



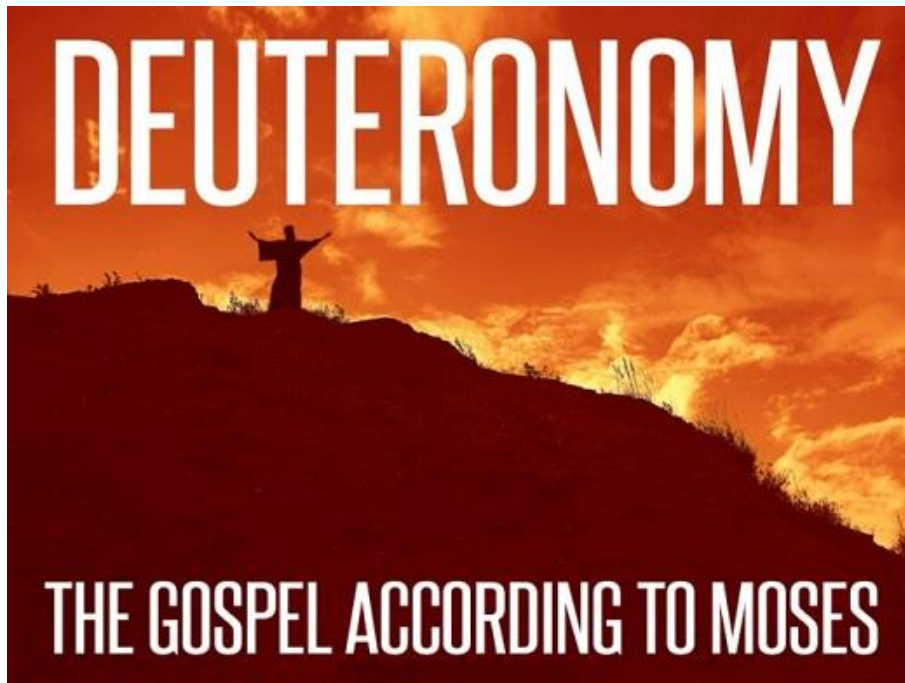
My Drift

Title: Bible – The Book of Deuteronomy

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Deuteronomy: love God, obey God.

Finally, Israel is just across the Jordan River from the promised land of Canaan. Moses has led the young nation out of Egypt and on a 40-year journey through the wilderness, and they have just defeated several enemies before setting up camp here. Three of the 12 tribes are already settling the land east of the Jordan, and the whole nation is almost ready to enter the land God promised to their ancestor Abraham (back in the book of Genesis).

It was almost time for the people of Israel to cross the Jordan River and conquer Canaan, But God refused to let Moses lead them into the land. Instead, Moses had been told that he was going to die on the eastern side of the Jordan. Joshua was the personally appointed successor to Moses (Deuteronomy 31:1–8; 34:9) and a charismatic warrior who will lead Israel in the conquest of Canaan.

Moses gave several farewell speeches to the people of Israel in which he repeated many of God's laws.

Forty years earlier, God had rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. In the wilderness, the people agreed to form a special agreement (a covenant) with their God: he would give them the land of Canaan and protect them as their God, and in return they would keep his laws. However, the people of Israel violated God's laws almost as soon as he gave them. That generation forfeited the promised land and now a new generation is about to make the journey into the land instead.

Before they do, Moses rallies the people to remind them of God's law—and why they should obey Him. This is how the book of Deuteronomy gets its name: it's the "second giving" of God's law.



