Time to move on

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[0:00] Take your Bibles, please, and turn to Deuteronomy, chapter 1. Last week was an introduction to Deuteronomy.

This week we begin, and last week we focused on the issues of Deuteronomy as a whole, and that God wants His people to trust Him, and that God convinces His people to trust Him.
But an important element to that is I use the illustration of a teacher who caught a young boy cheating by copying his friend's work, and was then asked, how did he know that his friend's work was correct, if he didn't know what the answer was?
And the reason this is important is because Christians are meant to show they're working out. We're not just to believe, but we are meant to know why we believe what we do.
That's a crucial element to being strong in the faith, being able to defend it. And the only way you can defend something is if you know it brilliantly.
[1:14] I heard a story just recently. In fact, I won't go into names, but it's quite illustrating that a student at a theological college had got a 96% pass on apologetics.

Apologetics is the term used for a defense of the faith, defending the faith, perhaps argumentatively, but it's that. But that same person only got a 52% on their knowledge of the Bible, which tells you what?
That they didn't know the faith that they were defending. How can you get a 96% pass rate on apologetics, which is defending the faith, when you only get a 52% pass rate on the faith described in God's Word?
There's a problem there. So it's important as Christians. We know how to show our working out. So we're going to pick it up then in chapter 1, verse 1, and the first 18 verses.
Now hear God's Word. These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel, beyond the Jordan in the wilderness.
[2:26] In the Abarha opposite Sufa between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazareth, Tezahab. It is 11 days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea.

In the 14th year, on the first day of the 11th month, Moses spoke to the people of Israel according to all that the Lord had given him in commandment to them.
After he had defeated Shilom, the king of the Amorites, who lived in Hezboon, and Og, the king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth, and in Edori, beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab.
Moab undertook to explain this law, saying, The Lord our God said to us in Horeb, You have stayed long enough at this mountain.
Turn and take your journey and go to the hill country of the Amorites and to their neighbors in the Arabah, in the hill country, and in the low land, and in the Negev.
[3:38] And by the sea coast, the land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, see, I have set the land before you.

Go in and take possession of the land that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their offspring after them.
At that time, I said to you, I am not able to bear you by myself. The Lord your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are today as numerous as the stars of heaven.
May the Lord, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are, and bless you as he has promised you.
How can I bear by myself the weight and burden of you and your strife? Choose for your tribes wise, understanding, and experienced men, and I will appoint them as your heads.
[4:41] And as you answered me, the thing that you have spoken is good for us to do. So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and set them as heads over you, commanders

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of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officers throughout your tribes.

And I charge your judges at that time, hear the cases between your brothers, and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien who is with him.
You shall not be partial in judgment. You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's.
And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring it to me, and I will hear it. As I commanded you, and I commanded you, and I command you at that time, all the things that you should do.
Well, may God bless his word to us this evening. I'm going to pray for us. So, if you have your Bibles again, open it, Deuteronomy.
[6:02] As we begin, it might be worth, at least, I think, beginning with the question that you can ask yourself. And the question is, has God done enough to convince you to trust him?

Has God done enough to convince you to trust him? Now, the answer to that question should be for all of us, yes, he's done more than enough to trust him.
And then the follow-on question should be, then, why do I find it so difficult to trust him? If we conclude that God has done enough for us to trust him, then the question that really bugs us, or the issue that really bugs us, is actually there are times when I don't.
So that the failing of not trusting God, it's not on the fact that God hasn't given us enough to place our trust in him, but rather on the thing that causes us to not trust him.
And that's part of the working out that Deuteronomy wants us to do throughout the entire book. Because the book of Deuteronomy recounts so much of Israel's past, to basically say to them, you know, very similar that Paul does in the New Testament, you know, it's no small thing for me to remind you.
[7:23] Do you remember how we saw how repetition, both in the book of Proverbs and in the New Testament, is the equivalent of a carpenter sanding down the same piece of timber over and over and over again until it becomes the beautiful piece of furniture that he intends it to be.

It looks repetitious, it looks boring, it looks how much work needs to go into this, but there are some things that can only become great and beautiful, that can only become what they're meant to be through continual repetition.
And the Christian life is no different. You know, the Christian life is not about learning and moving on, it's about learning and having that lesson repeated to us over and over again.
Paul is an example of someone who doesn't get tired of doing this, and he's a good role model, I think, for every other minister, of, you know, the temptation to think, do I have to go through this again?
What? Have I not told you enough? How many more times do I have to tell you before? Well, Paul doesn't seem to have that about him because he understands that this repetitious need for repetition in the church is an important aspect.
[8:38] And I think he gets that understanding because God's people in the Old Testament don't learn. They take a long time to learn. They take a long time, it seems, to be able to trust God.

