

DEUTERONOMY

We now come to the last book of the Pentateuch, the book of Deuteronomy. The title signifies “the second law” or the “the law repeated,” which calls attention to the fact that this document is a re-emphasis of that law which was earlier given in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. It is more than a simple restatement. It is an amplification, an expounding, a rehearsal and an applying of the Sinaitic laws to the settled life of Israel in Canaan.

The book covers the closing months just prior to Israel’s entrance into the promised land and of Moses’ career. Moses rehearsed the law of Moses for the new generation about to enter Canaan. They had been a nomadic people for forty years, now they were about to settle down. He urged them to let the law enter deeply into their hearts and live lives that will bring honor to God. Obedience is the over-riding theme.

This was a new generation, unspotted by the failures of their fathers, but also untested by their foes. How would they fare? Were these sons and daughters made of better stuff than their parents? Moses could only preach to and pray for them. They were about to enter a new land which was filled with idolatry and its degenerated practices. One thing was certain—their awareness of and obedience to the Word of God was absolutely vital to any and all future victories.

Deuteronomy is primarily a book to remind the people of what God did. It is a book of remembrance to the Jews. Moses was not giving a new law, just restating the old law. Some have said, Deuteronomy is a divine commentary on the other books of the Pentateuch.

The letter is divided into three addresses: First Address (1-4); Second Address (5-26); Third Address (27-30). Within these three addresses we will find three sermons delivered by Moses to Israel, a challenge issued to Joshua, a blessing pronounced on the individual tribes, a song composed, and a departure from this life.

I. First Address: (1-4)

A. Review of Israel’s History.

1. Chapter 1 has a review of God’s guidance given.
 - a. Recurrent theme in the Pentateuch: God made a promise to Abraham and renewed it to Isaac and Jacob (v.8).
 - b. Moses mentions the civil organization (vss.9-18). Take care of the needs of all Israel.
2. The breakdown of belief (1:19-40)
 - a. The spies were sent out.
 - b. Response (1:26, 32, 33)
 - c. Joshua and Caleb spared. Encourage your new leader (1:38; 3:28)
 - d. Deut. 1:39—important verse when talking with Calvinists.
3. They were presumptuous and refused to accept God’s decision (1:41-46).
 - a. God wasn’t with them (1:42)
 - b. They refused to listen to God (1:43).

B. Israel was alerted to new dangers (chapters 2 & 3)

1. The Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites were to be spared (2:4-23)
2. They battled the Amorites (2:24-37) and were victorious, as they were in every battle when they served the Lord faithfully.
3. In chapter 3, is the record of the conquest of Og, king of Bashan (v.11—size of his bed)
4. Heirs east of the Jordan were warned not to settle down prematurely (3:12-20).
5. Moses petitioned God that he might be allowed to enter the land of promise but God rejected his prayer. (3:21-29).

C. Chapter 4 is a review of past events.

1. The blessings of obedience (vss.1-8) (esp. vss.2,5-8)
2. He warned them about forgetting God’s revelation (4:9-31).
 - a. His covenant (v.13).

