

**LECTURE 7: DEUTERONOMY**  
**“The God Who Renews the Covenant”**  
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<b>Contents for Lecture 7a</b>		
I.	Orienting Data	1
	A. Content	1
	B. Historical Coverage	1
	C. Emphasis	1
	D. Structure	1
II.	The Charter of Covenant Relationship: The Constitution of the United Tribes of Israel	2
	A. Deuteronomy’s Canonical Placement and Significance	2
	B. The English Title “Deuteronomy” and the Nature of the Book	2
	C. Views on the Book’s Makeup and Structure	4
	D. Key Texts on Deuteronomy’s Call to Pursue Lasting Covenant Relationship	8
	E. The Expansive Influence of Deuteronomy on the Rest of Scripture	10
	1. The “Book of the Law”	10
	2. The “Torah/Law” in the Rest of the OT	11
	3. Deuteronomy in the Latter Prophets	15
	4. Deuteronomy in the Writings	16
	5. Deuteronomy in the NT	19
III.	Critical Issues in the Study of Deuteronomy	21
	A. Josiah’s Reform and the Origin of Deuteronomy	21
	B. The Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon and the Dating of Deuteronomy	25
IV.	The Context of Covenant Relationship: Taking God and His Word Seriously	28
	A. God’s Word and Life	28
	B. The Deuteronomic Pattern for Enjoying Life	28
	C. The Moab Covenant vs. the Horeb Covenant	30
	D. The Lasting Relevance of Deuteronomy for Christians	33

*Deut. 6:4–5. Hear, O Israel: Yahweh our God, Yahweh is one. And you shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*

### I. Orienting Data

- A. Content:** A series of Moses’ final sermons, a warning song, and the prophet’s death-bed blessing, all wrapped within a brief narrative.
- B. Historical Coverage:** The end of Israel’s forty years in the wilderness, just prior to their entrance into Canaan.
- C. Emphasis:** Moses supplies Israel with a charter for governing their lives in relation to God and his world within the Promised Land. He also clarified for Israel how to enjoy lasting covenant relationship and when that relationship would be secured and enjoyed.
- D. Structure:**
1. Superscription (1:1–4)
  2. Moses’s 1<sup>st</sup> Main Address: God’s Past Grace & Israel’s Future (1:5–4:43)
    - a. Superscription (1:5)
    - b. The Context for a Call to Response: Survey of Israel’s Recent History (1:6–3:29)
    - c. An Introductory Call for Response to Torah (4:1–4:40)

- d. Postscript (4:41–43)
3. Moses's 2<sup>nd</sup> Main Address: The Nature of Lasting Covenant Relationship (4:44–26:19)
  - a. Superscription (4:44–4:49)
  - b. What Lasting Covenant Relationship Looks Like (5:1–11:32)
    - i. The Context for Lasting Covenant Relationship: God's Word (5:1–6:3)
    - ii. The Nature of Lasting Covenant Relationship: Covenant Love (6:4–8:20)
    - iii. The Perpetuation of Lasting Covenant Relationship: Divine Grace (9:1–11:32)
  - c. How Lasting Covenant Relationship Is Enjoyed (12:1–26:19)
    - i. Religious Life in Covenant (12:1–16:17)
    - ii. Government in Covenant (16:18–21:9)
    - iii. Family Life in Covenant (21:10–22:30)
    - iv. Concluding Covenantal Oath (26:16–19)
4. Interlude Related to Covenant Ratification (27:1–28:68)
  - a. Two Initial Instructions Regarding Covenant Ratification (27:1–10)
    - i. Moses and the Elders' Command for a Future Covenant Ratification Ceremony (27:1–8)
    - ii. Moses and the Levitical Priests' Affirmation of Covenant Ratification (27:9–10)
  - b. A Further Charge Related to Covenant Ratification (27:11–29:1)
    - i. The Need to Declare Blessings and Individual Covenant Curses once Arriving in the Land (27:11–26)
    - ii. The Motivating Corporate Blessings and Curses (28:1–14, 15–68)
5. Moses's 3<sup>rd</sup> Main Address: The Hope of Lasting Covenant Relationship (29:1[28:69]–30:20)
  - a. Israel's Dire State with a Recap of Covenant Principles (29:1–29[28:69–29:28])
  - b. The Promise of a New and Better Covenant after Exile (30:1–14)
  - c. The Final Appeal (30:15–20)
6. Moses's Arrangements for the Future (31:1–32:47)
  - a. Designation of a Successor (31:1–8)
  - b. Provision of a Written Torah (31:9–13)
  - c. Provision of a Memorial Song (31:14–32:47)
7. Moses's Death (32:48–34:8)
  - a. Yahweh's summons to Moses (32:48–52)
  - b. The Blessing of Moses (33:1–29)
  - c. The Departure of Moses (34:1–8)
8. Postscript (34:9–12)

## II. The Charter of Covenant Relationship: Deuteronomy as the Constitution of the United Tribes of Israel

### A. Deuteronomy's Canonical Placement and Significance

1. Deuteronomy stands as the conclusion and summary of Pentateuchal theology.
2. Deuteronomy provides the lens for reading the Prophets and Writings.

- a. Law: The (Old) Mosaic Covenant *Established*
  - b. Prophets: The (Old) Mosaic Covenant *Enforced*
  - c. Writings: The (Old) Mosaic Covenant *Enjoyed*
3. Deuteronomy is the foundational statement regarding the law-covenant's ministry of condemnation and the new covenant's ministry of righteousness.

