

OT 501--Old Testament Introduction

Lecture Notes—Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy—Bridge Between Two Ages!

I. Introduction to Deuteronomy

A. Nature of Deuteronomy

1. Speech—Moses' farewell speech. As they stand at the threshold of the land of Canaan, their Promised Land, Moses delivers a message of farewell, challenge and encouragement.
2. Bridge between old and new. The old life of wandering & landlessness was about to end. They were about to enter their own land. This would be a new beginning.
3. Prophetic call to obedience. Moses reminds them that they are bound to Yahweh in covenant and that they must obey His Words in order to survive in their new land.

B. Or, Brueggemann's Suggestions¹

1. Deuteronomy is a copy. Dt. 17:18 says, keep "a copy" of "this Torah." (Is it a copy or a new version?)
2. Deuteronomy is exegesis. Dt. 1:5 reads, "Moses undertook to expound this Torah."
3. Deuteronomy is an "act of making contemporary."
And Moses summoned all Israel and said to them, "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the rules that I speak in your hearing today, and you shall learn them and be careful to do them. The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. Not with our fathers did the LORD make this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive today." (Dt 5:1-3 ESV)

B. Background of Deuteronomy

- Usually seen as connected with Josiah's reform, 627-609 B.C. because of the parallels in laws and reforms, i.e. tearing down altars, Asherim, & sacred pillars & centralizing worship in the Jerusalem.
- The connection between Josiah's reform measures and Deuteronomy is difficult to debate, as noticed as far back as Jerome in the 4th century AD.
- The phraseology & terminology of Dt. has many parallels with Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, and Jeremiah. This connection would suggest that the final literary form is from the 7th century, although it certainly is based on an older form, much of which could easily have come from the hand of Moses.

C. Structure of Deuteronomy—Covenant Treaty form?

1. Historical Prologue (Dt. 1-3)
2. Stipulations (Dt. 4-26)
3. Recording of Covenant (Dt. 27:1-8)
4. Blessings & Curses (Dt. 27:9-28:68)
5. Ratification/Renewal (Dt. 29)
- [6. Miscellaneous Conclusions]

--While this structure is instructive, it should not be forced. A better conclusion might be to see the covenant form as a context for instruction rather than arguing that the author of the final form of Dt. intended the book to be a covenant treaty.

¹ Walter Brueggemann, *God Neighbor Empire: The Excess of Divine Fidelity and the Command of Common Good* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016).

II. Outline of Deuteronomy

I. Introduction (Dt. 1:1-5)

II. Historical Introduction (1:6-3:29)

--A retelling of the journey from Mt. Sinai (Horeb) to the Plains of Moab, where they now stood.

III. Covenant Obligations (4:1-11:32)

--This section includes exhortations to love, obey, fear, and never forget Yahweh, their God.

IV. Law of Yahweh—"Deuteronomic Code" (12:1-26:19)

--Much of this "code" is a repetition of the previous laws (esp. the 10 Commandments in Dt. 5).

--Many of the applications are different, however, sometimes because the focus is upon the land. After they entered the land, the requirements of the law would change somewhat, & the implications of the law would also be different. Other differences are more difficult to explain (i.e. cf. Dt. 15:1-11 & Lev. 25:8-38 on the Year of Jubilee).

--A new focus is the "place where Yahweh will cause His name to dwell," i.e. the central sanctuary. There was to be no worship outside of this central place of worship. This was a central tenet of Josiah's reform, the destruction of sanctuaries outside of Jerusalem.

V. Covenant Ceremony To Be Celebrated at Shechem (27:1-28:68)

--Upon entering the land, Israel was to renew their covenant with a ceremony at Shechem which included the recitation of blessings and curses. If Israel kept the covenant, they could expect the blessings; however, if they broke the covenant they should expect the curses.

