

Deuteronomy

“Second Law”

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Title of the Book

- From Greek Δευτερονόμιον (*Deuteronomion*), "second law"
- The Hebrew title comes from the word *Devarim* ("[spoken] words") in the first verse of the text
- The English title is from a Greek mistranslation of the Hebrew phrase *mishneh ha-torah ha-zoth*, "a copy of this law" (17:18), as *to deuteronomion touto*, "this second law"

Theme

- Deuteronomy records a series of sermons or speeches delivered by Moses to the new generation who survived the 40 years of desert wanderings and were now ready to possess the Promised Land of Canaan
- Deut. 6:5; 10:12-13 (Mt. 22:37-40); 30:20
- The appeal of the book is to know God, to love God, and to obey God

Occasion

- The review of the law was necessary because the previous generation had died in the desert and a new generation was ready to enter Canaan
- Deuteronomy does not give a new law nor is it a mere repetition of the law
- It is a restatement and application of the law in view of the conditions Israel would meet in Canaan

Purpose

- To call the younger generation to “remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the desert, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord” (8:2-3)

Purpose

- To lead them to obedience and to warn them against disobedience
- Obedience is the way of life and blessing
- Disobedience is the way of curse and death
- 11:26-32; 30:15-20

Time & Scope of the Events

- At the end of the desert wanderings, ~1450 BC (Deut. 1:3)
- Moses refers to Israel's past, present and future
- First part of the book is historical
- Second part is legislative
- Third part is prophetic

Scope of Deuteronomy

- The opening and closing statements give its scope and a key to its interpretation
- It begins: “These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel”
- It closes with the eulogy to Moses the servant of the Lord (34:10-12)
- Contains the final words of Moses to God's people—words resulting from his “face to face” friendship with God

Key Words

- “remember” (14 times)
- “obey” and “listen” (~30 times)
- “observe” (31 times)
- “covenant” (26 times)
- “love” (22 times)

Key Phrases

- “walk in His ways” (7 times)
- “love the Lord” (9 times)
- “be/are careful to observe” (13 times)

Verses to Remember

- 5:29—“Oh, that they had such a heart”
- 18:15, 19—“The Prophet”
- 18:22—Way to know a false prophet
- 29:29—“The secret things belong to the Lord our God”
- 30:19-20—“Choose life . . . He is your life and the length of your days”

Verses to Remember

- 32:1-4—Beginning of “Song of Moses”
- 32:46-47—“be careful to observe all the words of this law . . . because it is your life”

Chapter to Remember

Ch. 6—

- The Greatest Commandment (1-9)
- Do not forget God (10-25)
- “take oaths in His name”/ “swear by His name” (13)—“adjure you by the living God”/“charge you under oath by the living God” (Mt. 26:63; 1 Thess. 5:27; Heb. 6:13; Col. 3:17—swear by nothing less than God)

Relationship to Previous Books

- In Deuteronomy there are at least 259 references to Genesis-Numbers
- 30 references to Genesis
- 94 references to Exodus
- 61 references to Leviticus
- 74 references to Numbers

Relationship to Other Books of the Bible

- At least 356 references to Deuteronomy in other Old Testament books
- In the New Testament there are at least 96 references to Deuteronomy
- The 96 references in the New Testament are found in 17 of the 27 books

Outline

Chs. 1-4—Review of the Journey

- Israel's history since leaving Egypt (1-3)
- Exhortation to obedience and three cities of refuge east of the Jordan (4)

Chs. 5-26—Review of the Law

- Repetition of the Ten Commandments (5)
- Explanation and application of Ten Commandments (6-11)
- Laws, civil, social, domestic life (12-26)

Outline

Chs. 27-30—Israel's Future Foretold

- The law to be written on memorial tablets of stone and set upon Mt. Ebal (27)
- Blessing and cursing (28)
- Life and death (29-30)

Chs. 31-34—Moses' Last Days

- His charge to Joshua (31)
- Song of Moses (32)
- Moses' farewell blessing of Israel (33)
- Moses' death (34)

Trivia

When was the last time you heard this Scripture and where is it located in Deuteronomy?

“The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms”
(Deut. 33:27)