#### **B. The English Title “Deuteronomy” and the Nature of the Book**

1. Derived from the LXX translation of Deut 17:18 – *to deuteronomion touto*, “this second law.”
2. Stresses Deuteronomy as a document of covenant renewal.
3. Partially fulfills Yahweh's covenant with the patriarchs (Deut 1:8; 4:31; 6:10; 7:8; 9:5; 29:13; 30:20; 34:4; cf. Gen 15:5, 18; 17:7; 26:3)
  - Deut 1:8. See, I have set the land before you. Go in and take possession of the land that Yahweh swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their offspring after them.
  - Deut 4:31. For Yahweh your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.
  - Deut 6:10. And when Yahweh your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great and good cities that you did not build. . . .
  - Deut 7:8. But it is because Yahweh loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that Yahweh has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.
  - Deut 9:5. Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations Yahweh your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that Yahweh swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.
  - Deut 29:13. that he may establish you today as his people, and that he may be your God, as he promised you, and as he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.
  - Deut 30:20. loving Yahweh your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that Yahweh swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.
  - Deut 34:4. And Yahweh said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, ‘I will give it to your offspring.’ I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there.”
  - Gen 15:5, 18. And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” . . .  
<sup>18</sup> On that day Yahweh made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.”
  - Gen 17:7. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.
  - Gen 26:3. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father.
4. Reaffirms and develops the covenant at Horeb/Mt. Sinai (Deut 5:2–3; 29:1)
  - Deut 5:2–3. Yahweh our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. <sup>3</sup> Not with our fathers did Yahweh make this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive today.
  - Deut 29:1[28:69]. These are the words of the covenant that Yahweh commanded Moses to make with the people of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant that he had made with them at Horeb.

5. Deuteronomy is a charter of instruction guiding Israel's covenant life in the Promised Land, until the Abrahamic promises are fulfilled (see Gal 3:23–29 – “pedagogical” role of the Law)
  - Gal 3:23–29. Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. <sup>24</sup> So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, <sup>26</sup> for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. <sup>27</sup> For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.
6. To heed the instruction in this book results in sustained life and blessing, whereas to ignore results in curse climaxing in death (Deut 11:26–28; 30:15–18). All teachers must be guarded not to add or take away from this book; all teaching must stand aligned with Moses' understanding of the nature and possibility of covenant relationship (4:2).
  - Deut 11:26–28. See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: <sup>27</sup> the blessing, if you obey the commandments of Yahweh your God, which I command you today, <sup>28</sup> and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of Yahweh your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known.
  - Deut 30:15–18. See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. <sup>16</sup> If you obey the commandments of Yahweh your God that I command you today, by loving Yahweh your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and Yahweh your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. <sup>17</sup> But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, <sup>18</sup> I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess.
  - Deut 4:2. You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you.

### C. Views on the Book's Makeup and Structure

1. Overview of Some Proposals:
  - a. Concentric literary pattern or chiasm
  - b. An expanded Decalogue
  - c. Treaty document between God and Israel
  - d. Moses' sermon exhortations concerning covenant
2. Deuteronomy as a Chiasm (D. L. Christensen):
  - a. Proposed Structure:
    - i. *A*. Outer frame: A Look Backward (chs. 1–3)
    - ii. *B*. Inner frame: The Great Covenant Speech (chs. 4–11)
    - iii. *C*. Central Core: Covenant Stipulations (chs. 12–26)
    - iv. *B'*. Inner frame: The Covenant Ceremony (chs. 27–30)
    - v. *A'*. Outer frame: A Look Forward (chs. 31–34)
  - b. Response:
    - i. Christensen's proposal does not account for the natural text boundaries or structural signals (e.g., he links the 1<sup>st</sup> sermon's hortatory conclusion in ch. 4 with the initial movement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> sermon in chs. 5–11).
    - ii. He fails to account for the purpose of the various units.
3. Deuteronomy as an Expanded Decalogue (using the Reformed numbering) (G. Braulik; S. Kaufmann; J. Walton)

- a. The Decalogue provides the blue print for the body of the rest of Deuteronomy.

<i>Passage</i>	<i>“Word”</i>	<i>Nature of Message</i>
Chs. 6–11	1: “No other gods”	A call to exclusive worship of Yahweh
Chs. 12–13	1–3: “No other gods, no idols, no name in vain”	Demand for purity of worship and exclusion of all foreign gods
14:28–16:17	4: “Sabbath”	Focus on “holy rhythms” of Israel’s life and care for poor
16:18–18:22	5: “Honor parents”	Respect for legitimate human authority—judge, king, priest, prophet
19:1–21:9	6: “No murder”; allusions to 8–10: “no theft, false witness, coveting wife and property”	Statements against murder in opening and closing laws; 8 and 10 (19:14) and 9 (19:15–21) alluded to
22:13–30	7: “No adultery”	Regulations for a number of related sexual offenses
Chs. 23–26	8, 10: “No theft, coveting”	Miscellaneous laws: focus on community ethos of care and compassion, esp. for weak and poor

- b. Response:

- i. Notably, the Decalogue is foundational for Deuteronomy and all OT theology.
  - (1) It occupies head position for all laws in both Exodus and Deuteronomy.
  - (2) It’s the first authoritative, written covenantal material mentioned in Scripture, and the only material written with the very finger of God.
  - (3) The number 10 suggests a definitive list, and the repetitive stylized language makes the 10 suitable for memorization.
  - (4) They are echoed throughout Scripture (Jer. 7:9; Hos. 4:2; Pss. 50; 81; Matt. 19:18–19; Rom. 13:9).
- ii. This stated, within the context of Deut 5, the Decalogue plays a secondary role, serving to fill out the context that clarifies for Israel why they should listen to Moses as covenant mediator.
- iii. In the above proposal, chs. 1–4 would have no connection with the Decalogue, though perhaps they could be seen to supply the historical context, parallel to “I am Yahweh your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.” One is pressed, therefore, to say that Deuteronomy as a whole is structured in parallel to the Decalogue.
- iv. The structural parallels noted above imply at best a general and not specific expansion of the Decalogue in Deuteronomy 12–26.
- v. While some (e.g., Nelson, Block) find it difficult to affirm that the order to honor one’s parents is reapplied to the topic of public authorities, Paul seems to have room for broad application in 1 Tim 5:1–3.

