

Deuteronomy

Terms of the Covenant



39 Books An Old Testament Survey

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- The first five books of the Bible make a set, variously called,
- *The Pentateuch* – Greek for “Five Books”
- *The Torah* – Hebrew for “Law” or “Instruction”
- *The Five Books of Moses* – Moses is the traditional author.

The Pentateuch or Torah

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1. Genesis – The Book of Origins
2. Exodus – Leaving Egypt
3. Leviticus – Worship and Walk
4. Numbers – In the Wilderness
5. Deuteronomy

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Deuteronomy Terms of the Covenant

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- Since the Exodus from Egypt, Israel has been wandering in the wilderness for 40 years.
- They are now in Moab, just east of the Jordan River.
- They have already defeated some enemies and are now ready for the conquest of Canaan.

Deuteronomy Terms of the Covenant

- Moses will now give them a series of messages, which form the contents of **Deuteronomy**.
- He is preparing a new generation for new challenges in a new land under a new leader.

Deuteronomy Terms of the Covenant

The book of Deuteronomy takes us to the very brink of the land, on the plains of Moab by the river Jordan. Moses speaks to the people one final time before he dies. Addressing the next generation, he pleads with them, 'Don't blow it like we did.'

*– Vaughan Roberts, rector
St. Ebbe's Church, Oxford*



Deuteronomy Terms of the Covenant

- **Deuteronomy** tells us 69 times that Israel would one day “possess” and “inherit” the land promised to her.
- This did not happen immediately, but God was faithful to bring it to pass.

Deuteronomy Terms of the Covenant

- Moses repeats the phrase “the Lord your God” to the people around 250 times in the book.
- **Deuteronomy** makes at least 250 references to the four preceding books of the Bible.
- The rest of the **Old Testament** refers to **Deuteronomy** more than 350 times.

Deuteronomy Terms of the Covenant

- The New Testament quotes Deuteronomy over 80 times in 17 different books.
- Jesus quoted Deuteronomy when tempted in the wilderness.
- It is the only book Jesus used on that occasion.

Deuteronomy Terms of the Covenant

- **Deuteronomy** prepares Israel to function as a nation.
- They were about to settle a land already occupied and surrounded by people with different values.
- These people all served other gods.
- **God wanted Israel to be different.**

Deuteronomy Terms of the Covenant

Deuteronomy is particularly helpful for nurturing godliness in people who come from non-Christian backgrounds and have not learnt to view life using biblical categories or, in other words, people whose world view is not Christian.

*– Ajith Fernando,
Youth for Christ, Sri Lanka*



Deuteronomy Terms of the Covenant

- Christians do not function as a distinct nation as Israel did, but there are similarities.
- No matter where we live, we live in a land already occupied and surrounded by people with different values.
- These people all serve other “gods.”
- God wants us to be different, since we serve him.

Deuteronomy Terms of the Covenant

- **Deuteronomy** follows an interesting format.
- It provides evidence for the ancient origin of the book.

Deuteronomy Historical Background

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- The format of **Deuteronomy** reflects the treaties or covenants that great kings made with other lesser kingdoms.
- Such treaties consisted of **six parts**.
- Each of these elements is found in **Deuteronomy**.

Deuteronomy Historical Background

Main elements in a Hittite vassal treaty:

1. Preamble or Introduction
2. Historical review of the relationship between the great king and the lesser kingdom
3. Stipulations governing the relationship
4. Sanctions in the form of blessings or curses
5. Witnesses to the treaty or covenant
6. Provision for the public reading and storage of the treaty

Deuteronomy Historical Background

- In other words, when Moses dictated the terms of God's covenant with Israel, he used a recognized form.
- God sounds like a great king laying out his relationship with a vassal or subordinate nation.

Deuteronomy Some Key Passages

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- Deuteronomy 5:6-22 reviews the Ten Commandments.

Deuteronomy Some Key Passages

- **Deuteronomy 6:4-9** (ESV) *The Shema*

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy Some Key Passages

- **Deuteronomy 7:6-12** (ESV) God's Chosen People

Deuteronomy Some Key Passages

- **Deuteronomy 8:1-3** (ESV) “Not by bread alone”

The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. ² And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not ...

Deuteronomy Some Key Passages

- **Deuteronomy 8:1-3** (ESV) “Not by bread alone”

³ And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

Deuteronomy Some Key Passages

- Deuteronomy 10:12 – 11:2
- A Description of a Covenant Relationship

Deuteronomy Some Key Passages

- **Deuteronomy 18:15-19** (ESV) A Prophet like Moses

¹⁵ “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen— ¹⁶ just as you desired of the LORD your God ... ¹⁷ And the LORD said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. ¹⁹ And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.’”

Deuteronomy Some Key Passages

- **Deuteronomy 34** (ESV) The Death of Moses
- This chapter brings the Torah to an end.
- Next week we move on to **Joshua**.

Deuteronomy

Conclusions

Deuteronomy Conclusions

- **Deuteronomy** characterizes Israel's relationship with God as one of **obedience**, but it is **loving obedience**.
- Love, in the Bible, is understood by its deeds.
- Therefore, love can be commanded.

Deuteronomy Conclusions

- **Matthew 22:35-40** (ESV)

³⁵ And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

Deuteronomy Conclusions

- **John 14:15** (ESV)

If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

Deuteronomy Conclusions

- **John 15:9-12** (ESV)

⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. ¹² This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Deuteronomy Conclusions

Deuteronomy, for the most part, consists of the final sermons of Moses. Therefore, these chapters bring to a close not only the life and ministry of Moses but the whole of the Torah.

*– Walter Kaiser, former President,
Gordon – Conwell Theological Seminary*



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