

DEUTERONOMY



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Welcome to the book of Deuteronomy!

To begin your study of Deuteronomy, meditate upon the book's content reflected in the overview chart below. What are the four major movements of the book? The historical review is for the new generation of Israelites who had been born since the exodus from Egypt. The law is given once again (the tablets had been broken). God renews and ratifies His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and Moses is buried before the nation enters her inheritance. The key word (standards) reflects the majority of the book's content (4-26) where we observe the giving of the Law (Deuteronomy means "second law.") A key verse for Deuteronomy is found in 10:12. How does this compare with Christ's teaching in Matthew 22:34-40? Do you understand where God's Law fits into your life as a believer?

DEUTERONOMY Standards

Three Discourses:

HISTORICAL REVIEW	LAW EXPOSITED	COVENANT RATIFIED	MOSES GOODBYE
1:26; 4:39	5:29; 6:12	30:11-20	34:6-12
1-4	4-26	27-30	31-34

God's faithfulness and instruction! 10:12

The book of Deuteronomy gives us a wealth of spiritual truth and insight into the character of God Most High. It focuses the righteous standards for holiness that are required by His character. In Numbers we viewed tests in the wilderness. In Deuteronomy we see the standards for the test that will come living as a distinct nation in the promised land. Two key verses are prominent. We have chosen 10:12 which reflects the essence of God's standards and 30:11 for God's perspective on His law. Do you understand the purpose of the Law as a part of the plan of God's grace?

Genesis opens with God's pre-eminence and closes with a promise of deliverance. Exodus begins with the problem of bondage and closes with the pathway to freedom. Leviticus opens with a peaceway of sacrifice, and closes with the premise that devotion to God is imperative. Numbers opens with a plan for the journey and closes with a preview of the promised land (35:10). Deuteronomy opens with principles of history and closes with the death of the prophet Moses.

Open your heart as you read!

Someone once said that the only thing men learn from history is that men don't learn anything from history. Just as Moses desired that the children of Israel grow through experience, it is His desire for us today to learn what is pleasing to Him (1 Corinthians 10:11,12). Moses walked humbly before the Lord. God's desire is the same for all His children (Leviticus 26:19). Are you being broken before the Lord or is your pride still your power? Do you have a proper view of God's law? The requirement of the law was fulfilled in Christ, but the law continues to convict mankind of our need. God's Law will be the standard for all future judgment! Christ's fulfilment of the penalty of the Law will be our rescue!

AUTHOR

The book explicitly states that Moses was the author. "So Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel." (31:9) Compare also 31:24-26. It is further declared that Moses spoke "the words of this song." (31:30)

DATE

According to Deuteronomy 1:1-5, Israel was on the plains of Moab about to enter Canaan when Moses spoke the words of the book. Moses states that he commenced the book "in the fortieth year" (1:3). Assuming the conservative date of the exodus (1445 B.C.), the date of this book would be about 1405 B.C. The material in this book was given to the people within a period of seven days, just a month before God's people crossed over to Canaan.

NAME

The name Deuteronomy ("Second Law" - 17:18) should be rendered "This is the copy or repetition of the law." The book, therefore, does not contain a "different law" distinct from that given at Sinai, but is simply a partial restatement and explanation of previous laws of Israel to the new generation who had grown up in the wilderness.

PURPOSE

The events described in Deuteronomy occur right at the end of the life of Moses and immediately prior to the entry of the Israelites into the promised land. Deuteronomy is a book which reflects upon the past forty years in the wilderness and gives the prospects for the coming years in the promised land. It is a book written to warn people who are fickle about the importance of being faithful. The word "do" is mentioned fifty times in the book, emphasizing the necessity of obeying God's law. In Deuteronomy God gives His people, Israel, standards to live by and in so doing to inherit a blessing. The corollary for God's people today is found in the book of James where we are told that those who are "doers of the Word and not hearers only" (1:22) will be blessed in what they do (1:25).

Why study the book of Deuteronomy?

As mentioned above, God set certain standards for the people of Israel to follow in Deuteronomy. The same holds true for believers today. It is very easy to confuse what is cultural from what is biblical. In subsequent books we will discover the Israelites had the same problem when they conformed themselves to the idolatrous cultures around them rather than having a transforming effect on those cultures by their obedience to God's commands. The nation confused what was cultural and what was biblical. To check up on your cultural/biblical I.Q., see if you can answer the following correctly;

1. Church is where we go on Sundays.
CULTURAL or BIBLICAL?
2. Our spiritual success is reflected in our material success.
CULTURAL or BIBLICAL?
3. Business leadership qualifies you to lead the people of God.
CULTURAL or BIBLICAL?
4. Providing materially for your family fulfills your family obligations before God.
CULTURAL or BIBLICAL?



