

Deuteronomy

IGNATIUS CATHOLIC STUDY BIBLE QUESTIONS

Welcome

“You are approaching the ‘word of God’. But for thousands of years, ... the Word of God has been approaching you.”

The following guide is provided to enhance your reading of Deuteronomy using the *Ignatius Catholic Study Bible*. If you are new to this resource or to reading the Bible, we recommend you read the general Introduction before you begin. It explains what it means that Scripture is the Word of God as well as how we understand and interpret it as Catholics. It also introduces the special features of the Study Bible and tells how they can enrich your reading and study. Additionally, the *Introduction to the Pentateuch* (the five books of Moses, of which Deuteronomy is the fifth) will provide valuable context for your reading.

A simple rhythm of prayer followed by reading and reflection is offered below to guide you through the book one chapter at a time. Questions draw attention to key footnotes and word studies to lead you into a deeper understanding of what you read and then prompt you to consider how to apply what you have learned. For a deeper dive, take advantage of additional features as you go: not just the other footnotes but also cross-references to Scripture and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* that are provided above the footnotes as well as any maps, charts, or essays that are not touched on in the questions.

Don't miss these helpful icons as you read! They highlight footnotes that pertain to the Church's criteria for interpreting Scripture (see CCC 112–14):



Be attentive to the content and unity of Scripture

Notes marked with a Bible icon connect Old Testament passages and New Testament mysteries, fostering appreciation for God's unified plan.



Read Scripture in light of the Church's living tradition

This icon marks notes drawn from the Holy Spirit's guidance of Church teaching and the spiritual senses of scripture. Here you'll find official teaching as well as interpretations from Fathers, Doctors, and saints of the Church.



Be attentive to the “analogy of faith”

Explore notes marked with an icon of keys to learn how the mysteries of faith, revealed in Scripture and defined by the Church, clarify and connect with one another in a unified, coherent way.

May God bless you as you read his word!

of God,* did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,⁷ but emptied himself,[†] taking the form of a servant,[‡] being born in the likeness of men.[§] And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.[¶] Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name,^{||} that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,^{|||} and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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12 Therefore, obeyed, so now much more in salvation with f work in you, bo pleasure.
14 Do all th tioning,¹⁵ that y children of God crooked and per

2:9–11: Rom 10:9; 14:9; Eph 1:20–21. 2:13: 1 Cor 15:10. 2

2:7 emptied himself: The Greek verb *kenōō* means “empty out” or “render void”. The idea is, not that Christ divested himself of divinity when he united himself with humanity, but that he restricted his rightful exercise of certain divine abilities during his earthly life and accepted certain limitations of the human condition. In effect, the Son of God made himself poor in order to make us rich with his grace (2 Cor 8:9) (CCC 472). • Christ emptied himself by compressing the glory of his Godhead within our smallness. What he always was remained perfect and incomprehensible, but what he assumed was in proportion to the measure of our nature (St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Apollinarius*).

2:8 death on a cross: The ultimate indignity. Death by crucifixion was the most awful and degrading form of criminal execution in the ancient world. The Romans reserved it for slaves and insurrectionists. See note on Mk 15:24.

2:9 exalted him: By raising him from the dead, enthroning him in heaven, and clothing his humanity with divine glory. A similar destiny awaits all who humble themselves as Jesus did (3:21; Lk 14:11).

2:10 every knee should bow: An allusion to the divine oath in Is 45:23. • Yahweh swore that all peoples, to the very end of the earth, would acknowledge his Lordship and bow before him in homage. Paul moves Christ into the center of this prophecy as the divine Lord destined to be revered by all. **heaven ... earth ... under the earth:** The three principal realms in the world view of ancient Israel (Ex 20:4). Homage will come from all creatures great and small—the angels and saints above, the family of man and beasts spread over the earth, and the dead and the demons of the underworld.

2:11 confess: I.e., acknowledge. Included in this open dec

serious that we pur sense of awe at ser the prospect of sinn Encouragement con readers that God's g desire (intention) at 21; CCC 308) (CC “work”, he address and trembling”, he good deeds were th not boast of your g within you (St. Augu **2:15 pervers** • Deuterono poetic lawsuit that and ingratitude du

A Thing to Harpagmos (G in the Greek O Occurrences of “robbery”. Its considerable d the leading vi (1) Some, like “something sel

Prepare

Read the Introduction to Deuteronomy, paying particular attention to the *Structure, Content, and Themes* of the book and the *Christian Perspective* on it. What one thing stands out to you, that you would like to remember?

Read the Outline of Deuteronomy to get an overview of the book. What are its major divisions?

Pray

Use the following questions to guide your reading of Deuteronomy, going at a pace that is comfortable to you. Before you begin each new section, pray simply for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit:

Come, Holy Spirit, open my heart to hear and receive these words as what they truly are, the Word of God. Enlighten my understanding and give me grace to put what I read into practice in my life. Amen.

Read and Reflect

Read and reflect on Deuteronomy as follows:

- Pray before you read
- Read a section of biblical text by itself
- Read the text again, referring to the notes that accompany the text
- For deeper understanding and to aid in applying what you read, answer the questions that follow. The references at the top of each numbered question correspond to particular notes.

At the end of each chapter, review what you have written and linger where you feel drawn, asking the Lord to speak to your heart and into your life. What do you hear? Respond in prayer and ask his help to live what you hear in your attitudes and actions this week.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Chapter 1

For understanding

1. **1:3.** What is meant by the “fortieth year”? Though the trip should have lasted less than two years, what refusal of the Israelites caused it to take so long? When does the eleventh month fall?
2. **1:8.** To which land does Moses refer, and how far does it extend? When does Israel finally control the full extent of this territory? To what does “the LORD swore” refer?
3. **1:31.** How is the Lord portrayed here? What characteristics of God and the Israelites does the book highlight several times? In what is this type of kinship language rooted?
4. **1:39.** Whom does Moses call “your little ones”? Because persons younger than 20 years old were not eligible for military service, for what were they not held responsible? To what does “no knowledge of good and evil” refer?

For application

1. **1:6.** Think of a time when you felt you needed to make a major change in your life, even if your circumstances at the time were both good and comfortable. What inspired the urge to make the change? Were you aware then or later that the desire to change came from the Lord?
2. **1:13.** According to 1 Tim 3:2–7, what qualifications should one look for in a bishop? How many of these qualifications are still pertinent? What other qualifications in Church leaders may be necessary or desirable? How often do you pray for your bishop?
3. **1:26–28.** Have you ever been given a task or a project that you were afraid was too great for you? If so, what did you do to avoid it? If avoidance was not possible, what was your attitude as you began it?
4. **1:41–44.** If at first you refused the task you feared, what were the consequences? How did you try to recover from them? For example, if you changed your mind and tried to complete the task anyway, how successful were your efforts? What did you learn from the experience?