And the reason why Deuteronomy finds this an important subject is because we need to remember that they're on the brink of entering into the promised land, the land that God has to give them, but you need to remember who they are.
They're not the generation that left Egypt. They're all dead and gone. Okay? And the reason they're dead and gone is because they failed, through their disobedience, to acquire the land.
It was an 11-day journey. To the borderland of the promised land. 14 days or even less than that, you'd be in enjoying the promised land, but here they are in the wilderness 40 years later.
They disqualified themselves through having to repeat the lesson so many times that they never actually got around to exercising faith in God.
[9:41] And so, the generation that Moses is speaking to here is the second generation, the children of those who left Egypt. There may be a few left over.

It's hard to, you know, understand the true transition of the first generation and the second generation. But the first generation that left Egypt and saw the miracles of God and saw what God did, then wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, which should have been only 11 or 12-day journey.

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And the issue is, is because God would not allow them to enjoy the blessings that he had for them without the corresponding faith and trust in him that they were meant to have.
God doesn't succumb to the temptation of, well, you can have it anyway. I've waited long enough to give it to you, so here you go, just take it.
He doesn't, he has great patience. And so here at the very beginning, Moses is now calling the second generation to learn from the previous generation. He's calling the second generation of God's people to be faithful with the first generation failed in their faithfulness.
[10:56] They disqualified themselves by their unfaithfulness to God. And so the point here is a very simple one, and that is any rebellion against God fails the people who are rebellious from enjoying the promises of God, from enjoying the blessings of God.

Any person who is caught in unbelief is caught in a sin. Unbelief is a sin. It's not a case of weakness. It's a sin to be confessed.
You know, we think we have tough times and, you know, we struggle to believe. What's actually being, what's actually being put forward in your own mind there is just that it's okay, I'll get around to believing it at some point.
Well, unbelief, at its most basic level, is not something that God approves of because he has given us so much to believe and to trust.
So the summary here is as follows. Verses 1 through to 7 is all about remembering the faithfulness of God, what God has done, how God has got you to where he has, the patience of God in doing this, that you are a blessed people, that a journey that should have taken 11 days has turned into 40 years, but God is still here.
[12:16] God hasn't left you in the wilderness. You know, God is still with his people 40 years later, even though the journey should have been much shorter.

And so God's patience and faithfulness with his people, who are persistently unfaithful, only highlights just how faithful God is. In fact, it's a wonderful example to us, a wonderful observation for us to notice the faithfulness of God to unfaithful people.
And God doesn't succumb to impatience of, you know, this promised land's been waiting around for a long time, you know, just have it anyway.
I've waited long enough to give it to you, just go ahead and take it. Now, as long as the people were disqualifying themselves, they disqualify themselves from the promises that God has for them.
But God is demonstrating here in the first seven verses that he is the God that has brought them right up to the borderland of the promised land. And verse eight is asking God's people to look and see.
[13:25] Take a look. It's time for you to move on. You're at Kadesh Barnea, but you're not meant to stay here. Come and receive the promise of God. There's a sense of expectancy.

In other words, don't delay. Go and take possession of the land. Stop waiting around. Move on. And then in verses nine through to 18, we have the appointment of leaders.
In other words, it's time to take responsibility. Now, the way that the leaders are appointed is because of the growing number of God's people.
And then the leaders themselves have to be qualified to handle God's people. And the key qualifications, of course, the wisdom needed to handle God's people. But the lesson overall is about taking responsibility.
The leaders have to take responsibility, but those under them have to take responsibility, justice, and social harmony. When it mentions here about alien, hopefully I don't have to tell you this is not referring to a little green man, but it would be that you are all aliens.
[14:36] You're the foreigners. And what is being laid out here, not from around here, doesn't mean that they can be treated differently. If people are being brought in, non-Israelites, into God's people and living under God's law, they're not led to be treated as less than God's people.

And that has a pretty important lesson, I think, for the church. You know, I've been here for 40 years, I've been here for 20 years, and I've only been here for two, if that's the issue. The issue is, if you're God's people, then we are all treated equally, or ought to be treated equally, by each other.
So, let's begin with the first point, verses one through to seven, remembering. God wants his people to remember properly, and sin has a wonderful habit of being able to edit the past.
You ever had an argument with someone? You said this? I didn't say that. No, you really did. What's the problem? The problem is, is the past can be edited.