Deuteronomy Chapter Chart

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Historical Review

Read Chapters 1-4

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
1		
2		
3		
4		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. In what ways are 1:26,27 summary verses?
2. What was the root of Israel's problem within the events of Chapter 1?
3. What do we learn about God's providence?
4. Why were the battles continued until there were no survivors?
5. How do these chapters reinforce our view of Moses' humility?
6. How did Moses view the future of Israel?

What about today?

1. What have you specifically learned from Israel's history that affects the way you view your own walk?
2. Reread 4:34-40. Consider the awesome power we have witnessed thus far in the Biblical account. How do these events impact your view of God? How do you know that you fear the Lord?

My thoughts on the fear of the Lord:

The Law of Moses

Read Chapters 5-11

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Note 4:44. Why is it a transitional verse?
2. What was the people's response to the message of the tablets?
3. What was God's response to the people?
4. What is God's central desire in chapter 6? What is His warning?
5. Why was Israel not to pity the nations?
6. What was Israel supposed to remember?
7. 11:26-28 are good summary verses for the section.

What about today?

1. What significance do you believe the ten commandments have in the life of a believer?
2. How do we define proper and improper pity?
3. Are you careful to remember the standards of God in the middle of your circumstances?

My thoughts about absolutes in the world (like the Ten Commandments):

Religious Laws

Read Chapters 12-16

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. There appear to be three sections. Worship Laws (12:1-32); Laws for Idolatry (13:1-18); and Personal Holiness Laws (14:1-16:17).
2. What is the purpose behind the worship laws?
3. What is God's specific attitude toward idolatry?
4. Personal holiness included no disfigurement, dietary restrictions, tithes, care of the poor, and keeping central feasts. What are the correlations of each as you meditate upon your walk with Jesus?

What about today?

1. True religion is described in James 1:27. How is one "stained by the world?"
2. In what ways has your view of worship changed? Your view of idolatry? Your standards for personal holiness?

My thoughts about the character of my personal worship of God:

The Civil Law

Read Chapters 16-21

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Note 16:18-20 as summary verses for this section.
2. Why and on what basis were transgressors to die?
3. In what way is 17:14, 15 a prophecy?
4. To whom does 18:15-22 refer?
5. What is the spiritual significance of the city of refuge?
6. What principles of warfare do we learn in chapters 20 and 21?

What about today?

1. How do you feel about today's reading?
2. Do you deal in equity with those around you?
3. Read 1 Peter 4:17. God is bringing equity first through the judgment of the Church. In what ways do you "fall short" by God's standard of evaluation?

My thoughts on God's laws in relation to our own civil laws:

Social Laws

Read Chapters 22-26

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
22		
23		
24		
25		
26		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Read 26:16-19 as summary verses for this section.
2. How are all of the issues tied together in chapter 22?
3. Chapters 23, 24, 25 deal with relationships in the congregation.
What is the central "social theme" that is taught?
4. What do we learn about principles for the importance of giving in chapter 26?

What about today?

1. God has "set us high." (Read 26:19)
2. 1 Peter 2:1-10 gives us the reason for our being "set apart".
3. In what ways do you see fruit in your life as one of the "chosen race"?
A "royal priesthood"? A "holy nation"? In what ways do you feel as though you belong to God?

My thoughts about the Law and my social relationships:

The Covenant Ratified

Read Chapters 27-30

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
27		
28		
29		
30		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. 27:1-8 give the prerequisites for establishing laws for the land that was to be possessed. They are summary verses for the section.
2. What do the curses of chapter 27 have in common?
3. What is the nature of the covenant (29:9, 30:19-20)? What is a covenant?
4. What does the "but" in 28:15 contrast?
5. How does 29:4 relate to a covenant?
6. Reread 29:29. What are secret things and revealed things in this context and what are the implications for us?
7. Read 30:19, 20 as extremely central verses!

What about today?

1. In what ways have you set up the law around you?
2. God establishes His covenant. Read Romans 8:26-39 to rejoice in the surety of the ratified covenant of God!

