

Deuteronomy Chapter 1

Background:

- Deuteronomy is the 5th and final book of the Pentateuch, or the Law.
 1. Genesis covers approximately 1,500 years of history. ([Beginnings](#))
 2. Exodus covers approximately 80 years. ([These are the names](#)) Elle Shemoth - Shemote
 3. Leviticus about 30 days. ("[And the Lord called...](#)") "Yahweh qara"
 4. Numbers covers 38-40 years. ("[In The Wilderness](#)")
 5. Deuteronomy will cover 37 days.
- Deuteronomy means "2nd Law" (Septuagint, 250 BC) – not a 2nd as in a different law, but the 2nd telling of the Law. In the Jewish Bible the title of this book is simply "[The Words](#)" – based on the first few words of Chapter 1 verse 1.
- This is not a detailed recounting of the entire law, but a narrowing of scope – directed focus on some very specific information.
- Moses will die at the end of this book, being gathered to his fathers at 120 years old.
- At this point he is 120 years old minus 37 days, he's been walking with the Lord for the last 80 years. He has seen and been the instrument of more miracles than any of the Old Testament prophets.
- God has spoken to Moses face to face as a man would speak with his friend and is truly one of the greatest leaders of all time.
- Moses loves the children of Israel, in this book he makes the transition from being the "Law giver" and "teacher" to being a "prophet." Knowing that the time is short he delivers 5 last teachings or sermons.
- A man that has been so close to the Lord, walking with Him these last 80 years – and been used so mightily, anything that he would have to say would be deemed important, but knowing that he's equipping the children of Israel, giving them the last points of instruction or advice before he departs.
- Physically the children of Israel are prepared and poised to enter the promise land, but this is for their spiritual preparation.
- **The theme of this book**, and the point of Moses' last 5 sermons are identical – it's all about obedience.

[Key Verse:](#) Deuteronomy 6:1-5

- Antshillvania: "You will win or loose by the way you choose."

Deuteronomy 30:19 “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”

- Deuteronomy is quoted 80 times in the NT – this means that there was an expectation of understanding, or a working knowledge on the part of the person hearing the teachings of the NT at that time of the book of Deuteronomy, otherwise they wouldn't have referenced it.
- This is one of Jesus' favorite books, He quoted Deuteronomy more than any other OT book.
- When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by Satan, each time that Satan presented a temptation Jesus responded from the word saying “*it is written...*” – if we look carefully we see that each of these responses from the word of God is from the book of Deuteronomy.
- With each temptation there is always a choice between obedience to God's word, or disobedience – which is what Deuteronomy is all about.
- Deuteronomy was required reading for the kings of Israel; in fact they were required to transcribe it themselves by hand to ensure that they knew it.

Deuteronomy 17:18-20 ¹⁸“And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites. ¹⁹And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: ²⁰That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel.”

- In terms of back ground information the last thing I want to mention is the direct assertion of God's love for His children.
- We've certainly seen God's love for His children in all of the previous books but it's been either implied in some way or we've drawn that conclusion from the circumstances. For the first time; in this book, God directly spells out or describes His great love for His children, for us.

Deuteronomy 4:37 “And because He loved thy fathers, therefore He chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in His sight with His mighty power out of Egypt.”

Deuteronomy 7:6-8 ⁶“For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. ⁷The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than

any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: ⁸But because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.”

Deuteronomy 7:12-13 ¹²“Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which He sware unto thy fathers:
¹³“And He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee:...”

Deuteronomy 10:15 “Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.”

V: 1-3 Moses speaking to the children of Israel: gives us the “who” in this story.

- Speaking the word, the commandments of the Lord: giving us the “what.”
- The 3rd verse gives us the “when” – which is the 1st day of the 11th month of the 40th year, which is 37 days before Moses is gathered to his fathers.
- “This side Jordan in the wilderness...”: gives us the “where.”

V: 2 It’s taken them 40 years to cover what would have been an 11 day journey from Horeb / Mt. Sinai to Kadesh Barnea, disobedience – lack of faith always hold us back.