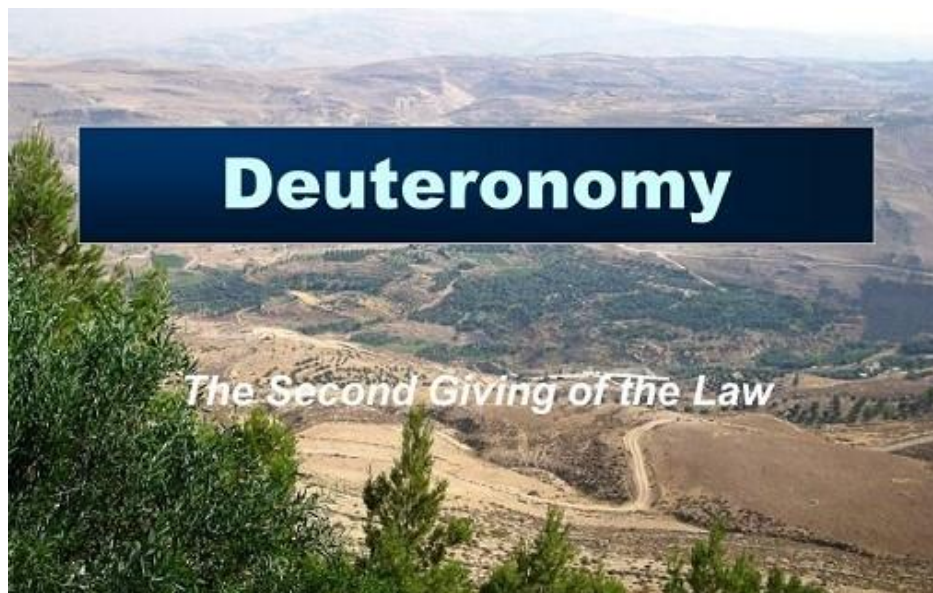
Moses Farewell Speech

Moses also reminded the Israelites of the past forty years. God had rescued them from Egypt and taken care of them in the desert, but they had not always been faithful or obedient to him.

Moses told the Israelites that if they kept their agreement to worship and obey the Lord, they would be a successful and powerful nation. But if they broke their agreement and worshiped idols, the Lord promised to put terrible curses on the people. They would also be defeated by their enemies and lose their land and their lives.

Much later, when Jesus was asked which one of God's commands was the most important, he answered by quoting one of the commands from Deuteronomy:

“Listen, Israel! The LORD our God is the only true God! So, love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul, and strength.” (Deuteronomy 6.4, 5)



Essentially, the book of Deuteronomy contains the farewell words of Moses to the Israelites. Moses' final words can be divided into the following sermons:

Deuteronomy 1–4 Moses recounts significant events from the Israelites' previous 40 years, including the covenant the Lord made with them at Horeb (Mount Sinai).

Deuteronomy 5–11 Moses exhorts the Israelites to teach their children to love the Lord, keep the commandments, and marry in the covenant. He reminds them that they are to be a holy and chosen people of the Lord. Moses also tells the Israelites of the lessons they need to remember from their wanderings in the wilderness and warns them of what will happen if they forget. He recounts times when the Israelites rebelled and how he mediated between them and the Lord. He teaches the Israelites that if they love and serve the Lord, they will be blessed in the promised land; if they do not, they will be cursed.

Deuteronomy 12–17 Moses instructs the people to destroy the false gods of the Canaanites and to remain a separate people, free from worldly practices and influences. He reminds the Israelites of the Lord's commandments. He warns Israel against having kings but then provides instructions for them in case they decide to have a king despite his counsel.

Deuteronomy 18 Moses instructs Israel to avoid the superstitions and occult practices of other nations. He prophesies of Jesus Christ and tells the Israelites how they can identify a true prophet.

Deuteronomy 19–28 Moses gives specific laws and commandments regarding judicial actions and warfare, as well as instructions for daily life. He encourages the Israelites to remember their debt to the Lord by offering the first fruits of the land of Canaan, paying tithing, and keeping their covenants.

Deuteronomy 29–30 Israel makes a covenant with the Lord. Moses warns that those who disobey the Lord will be cursed and prophesies that those who obey the Lord will be blessed temporally and spiritually.

Deuteronomy 31–34 Moses tells Joshua and the Israelites to be strong and have courage. He teaches the Israelites a song that will help Israel remember the Lord and the commandments. He blesses each of the tribes of Israel and sees all of the land that Israel will inherit.

Life Lessons From The Book of Deuteronomy



Don't Hold Back (Deuteronomy 1.19-21)

God granted Canaan to the Israelites and instructed them to take ownership of it. They hesitated and by staying outside of the land, they were not obeying God's instructions.

