

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 11-20-11 PM NOTES
"DEUTERONOMY"
#7 in Series, "The Glory of God in the Old Testament"

- Genesis focuses on the plan of God
- Exodus focuses on the redemptive power of God
- Leviticus focuses on the person of God
- Numbers focuses on the providence of God
- Deuteronomy focuses on the principles of God

—Norman Geisler

Deuteronomy 7:6-8 (NKJV) "6 For you *are* a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. 7 The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; 8 but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."

Deuteronomy 11:26-28 (NKJV) "26 Behold, I set 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 which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known."

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 (NKJV) "19 I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; 20 that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He *is* your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."

Deuteronomy 8:3 (NKJV) "So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every *word* that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord."

Deuteronomy 6:16 (NKJV) "You shall not tempt the Lord your God as you tempted *Him* in Massah."

Deuteronomy 6:13 (HCSB) "Fear the Lord your God, worship Him, and take [your] oaths in His name."

Deuteronomy 6:5 (NKJV) "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."

Deuteronomy 10:12 (NKJV) "And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul".

I. Moses' First Sermon—A Review of What God Has Done for Israel (Chapter 1-4)

A. The Tragedy of Unbelief (Chapter 1)

B. Journeys and Victories (Chapter 2-4)

Deuteronomy 4:37-38 (HCSB) "37 Because He loved your fathers, He chose their descendants after them and brought you out of Egypt by His presence and great power, 38 to drive out before you nations greater and stronger than you and to bring you in and give you their land as an inheritance, as is now taking place."

II. Moses' Second Sermon—A Review of the Law of God (Chapter 5-26)

A. The Review of the Sinaitic Laws (Chapter 5-11)

Shema—The imperative form of the Hebrew word translated “to hear”

Genesis 2:24 (NKJV) “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

Genesis 15:16 (NIV) “In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”

“People who do not understand the judgment of God or the awfulness of sin argue that God was ‘wicked’ to destroy these nations. If they understood the sinfulness of these pagan religions and the way these nations had resisted God, such critics would instead be grateful that Israel wiped them out. A defiled Israel could never give the world God’s Word and God’s Son.”
—Warren Weirsbe

B. A Restatement of the Special Laws (Chapter 12-26)

Hebrews 3:1-3 (HCSB) “¹Therefore, holy brothers and companions in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession; ²He was faithful to the One who appointed Him, just as Moses was in all God’s household. ³For Jesus is considered worthy of more glory than Moses, just as the builder has more honor than the house.”

John 6:14 (NKJV) “Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, ‘This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.’”

III. Moses' Third Sermon—A Review of the Covenant of God (Chapter 27-34)

A. Blessings and Curses (Chapter 27-28)

B. Repentance and Return (Chapter 29-30)

C. Moses' Farewell (Chapter 31-34)

Matthew 17:1-3 (NKJV) “¹Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; ²and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. ³And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.”

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“DEUTERONOMY”
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Deuteronomy is the 5th book of what is called the Pentateuch. The word Pentateuch comes from the Greek. *Penta* means five and *teuchos* refers to the case books were kept in. The Pentateuch is the first five books of the Bible, and they were all written by Moses under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit. The word “Deuteronomy” is from the Greek word *deutero* which means second and *nomos* which means law. It is not the second law in the sense of a different law; it is the second presentation of the same law. The law was first given almost 40 years earlier at Mount Sinai, but that generation (all those 20 and older) had died with the exception of Moses, Joshua and Caleb, and Moses is soon to die before he enters the Promised Land. Now as the Israelites camped on the plains of Moab on the border of the Promised Land, Moses gives the law again as instruction and warning to the new generation as they prepared to take the land of Canaan (the Promised Land) that God had promised to them.