- b. Warning about idolatry (vss.15-24).
 - c. Consequence of idolatry (4:25-28)
 - 3. God's grace extended to Israel (4:32-40).
 - 4. Appointment of the cities of refuge (4:41-43)
- II. Second Address (4:44-26:19)
 - A. Brief Summation (4:44-49)
 - B. Nature of the law and its fulfillment (Chapters 5-11)
 - 1. Covenant God made (5:2,3)
 - 2. It seems that 5:15 gives us a reason why they were to keep the Sabbath.
 - 3. Israel's reaction to the voice of God (5:22-27).
 - 4. God approved of their attitude (5:28-31) God realized that it would not last long (v.29)
 - 5. Purpose of the law given (5:32-6:3)
 - a. To live... to live long...to live well
 - b. To Multiply
 - 6. Very heart of the law is given in 6:4,5 (Shema)
 - a. We have seen God's love for the nation. God expected them to love Him back.
 - b. Love of God should be a motive to obedience.
 - c. Whenever the name of God occurs in the English text written all in capital and small capital letters (LORD), the name in the Hebrew text is YHWH (Yahweh or Jehovah).
 - (1) Name shows eternity. "The One who was, the One who is, the One who is to come."
 - (2) To the Jews the name was so sacred that they would not even pronounce it.
 - (3) Instead they read another name in its place *Adonai* which means (Lord/Master).
 - d. The word for God is *Elohim*. which shows plurality. (Godhead).
 - e. God reveals his unity.
 - (1) Two Hebrew words translated by the English word "one."
 - (2) "one Lord" Word is *echad*—"one" of plurality. (Gen. 2:24).
 - (3) Other is *Yachid*, "one" of uniqueness (Gen. 22:2).. Take thy son, thine only son Isaac
 - 7. The propagation of the faith (6:6-25) TEACH!!!
 - a. The only way that faith can spread is by teaching. Same is true today.
 - b. Fathers were to teach
 - c. When interest is shown...teach (6:20, 21).
 - C. Chapter 7—necessity of Israel going to war.
 - 1. There was the ever present danger of Israel's being corrupted by the idolatry and iniquity of the Canaanites.
 - 2. Israel must be a peculiar people, separate from all others. No compromise (7:1-5)
 - 3. The task would not be easy.
 - a. God does not tell his children that he will prevent hardships from arising, but rather that he will give us the strength to endure them (if we will obey Him)
 - b. I Cor. 10;13).
 - D. There would be dangers from within that they would have to guard against (Chapters 8-11).
 - 1. Acts 20:29ff
 - 2. Need for obedience is seen throughout the book (8:1, 6)
 - 3. Don't forget God when you prosper (8:11-20)
 - a. Prosperity always poses a more dangerous threat to faith than adversity.
 - b. Adversity enables one's faith to grow, but prosperity dulls the senses and lulls one to sleep.
 - 4. Instructions in avoiding these pitfalls (9-11).
 - a. Genuine self-inventory (9:1-10:11).
 - b. Nurture love for God (10:12-11:1) [esp. 10:12 and 11:1].
 - c. Cultivate their memory (11:2-21) Remember what the Lord has done for you.
 - d. The blessing and curse (11:22-32).

- E. Exposition of the Law (12-26).
 - 1. God would choose a central location for a place of worship (12)
 - 2. Idolaters and tempters are to be punished. (13) [vss.6ff, 18]
 - 3. God's people must be different (14:1-25:19)
 - a. Different in mourning (14:1,2)
 - b. Eat different food (14:3-21).
 - c. Different economic practices (14,15)
 - d. Holy seasons were to be observed (16)
 - e. Leaders were to be different (17,18)
 - f. A prophet arise (Deut. 18:15-19... Acts 3:23)
 - g. Sacred rights (19-21)
 - (1) Eye for eye (19:21; Matt. 5:38)
 - (2) Exemptions from war (20:5-9)
 - h. Matters of dress (22:5, 9-12).
 - i. Marriage sacredness to be upheld (22:13-30; esp. v.22)
 - j. Various rules and regulations (23).
 - k. Divorce (24:1-4); Newlyweds (24:5; Sin (24:16)
 - l. Levirate marriage law (25:5-10)
 - 4. Thanksgiving and prayer (26).
- III. Third Discourse (27-30)
 - A. The law to be publicly displayed on stones and recited in Mt. Ebal (27:1-8)
 - B. Curses for disobedience (27:9-26)
 - C. Blessings for faithfulness (28)
 - D. Conclusion of the Covenant (29-30)
 - 1. Command is clear (30:11)
 - 2. Blessing and curse (30:15-20)
- IV. Moses Farewell and Death (31-34).
 - A. Moses makes the final arrangements for Israel (31)
 - B. Song of Moses (31:29-32:43)
 - C. Announcement of the appointment with Death (32:44-52). Jehovah spoke to him (vss.48-52)
 - D. Moses blessed Israel (33)
 - E. The death and burial of Moses (34).
- V. Great theological themes in this book: Faithfulness of God, Word of God, Person of God, Love of God, Glory of God, Grace of God, Great Prophet of God, Will of God. . .

Con:

There are so many lessons to be learned from this book. The predominant thought was obedience to God and the fact that we are to worship the one God of the scriptures. As long as they obeyed God, they would be victorious, they would be blessed. . . but when they disobeyed God, the opposite was true. This has never changed. God has always demanded obedience. He demanded it of the Israelites and He demands it today. Have you obeyed God? Do you serve the one God of the Bible?