Chapter 2

For understanding

1. **2:1—3:11.** What do these verses describe? At this time, with whom do the Israelites avoid conflict, but against whom do they take up arms? With what historical notes is the account interspersed? In seizing Amorite lands by force of arms, among whom does Israel take its place?
2. **2:9.** Where was Moab, and what were its borders? From whom are both Moabites and Ammonites descended?
3. **2:14.** To what does the time lapse of thirty-eight years refer? Since that time, who perished, who survived, and what happened to the children of the first generation, the conquest generation? What oath had the Lord sworn to them?
4. **2:30.** How does the Lord bring judgment on Sihon? As one of the wicked idolaters, why must he be cleared away?

For application

1. **2:7.** In what spiritual wanderings have you engaged? Where have they led you? Given that the Lord knows what you have been through, how has he helped you get to where you are?
2. **2:14.** Assuming that a generation is roughly 40 years, which generation is passing from us, and which is coming into ascendancy? Which elements of our previous generation’s religious heritage have been passed on, and which are being rejected or replaced?
3. **2:27–29.** Why do foreign countries require the presentation of a passport before you can enter their territory? What happens if you attempt to enter the country without one or if you lose it while there?
4. **2:30.** Why do you think that Sihon, who was ignorant of God’s plan, refused to grant Israel’s request to purchase provisions and pass through his country? Is hardness of heart the same as mere stubbornness? Though the text says that God hardened Sihon’s spirit, who actually hardened it?

Chapter 3

For understanding

1. **3:11.** Who is Og? What is meant by “his bedstead”? How large was it, how was it built, and where was it on display for a time?
2. **3:18.** What does Moses require of the fighting men of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh?
3. **3:25.** What is Moses’ final plea? Though the request is denied, what small consolation is given to him?
4. **3:29.** What is Beth-peor? How does reference to this location help to establish the context for Deuteronomy as a whole? What opportunity does the covenant of Deuteronomy give Israel?

For application

1. **3:3–6.** Given the description of the cities in Og’s kingdom, how difficult must it have been for Israel to conquer them? What very difficult project have you completed, and what pleasure have you had in the effort it took?
2. **3:11.** Why do you think Moses adds this detail? What overwhelming spiritual difficulties have you faced and overcome?
3. **3:18.** Read the note for this verse. Since the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh now have their inheritance, what motivation do they have for supporting the remaining tribes in getting theirs? If you gain what you have earned with effort, why should you help others?
4. **3:23–26.** Have you ever sought permission from the Lord to accomplish a much-desired work? How did the Lord reveal his answer? If the answer was negative, how did you receive it?

Chapter 4

For understanding

1. **4:6.** How does the Torah benefit Israel as a guide to living for the glory of God? What effect will the moral and spiritual witness have on neighboring nations?
2. **4:12.** Why must the Lord not be depicted in the form of any created thing? What did the imageless worship required by the first commandment of the Decalogue act as a way of accomplishing? God, who is spirit, did not assume a physical form until what happened?
3. **4:24.** In what way does the Lord act as a devouring fire? How does he render this mystery concrete? According to Origen of Alexandria, what does the God of fire consume?
4. **4:35.** What does the expression of Israel’s monotheistic faith affirm, and what does it deny? What does it claim? To what extent is the existence of “other gods” still acknowledged? If the basis for this claim is not philosophical reasoning, what is it?
5. **Word Study: Loved (4:37).** How is *’ahab*, the Hebrew verb “to love”, used variously in the OT? As a key theme in Deuteronomy, what kind of love is it? In this respect, as in others, how does Deuteronomy parallel Near Eastern vassal treaties? What does a suzerain king swear to do, and what does the vassal swear to do? In Deuteronomy, what does the Lord as king do, and how are the Israelites commanded to love the Lord?

For application

1. **4:2.** Notice the wording of this verse. What does not adding to or subtracting from the Lord’s word have to do with obedience to the commandments themselves? For example, how would adding or removing requirements to the Lord’s word potentially corrupt it?
2. **4:5–6.** What is the evangelistic rationale for obeying the Ten Commandments? How does observance of the commandments demonstrate wisdom and understanding?
3. **4:24.** Note the context for this verse. If God is infinite, eternal, and omnipotent, what cause has he to be jealous? How jealous should God be for his people today?
4. **4:29.** As exiles on earth in a militantly secularist culture, how are we to seek the Lord our God? According to this verse, what is the condition for seeking him successfully?

Chapter 5

For understanding

1. **5:5.** When was Moses elected to the role of mediator of divine revelation to Israel? How were all laws given subsequent to the Decalogue relayed to the people?

2. **Essay: What Is a Covenant?** Why is the covenant motif in the Bible more pervasive and important than other covenants in the ancient Near East? As formal agreements between two parties that are sealed by oath, what do covenants accomplish, especially as a mutual exchange of persons? What formal procedures were necessary to ratify a covenant and make it binding? What three forms could covenants assume depending on their function? Though covenants in Scripture follow conventional models and procedures of the biblical world, how are they nevertheless unique?
3. **5:6–21.** Although the list of the Ten Commandments here and in Ex 20:1–17 are substantially the same, how are they different? Which order does traditional catechesis follow?
4. **5:22.** How did the Lord give the commandments? What is the twofold significance of the statement that the Lord “added no more”?

For application

1. **5:2.** Read the essay “What Is a Covenant?” How does the Mosaic covenant pertain to Christians today? How does the New Covenant in Jesus Christ incorporate the Old?
2. **5:3.** Why does Moses make this statement? How are you personally incorporated into the New Covenant?
3. **5:6–21.** Jews look upon these commandments not only as obligations but as opportunities to do good works. How does each commandment provide such opportunities for you?
4. **5:32.** How does this verse reflect Jesus’ injunction to enter by the “narrow gate” (Mt 7:13–14)?

Chapter 6

For understanding

1. **6:4.** What does this solemn address, used several times in the book, introduce here? How often each day have devout Jews recited this prayer since ancient times? What does the confession of faith in the Lord’s oneness and uniqueness affirm? While the NT affirms the oneness of God revealed in the OT, how does it expand this belief? According to St. Fulgentius, while we say that the Father, Son, and Spirit are one God in a unity of nature, what do we dare not say?
2. **6:7.** What kind of school is the family? Upon whom does responsibility for the spiritual formation of children rest?
3. **6:8–9.** What Jewish tradition did these verses inspire? What are phylacteries? What are mezuzot?
4. **6:16.** What mistake is this verse a warning not to repeat? When does Jesus defend himself with this verse?