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And God's people have a knack of editing the past when it comes to God also. God's people throughout Deuteronomy can even run into the danger zone of thinking, I did this all by myself. [16:00] I managed to get here all by myself. As I said a couple of weeks ago, when we're looking at the blessing of God, like the teenager, or the 20-year-old leaving home, and he's now standing on his own two feet, kind of, and he's got his job, I did this all by myself.

Or what about the 20 years at home that got you to that point? It's easily forgotten, isn't it? And God's people succumb to that kind of mental temptation, to forget of everything that has gone before them that got them to where they are.
Verse 4, God defeated the enemies of God's people. In other words, God has been able to move his people from one location to another location because he has cleared the way.
He's made the path straight. One of my favorite verses in Scripture is Exodus 13, in Exodus 13, where it says that God did not lead his people the way of the Philistines lest they see war and return to Egypt.
In other words, God knew the limitations of his people. He knew how much they could handle and how much they couldn't handle, and so he led them one way rather than the other way, simply because if he went the way of the Philistines, they would see war and return to Egypt.
[17:16] God didn't want that to happen, and so he cleared another way. He took them a different way. He knew the limitations of his people. But the focus here is on what we remember and how we remember it.

God's people, as I said, could often end up thinking we did this all by ourself, and we didn't. And so when we remember the past, it isn't just about remembering past events.
It isn't just about remembering this and that and whatever else, but it's about remembering God's involvement in all of those things. In other words, it's about remembering the past correctly.
And God's people here often fail to remember the past correctly. You think about how they came out of Egypt and then didn't have any food in the wilderness and then said to Moses how they ate by pots of meat in Egypt.
Well, and when did that happen? They never ate by clay pots of meat in Egypt. This idea of being able to edit the past is a frequent one.
[18:25] In other words, you're remembering things that didn't happen. You're not remembering the past how you should remember the past. well, the way that we are to remember correctly as God's people is to remember God's involvement in all that has happened to us.

How we got to where we are and why we are where we are now. Now, even old Christians can say, well, it would have happened anyway. And the answer is, no, it really wouldn't have happened anyway.
The only reason you are where you are is because of God. Okay? Forty years later these people are on the very borderland of enjoying the promises of God.
They could have got there a lot sooner but they are only where they are because of God's involvement. So, God's people are not meant to edit the past by their sin.
They're not meant to edit God's involvement out of how they got to where they are. How they get to enjoy the things that they do. And so, when we remember we are to remember it as God said it.
[19:36] We are to remember it with God's involvement not with the absence of God in any of it.
And now, this is important for another reason. Probably the most important reason and that is to remember that God is with us all the time.

See, the danger is of thinking, of looking back and thinking, you know, I know I went through all of this but where was God? The reason for remembering the past correctly is so that you can have encouragement as you move forward into the future that God's not going to leave you.
And the only way you can have confidence that God will not leave you or forsake you in the future is if you're able to remember a past where he did not leave you or forsake you. So we must be careful in how we remember the past because it's critically important for how motivated we are to live in the future that God has for us.
Okay? The reason we can trust in the faithfulness of God today is because we're able to remember how faithful he has been to us in the past. But if we edit that past, we struggle to exercise any kind of real faith in him moving forward.
And that's the difficulty. So this idea of being able to show our working out means that we need to be able to remember what we've learned. And we need to be able to remember it as God said it.

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[20:57] We are a blessed people but we are blessed because of God's involvement. Verse 8 then, the second point, it's time for you to move on. There comes a point in every Christian's life, just like the life of the people here, where you have spent long enough wandering around ignoring God.

How much longer are you willing to do that for? Isn't that effectively what this whole issue is about? 40 years, being someone who belongs to God yet wandering around in a circle for 40 years.
I mean, that's quite sad. It's really quite disappointing. It's a sad existence of a Christian of to be and belong to God and yet through your own disqualification of lack of faithfulness, you're still in the same place that you began in 40 years later.
And so God's saying, verse 8, have a look. You're on the brink of the promised land. See, see I have set before you a land.
Go in and take possession of the land that the Lord swore to your fathers. In other words, it's there for you. Go and take it. I promised it, it's there. Just go and have it.
[22:32] It's all for you. Now this should incur, in other words, this should promote in God's people a sense of great urgency but at the same time a sense of great uncomfortableness.