- “Why” and “how” are yet to be answered in our text, but we’ve already mentioned it.
 1. To draw the people to a place of obedience to God’s word.
 2. That the people would know and understand that God loves them.
- Both of which we can and should easily apply to our lives.
- As Moses is speaking to the children of Israel we have to understand that this is the new generation, the children of the previous generation that had died off in the wilderness.
- This generation hadn’t experienced slavery or seen the plagues in Egypt or God’s mighty deliverance, they hadn’t seen the Red Sea parted or Pharaoh and his army being destroyed – there were many things that they hadn’t seen
- So Moses begins to rehearse the highlights of their history to them – encouraging them in their faith with the great things God has already done for them.

V: 4 The first thing Moses mentions regarding their history is their victory over Sihon, king of the Amorites and Og, king of Bashan.

- After “He” – not “they”.
- Interesting – because their initial fears and disbelief regarding entering into the promise land was because there were giants there – very scary, didn’t want to face them.
- The first thing Moses mentions are these two kings, and one of them at least – Og, king of Bashan was also of the Nephalim, one of the giants.

Deuteronomy 3:11 “For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants...”

- Still had to face the giants, and basically the giants aren’t an issue – they’re dead and behind you.

This review of history is intended to be instructive:

Romans 15:4 “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

V: 5-8 God had told the people to go in and take the promise land.

- Notice the borders extend up past Lebanon into Syria unto the great river Euphrates.
- The promise land was actually much larger than what they actually took.
- To us the promise land is the victorious life we can have in Christ Jesus, laying hold upon the promises of God in Christ Jesus in this life.

V: 9-18 603,550 warriors, along with women and children probably somewhere around 2-3 million people.

- They started out as 70 people going down to Egypt with Jacob.

Genesis 15:5 “And He brought him forth abroad, and said, look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, so shall thy seed be.”

- Scientists tell us that in any given hemisphere around the world at night; with the naked eye you can see about 2,500 stars.
- God has certainly made good on His word.

- That many people is a big responsibility for any leader, and it was too much for Moses. Jethro, his father in law gave him good counsel – to set leaders over the tribes and families, men who could deal with most of the issues that come up – judging over the people and only bringing the harder cases to Moses.
- They are to judge without partiality – fairly, righteously – small and great.

V: 19-21 After traveling from Sinai to Kadesh Barnea, the border of the promise land – God said don't be afraid, go and take it.

- There is a difference between a legitimate wilderness experience as opposed to the illegitimate wilderness experience.

John 16:33 “These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

V: 22-25 Additional information regarding what happened with the spies. It was the people's idea to send men out to spy out the land – the stated purpose being to see how to go in, where to attack first.

- It wasn't initially based on disbelief but on a presumption of obedience. Moses liked it and God allowed it.
- In V: 21 God said go take the land, here they essentially say lets go check it out. They have moved from obedience to evaluation – we're always better off just being obedient. God doesn't always call us to understand, but He does call us to obey.

2 Corinthians 5:7 “For we walk by faith, not by sight:”

V: 26 The spies brought back a bad report, sure it was a land flowing with milk and honey – but it was inhabited by giants.

- We're called to walk by what God says, not by what man says. They chose to abide by what men were saying.

V: 27 “*You murmured in your tents...*”

Murmur (H7279). “ragan”, raw-gan'; to grumble, complain, rebel:--murmur.

“*in their tents...*” – not openly.

Titus 3:2 “Speak evil of no man.” How much less of God!

“Jehovah-Shammah” – “The God who hears.”

Psalm 34:17 “The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.”

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents ... of the heart.”

- If God knows the thoughts and intents of our hearts, hiding in a tent isn't going to help.
- Again; this is a review for a purpose.
- Philosopher George Santayana wrote: “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” This why Moses is going through this with them.
- Moses is describing the previous generation; and after seeing all of God's miracles, and provision, victory after victory, His faithfulness – they complained that God was going to kill them, or let them be killed.
- What are they saying about God's character? What are they saying about God's word, his faithfulness, his power – his love?
- This is why God called them an “evil generation” (V: 35)

V: 28-35 10 men discouraged a nation, 10 men with their cowardice, their lack of faith caused a nation to fall back in fear. 600,000 men and their wives died in the wilderness because 10 men didn't believe God after all that He had done.