My thoughts about God's covenant and it's relationship to the Law:

Moses Goodbye

Read Chapters 31-34

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
31		
32		
33		
34		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What was accomplished through Moses in each of these verses?

31:1-8

31:23

31:24-29

33:1-29

34:1-12

2. What do we learn from this eulogy about being a servant of the most High God?

What about today?

In Numbers we saw that Moses was the most humble man on the face of the earth.

1. How can we know (based on the example of Moses) that we are learning true humility?

2. Read Psalm 9:12; Proverbs 6:3; 16:19; Isaiah 57:15; Matthew 18:4, 23:12; James 4:6, 10; 1 Peter 5:5,6; and Philippians 2:8 for a brief study on humility. Are you being humbled?

4 THE GRACE OF LAW

The following references are an in-depth consideration of the subject of God's law. Take this opportunity to draw observations from each of the verses and take care to come to a concluding statement when you complete your study. What do you learn about the grace of law?

Deuteronomy	30:11,15,19 32:47 10:13 6:29 13:17 33:2-4
Psalms	119 128:1 94:12 112:1-6
Psalms	1:1,2 37:31 103:17 19:7
Proverbs	1:33 13:6 21:21 14:28-35 (with Habakkuk 1:4) 29:4
Jeremiah	31:33
Isaiah	32:17
Luke	6:46-48
Romans	3:31 4:15 5:13,20,21 6:14 7:10,22 8:2,3 10:4 13:8
2 Corinthians	3:17
Galatians	2:19,21 3:23,24 4:4,5,21 5:1,14,23 6:2
Hebrews	10:1,7
James	1:25 2:8, 10,25
1 John	5:3
Jude	4

COMMANDS OF CHRIST

Luke 6:46: "Why do you call me, Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say?"

John 15:14: "You are my friends, if you do whatever I command you."

John 14:15: "If you love me, keep my commandments."

Christ's purpose for giving commandments

John 15: 10-11 - "If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken to you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

The promise to those that find and keep commandments

John 14:21 - "Whoever has my commandments, and keeps them, it is he that loves me: and he that loves me shall be loved by my Father, and I will love him, and will reveal myself to him."

COMMANDMENTS CONCERNING YOU AND GOD

1. Rejoice -- Matthew 5:12
2. Prayer and Fasting -- Matthew 6:6,7,16
3. Ready -- Matthew 24:44
4. Watch and Pray -- Matthew 26:41
5. Follow -- Matthew 4:19
6. Treasure -- Matthew 6:19,20
7. First -- Matthew 6:33
8. Pray-Harvest -- Matthew 9:38
9. Yoke -- Matthew 11:29
10. Cheer -- Matthew 14:27
11. Love God -- Matthew 22:37, 38
12. Abide -- John 15:4

CONCERNING YOU AND OTHERS

5. Give -- Matthew 5:42
6. Light -- Matthew 5:16
7. Resist -- Matthew 5:39
8. Alms -- Matthew 6:1
9. Judge -- Matthew 7:1,2
10. Holy -- Matthew 7:6
11. Brother -- Luke 17:3,4
12. Murmur -- John 6:43
13. Caesar -- Matthew 22:21
14. Mile -- Matthew 5:41
15. Love Enemies -- Matthew 5:44
16. Offend -- Matthew 18:8,9
17. Go -- Mark 16:15
18. Lift -- John 4:35
19. Love One Another -- John 15:12
20. Faith -- Mark 11:22,23

COVENANT KEEPER

Man comes to God with many different expectations. Often we feel God owes us something. Many times we have a "bone to pick" because God has shown himself inconsistent in some way. There are those who have become embittered. There are those who maintain a religious skepticism toward our Creator and our need for redemption.

The Scriptures are clear. Man is in a humbled and needy position. God is the initiator - man is the reactor. Any system of belief that places man as the one responsible for faithfully keeping the covenant of redemption is a system without Biblical foundation. God and God alone is the "covenant-keeper." If anything, man is the "covenant-breaker" (in Biblical and secular history).

This concept is portrayed in the lives of the key characters of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Law).

ABRAHAM (read Genesis 12:1,2,8)

Who does the calling? Who calls first? Why was Abraham chosen?

ISAAC (read Genesis 21:7,8,13)

From where does the sacrifice come?

JACOB (read Genesis 28:10-17)

Who made initial contact? Judging by Jacob's previous actions, was he a "covenant keeper"?

JOSEPH (read Genesis 37:5)

Who made initial contact? What does this contact reveal?