In other words, the only way I think anybody moves on is if there is a sense of urgency to do so. But I also think there has to be a corresponding sense of uncomfortableness.
I'll never forget a very faithful pastor and he said to me, this is going back years ago, but he says, you know, that God can't move comfortable men on.
So what he does is he makes them uncomfortable. Right? Because who wants, right? You ever sat down in a seat and you've got it just the way you want it?
It's warm. You've snuggled in for the night and someone says, oh, can you just give me a hand to do this? And the difficulty you have to pull you out of that comfortable seat.
[23:35] Oh, really? What now? You know, I've just sat down with a cup of tea and it's even been brought to me so I've really nestled in. And the difficulty you feel of having to move out of that comfy spot.

Well, there should be a sense of uncomfortableness that every Christian feels outside of being in God's will and fulfilling and fulfilling his purposes.
But it is possible, isn't it, that after spending 40 years in one location, the wilderness, that you can even grow accustomed to that. It is amazing what God's people will put up with, even at the expense of disobeying God and the blessing that comes with faithfulness.
Remember Esther? Do you remember why she eventually got round to doing the right thing? It was not because she had faith in God. It was actually because she was made to feel incredibly uncomfortable if she did nothing.
So God here is trying to convey to his people or is conveying to his people a sense of urgency to receive the promise but at the same time to feel the uncomfortableness of staying where they are.
[24:49] They are where they are but not to stay there. And the way God affirms this is brilliantly in verse 9. In verse 9 it says this, At this time I said to you I am not able to bear you by myself.

The Lord your God has multiplied you and behold you are today as numerous as the stars of heaven. May the Lord your God and your Father, may the Lord God, may the Lord the God of your fathers make you a thousand times as many as you are and bless you as he has promised you.
In other words, one of the main promises made to Abraham concerning the people of God would be that they would be as numerous as the stars of the sky. And so what we have here in verse 10 is that Moses is saying to them look what God has done.
God's already kept a promise. You have already become as numerous as the stars of the sky and if God has kept this promise and you can see it, then move on.
Move on into the promised land. In other words, this should encourage you to take hold of every other promise God has made to you because he's already fulfilled this one in your midst.
[26:05] Why is it that we are so slow sometimes to move? Well, it comes back, I think, to perhaps not remembering the past correctly, editing it, God's involvement out of it.

Even if they have failed to trust, even if they have failed to trust at moments or their moments of failing are many, the fact that God has kept a promise that they can see with their own eyes should reignite every weakness of trust to great trust.
It should reignite their trust in God, the fact that God has kept a promise. And as we look back on the promises of God kept for his people of old and even the promises that he's kept for us in the

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church, we should have our trust reignited every single moment of every single day.
But the only way we can do that is to look and remember, to see for ourselves exactly what God has done. And so finally, verses 9 through to 18, the third point here is that it's time to take responsibility.
In other words, God has taken care of you for 40 years in the wilderness, you've had to take a certain amount of responsibility there, but now with blessing comes a greater sense of responsibility. I'm about to bring you into a land flowing with milk and honey, in other words, a place where you're going to have everything you want, but you need to be responsible.
[27:37] Remember how we've seen in the time of blessing in the sermons that we did, that in order to enjoy that tomorrow, you've got to be ready today for tomorrow. God's people have increased, and Moses considers this too much for him to be able to handle all on his own.

And so he calls for the appointment of leaders, and I think he does this for a couple of reasons. Why do ministers who are in their whatever age need young assistant ministers?
Why do you think? Because they will die, and someone needs to replace them. Okay, and Moses is calling the leaders that he does because he understands that that kind of natural transition needs to happen.
The idea of dividing people up and putting them into leadership groups, whatever it may be, or at least appointing leaders over them, is necessary not only for Moses to prepare God's people for his own departure, which is bound to happen, and does happen, but it's the same throughout the whole of the Old Testament and even the New Testament.
In the New Testament we have train others also. Why? Well, because of the transition issue, the relay race. Someone else takes the baton of the one that ran before him, and the process continues.
[29:01] The older generation passes the faith on to the younger generation, and when they get old, they do the same, so the church continues to grow. Moses is appointing leaders because he understands that responsibility needs to be spread throughout God's people, and the leaders are to lead God's people in this way.