Let me show you how the book of Deuteronomy fits with the other four books of the Pentateuch:

- Genesis focuses on the plan of God
- Exodus focuses on the redemptive power of God
- Leviticus focuses on the person of God
- Numbers focuses on the providence of God
- Deuteronomy focuses on the principles of God

[Norman Geisler, *A Popular Survey of the Old Testament*, Page 77]

The book of Deuteronomy covers a time span of only two months with 30 days of that time spent mourning for Moses. Deuteronomy is built around three farewell speeches Moses gave to the people before he died and they went into the Promised Land under the leadership of Moses’ successor, Joshua. A good summary of the theme of these speeches or discourses would be, “God chooses His people and God’s people choose Him”. God’s choosing of the Jews is summarized in **Deuteronomy 7:6-8 (NKJV)** ⁶ "For you *are* a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. ⁷ The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; ⁸ but because the Lord loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." Why did God choose Israel? It was because He loved them. Why did He love them? He loved them because He chose to love them! It was not because of anything that God saw in them; it was because He loved them and because out of that love, He made a covenant with Abraham concerning his descendents. The balancing truth to the truth that God chose Israel in that Israel must choose God! This principle is all through the book of Deuteronomy. God’s people must choose to love God and obey God and be guided by God. A format we see often in the book of Deuteronomy is a contrast as to what happens when God’s people choose to obey and when they choose to disobey. An example would be **Deuteronomy 11:26-28 (NKJV)** ²⁶ "Behold, I set 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 which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known." Another passage is **Deuteronomy 30:19-20 (NKJV)** ¹⁹ "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; ²⁰ that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He *is* your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them." With Israel, we see this complimentary truth that is continued with mankind’s response to Jesus. God sovereignly chooses those who are saved and yet those who are saved are those who choose Him. This two pronged non-

contradicting truth is most often described as, “The sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man in salvation”.

Let me tell you why I believe this book of Deuteronomy is very important and why we should desire to know and understand it. First, the book of Deuteronomy is quoted more than 80 times in the New Testament. Deuteronomy has been called Jesus’ favorite book of the Old Testament. For example, when Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by the devil, He answered him from the book of Deuteronomy. When Jesus was tempted to turn the stones into bread, He answered with a portion of **Deuteronomy 8:3 (NKJV)** “So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every *word* that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.” When Jesus was tempted to jump from the pinnacle of the temple He answered with a portion of **Deuteronomy 6:16 (NKJV)** “You shall not tempt the Lord your God as you tempted *Him* in Massah.” When Satan tempted Jesus to bow down and worship him, Jesus answered him with a portion of **Deuteronomy 6:13 (HCSB)** “Fear the Lord your God, worship Him, and take [your] oaths in His name.” Whereas much of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers were somewhat technical and gave details of the responsibilities of the priests and Levites, Deuteronomy was written for everyone. When we see some of the key words in this book we can begin to see how important it is even for us under the New Covenant. For instance we find the word “land” used 153 times, “inherit” 36 times, “possess” 65 times, “hear” 44 times, “obey” or its equivalent 27 times, “heart” 46 times, and “love” 20 times. When we put those all together, we see a theme of the book sounding something like this: If you go into the land God has given you as an inheritance and hear His Word and obey Him and love Him with all your heart, you will possess the land” [taken from *Weirsbe’s Expository Outlines of the Old Testament*, Page 191]. In Deuteronomy, there is more of an emphasis on the spiritual life of the people and their love for God than in the first four books of the Pentateuch. For example, **Deuteronomy 6:5 (NKJV)** “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.” **Deuteronomy 10:12 (NKJV)** “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul”.

With that background, let’s see the big picture of the book of Deuteronomy.

I. Moses’ First Sermon – A Review of What God Has Done for Israel (Chapter 1-4)

Moses begins this book by looking back from Sinai to the present location which was in the plains of Moab on the border of the Promised Land.

A. The Tragedy of Unbelief (Chapter 1) [Read 1:6-8]

When we think of the distance between where God gave the Israelites the law and the land of Canaan, we typically think this journey would have taken at least a decade or two to travel. As we looked at in our study of the book of Numbers, that is not so! **Deuteronomy 1:2 (NKJV)** “*It is eleven days’ journey* from Horeb [where the law was received and the Tabernacle was built] by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea [the border of the land of Canaan].” An eleven day journey took almost 40 years because of their unbelief. Moses recounts the sending of the 12 spies into the land of Canaan and the negative report by 10 of the 12 spies and the unbelief of the people manifested by their unwillingness to take the land God had given to them. **Deuteronomy 1:26 (NKJV)** “Nevertheless you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the Lord your God”. Moses is not just laying a guilt trip on these Israelites. After all, everyone who was 20 and older when this unbelief occurred had died except Joshua and Caleb. He is reminding them of the consequences of their parent’s rebellion to emphasize the importance of believing and obeying God.