4. A Treaty Document (M. G. Kline; K. A. Kitchen)

- a. 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium treaty format compared with Deuteronomy

<b>Kitchen</b>	<b>Gentry</b>	<b>Guest</b>
1. Title (1:1–5)	1. Title (1:1–5)	1. Preamble (1:1–5)
2. Historical Prologue (1:6–4:43)	2. Historical Prologue (1:6–4:43)	2. Historical Prologue (1:6–4:44)
3. Stipulations	3. Stipulations	3. Stipulations

a. Basic (4–11) b. Detailed (12–26) 4a. Deposit of Text (31:9, 24–26) 4b. Public Reading (31:10–13) 5. Witnesses (31:16–30, esp. 26; 32:1–47) 6. Blessings and Curses a. Blessings (28:1–14) b. Curses (28:15–68)	a. Basic (4:44–11:32) b. Detailed (12–26) 4a. Deposition (27:1–8) 4b. Public Reading (27:9–26) (Witnesses [30:19]) 5. Blessings and Curses a. Blessings (28:1–14) b. Curses (28:15–68)	a. General (4:45–11:32) b. Specific (12:1–26:19) 4. Document Clause (27:1–10) 5. Appeal to Witnesses (27:11–26) 6. Blessings and Curses (28:1–69[29:1]) 7. Solemn Oath Ceremony (29:1[2]–30:20)
Kitchen, <i>On the Reliability of the Old Testament</i> , 283–89.	Gentry and Wellum, <i>Kingdom through Covenant</i> , 358.	Guest, <i>Deuteronomy 26:16–19 as the Central Focus of the Covenant Framework of Deuteronomy</i> (PhD Diss., SBTS, 2009), 55.

- i. The key difference between Kitchen’s proposal and those of Gentry and Guest is that the latter two see only Deut 1–28 paralleling the ancient treaty structure.
- ii. The witnesses:
  - (1) Gentry sees no evidence of “witnesses” in Deut 1–28, and he suggests the reason is because no gods truly existed besides Yahweh, so he alone served as witness (*Kingdom through Covenant*, 359). One could note that Moses calls “heaven and earth to witness against” Israel in Deut 4:26; 30:19; 31:28 (cf. 32:1; Isa 1:2; Jer 2:12; 6:19; Mic 6:2), and the copy of the Book of the Law itself stands as “witness against” the people in 31:26. While the written law condemns the nation by identifying her sin, the heaven and earth are witnesses is a way comparable to the gods of the nations in that the people can never get away from them. Nevertheless, they are never personified in Deuteronomy (no pantheism here!), and so their role is not exactly parallel to that of the rival gods.
  - (2) Guest helpfully observes that the mention of twelve curses in Deut 27:11–26 may itself be the “appeal to witnesses,” for Yahweh is being called up to penalize any who would violate his stipulations.
- iii. A desire to parallel the ancient treaty structure could account for the intrusion of 27:1–10 before 27:11–28:68, which appears to have originally directly followed 26:19.
- iv. The placement of 27:1–10 after the stipulations and before the mention of witnesses and the blessings and curses seems best explained by a desire to echo the treaty pattern in the book’s structure (including the document clause), even though the book itself is more than a treaty. If Deut 1–28 were intended to parallel the treaty structure, with the last sermon in chs. 29–30 serving as a “solemn oath ceremony” (so Guest), it would suggest (1) that Moses’ “Book of the Law” (29:21[20]; 30:10; 31:26) covered chs. 1–30, (2) that Moses or the later editor intended to echo the treaty format in the final structure of the three sermons, and (3) that the treaty structure was important enough to force the intrusion of 27:1–10.

- b. Response:
  - i. Recognizably, the sermon form (see below) and *not* the treaty structure shapes the surface outline of the book. There are three sermons, a warning song, and a death-bed blessing, hinged together by narrative.
  - ii. Furthermore, not every feature in Deuteronomy is explained by the treaty structure, which suggests that the identification of treaty with Deuteronomy is, at some level, a secondary feature of the book.
  - iii. Kenneth A. Kitchen has rightly observed that “the covenant in Exodus–Leviticus, Deuteronomy and Joshua is a *confluence* of law and treaty” (“The Fall and Rise of Covenant, Law and Treaty,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 40 [1989]: 118–135, quote from 124). Kitchen summarizes (128): “The Sinai Covenant has the closest expectable links with both third/early second millennium Laws and the late second millennium Treaties, the links varying directly with function. Of distinctive features, Prologue, Laws, Epilogue, and few Blessings/many Curses all go with Law; the historical component of Prologue, Deposit/Reading, Witnesses and a Curses/Blessings topos are all held in common with Treaty type III [late second millennium B.C.], and *not* with I [third millennium B.C.], II [early second millennium B.C.], IV [first millennium B.C.] other than basic Witnesses/Curses [and title and stipulations]. Thus, the form and content of the Sinai Covenant is beyond serious doubt a clear confluence of the much older Law tradition with the late-second-millennium treaty format—and the covenant represents a fresh and distinctive formulation, intelligently using those two components.”
- 5. Moses’ final pastoral messages (D. I. Block):
  - a. Messages in sermonic form and structure all delivered by Moses (1:1, 5; 4:8, 44) and later written down (17:18; 31:9, 24):
    - i. “Farewell” sermons (1:5–4:43; 4:44–29:1; 29:2–30:20)
    - ii. Song of warning (32:1–43)
    - iii. Death-bed blessing (33:2–29)
  - b. Moses’ Title: “Book of the Law” (29:21; 30:10; 31:26)—God’s charter of “instruction/demand”
  - c. The Book’s Structure: An Overview
    - i. Superscription (1:1–4)
    - ii. Moses’ 1st Address: God’s Past Grace and Israel’s Future (1:5–4:43)
    - iii. Moses’ 2nd Address: The Nature of Lasting Covenant Relationship (4:44–29:1)
    - iv. Moses’ 3rd Address: A Paradigm for Covenant Renewal (29:2–30:20)
    - v. Moses’ Arrangements for the Future (31:1–32:47)
    - vi. Moses’ Death (32:48–34:8)
    - vii. Postscript (34:9–12)
- 6. Synthesis:
  - a. Deuteronomy contains the final pleas of a pastor on behalf of a loving covenant “father” (32:5–6) who calls for his “sons” (14:1) sustained love (6:5).

- b. As “the Book of the Law,” the body of Deuteronomy provided God’s charter of “instruction”:
  - i. To provide God’s people with a constant reminder of God’s greatness on their behalf (Deut 4:35, 39; 5:7; 6:4; 32:39)
  - ii. To provide a witness against Israel when they go astray (31:26–29)
  - iii. To clarify how to enjoy lasting covenant relationship (30:9–10; 31:9–13; 32:44–47; cf. 8:3)
- c. The sermonic form highlights that Deuteronomy is pastoral at its core, but the treaty structure stresses the covenantal or constitutional nature of the book.
- d. The potential use of the Decalogue to generally guide the arrangement of the middle sermon is possible, and this link with the tablets of the covenant would only highlight more the covenantal makeup with respect to both relationship and authority.