Sometimes, when God presents us with opportunities we shrink back because we have doubts. Or maybe we are afraid of failure or defeat. But if God opens a door for us, we need to go through it boldly. We need to take advantage of opportunities to grow and show our faith. Don't hold back when God shows you the way.

A Heart for God (Deuteronomy 5.28-30)

God told Moses he was pleased when the Israelites obeyed him because they wanted to, not because they had to. God doesn't make us obey him - it is our choice.

Yes, we should have respect for God and a healthy fear for his anger, but God is not honored when we do what he says simply because we are afraid to do otherwise. The LORD wants us to obey him because we love him.

It Doesn't Seem Fair (Deuteronomy 7.1-15)

Why would God command the Israelites to destroy their enemies without mercy? Does he hate some people and love others? No, God is loving and merciful, but he is also just so he doesn't permit evil to continue without being punished and corrected.

God's command to destroy these nations was his judgment upon them for the wicked things they had done for many years. His command was also a dramatic warning to the nation of Israel that God's people should beware of being overcome by the evil practices of their enemies.

Do not ever think that God is too kind to do anything about sin. Because he is holy and just, as well as merciful and loving, he must punish wrong actions and attitudes. God also rewards obedience.

The Hand that Feeds You (Deuteronomy 8.10-19)

God had promised the Israelites that if they obeyed his laws and teaching, he would bless them with food, shelter, and land. But with this promise, he also gave a warning that we should remember.

When things are going well in family, career, or any other area of life, we are tempted to become proud. It is easy to think that our hard work and ingenuity have gotten us where we are.

We should think again! It is God who gives us the ability to work and who blesses us with more than we need. He also requires us to be good caretakers of what we have been given. We must always give God the credit for our health, riches, and well-being.

A Promise is a Promise (Deuteronomy 9.4-6)

God made a promise to the Israelites - he would be their God, take care of them, and bless them. On the other hand, the Israelites had promised to obey God. This agreement was never to be broken and was intended to last forever.

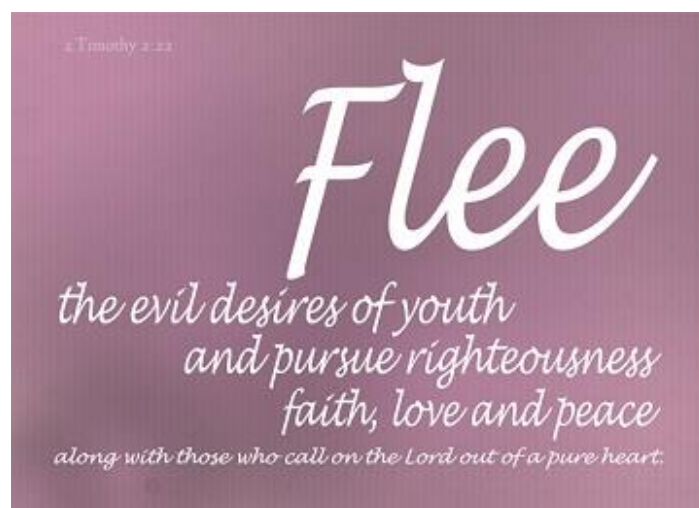
Unfortunately, the Israelites broke their promise to God. He, however, has never broken a promise to his people. God did punish the people several times for their disobedience, but he always remained faithful to them. God restored the Israelites even though they continued to turn against him.

God loves us even when we do things that go against his commands. It is important for us to understand that God's love for us never ends. He wants us to turn back to him.

Don't be so Stubborn (Deuteronomy 10.12-21)

Stubbornness is characteristic of human nature, but that doesn't mean God likes it. He was not pleased when the Israelites insisted on returning to their sinful practices.

In this passage, Moses encouraged the people to make a real effort to consider their promise to God and to allow him to wash away their sins. This request is one we should follow, too.