For application

1. **6:5.** If love of God is considered not to be sentimental but an action, how do you love God with all your heart and soul? Assuming that strength includes all your resources, what does it mean to love him with all your strength?
2. **6:7.** How comprehensive of all your daily activity is Moses’ injunction to teach your children? In *Catechesi Tradendae*, Pope John Paul II says that in catechesis Jesus is the one who is taught. How do you “teach Jesus” to your children?
3. **6:10–12.** Given all the good things Moses mentions, how could one forget the Lord? How have you shown gratitude for the good things you have? How often do you remember to thank him for them?
4. **6:20–25.** How does the explanation given by the father answer the question of his son as to the meaning of the commandments? For the Christian, how important is obedience to the commandments (cf. Jn 14:15)?

Chapter 7

For understanding

1. **7:1–5.** What must Israelites maintain? At what levels are associations with Canaanites forbidden?
2. **7:3.** Why does Deuteronomy forbid mixed marriages? To what will failure to heed this warning lead?
3. **7:6–8.** What theology does Moses expound? On what is the divine choice to set Israel apart as a holy nation based, and how is it expressed? In the economy of salvation, what greater end was the election of one nation as God’s people a means to achieving?
4. **Word Study: Possession (7:6).** What does the Hebrew word *segullah* mean, often with what connotation? As a secular term, to what can it refer? As a theological term, what does it describe? Later in the OT, when a time of judgment becomes necessary, what does the Lord promise to do? How does the idea of a *segullah* carry over into the NT?
5. **7:22.** How is the conquest of Canaan, here described as a gradual process, elsewhere envisioned? How are both predictions true?

For application

1. **7:3–4.** Why do marriages between Catholics and baptized Christians of other denominations require permission from the bishop? Why do marriages between Christians and unbaptized persons require a dispensation? Why does Baptism make such a big difference?
2. **7:8.** Why has the Lord redeemed you? What return can you make to him for that grace?
3. **7:22.** How quickly have you rid yourself of all your sins and imperfections? Why is it a grace that you must conquer these things little by little? If you persevere, how certain is it that victory over them will be yours?
4. **7:26.** What occasions have the Internet and social media given you to bring an “abominable thing” such as pornography into your home, even if accidentally? What can be done to prevent this?

Chapter 8

For understanding

1. **8:3.** As the bread from heaven that sustained Israel during its long journey through the wilderness, what did the daily provision of manna express? What did the miracle of the manna teach Israel? What does ignorance of the word of God do to the human spirit? How does Jesus use this verse?
2. **8:5.** How does the Lord act as a man does who disciplines his son? Of what is discipline, though unpleasant, a sure sign? Among other things, what is it meant to induce? From what does the father-son relationship between the Lord and Israel arise?
3. **8:14.** To what does the concern about Israel’s heart being lifted up refer? What is the danger?

For application

1. **8:2.** Psalm 139 ends with this invitation: “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts” (Ps 139:23). How often have you issued to the Lord this invitation to test you? Why is it good for you that he puts you to the test from time to time?
2. **8:3.** How does the experience of hunger and its satisfaction with manna lead Israel to know that man lives only by what comes from the mouth of God? How does God create? How does the Eucharist, without which we have no life, come forth from the mouth of God?
3. **8:5.** A disciple can receive discipline in a variety of ways. How has the Lord disciplined you, either directly through prayer and spiritual exercises or indirectly through other life experiences? What are some positive and negative lessons you have learned from him?
4. **8:11–14.** How can a comfortable life pose a spiritual danger? If your Christian life is comfortable and serene, what can you do to avoid this danger?
5. **8:17.** Which commandment does the sin of presumption violate? What are the two kinds of presumption (CCC 2092)? How does presumption open the door to lax spiritual practice and carelessness of heart (CCC 2733)?

Chapter 9

For understanding

1. **9:4.** Why does the Lord plead for Israel’s humility in view of its possession of the land of Canaan? On what is its possession based? According to St. John Cassian, morally, when we achieve success in warring against the vices of the flesh and have gained freedom from the world’s way of life, why should we not be puffed up with the success?
2. **9:6–10:11.** What two critical events at the start of the wilderness period do these verses present?
3. **9:9.** After the covenant was first ratified at Sinai, what did Moses do? What happened when he finally came down?
4. **9:22–23.** With what are the sites mentioned in these verses associated? Besides the apostasy at Sinai, what did the people do at each one?

For application

1. **9:6.** How good do you have to be before you can merit God’s grace? If your goodness does not prompt him to give you grace, what does?
2. **9:7, 24.** From where does the human urge to rebel against the Lord come? How deeply embedded in the heart is the spirit of rebellion? How can that spirit still be present even in the desire to submit to the Lord?

3. **9:18–19.** Do you ever practice intercessory prayer? What makes such prayer difficult? For whom do you intercede, and how long have you been doing it? Have you ever faced the temptation to give up?

Chapter 10

For understanding

1. **10:8.** What were the Levites tasked with doing in the wilderness? Which clan was responsible for carrying the ark? For what purpose was the Levitical family of Aaron ordained?
2. **10:16.** As an outward sign of an inward act, what does removing the foreskin of the flesh symbolize? What does it mean to have an uncircumcised heart?
3. **10:17.** What does the superlative expression “Lord of lords” mean? Given the covenant framework of Deuteronomy, what does it mean in particular? What does it mean to say that the Lord is not partial?
4. **10:18.** For whom does Deuteronomy express humanitarian concern? To what do its laws appeal?

For application

1. **10:5.** How do you store important personal papers such as contracts, property deeds, and certificates? How important are considerations such as their safety and access to them? What about the storage and care of sacred objects in your home?
2. **10:8.** From where does the right of the laity to administer blessings come? What are the limitations on this privilege (CCC 1669, 2626)?
3. **10:16.** As a metaphor for purification of intention, what are the limitations of the expression “circumcision of heart”? What metaphor would you use to get across the same idea?
4. **10:17.** Calling the Lord “the terrible God” can have several layers of meaning. What are some of them? In what sense might the negative connotations of the word be appropriate when applied to God, and how might they be inappropriate?

