it? And to have the gospel so clearly in the song, praise God, that it's in there. And Jesus, from where we're sitting this side of the cross, we see it so clearly, don't we? And I think that as you hear the witness against them, which ultimately is a witness against us as well as our sinful hearts are just the same as we've been seeing all the way through Deuteronomy. And as we hear that witness, so we're pushed all the more to long for Jesus. I think that is as we see the hope here, we see the gospel, especially in those last verses you were just talking about. Then we're all the more thankful for Jesus. And I just feel great empathy for the people, really. I hope they hear those last verses and think it's okay because we know.

**Sarah:** Yeah, it drives along for Jesus. And doesn't the end of the book just do that even more, though? So we then get this kind of chapter on the blessings given by Moses to the tribes. And we've both kind of said to each other, we don't really understand what's going on here. What's striking is that there's very little on the tribe of Judah, which is essentially the tribe that Jesus will come from. It seems like there's the least detail on that which I find just surprising. But then after that, we get the narrator just kind of detailing what happens. Moses dies, Joshua is kind of given, the Baptist handed over to Joshua, and then a couple of lines at the end about how great Moses was. And yet the refrain that there's been over this last few chapters is that Moses does not enter the land. Moses is dead. And this glorious great leader that you've had, well, he sinned as well, and he's dead. And so I think we're kind of left with this really ominous tone at the end of the book of like, well, we've just been told in this song that hope will come, but it's not through this guy. He's as dead as can be right now. And so we long for the one who is greater. And I think it's left we felt a bit flat, haven't we? But I guess we shouldn't feel flat because we get to see that fleshed out and we get to see the one greater than Moses in reality.

**Felicity:** Yeah, I think that's I think that's right. And it is in a way, it's a surprisingly understated description of his death, you know, this is the guy and actually there's not very many words given to it. But I think that what and I think you get echoes of this back in chapter 32, verse 47, you get this statement, these words that have been said, they're not just idle words for you, they are your life. And Moses all the way through deuteronomy has been the spokesperson for God hasn't in the prophet kind of sense. And so it's the words of Moses that carry on because they are the words of God and they are the words, the words that give life. So it's not Moses himself who gives life, but he, as he speaks God's words, gives the means of life.

**Sarah:** Yeah. And that's just wonderful, isn't it? And you see that again back in the beginning of chapter 31, I think again, Moses is going to die, but the Lord never will. The Lord will never forsake you. He is with you as you go on and we see that all the way through, don't you? And as you say, really, then clearly the word carries on. They're going to take this song and the covenant and the book of the law into the new land. And the word lives, and the word breathes life. And that is the means to life.

**Felicity:** Which interestingly then, means that then, while I think, as the people there, you might hear this and think, oh, well, Sack, that all that law that's being given, it's all going to go wrong anyway. But I think it prompts the hearer to think, oh, okay, now I do still want to keep listening, I want to keep trying to obey, holding fast that kind of pattern that we've heard.

**Sarah:** Well, yeah, big time. Because we've seen the character of God through the law, haven't we? We've seen how good it is to dwell and live in light of the law because it is a reflection of his character. So that's part of the listening, isn't it? Just really driving this last few chapters to our own hearts. Felicity, what does that look like for you this week to really kind of let it sink in?

**Felicity:** I think it's thinking about the song and hearing that they're supposed to be repeating it to themselves again and again. That has made me think I need to be hearing the song ultimately the gospel song, the song of Christ, again and again. That's where the hope is, isn't it? That's where I hear of God's covenant, love for me and life beyond my sinful, death, deserving state. And I think I've been prompted to keep hearing that. What about you?

**Sarah:** Yeah, I think similarly with the kind of actually the call to keep repeating the gospel for myself, I still need to hear the gospel day after day. That is the food I need. Those are the words that I need. They're not idle words, they are my life to keep reminding myself of the Gospel and I've got faithfulness. I think I'm in awe of how much this has grown, our view of Jesus. And that's wonderful, isn't it? And just trying to let that sink in and to really take that to heart. There's so much, isn't it, to take to heart. But, yeah, rehearsing the Gospel is probably the biggest one just for this week.

**Felicity:** Just for this week.

**Sarah:** Yeah, I think it's that, isn't it?

**Felicity:** Not forgetting that we see ourselves in the people, but we also see the same God. Like, the faithfulness of God is so encouraging in that because I think I can hear about the people and be.

**Sarah:** Like, yeah, but in that he doesn't kind of put a veneer over there, sin does. He doesn't kind of pretend there's a kind of real freedom here. Like sin is called out and it is hideous and horrendous in every way. But the Lord is faithful and his heart is to draw near to us in the midst of our sin and to say, Come to me. And so just that reality of seeing that here very clearly and going, we can come, we can come to Jesus, the one greater than Moses, who death cannot hold him and he's taken every curse upon himself for us and just basking in that.

**Felicity:** Yeah. Praise God. Praise God. Sarah, do you want to pray for us? That we would be able to do that?

**Sarah:** Father, we just thank you so much for the gift of this book. We thank you for the gift of this word even today, where we've seen the need and the joy of rehearsing the Gospel for our own hearts. That you are glorious, we are sinful beyond measure, and yet your mercy is more. We just praise you for your immeasurable grace and your character of faithfulness that we see here. And we thank you ultimately that we get to glory in the one who is greater than Moses, the one who could not be held by the grave, the one who gives us life because he is life himself. Lord, please help us to continue to marvel at the Lord Jesus as we take the eternal me to heart. Amen.

**Felicity:** Oh, man. So, final bit, but do join us next time for a roundup with Jen Wilkin. We're excited about that. And if you've enjoyed it, if you are enjoying it, why not leave us a review wherever you listen to the podcast? We would love that, but we will look forward to being with you next time.

**Sarah:** Indeed. See you then. See you then. Bye.

**Felicity:** We're thankful for ten of those and Kaleidoscope Bibles sponsoring this you.