Flee from Evil (Deuteronomy 12.29-31)

God made it very clear to the Israelites that he did not want them to get mixed up in the false religious surrounding them. Idolatry (the worship of handmade statues or images) was everywhere in the land. No doubt, it was very easy to be lured into practices that appeared to be harmless on the surface but were deadly in the end.

Sometimes curiosity and the attempt to learn more about evil things can harm our spiritual growth if those evil things become too attractive to us. It is always best to stay as far away from evil as we can.

Ignore False Prophets (Deuteronomy 13.1-3)

Moses warned the Israelites about the false prophets who would encourage them to worship other gods and idols. Just because someone can perform a "miracle" or predict the future doesn't make them authentic. If their teachings and their lifestyles do not line up with God's word, stay far away from them!

Not everyone who claims to speak and act on God's behalf is truly doing so. Some people may be deceiving themselves. Others may be trying to trick us. In any case, God's Word is the one true standard against which all activities should be judged.

Downhill from Here (Deuteronomy 17.14-20)

Years after Moses gave these instructions for kings, Israel's rulers refused to listen to this word of creation. As a result, each of them experienced a downhill slide.

King Solomon, for example, was very successful at first. But he turned away from God after he had accumulated great wealth and built a huge army. Because of Solomon's disobedience, Israel became a divided nation, and many of the Israelites turned away from God.

God's laws and commands are practical - he knows what can cause us to start trusting ourselves instead of him. Refusing to obey God's instructions always brings defeat.

Greater is He (Deuteronomy 20.1-4)

Moses reminded the Israelites that the same God who had rescued them from slavery in Egypt could help them defeat an enemy, no matter how strong their

opponent was. Similarly, God has already saved us from our worst enemy - slavery to sin.

Sometimes we are faced with big problems or strong opposition. Confronting an enemy always causes a certain amount of fear, but with God, on our side, we can be confident of victory. We can read in the Bible how God has helped his people again and again with their problems. We can remind ourselves of the many times he has helped us, our family, and our friends. God is honored when we trust him to help us meet any situation.

Looking Out for Others (Deuteronomy 20.1-4)

God gave the Israelites specific instructions for returning lost animals because they were valuable possessions. Aside from that, though, God's people should have an attitude of wanting to help others instead of trying to take advantage of someone else's loss.

It is important for us to have God's attitude about someone else's property and not to allow the attitude of the world to rub off on us. Having the proper attitude helps keep us from becoming greedy and selfish. Our respectful behavior sets a good example for others.

Sex for Sale (Deuteronomy 20.1-4)

Moses warned the Israelites about staying away from prostitutes because immoral sex was strictly forbidden by God's law. This was doubly important in biblical times because many of the pagan religions surrounding Israel made prostitution a regular part of their religious ceremonies.



God's people are to have a different view of sex. It should be an expression of intimacy between husband and wife within marriage. Prostitution - and any other form of sexual immortality - ruins the fabric of the family.

All of us need to listen to God's warnings about sex outside of marriage. Young people should be informed of the consequences that are sure to follow when God's instructions are ignored. Adults need to be encouraged to remain faithful to their spouse.

We are His People (Deuteronomy 28.1-14)

Moses let it be known that from this day on, the Israelites were God's people, so they needed to obey God's instructions. Possibly, Moses wanted to remind the new generation that had grown up during the desert wandering that they, too, were God's chosen people. It could be that since they were getting ready to enter the land God promised to them, Moses was announcing the formation of the nation of Israel. In either case, it was a new start for the people.

When we chose to believe in God, we are also given a fresh start. We are citizens of a new nation, a heavenly kingdom. As such, we should begin to obey God's commands and follow his ways. Our behavior reveals what we truly believe in our hearts.

Two Choices (Deuteronomy 30.1-7)

The Israelites were given two choices: obey God's commands and live good lives or disobey them and face death and disaster. God had made his laws very clear and understandable so the people could not claim they were impossible to obey - they simply had to decide what they would do.

We have the same choice as God's followers. If we are slaves to sin or if we choose to go our own way, bad things are sure to happen. But, when we become God's followers, he gives us the freedom, as well as the strength and courage, to follow God's way.

