

Intro to DEUTERONOMY

Author: Moses

- Intro to Deuteronomy

Title and Historical Setting: Deuteronomy is called by the Jews, “the five-fifths of the law,” since it completes the five books of Moses. The title, “Deuteronomy,” which has often been called the “second giving of the law,” is literally translated, “the copy, or repetition, of the law.” The book contains the addresses that Moses gave to the children of Israel during the final months of his life, when they were encamped in the plains of Moab prior to their entrance into the Promised Land. The author of all five of the books of the Torah is believed to be Moses. However, the account of his death in Deut. 34 could not have possibly been written by him. It was customary for another writer, Joshua perhaps, to pen the obituary to the final work of a great man.

Themes and Divisions of the Book: The build up from the first four books (God has a plan, God wants us to know him, God wants us to obey Him) culminates in the overall theme of the book, God wants us to love Him. For to be a part of His plan is to love Him...to know Him, is to love Him...to obey Him is to love Him.

- Recalling the Wanderings (Deut. 1:1—4:43)

Moses begins his first discourse by recalling the call of the Lord to go into the Promised Land, the appointment of leadership to help with the administration of the people, and the sending out of the 12 spies in to the land. He then reminds them of how they rebelled against the Lord, and of the wanderings in the desert for 39 years. He then recalls the battles that ensue in occupying the territory, the command of God forbidding him to go into the land, and the settling in near Beth Peor.

- Revisiting the Law (Deut. 4:43—28:68)

In the second part of the discourse, Moses reminds the people of God’s law, and issues some practical commands for them to follow. In chapter 6, he encourages them to obey the law for wisdom and understanding’s sake, and forbids them to worship idols. In chapter 5, he reminds them of the Ten Commandments, and commands them to love God with all their heart, mind, and strength. He then instructs them to not forget the Lord and His deliverance, and recalls their rebellion when they made the golden calf. He tells of how he interceded for them and how God instructed Him to come up the mountain and receive new tablets—replacements for the ones that he broke when he saw the rebellion of the people. In chapters 10 and following, he tells them to observe God’s law and gives them instruction as to how they are to worship Him. He warns them about worshipping other Gods, and reminds them of food that they can and cannot eat. He ends chapter 14 with a teaching on tithing. He then revisits various laws that were laid down in the book of Leviticus. He ends with a discourse on the blessings of obedience and the repercussions for disobedience.

- Renewing the Covenant (Deut. 29:1—30)

Moses closes with a reminder of the covenant that God established with his people and the reward for doing so. Joshua is installed as Moses' successor, and Moses closes out the discourse with his song in Chapter 32 and the blessing of the twelve tribes in Chapter 33. Moses dies in Chapter 34 at the age of 120.

Chapter Synopsis:

Chapter 1 - Moses reminds them of the command to leave Horeb and go to the Promised Land, the appointment of new leadership, the sending out of the spies and the rebellion of the people.

Chapter 2 – The wandering in the desert and the defeat of Heshbon.

Chapter 3 – The defeat of Bashan and the division of the land. Moses forbidden to cross the Jordan

Chapter 4 – The call to Obedience

Chapter 5 – The Ten Commandments

Chapter 6 – The call to Love

Chapter 7 – Establishment by Separation

Chapter 8 – Remembering the Word

Chapter 9 – The Golden Calf

Chapter 10 – New Tablets

Chapter 11 – Love and Obedience

Chapter 12 – The Worship Place

Chapter 13 – Worshipping Other Gods

Chapter 14 – Clean and Unclean Food / Tithing

Chapter 15 – Debt Cancellation and Free Slaves

Chapter 16 – Passover and Other Feasts

Chapter 17 – Laws and Kings

Chapter 18 – Priests and the Levites

Chapter 19 – Cities of Refuge

Chapter 20 – Guidelines for War

Chapter 21—25 - Misc. Laws and Regulations

Chapter 26 – First fruits and Tithing

Chapter 27 – An Altar of Remembrance

Chapter 28 – Blessing for Obedience / Curses for Disobedience

Chapter 29—Renewal of the Covenant

Chapter 30 – Blessings of an Obedient Life

Chapter 31 – Joshua to succeed Moses

Chapter 32 – The Song of Moses

Chapter 33 – **Moses' Blessing**

Chapter 34 – The Death of Moses

CITIES OF REFUGE

Deuteronomy 4: 41—43; 19: 1—13

These were towns in the Kingdom in which the perpetrators of manslaughter could claim the right of asylum. There is a wonderful picture that is painted with each of these cities of the provision of God that is ours through the Son, Jesus Christ.

1. Kadesh means **“hallowed, righteous,”** and represents a refuge for the unclean. Through Christ, we have a righteousness that we did not earn and do not deserve.
2. Shechem means **“shoulder,”** and represents that refuge for the lost sinner in the wilderness. Through Christ, we have a strong right arm, able to rescue us and lead us through our wilderness.
3. Hebron means **“fellowship,”** and represents a refuge for lonely sinner. Through Christ, the barrier of separation has been broken and we are now friends of God.
4. Bezer means **“fortress,”** and represents a refuge for the helpless sinner. Christ is our solid rock, our strong, mighty tower.
5. Ramoth means **“heights,”** and represents a refuge for the wretched, lowly sinner. Christ has reached down and pulled us out of the muck and mire and has lifted us up to where we truly belong.
6. Golan means **“joy,”** and represents a refuge for the downcast sinner. Because of what Christ has done for us, we have joy unspeakable and full of glory.