Chapter 11

For understanding

1. **11:6.** Who are Dathan and Abiram?
2. **11:10.** How were the farmlands of Egypt irrigated? Why will such toilsome labor not be necessary in Canaan?
3. **11:14.** In Palestine, when do the early and late rains come? When are crops sown, and how long does the harvest season stretch? According to St. Gregory the Great, what does rain represent allegorically, and when did the Lord give the early and the later rains?
4. **11:29–32.** What do these verses describe? On which twin mountains will it take place? While the liturgy is described in Deut 27:1–26, when will it be enacted?

For application

1. **11:8.** How does obedience to the commandments make one strong? In a culture like ours, what kinds of strength are needed?
2. **11:10.** What is the “land” that the Christian is called to go in and possess? How is it unlike the environment in which you live now?
3. **11:18, 20.** What ways do you have of reminding yourself of the word of God throughout your day? Do you carry anything with you or post anything in your house to help remind you? When you study Scripture, what means do you use to remember what you read?
4. **11:19.** Even if you send your children to religious education classes, what do you do to instruct your children directly and personally? How do you monitor what they are taught in these classes? How do you pray with them? How do you model your faith for them?

Chapter 12

For understanding

1. **12:1—26:19.** Just as chapters 5–11 outline the *general* stipulations of the covenant, what do these chapters set forth? In doing so, what pattern does Deuteronomy follow?

2. **12:5.** As the law of the central sanctuary, to what does it point? What is the twofold purpose of this law? What does centralizing worship at a single sanctuary thus foster? To what does selecting a single “place” for sacrifice stand in contrast? When does God reveal that Jerusalem is the chosen location? For what is “his name” an idiom, and what does it *not* mean that Deuteronomy is naïvely doing?
3. **12:13.** What legislation does this verse revise, and when will it go into effect? Centuries later, what does the prophet Malachi envision?
4. **12:15.** What did legislation in Leviticus stipulate about the profane slaughter of animals? Why is the Levitical law being revised now? In Deuteronomy, then, where may one slaughter animals, but for sacrifice where must they be slaughtered? Which animals may be slaughtered and eaten like game animals taken in hunting? What is the one exception?

For application

1. **12:2–3.** Why do we not follow the command in these verses today? How should Christians approach the idolatry rampant in our culture?
2. **12:5–7.** The note for verse 5 explains the rationale behind requiring Israel to worship through sacrifice in one place (later identified as Jerusalem). Where may Catholics conduct formal worship through the Eucharistic sacrifice? What is the rationale for that?
3. **12:23.** Both here and in Leviticus, the prohibition against consuming blood is stressed. How does that explain the defection of many of Jesus’ disciples in Jn 6:66?
4. **12:30.** Why does Moses forbid curiosity over pagan worship practices? What would he have said about certain Eastern religious practices, such as transcendental meditation and yoga? How can curiosity about such things lead one into serious sin?

Chapter 13

For understanding

1. **13:1–18.** With what are these laws concerned? What must happen to instigators of idolatry? Likewise, what must happen to towns that forsake the Lord for other gods? Why is idolatry a capital offense?
2. **13:3.** According to St. Vincent of Lérins, as Deuteronomy indicates, why would divine Providence permit a teacher of the Church to wander from the faith? Who is the true and genuine Catholic?
3. **13:16.** How does the military operation have a cultic dimension? What must happen to the town that has been destroyed?
4. **13:17.** In this context, what are devoted things? Why must a complete ban be placed on all persons and property found in apostate cities?

For application

1. **13:1–5.** Jesus worked numerous miracles; why were they not enough to convince his critics to believe him? What impact might this regulation from Deuteronomy have had on how the Pharisees and Sadducees regarded Jesus?
2. **13:5.** Read the note for this verse. What are the penalties in the Church for teaching heresy? Why is the Church seemingly slow to impose them?
3. **13:17.** Look up 1 Sam 15:7–22. How completely did King Saul claim he fulfilled the command to impose the ban on the Amalekites? What did Samuel tell him he should have done? What was Saul’s punishment? What happens to us if we do not banish sin from our lives?

Chapter 14

For understanding

1. **14:1.** In what is the adoptive sonship of Israel rooted? Why are self-laceration and shaving of the head forbidden?
2. **14:3.** For what are the ox, the sheep, and the goat worthy of use? Unlike Leviticus, why does Deuteronomy mention them specifically?
3. **14:21.** Why is it unlawful to boil a kid in its mother’s milk?
4. **14:22–29.** What does the law of tithing require Israelite farmers to do with their annual harvest? Although part of the offering is eaten by the farmer and his family at the sanctuary, where does the rest go? Because the transportation of

produce is difficult over long distances, what provision is made regarding food offerings? What happens with the tithe every third year?

For application

1. **14:3.** In the context of this chapter, how does the avoidance of certain foods contribute to the holiness of the people? According to Mark's Gospel, what reasoning did Jesus use to "declare all foods clean" (Mk 7:15–19)?
2. **14:21.** Why can an Israelite eat an animal that he slaughters but not one that dies naturally, although he is allowed to give or sell it to non-Israelites? What might this regulation have to do with the law against eating blood?
3. **14:22.** Do you practice tithing? If so, is it in the form of money? What other forms of income or personal resources might you tithe? How is almsgiving different from tithing?

Chapter 15

For understanding

1. **15:1.** As a new law added to the Sabbatical year of Exodus and Leviticus, what does Deuteronomy require in addition to letting fields lie fallow? What situation was periodic debt relief designed to balance? What was one problem that might result from this law?
2. **15:3.** Who does not qualify for the sabbatical release? What double standard does Deuteronomy thus erect for Israel and the people of other nations?
3. **15:12–18.** How does the law of slave release upgrade the law of Ex 21:1–11? Without provisions, what might happen to a newly released slave?
4. **15:16.** What does the refusal of a slave to be released indicate about domestic slavery? How was slavery beneficial in harsh economic conditions?

For application

1. **15:3.** The Catholic Church claims to exercise a "preferential option for the poor". What does that mean in practice? When it comes to choosing between helping Christian brethren and non-Christians, to whom do you owe priority of consideration?
2. **15:6.** Why is borrowing from a relative less problematic than borrowing from a stranger? On the other hand, what problems can arise from being in debt to a relative?
3. **15:11.** What questions about divine Providence do you have from the fact that poverty never seems to be eradicated? What social structures have been created to address this problem? Why do they always seem to fall short?
4. **15:12–18.** Suppose you wanted to employ a fellow Catholic who needed help supporting his family. What provisions for employment would you need to make for him? If, after a time, he felt able to support himself, what arrangements might you make for discharging him? How might the pattern of employment and discharge in these verses help you make the necessary decisions?