His Word Is Life! (Deuteronomy 30.1-7)

Moses summed up his sermon by once again stressing to the people the importance of knowing God's Law, applying it to their lives, and teaching it to younger generations.

It is not enough to merely read the Bible or hear a sermon. We should constantly ask, "What is God saying to me through this? How does he expect me to respond?"

God's Word is powerful. It tells us what we need to know about God and how he wants us to live. It is the manual for life!

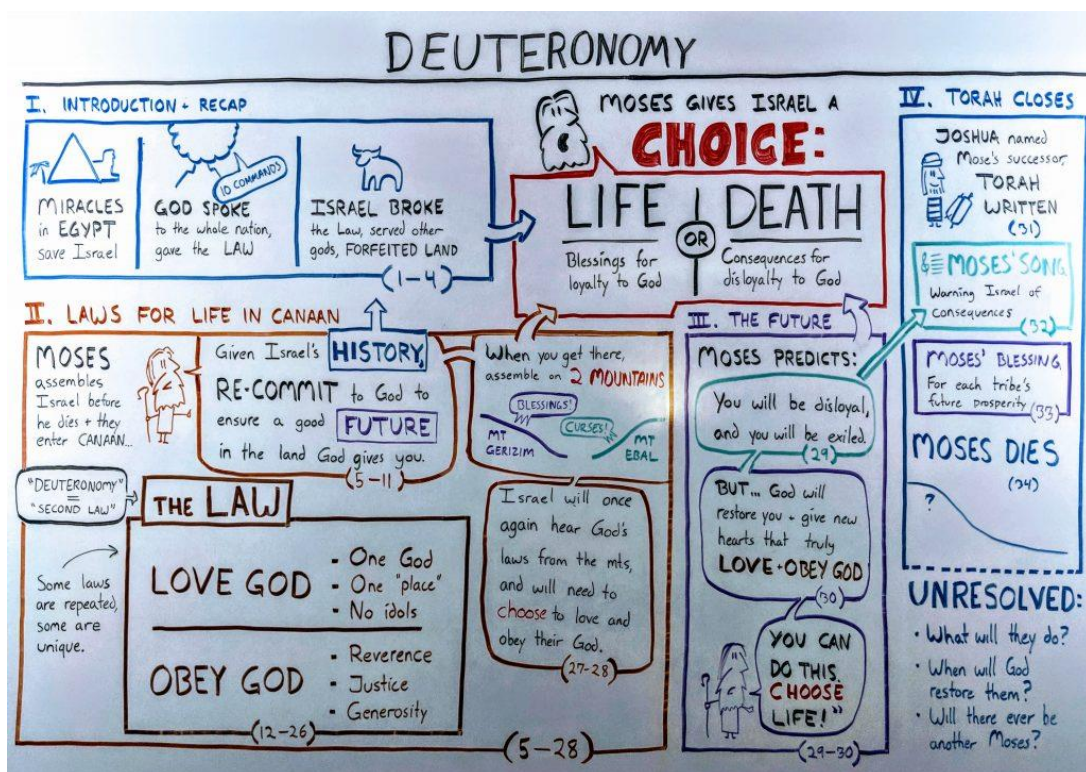
What is the Song of Moses?

As recorded in his last book, Deuteronomy, towards the end of his life, Moses composed a song, inspired by God, to give to the people of Israel. He wrote it after the giving of the law at Sinai, the worship of the golden calf, the wandering in the wilderness, and the miracles of manna and quail.

Moses was 120 years old when he announced Joshua as his God-chosen successor; he was commissioned to lead. The Song of Moses was his final speech to Israel, though he would give them one more blessing tribe by tribe before he separated from them.

It was after he gave the song to the people that, "...the Lord spoke to Moses, 'Go up this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab... And die on the mountain which you go up and be gathered to your people as Aaron your brother died in Mount Hor and was gathered to his people, because you broke faith with me in the midst of the people of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh.'" (Deuteronomy 32:58b-51a).

Moses would never get to enter the promised land because of his temper, though God did let him see it.



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