#### D. Key Texts on Deuteronomy’s Call to Pursue Lasting Covenant Relationship

1. Deut 30:8–10. And you shall again obey the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today. <sup>9</sup> The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers, <sup>10</sup> when you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in the Book of the Law, when you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.
  - a. Deuteronomy envisions a day when God’s people will follow their leader, resulting in the enjoyment of life and the delight of God.
  - b. Here divine promises serve to motivate obedience, thus a failure to follow is a failure to believe (Deut 1:32; 9:23; Num 14:11).
  - c. What you hope for tomorrow will change who you are today (2 Pet 1:4–5, 7).
    - 2 Pet 1:4–5, 7. He has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this reason, make every effort to supplement your faith . . . with love.
2. Deut 31:11–13. You shall *read* this instruction before all Israel in their *hearing*. Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may *hear* and *learn to fear* the LORD your God, and be careful to *do* all the words of this instruction, and that their children who have no known it, may *hear* and *learn to fear* the LORD your God, as long as you *live* in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.
  - a. Deuteronomy provides a general pattern for enjoying life: Reading or Teaching the Word > Hearing the Word > Learning to Fear God > Obeying God = Life (cf. Deut 6:1–3; 17:18–20)
  - b. The internal disposition of fear precedes and produces obedience (cf. Prov 9:10), and failure to fear God leads to judgment (Matt 10:28; Rom 3:18).
  - c. Yet holy fear itself is contingent on a preceding encounter with God’s gracious revelation (cf. Exod 20:20; Jer 32:39–40). That is, lasting covenant relationship is grounded in God’s grace alone; fear and the obedience that



flows from it are human responses to God's covenant initiating and sustaining grace.

3. Deut 32:45–47. And when Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel, he said to them, “Take to heart all the words by which I am warning you today, that you may *command* them to your children, that they may *be careful to do* all the words of this instruction. For it is no empty word for you, but your very life, and by this word you shall live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.”
  - a. Here, a parent's instruction is to lead to a child's obedience, all so that he/she may enjoy life (Command > [Hear > Learn to Fear >] Obey = Life).
  - b. Both promises of blessing and warnings of danger are gracious provisions, designed to motivate a different kind of living in the present. See Lev 26:18, 21, 23, 27; NT warnings: Matt 6:15; 25:31–46; Luke 6:20–26; Rom. 8:13; 11:22; 1 Cor. 6:9–11; Gal. 5:4, 19–21; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 2:3; 6:4–6; 10:26–31; 12:15; Rev. 22:19
    - Deut. 8:3. Man does not live on bread alone, but man lives on every word that comes from the mouth of Yahweh.
4. Summary:
  - a. Lasting covenant relationship (i.e., life) is enjoyed by encountering the Word (Read) in a responsive way (Hear) that leads to reverence of God (Fear) and overflows in following him (Obey).
    - i. God's grace through revelation and motivation is the foundation of all life and lasting covenant relationship.
    - ii. God graciously discloses himself and his will in a way that creates fear and leads to obedience.
  - b. Lasting covenant relationship (i.e., life) is enjoyed by encountering the Word (Read) in a responsive way (Hear) that leads to trust God's promises (Believe) and overflows in following him (Obey).
    - i. God graciously gives promises of blessing and warning of curse that generate faith, hope, and love in a divinely reshaped heart.
    - ii. The obedience of faith is a means not a ground for enjoying life; the declaration and reception of the promise is gift!
  - c. The ground, motivation, and perpetuation of covenant relationship is solely God's grace.
    - i. Grace from Start to Finish: Deut 33:26–29. **There is none like God**, O Jeshurun, who rides through the heavens to *your help*, through the skies in his **majesty**. <sup>27</sup>The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms. And he thrust out the enemy before you and said, Destroy. <sup>28</sup>So Israel lived in safety, Jacob lived alone, in a land of grain and wine, whose heavens drop down dew. <sup>29</sup>Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, *a people saved by Yahweh*, **the shield** of *your help*, and **the sword** of *your triumph*! Your enemies shall come fawning to you, and you shall tread upon their backs.
      - (1) The uniqueness of Yahweh (Deut 4:35:39)
      - (2) This God is for his people, not against them!

- ii. From an eschatological perspective, Israel becomes “a people saved by Yahweh” (Deut 33:29) on the basis of Christ’s atoning sacrifice alone (Rom 3:26).
- iii. So too his work is the ground upon which we receive all mercy, for it both ensures for us all future grace (Rom 8:32) and calls us to live for God in the present (12:1–2).
- iv. Relationship is always by grace alone through faith alone and ultimately by, through, and for Christ alone.

## E. The Expansive Influence of Deuteronomy on the Rest of Scripture

### 1. The “Book of the Law”

- a. Moses’ title for the “book” within the book of Deuteronomy (Deut 29:21[20]; 30:10; 31:26)
  - Deut 29:21[20]. And Yahweh will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for calamity, in accordance with all the curses of the covenant written in this Book of the Law.
  - Deut 30:9–10. Yahweh your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For Yahweh will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers,<sup>10</sup> when you obey the voice of Yahweh your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you turn to Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul.
  - Deut 31:26. Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of Yahweh your God, that it may be there for a witness against you.
- b. Guided Israel’s conquest and settlement (Josh 1:8; 8:34; 23:6)
  - Josh 1:8. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.
  - Josh 8:34. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law.
  - Josh 23:6. Therefore, be very strong to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, turning aside from it neither to the right hand nor to the left.
- c. Directed God-fearing kings in Judah in shaping judicial policy (2 Kgs 14:6) and in assigning community responsibilities (2 Chr 17:9) (cf. Deut 17:18–20).
  - 2 Kgs 14:6. But [Amaziah, the son of Joash, king of Judah] did not put to death the children of the murderers, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, where Yahweh commanded, “Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. But each one shall die for his own sin.”
  - 2 Chr 17:9. And [in the days of Jehoshapat, king of Judah, the Levites and priests he called] taught in Judah, having the Book of the Law of Yahweh with them. They went about through all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.
- d. Provided Israel’s political and religious leaders with a blueprint for covenant renewal before (2 Kgs 22:8–11; 23:2, 21) and after (Neh 8:1, 13, 18; 9:3) exile.
  - 2 Kgs 22:8, 10–11; 23:2, 21. And Hilkiyah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, “I have found the Book of the Law in the house of Yahweh.” And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. . . .<sup>10</sup> Then Shaphan the secretary told the king, “Hilkiyah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read it before the king.<sup>11</sup> When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes. . . .<sup>23:2</sup>

And the king went up to the house of Yahweh, and with him all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the prophets, all the people, both small and great. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of Yahweh. . . .<sup>21</sup> And the king commanded all the people, “Keep the Passover to Yahweh your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant.”