Chapter 16

For understanding

1. **16:1–17.** What does Deuteronomy do to Israel's three major feasts? As times of national assembly and worship, where are they to be celebrated?
2. **16:1.** What month of Israel's calendar is Abib, and what is it later called? When does it fall? What does Passover commemorate, and when is it celebrated?
3. **16:13.** When is the Feast of Booths celebrated, and what is it also called? What would take place for the pilgrims assembled for this feast every seventh year?
4. **16:18.** What role do judges and officers play? Although Deuteronomy does not specify who manned these local tribunals, who does it seem likely were represented? Where did the priestly tribe of Levi settle in Israel?

For application

1. **16:1–8.** How do you celebrate the Holy Week liturgies? When is the last time you attended a Chrism Mass with the bishop? What efforts do you make to participate in Good Friday and Easter Vigil services? If you do not participate in these, what prevents you?

2. **16:9–12.** What does the Feast of Pentecost mean to you? If you helped RCIA candidates to receive the Sacraments of Initiation at Easter, how do you conclude mystagogy at this feast? How does Pentecost prompt you to renew your own Confirmation?
3. **16:16–17.** Which liturgical feasts do you most enjoy? What is there about them that most delights you? How do you celebrate them? If they are also commercially popular, how do you retain their religious significance?

Chapter 17

For understanding

1. **17:6.** How were allegations verified for a death sentence to be issued in Israel? As further legal protection for the accused, with what does the Law threaten false witnesses?
2. **17:8–13.** What kinds of cases is a federal court established to handle? Where do members of this supreme tribunal convene? What kind of offense is failure to comply with its decisions?
3. **17:14–20.** What law is described here, and when does it go into effect? Why will the elevation of a human king be a divine concession to the weakness of Israel? What does Deuteronomy foresee among the dangers of adopting this model of government? What events will these types of selfish excess trigger?
4. **17:18.** In addition to the king's personal copy of Deuteronomy, what was to happen with the official scroll? Why must the king be an exemplary student of the Torah?

For application

1. **17:1.** When you come to the Lord in prayer, what do you offer him? In Rom 12:1–2, what sacrifice are you bringing to him? How do you make that sacrifice holy and pleasing to him?
2. **17:7.** Why does Moses lay on witnesses the responsibility of executing the death sentence? If you had been among the accusers of the woman caught in adultery (Jn 8:4–7), what would you have done when Jesus challenged you to cast the first stone? Why?
3. **17:12.** In a culture like ours, what is the responsibility of officers of the law when a judicial decision is rendered? What should happen to one who refuses to abide by the decision of the courts in the belief that the decision is unjust or immoral?
4. **17:18.** Some people think it is useful in Scripture study to write in a Bible; others disagree. What is your opinion? What is the benefit for yourself of writing notes (whether in the Bible or not)? What use do you make of memorization?

Chapter 18

For understanding

1. **18:1.** For what is “the Levitical priests” a general term? What clear distinction did legislation found in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers make between them? Why is Deuteronomy not concerned with this difference? As descendants of the patriarch Levi, the son of Jacob (Ex 6:16–25), in which family line do its priests stand? Because Levi is the one landless tribe in Israel, where will the Levites go to live?
2. **18:9–14.** What does Deuteronomy condemn in these verses? In the ancient Near East, what did occult practitioners often seek to learn about or influence? To this end, in what practices did they engage? Why is it significant that these laws immediately precede Moses' instruction regarding true prophecy in Israel?
3. **18:15.** Who will be the “prophet like me”? Since Moses himself is the model who defines the expectation, what does it suggest that the prophet to come will be like? What do many scholars think the passage envisions? That said, with whom did Jewish expectations during NT times identify the prophet like Moses? Where can this be seen? Regardless, then, of how this prediction might apply to various prophets in the OT, who fulfills the expectation of a prophet like Moses, and where is this first revealed?
4. **18:22.** How is a prophet proven to be false? How is he also exposed as a fraud?

For application

1. **18:2.** Moses reminds the Levites that they have no physical inheritance but that the Lord is their inheritance. What did that mean for their livelihood? What is the inheritance of men and women who take vows of perpetual poverty? What should happen for the support of aged religious who cannot support themselves?

2. **18:11–12.** What are some occult practices that exist in our culture? Why are these forbidden? Why is it dangerous to dabble in them, even as a parlor game?
3. **18:15.** The note for this verse refers to the Transfiguration (Mt 17:5), where the Father’s words “listen to him” were directed to Peter, James, and John. Why especially to them? For you, what does it mean to “listen” to the prophet like Moses?
4. **18:21–22.** The charism of prophecy still exists and is exercised in various contexts in the Church. How do you discern whether a prophecy is true and reliable? Since post-biblical prophecy is private revelation, what attention should be paid to it?

Chapter 19

For understanding

1. **19:2.** What are the three cities for? Three asylum cities had already been assigned east of the Jordan; now where are three others assigned? How does Deuteronomy build on Num 35:9–34? Where are the cities of refuge listed by name?
2. **19:15–21.** What does the law of witnesses stipulate? How is legal protection for the innocent afforded in the law? What punishment do perjurers receive?
3. **19:21.** What standard does “eye for eye” provide? What compromises justice?

For application

1. **19:6.** In our system of justice, who takes on the role of the “avenger of blood”? Whether the crime is murder or manslaughter, what is the “avenger’s” role when the culprit is caught? What is the role of relatives in our system of justice?
2. **19:12.** According to the revised version of CCC 2267, what does the Church say about recourse to the death penalty? If, despite past toleration of capital punishment, imposition of the death penalty is now “inadmissible”, does that mean that it should never be imposed?
3. **19:18–19.** Why is perjury such a pernicious crime? What is the penalty for perjury in our society?
4. **19:21.** In the context of this passage, who should administer the punishment of “eye for eye”: the court or the individual offended? How does Jesus answer the question of retaliation for an offense (Mt 5:38–42)?

Chapter 20

For understanding

1. **20:2.** What was the job of the priest in speaking to soldiers before a battle? Why will trust in the Lord be needed when the people enter Canaan?
2. **20:5–9.** What circumstances would exempt a soldier from combat duty?
3. **20:10–18.** What would cause the rules of siege warfare to differ? What is the rule regarding subjugation? Where is extermination mandated?
4. **20:17.** What is the ban of total destruction a means of doing? Who are the Hittites and Jebusites? According to a Jewish tradition in the *Book of Jubilees*, which dates to the second century B.C., how was the world divided? Against this background, what was the reason behind Israel’s conquest of Canaan?

