

## The Book of Deuteronomy

### The Author, Title, and Date of Deuteronomy

1. Author: God, through Moses (n.b. *1.1,5; 31.9, 22, 24*)
2. Title is taken from the first phrase of the book
  - a. Hebrew — *'elleh hāḏbarim* = “these are the words” – A record of Moses sermons on the Law, explaining its content.
  - b. Greek — *δευτεροννομος* = “second law” - A mistranslation of *17.18*
3. Date: c. February, 1405 B.C. – At the end of the 40 years wandering. *1.1-4*
4. Note: Quoted directly 40x in the NT.

### The Background and Setting of Deuteronomy.

1. Background
  - a. Israel has wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, in punishment for their rebellion.
  - b. The generation responsible for that is now dead. The new generation is now poised to enter the land promised by God’s covenant.
  - c. Moses is preparing them to go in. Will they do better than their parents?
2. Historical Setting
  - a. This book has no geographical or historical movement.
  - b. The focus is on Moses final words to the nation, as he communicates the Covenant Law and its context to the people, preparing them to enter and live in the land.
  - c. No movement.
    - 1) They are in one location throughout the book for about one month: Just east of the Jordan river.
    - 2) cp. *1.5; 34.8; Nu 21.21-22.21; Josh 5.6-12*

### The Purpose of Deuteronomy

1. Deuteronomy is called “the crown jewel of the Pentateuch.” This is because the book brings into focus *all* that had been revealed in Genesis-Numbers, as well as laying out the implications for the people as they entered the land.
2. The purpose of the book of Deuteronomy is to prepare the new generation to enter and enjoy the land God has promised to them in the covenant.
  - a. This requires a communication of God’s covenant law, *in its context*, so they will grasp the implications of *covenant living in relationship with YHWH*, in the land they will live in.
  - b. i.e. They need to understand *context and covenant*, if they are to be blessed in the Promised Land.
  - c. Jack Deere: “Moses was preaching the law to Israel to impress God’s word on their hearts. His goal was to get the people to renew the covenant made at Sinai, that is, to make a fresh commitment to the Lord. Only by unreservedly committing themselves to the Lord could the people hope to enter the Promised Land, conquer its inhabitants, and then live in prosperity and peace.” *BKC, p.260*

## The Message of Deuteronomy

1. Deuteronomy is a record of the last words of Moses to the nation, as he prepares them to enter the Land.
2. The renewal of the covenant with a new generation calls for hearts that will faithfully obey YHWH, while trusting fully in His grace.
  - a. This is accomplished by giving them the *context* of the covenant: Covenant history and covenant relationship.
  - b. Moses preaches the implications of the Law, recounting *how* God has dealt with the nation in *grace*, and warning them how God has dealt with the nation in punishment, to the end that they will *remember God*, and therefore live in the land and receive blessing, rather than curse.

## The Structure of Deuteronomy

1. Simple structure
  - a. 1.1-4 Introduction – Historical Setting.
  - b. 1.5-4.43 First Sermon of Moses – Historical Prologue
    - 1) Reviews God’s provision: How and why they got from Mt. Sinai (Horeb) to Mt. Nebo (Pisgah)
    - 2) Gives a strong warning against idolatry
  - c. 4.44-26.19 Second Sermon of Moses – Recapitulation of the Law at Sinai in context of their relationship with YHWH and instructions for living in a new land. Emphasis: *Remember God!*
  - d. 27.1-29.1 Command to renew the Covenant . . . Declaration of Blessing and Curse
  - e. 29.2-30.20 Appeal to commit and charges given.
  - f. 31-34 Transition: From Moses to Joshua
2. Key Verses: 1.1-5, 6-8; 1.39; 2.7, 14-16, 25; 3.21-22; 4.1-14, 23-26, 31, 39-40; 5.28-29; 6.1-9; 7.6-11, 22; 8.6, 11, 16-18; 9.4-6; 10.12-13, 20-22; 11.26; 18.15-17; 26.17-19; 27.9

## The Themes of Deuteronomy

3. The Promised Land
  - a. Call to *remember their journey/history* – 1.7-8, 21, 35; 4.20, 31
  - b. Call to *remember God* – 4.10, 30; 5.29; 6.5; 10.20
4. The Covenant of Sinai and Obedience
  - a. Emphasis on the *people* (not the priests, as in Leviticus)
  - b. A focus on *history*, to encourage them to *take the land of Promise by trusting in God and being faithful*.
    - 1) Moses explains *why* they wandered for 40 years and *why* the first generation perished. 1.19-46
    - 2) n.b. 1.39, 40, 41-45; 26.17-19; 27.9
5. Israel as a nation set apart for God.
  - a. Repetition of God lovingkindness, along with warning to *not forget* cp. 8.1-11, 17; 10.12-13; 11.8-12
  - b. cp. 4.20, 34; 7.6-8; 14.2, 21; 21.8; 26.18-19; 27.9; 28.1, 9; 29.13
6. The Abrahamic Covenant – The promise is referred to in every chapter, except 14, 22, and 33.
7. Warnings against Idolatry
  - a. God warns them of idolatry as the greatest hazard they will face.
  - b. 12 warnings: chs 4, 7, 11, 13, 16, 18, 20, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32