You see the same thing happen in the book of Acts, that as God multiplied the church, as the church got numerically bigger, the first thing that the apostles did in Acts 6 was appoint deacons, appoint leaders.
Why? Because it was too much for them to be devoted to the word of God and prayer, and it's interesting, I always find that deeply challenging, that 50% of a minister's work, according to Acts 6, was prayer.
50% of a minister's work, according to Acts 6, was prayer, the other 50% was the word of God. And so they appointed leaders, deacons, to take care of the general concerns of the church, of the people.
The same thing here in Deuteronomy is mirrored in Acts 6, that as God adds to his people with blessing, leaders who take responsibility are needed.
[30:14] But the responsibility that they take is not to be a delegated responsibility from the people. In other words, it's easy, isn't it, that suddenly you get a few more leaders and think, well, I'll give them that to do, and I'll step back.

Moses is aware of this problem. Moses is all too aware of this problem. So God's people, verse 12, Moses calls hard work.
He says, you know, I mean, listen to him, I mean, he obviously loves his people. How can I bear you by myself, the weight and burden of you and your strife, with love from Moses?
You know, it's a kind of hard words to say to a congregation, isn't it, that you are a burden and strife. I don't feel that way about you much, but we all, no, I really don't.
But the temptation that happens is this one, that after a while, the congregation wants a new leader, and the minister suffers from the same temptation as the congregation, in that he wants a new congregation.
[31:26] They want a new leader, and he wants a new congregation. That's not the way it's meant to be. That's not the way it's meant to be. There's no growing together there.

It simply means that you grow apart, and that's multiplied in churches. So ministers who can't stay in one church for more than X amount of years, you know that it's going to be a perpetual pattern in every other church.

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In other words, you know, what Moses understands, that's not the issue. The issue here is that God's people have a tendency, remember, to even prefer a golden calf than the triune God of Scripture.
This is who brought us out of Egypt. Okay? They edit the past by saying it's better to live in Egypt with pots of meat than it is out here in the wilderness. Well, that isn't the case.
And Moses is often complaining to God for the people that God has given to him to lead, and God has to remind them that you misunderstand the point, Moses, that when they complain, it's me that they're complaining about, but, okay, messengers get shot.
[32:30] The issue here is that as God's people, we need to recognize our own responsibility, and it's easy to run away from it. It's easy to say, I'm going to pass it off onto somebody else, and we're not meant to do that.

The leaders here are men who have to take responsibility, and the congregation cannot succumb to the temptation of delegating responsibility, which is clearly theirs, off onto the leadership.
And that happens a lot, it definitely happens in the church, and this is a perpetual problem. The leaders can't carry more than they can carry, and the congregation have to carry their own weight.
In fact, if you look at churches carefully, there's a lot of churches that are displaying a very clear view of socialism. I think, I'm not just saying this, but I really do believe that we have an exceptional Sunday school.
But I believe that because we have an exceptional Sunday school with exceptional leaders and helpers and everything, it causes a problem. And the problem is, well, we'll let them do it all. In other words, they get good biblical education, and they get it with good adults that love and care for the children, and the temptation is, well, I don't need to do it with them at home.
[33:55] Okay, what is that? That's like coming to church, giving your offering, and then the state taking care of everything. Well, God's not a socialist.

God expects all people to take responsibility, and fair enough, the responsibility is a shared responsibility. We are not to delegate off to somebody else, but it's clearly our own role to fulfill.
And that's an important issue, because the leaders here are clearly leaders who have to be full of wisdom. That's spelled out again in Exodus 18, that the leaders are to have wisdom.
And Moses will sort of appoint these leaders, verse 13. In other words, they can choose their own, but Moses will appoint them, very similar to the way that we do the eldership here. Okay, anybody can propose the leaders, but they have to go through an eldership qualification, and we have this eldership training program, and then it's brought back to the church.
Okay, this is the biblical model here. Why? Because it takes a certain amount of qualification to be able to spot if others have that qualification.
[35:04] That's just the way that it is. Okay, it would be lovely if it's school, you could pick the teacher you wanted. Okay, because I would probably pick one that didn't make me have to do much work.