For application

1. **20:5–8.** What circumstances or conditions would excuse a person from military duty today? What could excuse the person from engaging in battle once he is trained for it?
2. **20:13–14.** How does the Christian view of the value of human life moderate the conduct of soldiers in battle with regard to civilians? Why is it considered an atrocity among us for the victors in battle to exterminate all the males, including young boys, but to spare at least women of childbearing years?
3. **20:16–18.** Why would a God who is defined as love itself (1 Jn 4:8) impose a total ban on the current occupants of the Promised Land? What rationale does Moses give for it? How does Christian faith evaluate such a policy as part of God’s plan?

Chapter 21

For understanding

1. **21:1–9.** According to the law for unsolved homicides, if the body of a murder victim is found, and the culprit remains unknown, what must the town nearest the crime scene do? What about sin is implied?
2. **21:15–17.** What does the law of primogeniture protect? Without this legal safeguard, what could a father do? While Deuteronomy does not create the right of the first-born son, what does it guard against? What various family struggles in the Book of Genesis does the law of primogeniture recall?
3. **21:22.** To what does this verse refer? Against what did this gruesome spectacle, with the body tied or impaled to a tree or wooden upright, stand as a warning? How does Deuteronomy regulate the practice?
4. **21:23.** How is the curse manifested? What do other passages imply that the criminal must bear? To what method of execution do later Jewish texts relate this punishment? Why does Paul also cite this passage in connection with the Crucifixion of Jesus?

For application

1. **21:1–9.** Why might a city where a murder was committed wish to perform an act of atonement as described here? In modern cities with high murder rates, what acts of reparation might be appropriate for parishes to perform? What acts of reparation for the deaths of unborn children are even now being performed?
2. **21:15–17.** What is your position in birth order in your family? If you are the oldest, what rights and responsibilities are or have been yours within your immediate family? If you are not the oldest, how have you regarded your place among your siblings? What does birth order have to do with any inheritance expectations you may have had?
3. **21:18.** Read the note for this verse. How have your parents disciplined you, and with what end in mind? How has their discipline of you carried over into your training of your own children? How have they grown under your discipline?

Chapter 22

For understanding

1. **22:5.** What kind of dress is forbidden? What is implied about transvestism?
2. **22:10.** Why is plowing with an ox and donkey together forbidden? In addition, how does the Torah classify each animal? When does Paul seem to allude to this law?
3. **22:22–30.** With what do these penal laws deal? Which of these sexual crimes warrant the death penalty?
4. **22:29.** In this example of a rape, why would divorce not be an option for the rapist who is forced to marry the victim?

For application

1. **22:5.** If the Lord had a complaint against today's clothing fashions, what do you think the complaint would be, and why? What would he say about the penchant for near or total public nudity?
2. **22:8.** In a litigious society like ours, for what may homeowners be liable if an accident occurs to someone on their property? According to St. Paul, how should lawsuits between Christians be settled (1 Cor 6:1–7)?
3. **22:13–17.** How important is premarital virginity to the integrity of a marriage? What has our culture lost from having lost respect for physical virginity? How does physical virginity correlate with spiritual virginity?
4. **22:25–27.** The word “rape” comes from a Latin verb meaning “to plunder” or “steal forcibly”. What does a rapist steal from his victim? Even in a morally compromised age such as ours, why is rape such a heinous crime?

Chapter 23

For understanding

1. **23:1.** To what does the “assembly of the LORD” refer here? Understood in this way, to whom are liturgical festivals off-limits? When will these restrictions be lifted?
2. **23:10–14.** What are these sanitation laws designed to protect? Where must soldiers go after a nocturnal emission of semen and for defecation?
3. **23:17.** What does the law about cult prostitutes forbid? Unfortunately, what do the Books of the Kings document?
4. **23:20.** What does this law regarding interest on loans allow? What is still forbidden?

For application

1. **23:6.** Considering the context, why does Moses forbid seeking the peace and prosperity of Israel's traditional enemies? What does Jesus say about antipathy toward enemies (Mt 5:43–44)?
2. **23:15–16.** What kinds of slavery exist in our country today, despite the illegality of slavery? What human trafficking laws exist in your part of the country? How can persons freed from slavery or trafficking be cared for?
3. **23:19–20.** What is usury? Which is usurious: a loan company charging 50% interest on a short-term loan; a credit card company charging 19% interest on outstanding balances; a bank charging 3.5% interest on a mortgage? What interest would be reasonable on a loan to a fellow Christian?
4. **23:21.** What is a vow (CCC 2102)? If you make a private vow to the Lord, which no one but you knows of, what is your obligation to fulfill it?

Chapter 24

For understanding

1. **24:1–4.** What about divorce and remarriage does Deuteronomy prohibit? Without this restriction, what could a husband, who alone had the legal right to initiate divorce, be able to do? While Deuteronomy does not thereby throw open the doors to divorce, what does it rather do? Though Jesus described divorce and remarriage as a legal concession to the sinfulness of Israel, what did he do with the Mosaic permission?
2. **24:1.** What does the Hebrew translated “indecency” (literally “nakedness of a thing”) concern? Why is adultery probably not intended? In later Judaism, how was the legal ground for divorce defined? What is a bill of divorce? What provisions may it have included?
3. **24:5.** What exemption does the new groom enjoy? What does this law promote?
4. **24:10.** To whom were loans normally made? What was the purpose of allowing the debtor to choose his own pledge?

For application

1. **24:4.** In the Christian dispensation, what about a second marriage after divorce might defile either spouse? How may the defilement be removed or resolved?
2. **24:14–15.** In modern times, what benefits usually factor into a wage payment? What abuses can arise in payment of a worker's wage? In Catholic social teaching, what rights does the worker have?
3. **24:16.** What is “guilt by association”? In our society, how might other family members be punished for the crime of one of the members?
4. **24:19–22.** Even though the gleaning laws described in these verses no longer apply, how may the less fortunate today benefit from whatever harvest is brought to market? For example, what organizations exist to benefit the poor based on harvest results?

Chapter 25

For understanding

1. **25:4.** What is a working ox allowed to do from the grain he is processing? What spiritual lesson does Paul draw from this passage?
2. **25:5–10.** What is the law discussed in these verses called? Though strictly optional, what does it urge a man to do for his brother's widow? What is the purpose of the new union? With what is refusal to marry the widow met? What force did the duty of the brother-in-law, here codified as law, have in patriarchal times?
3. **25:9.** What was the meaning of removing the sandal? How do some interpret the gesture?
4. **25:13–16.** What does this law address? What does justice require for all commercial transactions? What standard of measurement should be used for buying?