- Neh 8:1, 13, 18; 9:3. And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that Yahweh had commanded Israel. . . .<sup>13</sup> On the second day the heads of fathers’ houses of all the people, with the priests and the Levites, came together to Ezra the scribe in order to study the words of the Law. . . .<sup>18</sup> And day by day, from the first day to the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. They kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the rule. . . .<sup>9:3</sup> And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of Yahweh their God for a quarter of the day; for another quarter of it they made confession and worshiped Yahweh their God.

## 2. The “Torah/Law” in the Rest of the OT

### a. The righteous were called to meditate on it daily (Josh 1:8; Ps 1:2; cf. Deut 6:7; 17:19)

- Josh 1:8. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.
- Ps 1:2. But his delight is in the law of Yahweh, and on his law he meditates day and night.
- Deut 6:7. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.
- Deut 17:19. And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear Yahweh his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them.

### b. Faithful kings would rule by it (1 Kgs 2:2–4; 2 Kgs 14:6; 22:11; 23:25; cf. Deut 17:18–20)

- 1 Kings 2:2–4; 2 Kings 14:6; 22:11; 23:25; Deut 17:18–20.
- 1 Kgs 2:2–4. [King David said to Solomon,] “I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, and show yourself a man,<sup>3</sup> and keep the charge of Yahweh your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn,<sup>4</sup> that Yahweh may establish his word that he spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’”
- 2 Kgs 14:6. But [Amaziah, king of Judah,] did not put to death the children of the murderers, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, where Yahweh commanded, “Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. But each one shall die for his own sin.”
- 2 Kgs 22:11; 23:25. When [Josiah] the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes. . . .<sup>23:25</sup> Before him there was no king like him, who turned to Yahweh with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses, nor did any like him arise after him.
- Deut 17:18–20. And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests.<sup>19</sup> And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear

Yahweh his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them,<sup>20</sup> that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.

- c. Priests were to teach and model it (Jer 18:18; Ezek 7:26; 22:26; Mal 2:7; Ezra 7:10; cf. Lev 10:10–11; Deut 33:10)
- Jer 18:18. Then they said, “Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us strike him with the tongue, and let us not pay attention to any of his words.”
  - Ezek 7:26. Disaster comes upon disaster; rumor follows rumor. They seek a vision from the prophet, while the law perishes from the priest and counsel from the elders.
  - Ezek 22:26. Her priests have done violence to my law and have profaned my holy things. They have made no distinction between the holy and the common, neither have they taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have disregarded my Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them.
  - Mal 2:7. For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of Yahweh of hosts.
  - Ezra 7:10. For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of Yahweh, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.
  - Lev 10:10–11. You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean,<sup>11</sup> and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that Yahweh has spoken to them by Moses.”
  - Deut 33:10. They shall teach Jacob your rules and Israel your law; they shall put incense before you and whole burnt offerings on your altar.
- d. Prophets interpreted Israel’s history in the light of it and made warnings and promises about Israel’s future on the basis of it (2 Kgs 17:13–18; Isa 1:10; Jer 11:1–13; Ezek 20:23–24; Dan 9:3–15; cf. Deut 4:25–31; 29:16–28)
- 2 Kgs 17:13–18. Yet Yahweh warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the Law that I commanded your fathers, and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets.”<sup>14</sup> But they would not listen, but were stubborn, as their fathers had been, who did not believe in Yahweh their God.<sup>15</sup> They despised his statutes and his covenant that he made with their fathers and the warnings that he gave them. They went after false idols and became false, and they followed the nations that were around them, concerning whom Yahweh had commanded them that they should not do like them.<sup>16</sup> And they abandoned all the commandments of Yahweh their God, and made for themselves metal images of two calves; and they made an Asherah and worshiped all the host of heaven and served Baal.<sup>17</sup> And they burned their sons and their daughters as offerings and used divination and omens and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of Yahweh, provoking him to anger.<sup>18</sup> Therefore Yahweh was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight. None was left but the tribe of Judah only.
  - Isa 1:10. Hear the word of Yahweh, you rulers of Sodom! Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah!
  - Jer 11:1–13. The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh:<sup>2</sup> “Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> You shall say to them, Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel: Cursed be the man who does not hear the words of this covenant<sup>4</sup> that I commanded your fathers when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God,<sup>5</sup> that I may confirm the oath that I swore to your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this day.” Then I answered, “So be it, Yahweh.”<sup>6</sup> And Yahweh said to me, “Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem:

Hear the words of this covenant and do them. <sup>7</sup> For I solemnly warned your fathers when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, Obey my voice. <sup>8</sup> Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of his evil heart. Therefore I brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did not.” <sup>9</sup> Again Yahweh said to me, “A conspiracy exists among the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup> They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to hear my words. They have gone after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant that I made with their fathers. <sup>11</sup> Therefore, thus says Yahweh, Behold, I am bringing disaster upon them that they cannot escape. Though they cry to me, I will not listen to them. <sup>12</sup> Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry to the gods to whom they make offerings, but they cannot save them in the time of their trouble. <sup>13</sup> For your gods have become as many as your cities, O Judah, and as many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars you have set up to shame, altars to make offerings to Baal.