Okay, that's the type of teacher I would pick. But it would take me years later to realise that I wasn't qualified to make that choice at five. Okay, you understand the point, I'm sure.
Following this, everyone considered this to be a good thing, verse 14, and so Moses then begins to lay down some rules, verses 16 onwards. This is to confirm a social harmony and a social justice.
In other words, God's people are meant to get along, but they cannot get along without rules. Okay, I want to say that again. God's people are meant to get along, but they cannot get along on love alone.
Okay, there has to be rules. There has to be a believing statement of faith. There has to be things that are affirmations and denials.
[36:16] In other words, I believe this and I do not believe that. I believe this and I do not believe that. I do this and I do not do that. In other words, it has to be put in the positive and negative so that we can clearly understand the context that we're meant to live in.

And so this idea of just being loving, you know, we're all in the same church, not even according to Jesus. I mean, it's a nice thought, isn't it, that everyone who's in church throughout the world belongs to God.
But Jesus said that's not the case. That's not the case. So Moses clearly here is laying the groundwork for something that he knows is absolutely incredibly important for social harmony.

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In other words, you're not going to have a harmonious environment if half a dozen people believe that it's okay to steal and the other half don't. You're not going to have a harmonious sort of environment if it's okay to sort of, you know, do this, that and the other and the other group of people think, well, it isn't.
That doesn't lead to any kind of social cohesion. And so even more of an issue is when you have Israelites and non-Israelites living together.
[37:37] Now, they're both living under God's law and so they ought to both be treated in the same way. And that's the point that Moses is making. That just because they're not a Jew doesn't mean that they should be oppressed in any way.

If they're obeying God's laws, if they're coming under God's law in the same way you are, then you are not to oppress them. And then he says also you're not to be intimidated by anyone.
Do you know what? I've had this said to me twice in the church in my 18 years of ministry. Twice. Clearly not by the same person, but it went something like this. If I go, then the money I give goes with me.
If I go, then the money I give goes with me. And my answer to both of them was exactly the same. It's time for you to go. Off you go. The idea that intimidation cannot happen in the church, again, is something you need to be aware of that does happen.
Okay? People in the church, rather than take responsibility, vote with their feet. Or vote with...
Okay? And James warns us against this in the New Testament about not favoring the brother that has the gold ring and the good clothes and drives up to church in the fancy car as though he is somehow more important to the church than the guy who can barely get himself to church in a clean jacket and shirt.
[39:05] Okay? The temptation is to favor one over the other, and James says you're not to do that. Okay? So there's a direct parallel here in Deuteronomy to James, and that is social harmony requires certain rules.

Social cohesion requires an adherence to law. rules, and you can't get at it any other way. It would be nice to say let's all love one another, but even that love has to be defined.
Okay? And that's the point that Moses is making here. It will always be the case in God's people here and in the church of those people who just can't make decisions.
You know, this can happen with some people over what they're going to eat for tea. I just can't decide. Okay? Well, some people can be like that even when it comes to important decisions.
I just can't decide. And that's not a weakness. It's simply to indicate, okay, but somebody's going to have to make the decision. And then you get those people in Scripture and in the New Testament church who don't make the decisions they should.
[40:20] Now that's much more problematic because they know that they should make the decision and they're not making the decision. And then you get those who have witnessed both of those other two who have to make the decision because the decision has to be made.

And there's a safe place for a lot of people to not be the one having to make the decision. Okay? Isn't there?
There is a safe place, even perhaps in a members meeting, to not make the decision. But somebody has to.
And this is why you have so much to-ing and fro-ing as over who's to-ing. I'll make them all if you let me. We'll pass that at the next members meeting.
But the point is this, that somebody has to make the decision. So with this, we'll finish. Here's the conclusion, here's the exhortation.
[41:25] One of the lessons in Deuteronomy that's spelled out over and over and over again is that if you want to be ready for the promised land tomorrow, you have to be ready today for tomorrow.

You cannot be ready for tomorrow tomorrow, you must be ready today for tomorrow. What God has for you tomorrow will be contingent on whether or not you're ready today for tomorrow.
Now it may not feel because we're not moving into a promised land that we're not actually moving. But God's people are always on the move, as we learnt this morning. Change is always about movement.
But the movement we understand from a promised land point of view or from a kingdom point of view is slightly different because we pray this prayer, that God's kingdom will come and God's will will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

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In other words, we're not just moving closer to the future as described, but the future is clearly moving closer to us. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. [42:31] There's two movements happening. We're moving towards it and it is moving towards us. Now given all of this, we need to take hold of our responsibility.

We will need to make decisions. And we are not to forget God's involvement in all of this. And so the lesson here is actually to learn the lesson. The lesson here is actually to learn the lesson so that we may glorify God in trusting him.
Amen. Amen.

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