For application

1. **25:2.** In our court system, what factors can mitigate the severity of a sentence of punishment? How much time may elapse between sentencing and the execution of the sentence? What can delay it? How may justice be either served or abused by numerous appeals?

2. **25:5–10.** What did St. Paul recommend for the care of younger widows? Of widows over sixty (1 Tim 5:3–14)? In the Christian community, what care should be taken of widows, especially ones with no family in the immediate vicinity?
3. **25:13–16.** How well have you familiarized yourself with the techniques of con artists in our digital age? What resources are available for helping you to recognize a scam or inducement to fraud? If you have ever been scammed or hoodwinked out of money, what lesson did you learn from it?

Chapter 26

For understanding

1. **26:2.** To what does the “first of all the fruit” refer here?
2. **26:5.** Who is the “wandering Aramean”? How is his reputation as a wanderer borne out?
3. **26:12.** Which tithe is referred to here?
4. **26:14.** What problem would handling the tithe in a state of ritual impurity cause? Which food offerings for the dead are meant?

For application

1. **26:5–9.** This passage is read at most Seder celebrations to answer the youngest child’s four questions about the meal. How does that practice reflect the purpose of the Liturgy of the Word at Mass? Why is it necessary to remember events of salvation history at important celebrations?
2. **26:13–14.** How do you go about sharing your material goods with the poor, for example, by donating to charitable organizations or performing a direct service? If you donate money, how do you select your charities? What motivates you?
3. **26:17–19.** In what way might you see your involvement in the Christian covenant as an exchange of persons? How does God take you to himself, and how do you take him to yourself? What does keeping the commandments have to do with this?

Chapter 27

For understanding

1. **27:1–26.** What procedures are described in this chapter? What are some ways in which the Shechem liturgy of Deut 27 mirrors the Sinai liturgy of Ex 24? However, what are some important differences? What claim in 29:1 do the differences reinforce?
2. **27:11–14.** Where will the tribes assemble, and what will they do there? Which tribes will Gerizim, the southern peak, host, and which will Ebal, the northern peak, host?
3. **27:15–26.** What does this litany of twelve curses invoked by the twelve tribes ratify? What will the priests and the people do antiphonally? Since the nature of these curses is not specified here, only the sins that trigger them, where will they be specified in detail?
4. **27:26.** To what does the final curse, which is climactic and comprehensive, apply? Why does Paul cite this final curse in Gal 3:10? When did Jesus redeem us from the curse of the Law?

For application

1. **27:1–26.** The note for this chapter explains how ratification of the Deuteronomic covenant took place. At the Easter Vigil, how do you renew your baptismal vows? Why does the Church insist on this solemn renewal?
2. **27:5–6.** According to the *Catechism*, among the Israelites the altar was the place where sacrifices were offered to God. Among Christians, what does the altar represent (CCC 1383)? Just as the Israelites offered communion sacrifices, what kind of sacrifice is offered on the Christian altar?
3. **27:15–26.** In a public setting, how is a litany, such as the Litany of the Saints, usually recited? In the litany recorded in these verses, what does the word “Amen” mean? To what does it commit the people?

Chapter 28

For understanding

1. **28:1–68.** What are the sanctions of the Deuteronomic covenant? How is it indicated that the possibilities of both blessings and curses are conditional? Where else do blessings and curses appear in ancient documents?

2. **28:49.** What nation, swift as the eagle, is meant here? Historically, which nations fulfilled this role? Which foreign tongues would these be?
3. **28:62.** Why will Israel become few in number?
4. **28:64.** When will the curse of exile become a reality?

For application

1. **28:1.** From whom do the blessings of obedience to the Lord's voice come? In the Christian life, what are the spiritual consequences of obeying the Holy Spirit (e.g., Gal 5:22–23)?
2. **28:10.** How can living a fruitful Christian life serve an evangelistic purpose? What kind of witness to unbelievers can it give?
3. **28:1–68.** Moses spends 14 verses listing the blessings of the covenant and 54 verses detailing the curses. Why this imbalance? Why the use of very graphic language in some of these curses?
4. **28:15.** What are the spiritual consequences of refusing to obey the Lord's voice (e.g., Gal 5:19–21)? How do these consequences follow from such a refusal? According to the Galatians passage, what is the source of these consequences?

Chapter 29

For understanding

1. **29:1.** To what laws do these words refer? How is the Deuteronomic covenant distinct from the Sinai covenant? Where was the Sinai covenant ratified? By contrast, where is the Deuteronomic covenant made? Where is Moab, and where did Israel make its final encampment before entering the Promised Land? For what is Horeb another name?
2. **29:3.** How old would the assembly listening to Moses have been when they witnessed the marvels of the Exodus? What would have happened to everyone over 19 years old at that time?
3. **29:4.** What is the idiom for spiritual discernment? What does Moses contend? Failing to recognize the need for grace, what would the people fail to do?
4. **29:15.** To whom is Moses referring as “him who is not here”?

For application

1. **29:4.** As Moses suggests, how does one acquire the “eyes to see or ears to hear” what the Lord is doing or saying? As you have grown in the spiritual life, how has your spiritual visual and auditory perception improved? What helps have you sought to improve your perception?
2. **29:10–13.** In addition to removing the stain of Original Sin, what does the Sacrament of Baptism do? Viewed in terms of covenant, what baptismal oaths or promises have all who receive the sacrament made?
3. **29:14–15.** Who else does the Lord wish to bring into this baptismal covenant? What is your role in bringing this wish to fulfillment?
4. **29:18–19.** What is a “Catholic in name only”? How does Paul's description in 2 Tim 3:2–5 apply to the way such people live? What danger do they pose to the rest of the Christian community?

Chapter 30

For understanding

1. **30:6.** What does this verse indicate that God will do for his people that they cannot do for themselves? What does Moses thus prophesy? How does the sentence read in the Greek LXX? What does talk of a new circumcision imply? According to St. Paul, how is this fulfilled?
2. **Word Study: Heart (30:6).** As a word meaning “heart” or “inner self”, to what does the Hebrew word *lebab* or *leb* refer? Of what is the heart the seat? As the hidden center of the person, who is the only one who can see it, and how is it wounded? For this reason, why is the healing of the heart the focus of OT eschatology? Regardless of the metaphor used, what is the main point?
3. **30:11–14.** How does Moses dismiss excuses for disobedience? What does Israel lack? How does Paul apply this assessment of the Law to the word of the gospel?
4. **30:15.** What choice do the two ways of the covenant mean for Israel? According to St. Caesarius of Arles, what outcomes are contained in these two ways?