- One man for every 120,000 men & women. Discouraged them to death. Think about the impact one man can have on a single household.
- God had just said that He would fight the battles for them just like in Egypt. At that time Egypt was the greatest military and economic power on the planet, who would have believed that they could be defeated and plundered? That is exactly what God did!

Testimony: point of decision.

Hebrews 10:38-39 ³⁸“Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. ³⁹“Bet we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

Luke 9:62 “No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

- God carried them, like a father carries a son.

1 Thessalonians 5:24 “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.”

- We can trust God!

V: 32 To not believe God is to call Him a liar – that is called blasphemy.

Hebrews 11:6 “Without faith it is impossible to please Him.”

V: 33 What need is there for spies if God is showing them the way?

V: 35 The generation that believed the word of man over the word of God – God calls them an “evil generation” – and they will not be allowed to enter into the promise land.

V: 36 Except for Caleb – he was different, in a way not part of this evil generation.

Numbers 14:24 “But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.”

V: 37 At first glance it looks like Moses is blaming the children of Israel for his sin.

Speaking of Moses situation:

Psalms 106:32-33 “³²They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: ³³Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.”

- Moses knows his own responsibility; in a way Moses is saying that God is gracious and might have extended grace to Moses but as the theme of this book is “obedience”, we see that Moses is used as an example to the people – no one is above the law or not subject to correction, even Moses is held accountable for being obedient to God’s word.

1 Corinthians 10:1-15 Offers commentary on the wilderness years – but specifically **verses 10-12** “¹⁰Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. ¹¹Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. ¹²Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

V: 38-40 Joshua would lead the nation into the promise land, Moses is called to encourage him.

- Their children, their little ones who they said would be a prey, they will be the ones to receive the inheritance forfeited by the older generation due to their lack of faith.

Note: V: 39 God describes these children saying “at that time having no knowledge between good and evil...”

- “At that time” – meaning that there is an age of accountability where they should know better; God used 20 years as that mark – those able to go to war.
- We use 18 years of age as that mark of the entry into adulthood.
- Jews use 13 years of age, Barmitzvah or Batmitzvah – where the young man indicates that he is accountable directly to God.

1 Corinthians 13:11 “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

- Prior to that it is recognized that “children” don’t know, they are in training, they are impressionable – which is exactly why homosexual activists try to influence our children from a very early age – because they don’t know the difference between good and evil.
- That is why we train our children in God’s ways!

V: 41-46 God has just told them that because of their disbelief & rebellion they are to turn around and head back into the wilderness.

- They admitted their sin, but they are no more yielded to God’s word. They continued to ignore God and said they would fight the Amorites.
- They were warned; don’t go – God is not among them! God is gracious in even warning them – and us!
- Again they rebelled and went up presumptuously – and got clobbered!

Psalm 24:8 “Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.”

Proverbs 21:31 “The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the Lord.”

V: 43 “presumptuously” - Faith vs: presumption

Deuteronomy 6:16 “Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God, as ye tempted Him in Massah.”

- Jesus quoted this verse when Satan tempted Him, taking Him to the pinnacle of the Temple and challenging Him to throw Himself down so that God would have to save Him.
- There are people who will do the same thing, putting themselves in danger or going out on their own in what they call an act of faith – when really they are presuming upon God – tempting God.
- Faith is simply believing God, believing God's word – and being obedient to Him.
- Hebrews Chapter 11, the hall of faith: Every person listed knew exactly what God called them to do, they didn't need to guess at it, or flail around trying to figure it out. They knew, and they're included in the hall of faith because they simply did it, they were obedient to what they knew to do.
- Mom / kids I'm not really very faithful I'm just watching my kids. If you know that you're called to raise your children in the nurture and admonition of God's word – and you are obedient to that – your obedience in an act of faith.
- If you're called to be a plumber, or a CO, or a gardener and you do it obediently, faithfully as unto the Lord – that is faith in action.
- That is really all that God is looking for; the faith of a child.