

# Deuteronomy<sup>1</sup>

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## Authorship and Dating

Internal evidence indicates that Moses wrote the book titled Deuteronomy (Deut 31:9,22). The Jews of Jesus' day believed that Moses wrote Deut. (Mark 12:9; Luke 20:28; Deut 25:5-10). Although, it has been recognized that editors may have added Moses' death, the book has throughout tradition been accepted as from Moses.<sup>2</sup> Others, however, have argued that the book wasn't written during the 1400's B.C. but was however part of Josiah's reform in the 600's B.C. Such a view is in keeping with the JEDP theory which is discussed in the author's Genesis notes. Given internal as well as early external evidence, Moses is the author.

## Recipients

Deuteronomy was written to the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Hebrews exiting Egypt.

## Purpose

While Deuteronomy follows a treaty format, discussed below, the book is also presented in sermon form providing an exhortation to the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Israelites. Therefore the book's purpose is to encourage the next generation to enter the promised land according to a renewed covenant mandate.

## Message

While the book consists of three basic sermons, closer inspection indicates a format following the Hittite Vassal Treaty.<sup>3</sup> The following comment and chart are provided by Richard Lawrence.

Perhaps the most unusual feature of Deuteronomy is its form. Moses adopts as a pattern for his message the Hittite type of suzerainty treaty. This treaty type was not used after 1200 B.C., a fact which supports Mosaic authorship of the book. The treaty structure invites us to see Deuteronomy as a national constitution: a binding agreement made between God as the nation's ruler, and Israel as His people.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The English title Deuteronomy stems from the Septuagint's mistranslation of Deuteronomy 17:18, "this repetition of the Law." The Septuagint translated those words *deuteronomion* (lit., "second Law"), which were rendered *Deuteronomium* in the Vulgate, Jerome's fourth-century Latin translation of the Bible. The Hebrew title of the book is "these are the words" in keeping with the Hebrew custom of often titling a work by its first word(s) (see 1:1). This Hebrew title is a more apt description of the book for it is not a "second Law," but the record of Moses' sermons on the Law. Jack S. Deere, "Deuteronomy," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, ed. Roy B. Zuck John F. Walvoord(Grand Rapids: Victor, 1983). 259.

<sup>2</sup> Charles & Eugene Merrill Dyer, *Nelson's Old Testament Survey*, ed. Charles R. Swindoll & Roy B. Zuck(Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001). 127.

<sup>3</sup> David Allan Hubbard William Sanford LaSor, Frederic Wm. Bush, *Old Testament Survey the Message, Form, and Background of the Old Testament*, Second ed.(Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1996). 112-13.

<sup>4</sup> Lawrence Richards, "The Bible Readers Companion," (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1991).

<b>Treaty format</b>	<b>Intent</b>	<b>Deuteronomy passage</b>
Historical prologue	Defines relationship of ruler to subjects	1:6–3:29
Basic stipulations	Defines general principles guiding behavior	5:1–11:32
Detailed stipulations	Lists some specific rules to be followed	12:1–26:19
Document clause	Citizens ratify constitution	27:1–26
Blessings	Lists benefits of relationship	28:1–14
Curses	Lists penalties for breaking treaty regulations	28:15–68
Recapitulation	Reviews and sums up the treaty	29:1–30:10

Nearing the end of his life Moses encourages Israel's second generation to remember and humbly obey the commandments by seizing and occupying Canaan under covenantal promises. After a rehearsal of Israel's history (1-4), Moses then charges the new generation to humbly obey the commandments (4-11) noting the Sinai event (4-5) as well as the continual temptation of self reliance (9-10). Under an extended address concerning occupation of Canaan (12-26), Moses instructs the Israelites concerning their worship (12-16), their leadership (16-18) their actions as they seize and occupy their land (19-26). In order to encourage their success Moses explained God's covenant with Israel reassured Israel that God would bless them if they continued to obey Him and would curse them for disobedience (28-29). If it happened that Israel did sin, Moses reassured Israel that God would rescue them upon repentance (30). In the closing chapters Moses commissions new leadership (31) and prepares for his death (32-34).