For application

1. **30:6.** When the Lord cuts away things that you hold dear, how do you respond? What is his purpose? With what does he replace them?
2. **30:11–14.** Moses says that the word of God is “in your mouth and in your heart”. How is the mouth related to what is in the heart (Rom 10:9)? According to Sir 15:14–15, what in addition to faith is needed to keep the commandments?
3. **30:14.** Read the note for this verse. Likewise, how is the way of the Lord made continuously present in the life of the devout Christian?
4. **30:15, 19.** In the last analysis, why are there only two choices? Why are there ultimately no “gray areas” in the spiritual life?

Chapter 31

For understanding

1. **31:1–23.** How is leadership over Israel transferred from Moses to Joshua? When does this transfer of authority take place? Because times of transition can be times of uncertainty and fear, what words punctuate the speeches? According to Origen of Alexandria, what does the death of Moses allegorically foreshadow? Whose coming does the succession of Moses by Joshua announce?
2. **31:9.** What does this verse claim? For what other parts of the Pentateuch is Mosaic authorship claimed? How prevalent was the belief that Moses wrote the books of the Torah? Whom do witnesses to this belief in the NT include?
3. **31:11.** To what place is Moses referring, and what is to happen there? For what did ancient Near Eastern treaties also set aside time?
4. **31:26.** Where is the Deuteronomy scroll kept, and why? How is this unlike where the tablets of the Decalogue are kept?

For application

1. **31:2–6.** Whose successor is the current pope? What concerns do most people have when a pope either dies or resigns and a new one must be elected? What considerations should help answer these concerns?
2. **31:7–8.** When a new pope is elected and accepts the office, what virtues does he most need? According to custom, what do his first words try to communicate when he greets the people from the loggia?
3. **31:10–13.** Why do Christians recite the Nicene Creed during major liturgies, especially during the Easter Vigil? How does the Creed function as an act of worship, a confession, and a rule of faith?
4. **31:20.** Since it was God himself who promised the chosen people a land flowing with milk and honey and led them to it, why is he now predicting that the people will grow fat and reject him? What is the danger to the faith of a comfortable life?

Chapter 32

For understanding

1. **32:1–43.** What do the lyrics of the Song of Moses constitute? Whom does the Song vindicate, and whom does it prosecute? How does it combine elements of flashback and forecast? Although the same story of rebellion and future restoration is outlined in the prose account of 30:1–10, how does the Song frame it? When does the NT reference the Song of Moses?
2. **32:5.** How has Israel dealt corruptly with God? What bond does the Song stress? Which generation is this crooked generation like?
3. **32:8.** To what table does this verse allude? Where did these nations spread to? What did fixing the bounds of the nations suggest? What manuscripts does the RSVCE follow? How do other Greek manuscripts and the Masoretic Hebrew text read? To what different interpretations do these different wordings lend themselves?
4. **32:15.** In Deuteronomy and Isaiah, for whom is Jeshurun an epithet? How is its meaning debated? What does Moses foresee Israel doing in Canaan? According to St. John Chrysostom, once the Israelites enjoyed relief and freedom from bondage, how should they have behaved, but what instead did they do?
5. **32:21.** What does the Lord intend to provide by stirring Israel to jealousy? Who are the “no people”? How will the Lord make Israel jealous? According to Paul, when is this fulfilled? What effect will the discipline envisioned by the Song thus have?

For application

1. **32:5.** Has there ever been a generation that was not “perverse and crooked”? What is the cause of this? How can human perversity and crookedness be counteracted?
2. **32:17.** How is the paganism of our age different from that of the ancients? Which are some of the “new gods” that our generation appears to be worshipping? What are some of the spiritual roots of this new paganism?
3. **32:29.** What is mankind’s “latter end”? What are the “four last things”? Why is it unwise to avoid bearing them in mind?
4. **32:36.** Read the note for this verse. When is God’s mercy most likely to manifest itself in the life of a sinner? Have you ever confronted the need for mercy in your own life?

Chapter 33

For understanding

1. **33:1–29.** What blessings does Moses invoke here? How are his words like the patriarchal blessings in Genesis? What does the use of this model hint about Moses? Which tribe is omitted from the list of blessings, and why?
2. **33:8.** What are the Thummim and Urim? What did these small items, kept in the custody of the high priest, represent?
3. **33:10.** As ministers of word and sacrament in Israel, for what are the Levitical priests in the line of Aaron responsible? Why is no reference made to Levi’s territory?
4. **33:22.** Where is Bashan? What did its pasturelands support and its forestlands provide cover for? What allusion do some read in this passage?

For application

1. **33:2.** The note for this verse cites Heb 2:2. What point is the author of Hebrews making about fidelity to the Christian message (Heb 2:2–4)? If the Law of Moses promised blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience, what does the future hold for those who disregard or disobey an even more powerful word?
2. **33:9.** What level of commitment does Jesus demand of his disciples (Lk 14:26)? How does Jesus’ demand square with the commandment to honor father and mother? Why does a relationship with Jesus take priority over blood relations?
3. **33:12.** Why was Benjamin especially beloved of his father, Jacob (Gen 35:18; 42:4, 36–38)? How does he remind you of the Apostle John? Although the expression “beloved of the Lord” seems to imply a special status for certain individuals, how might you describe yourself as beloved of the Lord?
4. **33:26–29.** How is Christianity unique among all other religions? Even though Christians suffer persecution for their faith, how can they count themselves happy?

Chapter 34

For understanding

1. **34:1–12.** What do these verses appear to be? Which two considerations point in this direction?
2. **34:6.** Who buried Moses and where? How does the Greek LXX read, and what does it imply? What is Beth-peor?
3. **34:7.** What is the significance of a hundred and twenty years? How can the lifetime of Moses be divided? By an extraordinary grace, how did Moses appear at the time of his death?
4. **34:9.** What does the imposition of hands signal? Upon whom did Moses perform this rite?

For application

1. **34:5.** This verse gives Moses the title “servant of the LORD”. What makes this a title of honor? Given the circumstances of your life, what would enable you to claim this title as your own?
2. **34:7.** In your opinion, what constitutes a full lifetime? What makes one’s lifetime a success, and what makes it a failure regardless of age?
3. **34:9.** In the Christian understanding, what does the laying on of hands signify? During which of the Sacraments of Initiation were the hands of one in authority laid on you? What graces were communicated to you then, and what commission to covenant leadership did they entail?
4. **34:10.** What does the expression “face to face” signify? Why is our communication with God usually mediated through signs and symbols? According to 1 Jn 3:2, when can we expect to see God face-to-face?