

Lesson 6 - Deuteronomy

Key verse: 11:26-28 - *“See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: 27 the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, 28 and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known.”*

Genesis relates the call of Abraham and the election of his family to a covenant role with Jehovah. **Exodus** tells of the deliverance of Abraham’s descendants (Israelites) from bondage in Egypt and their becoming a great nation.

Leviticus elaborates on the the law of the priests and their rituals and feasts.

Numbers records both the census at the Exodus and at the crossing of the Jordan and the events at Mt. Sinai and the wandering in the wilderness.

Deuteronomy is the fifth and last book of what is known as the PENTATEUCH, the first five books of the Old Testament. The evidence for Mosaic authorship of the book is overwhelming. (See Deut. 1:1-6; 4:44-46; 29:1; 31:9, 24-26). Jesus quoted from the book of **Deuteronomy** when He resisted the devil in the wilderness (Matt. 4:10). (See Deut. 8:3; 6:13; 10:20)

Moses was a legislator, but is also set forth as a PROPHET in this book (Deut. 18:15, 18).

Deuteronomy is somewhat of a bridge between the earlier events of Israel and what follows after Israel entered the promised land of Canaan. It reviews Israel’s history in the wilderness and points forward to the future life in Canaan. Deuteronomy is not so much law as it is preaching about the law and the covenant between God and Israel. It consists of speeches of Moses to Israel on the occasion of a renewal of the covenant which took place on the plains of Moab shortly before Moses’ death and with Israel ready to cross the Jordan and begin the conquest of Canaan.

The forty years of wandering were over. The faithless generation of the Exodus was gone. Only two of the remaining Israelites (at least among the men of war) had been as much as twenty years old when the covenant had been first concluded (Num. 14:28-30). It was a new generation that Moses was speaking to. At this time it was needful to renew the covenant with a new generation. That nature of the covenant had to be expounded. The new generation had to be REMINDED of who and what they were and of what Jehovah required of them. Their commitment to their God needed to be freshly pledged.

Deuteronomy deals with this renewal of the covenant and with the new generation of Israelites. It contains Moses sermons/speeches on that occasion.

The book is in the fifth period of Old Testament history: WANDERINGS

I. The title of the book

- A. The word “**Deuteronomy**” (Greek) means “Second Law” or “Repetition of the Law”
- B. In the plain of Moab, beyond the Jordan (Deut. 1:5), Moses rehearsed the laws which had been given in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers.

1. These laws were expounded upon to a new generation that had grown up in the wilderness. Moses applied them with reference to their future life in Canaan.

II. Contents of the book

- A. The main body of the book is composed of three discourses delivered by Moses in the plain of Moab beyond the Jordan in the wilderness (1:1)

1. The First Discourse (Chapters 1-4)

- a) A historical sermon, a rehearsal of all the leading events of the previous forty years.

- (1) Preamble 1:1-5
- (2) Sinai to Kadesh-barnea, 1:6-46
- (3) Journey through transjordan 2:1-25
- (4) Conquest of transjordan 2:26-3:22
- (5) Prayer of Moses 3:23-29
- (6) Call to obedience 4:1-40

- b) Assignment of cities of refuge beyond the Jordan (4:41-49)

2. The Second Discourse (Chapters 5-26)

- a) A review of the law
- b) A constant appeal to the love of God as the great motive to obedience

3. The Third Discourse (Chapters 27-30)

- a) Prophetical, proclaiming a long and fearful list of CURSES which would befall the people if they should depart from Jehovah, and BLESSINGS if they would be faithful to Him.

- B. The last four chapters (31-34) announce:

1. The approaching death of Moses (Ch. 31)
2. Charge to Joshua as his successor (31:23)
3. A commitment of the law to writing and the charge to the Levites to preserve it. (31:24-26)
4. Two poems
 - a) The song of Moses (Chapter 32)
 - b) Blessings of Moses (Chapter 33)
5. The death of Moses (Chapter 34)

III. Two key words: REMEMBER and OBEY

- A. "Thou Shalt" and "Thou Shalt Not" are prominent in the book.

IV. The purpose of the book

- A. To lead Israel to **OBEDIENCE** and to warn against **DISOBEDIENCE**