B. Journeys and Victories (Chapter 2-4)

In these chapters, Moses reviews their journey through the wilderness while they were under the chastisement of God. The emphasis is that God was faithful to care for them in spite of their unbelief and disobedience. A good summary verse is **Deuteronomy 2:7 (NKJV)** “For the Lord your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand. He knows your trudging through this great wilderness. These forty years the Lord your God *has been* with you; you have lacked nothing.” They had manna to eat, water to drink,

and even their clothes did not wear out. The cloud by day provided shade from the desert heat, and nothing went undone to meet the basic need of these chosen people.

In chapter 4, Moses reminds them in the form of a warning about the character of God. **Deuteronomy 4:23-24 (NKJV)** “²³Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the Lord your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of anything which the Lord your God has forbidden you. ²⁴For the Lord your God *is* a consuming fire, a jealous God.” To balance this warning, Moses reminds them of the promise of God to give them the land in **Deuteronomy 4:37-38 (HCSB)** ³⁷“Because He loved your fathers, He chose their descendants after them and brought you out of Egypt by His presence and great power, ³⁸to drive out before you nations greater and stronger than you and to bring you in and give you their land as an inheritance, as is now taking place.”

II. Moses' Second Sermon – A Review of the Law of God (Chapter 5-26)

The focus in this section is the present. God is reminding the people of His rule before He brings them into His land that He has promised them.

A. The Review of the Sinaitic Laws [The law given at Mount Sinai] (Chapter 5-11)

Moses begins by restating the Ten Commandments which are the basis of the moral law of God. Let me give you a reminder of what most of you already know. The Ten Commandments were not given to show the Israelites how to be righteous before God. Neither they nor we are able to keep the law. The law was given to show us how short we come of God's standards. That is why God followed the commandments and all of the moral law with the ceremonial law – the sacrificial system. Innocent animals were slain and presented in faith to God as a substitute for the sinner. When the sacrifices were offered in faith, God covered their sin until the fullness of time when the Savior, the Son of God, God in the flesh, the true Lamb of God became the sufficient substitute and sacrifice for sin, that is our coming short of God's standard revealed in the law.

In chapter six, we see perhaps the most familiar passage in Deuteronomy. The Jews call it the “Shema”. That word is the imperative form of the Hebrew word that means “to hear”. The Shema is found in **Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (NKJV)** ⁴“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord *is* one! ⁵You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.” This command is so important that God told them in Deuteronomy 6:6-9 to make sure that it is never forgotten. The way that it would not be forgotten is that it was to be constantly kept before them. They were to diligently teach it to their children, keep it before them always and display it in their homes. The Shema encapsulated the truth of our one God as they would go into a land where the inhabitants worshipped many gods. God knew their tendency to forget and He tells them that this basic truth about their God must never be forgotten!

Before we move on, let me point out that while it is not detailed in this passage, when we look at it in the light of the New Testament, we see the Trinity here. The doctrine of the Trinity is that there is one God in three persons. The word translated “one” in Deuteronomy 6:4 is not the Hebrew word that means one in the singular sense (“yacheed”). It is the Hebrew word that means one in collective sense. That is, it signifies a compound unity. It is the Hebrew word (“echad”) which is used for communicating “one cluster of grapes”. It is the Hebrew word used in **Genesis 2:24 (NKJV)** “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

In Chapter seven, we see God giving some instructions that really cause some people some real problems [Read 7:1-2]. Some see this passage and then the actual carrying out of this command in Joshua, and begin to “second guess” God. I remember sitting in a seminary class about 36 years ago and hearing a man who was preparing to be a Pastor ask this question, “Was God right when He told them to destroy the inhabitants of the land of Canaan?” I couldn't believe my ears! God is the standard of what is right. We don't have some outside standard and measure God by our standard. God is the standard! Why did God instruct the Israelites to wipe out many of the people who possessed the land of Canaan and to take others as slaves? There were two reasons: First, these nations were wicked almost beyond description! Israel was God's instrument of judgment on an unspeakably wicked people who had refused to repent. Several hundred years earlier, God told Abraham that his descendents would be enslaved and that God would