### **What is Deuteronomy's Theme**

Covenant Faithfulness

## Outline of the Book

- I. Moses Rehearses Israel's History 1:1-4:44
  - A. Setting of Deuteronomy 1:1-5
  - B. Rehearsal of Yahweh's Work's Between Hebron and Peor 1:6-3:29
    - 1. Moses Rehearses Yahweh's Commission 1:6-8
    - 2. Moses Rehearses Commissioning of Leaders 1:9-18
    - 3. Moses Rehearses his Former Charge 1:22-25
    - 4. Moses Rehearses Israel's Fears 1:26-33
    - 5. Moses Rehearses Yahweh's Judgment 1:34-40
    - 6. Moses Rehearses Israel's Presumptuous Disobedience 1:41-46
    - 7. Moses Rehearses Israel's Wanderings 2:1-7
    - 8. Moses Rehearses Crossing Zered 2:8-15
    - 9. Moses Rehearses Defeat of Sihon 2:16-37
    - 10. Moses Rehearses Defeat of Og 3:1-11
    - 11. Moses Rehearses Division of Transjordan 3:12-17
    - 12. Moses Rehearses Transjordan Tribes Responsibilities 3:18-22
    - 13. Moses Rehearses Personal Disobedience 3:23-29
  - C. Rehearsal of Yahweh's Work and Law 4:1-43
    - 1. Moses Charges Israel to Keep Law 4:1-14
    - 2. Moses Charges Israel Against Idolatry 4:15-23
    - 3. Moses Rehearses Yahweh's Compassion 4:25-31
    - 4. Moses Rehearses Yahweh's Power 4:32-40
    - 5. Moses Rehearses Cities of Refuge 4:41-43
- II. Moses Charges Second Generation to Humbly Obey Commandments 4:44-11:32
  - A. Review of Mt. Sinai Event 4:44-5:33
    - 1. Recognition of Moses' Words 4:44-49
    - 2. Moses Rehearse Ten Commandments 5:1-21
    - 3. Moses Rehearses Sinai 5:22-33
  - B. Moses' Charge to Keep Commandments 6:1-25
    - 1. Moses' Charge to Hear Commandments 6:1-3
    - 2. Moses' Charge to Teach Commandments 6:4-9
    - 3. Moses' Charge to Worship Yahweh 6:10-15
    - 4. Moses' Charge to Diligence 6:16-19
    - 5. Moses' Charge to Repeat Heritage 6:20-25
  - C. Moses' Charge to Trust Yahweh and Conquer Canaan 7:1-9:3
    - 1. Moses' Charge for Complete Occupation 7:1-6
    - 2. Moses Rehearses Yahweh's Jealousy 7:7-11
    - 3. Moses Rehearses Yahweh's Promises of Blessing 7:12-16
    - 4. Moses Rehearses Yahweh's Promise of Victory 7:17-26
    - 5. Moses Rehearses Yahweh's Gracious Dealings 8:1-10
    - 6. Moses Warns of Yahweh's Discipline 8:11-20
    - 7. Moses' Charge to Trust Yahweh 9:1-3
  - D. Moses' Warning against Self Reliance 9:4-10:11
    - 1. Moses' Charge for Humility 9:4-5
    - 2. Moses Rehearses Sinai Rebellion 9:6-14
    - 3. Moses Rehearses His Intercession 9:15-21

4. Moses Rehearses Kadesh Barnea Rebellion 9:22-23
5. Moses Rehearses His Intercession 9:25-29
6. Moses Rehearses Writing of Tablets 10:1-5
7. Moses Rehearses Levite's Work 10:6-9
8. Moses Rehearses His Work 10:10-11
- E. Moses' Challenge to Current Generation 10:12-11:32
  1. Moses' Charge For Obedience 10:12-22
  2. Moses' Charge to Current Generation 11:1-7
  3. Moses' Charge to Keep Commandments 11:8-12
  4. Moses Rehearses Yahweh's Promise of Rain 11:13-17
  5. Moses' Charge to Teach Commandments 11:18-25
  6. Moses Rehearses Promises of Blessing and Cursing 11:27-28
  7. Moses' Charge to Rehearse Promises in Land 11:29-32
- III. Moses' Address Concerning the Laws for Seizure and Occupation of Canaan 12:1-26:19
  - A. Laws Concerning Worship 12:1-16:17
    1. Moses' Charge to Destroy Pagan Altars 12:1-7
    2. Moses' Charge to Make Holy Sacrifices in Land 12:8-14
    3. Warnings Concerning Offerings 12:15-28
    4. Warnings Against Pagan Worship 12:29-32
    5. Moses' Charge to Remove Idolaters 13:1-5
    6. Charge to Remove Idolatrous Relatives 13:6-11
    7. Charge to Remove Idolatrous Cities 13:12-18
    8. Law against Self Defacement 14:1-23
    9. Law of Clean and Unclean Land Animals 14:3-8
    10. Law of Clean and Unclean Fish 14:9-10
    11. Law of Clean and Unclean Birds 14:11-20
    12. Law Concerning Dead Animals 14:21
    13. Law Concerning Distant Tithing 14:22-29
    14. Law Concerning Sabbath Year 15:1-6
    15. Law Concerning Gifts to Poor 15:7-22
    16. Law of Hebrew Slavery 15:12-18
    17. Law Concerning Firstborn of Flock 15:19-23
    18. The Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread 16:1-8
    19. The Feast of Weeks 16:9-12
    20. The Feast of Booths 16:13-15
    21. Summary of Feasts 16:16-17
  - B. Laws Concerning Leadership 16:18-18:22
    1. The Appointment of Judges 16:18-20
    2. Charge Against Asheroth Idolatry 16:21-22
    3. Charge to Stone Confirmed Idolaters 17:1-7
    4. Charge Concerning Difficult Problems 17:8-13
    5. Law Concerning Israel's Kings 17:14-17
    6. Charge to Establish Law before Kings 17:18-20
    7. The Portion of the Levites 18:1-8
    8. Charge to Cast off Diviners 18:9-14
    9. Promise of Prophet like Moses 18:15-22