VI. Covenant Renewal in Moab (29:1-30:20)

--Israel is exhorted to "choose life," emphasizing that to live in covenant with Yahweh was the only way to attain true life, every other life only led to death. Relationship with Yahweh included more than just inevitable death. This was true life, and for Israel to reject the covenant meant death & destruction.

VII. Conclusion (31:1-34:12)

--Joshua's succession and Moses' song, blessing, & death.

III. Theological Themes in Deuteronomy

A. Only the LORD (YHWH) is God

1. "There is no other" (4:35, 39)

2. "The Lord is One" (? 6:4)

3. All remnants of other gods & false worship must be abolished (7:5, 12:3).

4. "The Lord your God" is used about 200 uses in Dt. out of 390 in the entire OT. And 53 of the others are in Dtr.

B. God has chosen Israel

1. God chose Israel out of all the nations (7:6, 14:2).

2. Israel is God's "treasured possession" (7:6, 14:2, 26:18; & Ex. 19:5).

3. This choice is based on promises to the fathers

C. The Land

1 As a promise, or fulfillment of promise, to the patriarchs. Dt. has 15 references to promise of the land (or prosperity in the land) to the fathers that would now be fulfilled.

2. As a warning that they would lose the land if disobedient.

D. God expects total commitment (note handout below)

1. Love the Lord.
2. Fear the Lord.
3. Obey the Lord.
4. “With all your heart & with all your mind.”

→ Deuteronomic Phraseology

Love the Lord”

DT 6:5
DT 11:1
DT 11:13
DT 11:22
DT 19:9
DT 30:16
DT 30:20
JOS 22:5
JOS 23:11
PS 31:23
PS 97:10
PS 116:1

“Fear the Lord”

EX 9:30
DT 6:2
DT 6:13
DT 6:24
DT 10:12
DT 10:20
DT 31:12
DT 31:13
JOS 4:24
JOS 24:14
1SA 12:14
1SA 12:24

“Obey the Lord”

DT 13:18
DT 15:5
DT 27:10
DT 28:1
DT 28:2
DT 28:15
DT 28:45
DT 28:62
DT 30:8
DT 30:10
1SA 12:15
1SA 15:19
1SA 15:20
1SA 28:18

“Obey Him”

DT 4:30
DT 9:23
DT 13:4
DT 26:17
DT 30:2
JOS 24:24
1SA 12:14

“All your heart and all your soul”

DT 4:29
DT 6:5 (+”all your strength”)
DT 10:12
DT 11:13
DT 13:3
DT 26:16
DT 30:2
DT 30:6
DT 30:10
JOS 22:5
JOS 23:14

“All your heart”

1SA 12:20
1SA 12:24

“Types of Christ in the Pentateuch”

1. Isaac’s Near Sacrifice

--Just like Abraham was willing to offer his only (true) son as a sacrifice to God, so Yahweh himself offered Jesus his only son.

--As God provided the ram for Abraham’s sacrifice, so God supplied our sacrifice, Jesus.

2. Passover

--The perfect spotless Lamb died to cause judgment to pass over those who believe in Him. He died on Passover. On the night of his betrayal, Jesus declared “This is the blood of the covenant.” First Peter refers to Jesus as the spotless Lamb who was sacrificed for His people.

3. Tabernacle

--Jesus was God among His people. He brought access to God for those who follow Him. Some of the elements in the Tabernacle also foreshadow things that Jesus would bring about. He was the “bread of life.” He was the sacrifice. He cleanses us.

4. Day of Atonement—

--a. Jesus is the atoning for sin. He entered the Most Holy Place as the high priest to make atonement for sin, but He did it “once for all,” as Hebrews puts it. He offered His own blood.

--b. Jesus removes the sins of the people like the goat for Azazel. He is often compared to the 2nd goat as the one taking the sins of the people upon Himself.

5. Year of Jubilee—

--Jesus came to “set free” the captive (see Luke 4). Thus Jesus is often seen as the true jubilee who brings freedom for his people.