deliver them and that they would come back to the land. Then God tells Abraham that they would deal with the sinful people of the land whose iniquity would be full or complete. **Genesis 15:16 (NIV)** “In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.” God judges the wicked in whatever way He chooses, and He chose to judge the wicked in Canaan through the Israelites. Second, if the Canaanites were left in the land, they would have led the chosen people into sin. Warren Weirsbe summarizes it this way: “People who do not understand the judgment of God or the awfulness of sin argue that God was ‘wicked’ to destroy these nations. If they understood the sinfulness of these pagan religions and the way these nations had resisted God, such critics would instead be grateful that Israel wiped them out. A defiled Israel could never give the world God’s Word and God’s Son” [*Weirsbe’s Expository Outlines of the Old Testament*, Page 195].

In chapters eight and nine, God gives several warnings to the Israelites. He warns them about prosperity and how it will tend to affect them in Deuteronomy 8:7-18a [Read]. In chapter nine, God warns them about pride and its devastating affects [Read 9:1-6]. Oh how we struggle with those two things when we are physically blessed of God. When God gives affluence, we think it is because of our abilities. When we are victorious over our enemies, we tend to become prideful and think we did it in our own power.

B. A Restatement of the Special Laws (Chapter 12-26)

This section of Deuteronomy deals with the ceremonial and civil portions of the law. There are laws related to sacrifices, tithes, clean and unclean food, and feasts. He also reviews the laws relating to judges, land owners and soldiers. Some really important areas covered in this section that we don’t have time to dig into are divorce and remarriage, cities of refuge where one could go to escape judgment when he had accidentally killed someone, and the solving of disputes.

Perhaps the clearest reference to Jesus in Deuteronomy is found in this section in **Deuteronomy 18:15 (NKJV)** “The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear”. In some measure this prophecy was fulfilled by all of the true prophets that God raised up in Israel, but its ultimate fulfillment was in Jesus Christ. He was like Moses in that He spoke forth the Words from God the Father, but as we read in **Hebrews 3:1-3 (HCSB)** “¹ Therefore, holy brothers and companions in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession; ² He was faithful to the One who appointed Him, just as Moses was in all God’s household. ³ For Jesus is considered worthy of more glory than Moses, just as the builder has more honor than the house.” It was this prophecy of Moses that was referred to in **John 6:14 (NKJV)** “Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, ‘This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.’”

III. Moses Third Sermon – A Review of the Covenant of God (Chapter 27-34)

While the first sermon focused on the past and the second sermon focused on the present, this sermon focused on the future.

A. Blessings and Curses (Chapter 27-28)

In this sermon, Moses gives instructions concerning an illustrated sermon that was to be carried out on the other side of the Jordan river when the people had crossed into the promised land. Six of the tribes were to stand on one mountain and six on another mountain. The Levites cried out the curses of God on the people for disobedience and blessings for obedience, and the tribes cried out from the mountains, “Amen”. They could never claim ignorance. It is interesting to see these carried out in history. In chapter 28, we see the curse on the Israelites for disobedience would be dispersion among the nations. Israel went into the Promised Land in about 1400 BC and in about 587 BC the last of Israel was taken captive into Babylon. A remnant returned to the land in 536 BC, but this was not the great national return.

B. Repentance and Return (Chapter 29-30)

Here is something exciting. [Read Deuteronomy 30:3-5]. I believe that the beginning of what this passage refers to happened in 1948 when Israel was reestablished as a nation. I think that many of the blessings associated with their coming back to the land are yet to be filled, but this is (I believe) at least the beginning of the fulfillment of what Moses spoke.

C. Moses’ Farewell (Chapter 31-34)

Moses commissions Joshua as the new leader in Deuteronomy 31:7-8 [Read]. After giving the people a new song to remind them of God's calling and God's demand for obedience, and after giving a final blessing in chapter 33, Moses goes up on Mount Nebo. At this point, someone else (likely Joshua) completes the book. Let me close out this amazing book by just reading the last chapter – Deuteronomy 34:1-12 [Read]

This is not the last time we see Moses. **Matthew 17:1-3 (NKJV)** “¹ Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; ² and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. ³ And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.” (3471)