- Ezek 20:23–24. Moreover, I swore to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them through the countries, <sup>24</sup> because they had not obeyed my rules, but had rejected my statutes and profaned my Sabbaths, and their eyes were set on their fathers’ idols.
- Dan 9:3–15. Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. <sup>4</sup> I prayed to Yahweh my God and made confession, saying, “O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, <sup>5</sup> we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. <sup>6</sup> We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. <sup>7</sup> To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you. <sup>8</sup> To us, O Yahweh, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. <sup>9</sup> To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him <sup>10</sup> and have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh our God by walking in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. <sup>11</sup> All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him. <sup>12</sup> He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a great calamity. For under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us; yet we have not entreated the favor of Yahweh our God, turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth. <sup>14</sup> Therefore Yahweh has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us, for Yahweh our God is righteous in all the works that he has done, and we have not obeyed his voice. <sup>15</sup> And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly.
- Deut 4:25–31. When you father children and children’s children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of Yahweh your God, so as to provoke him to anger, <sup>26</sup> I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed. <sup>27</sup> And Yahweh will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where Yahweh will drive you. <sup>28</sup> And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. <sup>29</sup> But from there you will seek Yahweh your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your

soul.<sup>30</sup> When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to Yahweh your God and obey his voice.<sup>31</sup> For Yahweh your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.

- Deut 29:17–28. And you have seen their detestable things, their idols of wood and stone, of silver and gold, which were among them.<sup>18</sup> Beware lest there be among you a man or woman or clan or tribe whose heart is turning away today from Yahweh our God to go and serve the gods of those nations. Beware lest there be among you a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit,<sup>19</sup> one who, when he hears the words of this sworn covenant, blesses himself in his heart, saying, ‘I shall be safe, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart.’ This will lead to the sweeping away of moist and dry alike.<sup>20</sup> Yahweh will not be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of Yahweh and his jealousy will smoke against that man, and the curses written in this book will settle upon him, and Yahweh will blot out his name from under heaven.<sup>21</sup> And Yahweh will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for calamity, in accordance with all the curses of the covenant written in this Book of the Law.<sup>22</sup> And the next generation, your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, will say, when they see the afflictions of that land and the sicknesses with which Yahweh has made it sick—<sup>23</sup> the whole land burned out with brimstone and salt, nothing sown and nothing growing, where no plant can sprout, an overthrow like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which Yahweh overthrew in his anger and wrath—<sup>24</sup> all the nations will say, ‘Why has Yahweh done thus to this land? What caused the heat of this great anger?’<sup>25</sup> Then people will say, ‘It is because they abandoned the covenant of Yahweh, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt,<sup>26</sup> and went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they had not known and whom he had not allotted to them.<sup>27</sup> Therefore the anger of Yahweh was kindled against this land, bringing upon it all the curses written in this book,<sup>28</sup> and Yahweh uprooted them from their land in anger and fury and great wrath, and cast them into another land, as they are this day.’
- e. Parents were supposed to teach their children to obey it (Prov 3:1–3; 6:20–24; cf. Deut 6:7, 20–25; 11:19)
  - Prov 3:1–3. My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments,<sup>2</sup> for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.<sup>3</sup> Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.
  - Prov 6:20–24. My son, keep your father’s commandment, and forsake not your mother’s teaching.<sup>21</sup> Bind them on your heart always; tie them around your neck.<sup>22</sup> When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you.<sup>23</sup> For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life,<sup>24</sup> to preserve you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress.
  - Deut 6:7. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. Cf. 11:19.
  - Deut 6:20–25. When your son asks you in time to come, “What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that Yahweh our God has commanded you?”<sup>21</sup> then you shall say to your son, “We were Pharaoh’s slaves in Egypt. And Yahweh brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.<sup>22</sup> And Yahweh showed signs and wonders, great and grievous, against Egypt and against Pharaoh and all his household, before our eyes.<sup>23</sup> And he brought us out from there, that he might bring us in and give us the land that he swore to give to our fathers.<sup>24</sup> And Yahweh commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Yahweh our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as we are this day.<sup>25</sup> And it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to do all this commandment before Yahweh our God, as he has commanded us.”

- f. The psalmists delighted in it (Pss 19:7–11; 119)
- Ps 19:7–11. The law of Yahweh is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of Yahweh is sure, making wise the simple; <sup>8</sup> the precepts of Yahweh are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of Yahweh is pure, enlightening the eyes; <sup>9</sup> the fear of Yahweh is clean, enduring forever; the rules of Yahweh are true, and righteous altogether. <sup>10</sup> More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. <sup>11</sup> Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.
3. Deuteronomy in the Latter Prophets
- a. The prophets were covenant ambassadors from the heavenly council, commissioned to call God’s people back into relationship with their covenant King. Deuteronomy shaped the foundation for their covenant message.
  - b. Categories of Prophetic Oracles:
    - i. *Indictment*: statement of offense that specified the deuteronomic stipulations violated.
    - ii. *Warning/Punishment*: declaration of the punishment to be carried out, stated in terms of the deuteronomic curses.
    - iii. *Instruction*: clarified the expected response in light of the deuteronomic stipulations.
    - iv. *Restoration/Salvation*: affirmation of future hope or deliverance, stated in terms of the deuteronomic restoration blessings.