- C. Various Laws Concerning the Seizure of Canaan 19:1-21:14
  - 1. Laws Concerning Cities of Refuge 19:1-13
  - 2. Laws Concerning Landmarks and Testimony 19:14-21
  - 3. Laws Concerning Recruitment for War 20:1-9
  - 4. Laws Concerning Capture of Cities 20:10-18
  - 5. Laws Concerning Resources for Warfare 20:19-20
  - 6. Laws Concerning Unknown Death 21:1-9
  - 7. Law Concerning Enemies Beautiful Virgin 21:10-14
- D. Laws Concerning Occupation of Canaan 21:15-26:19
  - 1. Concerning Right of Firstborn 21:15-27
  - 2. Law Concerning Rebellious Child 21:18-21
  - 3. Law Concerning Hanging 21:22-23
  - 4. Laws Concerning Relations 22:1-12
  - 5. Laws Concerning Bride's Virginity 22:13-21
  - 6. Laws Concerning Sexual Immorality 22:22-30
  - 7. Laws of Exclusion from Assembly 23:1-11
  - 8. Laws Concerning Society 23:12-25
  - 9. Law of Divorce and Remarriage 24:1-5
  - 10. Laws Concerning Society 24:6-22
  - 11. Laws Concerning Righteous Judgment 25:4-10
  - 12. Laws Concerning Society 25:11-19
  - 13. The Offering of First Fruits 26:1-15
  - 14. Moses Rehearse Purpose of Statutes 26:16-19
- IV. Moses' Charge for Continued Success in Canaan 27:1-30:20
  - A. Moses Command for Memorial Stones 27:1-26
    - 1. Charge to Write Memorial Stones 27:1-8
    - 2. Charge to Rehearse Curses 27:9-26
  - B. Moses States Covenant's Blessing and Cursing 28:1-68
    - 1. Promise of Blessings 28:1-6
    - 2. Promise of Rule over Nations 28:7-14
    - 3. Promise of Destruction Under Nations 28:15-68
  - C. Moses Explains the Covenant 29:1-29
    - 1. Moses Introduces Covenant in Moab 29:1-9
    - 2. Moses States Purpose of Covenant 29:10-13
    - 3. Moses States Extent of Covenant 29:14-21
    - 4. Moses States Judgment of Covenant 29:22-29
  - D. Moses Reassures Israel of Yahweh's Mercy 30:1-20
    - 1. Restoration Promised upon Repentance 30:1-14
    - 2. Moses Exhortation to Choose Life 30:15-20
- V. Moses Prepares Israel for New Leadership 31:1-34:12
  - A. Moses Commissions and Charges New Leadership 31:1-30
    - 1. Moses Appoints Leaders 31:1-6
    - 2. Moses' Charge to Joshua 31:7-8
    - 3. Moses' Charge to Levites 31:9-13
    - 4. Moses Foretells Israel's Apostasy 31:14-18
    - 5. Yahweh's Prophetic Song 31:19-22

6. Moses Commissions Joshua 31:23
7. Moses Charges Levites 31:24-30
- B. Moses' Song of Deliverance 32:1-47
  1. Yahweh's Great Redemption 32:1-14
  2. Israel's Rebellion 32:15-18
  3. Yahweh's Judgment 32:23-27
  4. Israel's Ignorance 32:28-33
  5. Yahweh will Rescue His People 32:34-43
  6. Moses' Charge to Joshua 32:44-47
- C. Moses' Last Days 32:48-34:12
  1. Yahweh Commands Moses to Die 32:48-52
  2. Moses Final Blessings upon Tribes 33:1-29
  3. The Death of Moses 34:1-8
  4. Epitaph of Moses 34:9-12

## Questions for Deuteronomy

1. Discuss the outline of Deuteronomy.
2. What is a Suzerain-Vassal Treaty?
3. What is the purpose of Deuteronomy
4. What is the name of the location where the message is given?
5. Who wrote the article on Moses death in 34 and in what ways does this affect authorship?
6. In what year was the book written?
7. Indicate three quotes in Matthew 4 that are from Deuteronomy.
8. What can we learn about training children from Deuteronomy 6.
9. Who represented the first generation and who represented the second generation?
10. How is Deuteronomy 12-26 related to the Ten Commandments?

## Bibliography

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