**Fig. 7.1. Israelite Covenant Blessings, Curses, & Restoration Blessings Referred to by the Prophets**

Blessings			
1.	Yahweh’s presence / favor / loyalty (Lev. 26:11–12)	6.	General & unspecified (Deut. 28:2, 6, 8, 12–13)
2.	Confirmation of the covenant (Lev. 26:9)	7.	Peace & security in the land with no fear: a. <i>general</i> (Lev. 26:5–6); b. <i>from harmful animals</i> (Lev. 26:6); c. <i>from enemies</i> (Lev. 26:6)
3.	Be a holy people to Yahweh (Deut. 28:9)		
4.	Rains in season (Lev. 26:4; Deut. 28:12)		
5.	Abounding prosperity and productivity: a. <i>general</i> (Deut. 28:12); b. <i>fruit of the womb</i> (Lev. 26:9; Deut. 28:4, 11); c. <i>fruit of the livestock</i> (Deut. 28:4, 11); d. <i>fruit of the ground</i> (Lev. 26:4–5, 10; Deut. 28:4, 8, 11)	8.	Victory over enemies (Lev. 26:7–8; Deut. 28:7)
		9.	Freedom from slavery (Lev. 26:13)
		10.	Global influence & witness (Deut. 28:1, 10, 12)
Curses			
1.	Anger & rejection from Yahweh (Lev. 26:17, 24, 28, 41; Deut. 4:24–25; 29:20, 24, 27–28; 31:17–18, 29; 32:16, 19–22, 30)	13.	Exile & captivity: a. <i>of the people</i> (Lev. 26:33–34, 36, 38–39, 41, 44; Deut. 4:27; 28:36–37, 41, 63–64, 68; 29:28; 30:4; 32:26); b. <i>of the king</i> (Deut. 28:36)
2.	Rejection & destruction of the cult (Lev. 26:31)	14.	Forced idolatry in exile (Deut. 4:28; 28:36, 64)
3.	War and its ravages: a. <i>general</i> (Lev. 26:17, 25, 33, 37; 28:25, 49, 52; 32:23–24, 30, 41–42); b. <i>siege</i> (Lev. 26:25–26, 29; Deut. 28:52–53, 55, 57)	15.	Futility (Lev. 26:16, 20; Deut. 28:20, 29–31, 33, 38–41)
		16.	Dishonor & degradation (Lev. 26:19; Deut. 28:20, 25, 37, 43–44, 68)
4.	Fear, terror, & horror (Lev. 26:16–17, 36–37; Deut. 28:66–67; 32:25)	17.	Loss of possessions & impoverishment (Deut. 28:31)
		18.	Loss of family (Deut. 28:30, 32, 41; 32:25)
5.	Occupation & oppression by enemies & aliens (Lev. 26:16–17, 32; Deut. 28:31, 33, 43–44, 48, 68; 32:21)	19.	Helplessness & stumbling (Lev. 26:36–37; Deut. 28:29, 32; 32:35–36; 38–39)
6.	Agricultural disaster & non-productivity: a. <i>general</i> (Lev. 26:20; Deut. 28:17–18, 22, 40; 29:23); b. <i>drought</i> (Lev. 26:19; Deut. 28:22–24); c. <i>crop pests</i> (Deut. 28:38–42)	20.	Psychological afflictions (Deut. 28:20, 28, 34, 65–67)
		21.	Lack of peace & rest (Deut. 28:65)
		22.	Denial of burial (Deut. 28:26)
		23.	Becoming like the cities of the plain (Deut. 29:23)

7.	Starvation / famine (Lev. 26:26, 29, 45; Deut. 28:53–56; 32:24)	24.	Death & destruction (Lev. 26:36, 39; Deut. 4:26; 28:20–22, 44, 48, 51, 61; 29:20; 30:15,18–19; 31:17; 32:25–26, 35, 39, 42)
8.	Illness, pestilence, & contamination (Lev. 26:16; Deut. 28:21–22, 27–28, 35, 59–61; 29:22; 32:24, 39)	25.	General & unspecified (Deut. 4:30; 28:20, 24, 45, 59, 61, 63; 29:19, 21–22; 31:17, 21, 29; 32:23, 35)
9.	Desolation: a. <i>of holy places</i> (Lev. 26:31); b. <i>of cities &amp; towns</i> (Lev. 26:31, 33); c. <i>of the land</i> (Lev. 26:32–35, 43; Deut. 28:51; 29:23)	26.	General punishment, curse, & vengeance (Lev. 26:41, 43; Deut. 28:16, 20–21, 27; 30:19; 32:35, 41, 43)
10.	Destruction by fire (Deut. 28:24; 32:22)	27.	Multiple punishments (Lev. 26:18, 21, 24, 28)
11.	Harm from wild animals (Lev. 26:22; Deut. 32:24)		
12.	Decimation & infertility: a. <i>of family</i> (Lev. 26:22; Deut. 28:18, 59); b. <i>of cattle</i> (Lev. 26:22; Deut. 28:18, 51); c. <i>of population generally</i> (Lev. 26:22, 36; Deut. 4:27; 28:62; 32:36)		
<b>Restoration Blessings</b>			
1.	Renewal of Yahweh's presence, favor, & loyalty (Lev. 26:42, 45; Deut. 4:29, 31; 30:3, 9)	6.	Restoration of general prosperity, well-being, & wealth (Deut. 30:3, 5, 9; 32:39)
2.	Renewal of the covenant (Lev. 26:42, 44–45; Deut. 4:31)	7.	Return from exile & repossession of the land (Deut. 30:3–5)
3.	Restoration of true worship & ability to be faithful (Deut. 4:30; 30:6, 8)	8.	Reunification (Deut. 30:3–4)
4.	Population increase (Deut. 30:5, 9)	9.	Power over enemies & aliens (Deut. 30:7)
5.	Agricultural bounty (Lev. 26:42; Deut. 30:9)	10.	Freedom & restoration from death & destruction (Lev. 26:44; Deut. 30:6; 32:39)
Prepared by Jason S. DeRouchie; most of the categorization is taken from Douglas Stuart, "Malachi," in <i>The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical &amp; Expository Commentary</i> , ed. Thomas Edward McComiskey (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 1259–1260; cf. idem, <i>Hosea–Jonah</i> , WBC 31 (Dallas: Word, 1987), xxxi–xlii. All references were pulled from Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 4, and 28–32. No single prophetic book, except perhaps Isaiah, mentions all categories.			

#### 4. Deuteronomy in the Writings

- a. *Deuteronomical Law in Psalms*. Deuteronomy appears to supply the backdrop to "law" in the Psalms, as is suggested by a number of features. (Much of this material is taken from Wells and Magdaline, "Law," *DOT:WPW*, 420–27.)
  - i. Deuteronomical language of law fills the so-called Torah psalms (Pss 1, 19, 119 = *tôrâ* "law, teaching," *ēdût* "decrees," *piqqûdîm* "precepts," *hōq* "statute, law," *mišwâ* "commandment," *mišpaṭ* "judgment, ruling"), as well as other passages (e.g., 78:5).
  - ii. The phrase "meditate on the law day and night" in Ps 1:2 appears to be a parallel with the only other use of the phrase in Scripture—Josh 1:8, which bear explicit reference to Deuteronomy.
  - iii. Deuteronomical retribution theology fills the Psalter. In Deuteronomy, obedience will bring blessing of health, prosperity, and success (Deut 15:4–6; 28:1–14), whereas disobedience will result in curses of sickness, poverty, and defeat (28:15–68). Similarly, in the Psalms, Yahweh is judge over all the cosmos (e.g., Pss 7:8–11; 82:1), who makes covenants (e.g., 25:10; 89:3), investigates possible covenant breaches (e.g., 7:9; 17:3; 26:2; 44:21), and enforces the covenants with lawsuits (e.g., 82; 143:2). He evaluates the degree to which an individual or a society adheres to covenantal law (78:10; 103:18) and blesses or punishes accordingly (1:5–6; 5:12; 9:17; 33:12; 37:17). At times, when the psalmist felt God was not following his own rules of justice, they would petition Yahweh for assistance (e.g., 4:1; 5:2; 17:1;



55:1–2; 119:154; 130:2–3) or ask him to rehear a case (e.g., Ps 88), pleading for vindication for themselves (e.g., 26:1) and often ruin for their adversaries (143:11–12).

- b. *Deuteronomic Law in Proverbs* (much of this material is taken from G. H. Wilson, “The Words of the Wise’: The Intent and Significance of Qoheleth 12:9–14,” *JBL* [1984]: 175–92; C. M. Carmichael, *The Origins of Biblical Law*, 73)
- i. The law as wisdom
    - Deut 4:6. Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.”
    - Sir 24:1–2, 23. Wisdom praises herself, and tells of her glory in the midst of her people. <sup>2</sup> In the assembly of the Most High she opens her mouth, and in the presence of his hosts she tells of her glory. . . . <sup>23</sup> All this is the book of the covenant of the Most High God, the law that Moses commanded us as an inheritance for the congregations of Jacob.
  - ii. Life enjoyed through following God’s commands
    - Prov. 3:1–2. My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. (Cf. Deut. 4:40; 6:1–2)
    - Prov. 6:23. For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life. (Cf. Deut. 4:1; 5:28–29; 8:1–2)
    - Deut. 4:40. Therefore you shall keep his statutes and his commandments, which command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, that you may prolong your days in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you for all time. Cf. 4:1; 5:29; 6:1–2; 8:1–2.
  - iii. “Bind” the commandments on the body
    - Prov. 6:20–23. My son, keep your father’s commandment, and forsake not your mother’s teaching. Bind them on your heart always; tie them around your neck. When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you. For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life.
    - Prov. 7:1–3. My son, keep my words and treasure up my commandments with you; keep my commandments and live; keep my teaching as the apple of your eye; bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.
    - Deut. 6:6–9. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Cf. 11:18–19)
  - iv. Two ways
    - Prov. 3:33–35. Yahweh’s curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the dwelling of the righteous. Toward the scorner he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor. The wise will inherit honor, but fools get disgrace.
    - Prov. 4:10–19. Hear, my son, and accept my words, that the years of your life may be many. <sup>11</sup> I have taught you the way of wisdom; I have led you in the paths of uprightness. <sup>12</sup> When you walk, your step will not be hampered, and if you run, you will not stumble. <sup>13</sup> Keep hold of instruction; do not let go; guard her, for she is your life. <sup>14</sup> Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of the evil. <sup>15</sup> Avoid it; do not go on it; turn away from it and pass on. <sup>16</sup> For they cannot sleep unless they have done wrong; they are robbed of sleep unless they have made someone stumble. <sup>17</sup> For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence. <sup>18</sup> But the path of the righteous is like the light of

dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day.<sup>19</sup> The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know over what they stumble.

- Prov. 8:32–36. And now, O sons, listen to me: blessed are those who keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and do not neglect it. Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors. For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from Yahweh, but he who fails to find me injures himself; all who hate me love death.
  - Deut. 11:26–28. See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of Yahweh your God, which I command you today, and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of Yahweh your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known.
  - Deut. 30:15–18. See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of Yahweh your God that I command you today, by loving Yahweh your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and Yahweh your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess.
- v. God as “father” who disciplines the “son” he loves
- Prov. 3:11–13. My son, do not despise Yahweh’s discipline or be weary of his reproof, for Yahweh reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.
  - Deut. 8:5–6. Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, Yahweh your God disciplines you. So you shall keep the commandments of Yahweh your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. Cf. Deut. 1:30–31.
- vi. Possession of the land conditioned on adherence to the righteous path
- Prov. 2:20–22. So you will walk in the way of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous. For the upright will inhabit the land, and those with integrity will remain in it, but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the treacherous will be rooted out of it.
  - Deut. 5:32–33. You shall be careful therefore to do as Yahweh your God has commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the way that Yahweh your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess.
  - Deut. 30:15–18 (see above).
- vii. Wisdom’s role at creation
- Prov. 3:19–20. Yahweh by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; but his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew.
  - Prov. 8:22–31. Yahweh possessed me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth, before he had made the earth with its fields, or the first of the dust of the world. When he established the heavens, I was there; when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man.

## viii. The Ten Words Affirmed in Proverbs

## (1) Never take Yahweh's Name in Vain

- Prov. 30:8–9. Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is Yahweh?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.

## (2) Honoring One's Parents

- Prov. 1:8. Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching.
- Prov. 15:5. A fool despises his father's instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is prudent.
- Prov. 19:26. He who does violence to his father and chases away his mother is a son who brings shame and reproach. (Cf. 17:21.)
- Prov. 20:20. If one curses his father or his mother, his lamp will be put out in utter darkness.
- Prov. 23:22. Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.
- Prov. 30:17. The eye that mocks the father and scorns to obey a mother will be picked out by the ravens of the valley and eaten by the vultures.
- Cf. Sir. 3:1–16.

## (3) Never commit adultery or lust

- Prov. 6:25–26, 32. The adulterous... Do not desire her beauty in your heart, and do not let her capture you with her eyelashes; for the price of a prostitute is only a loaf of bread, but a married woman hunts down a precious life.... He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it destroys himself.

## (4) Never bear false witness against your neighbor

- Prov. 6:19. Yahweh hates... A false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.
- Prov. 14:25. A truthful witness saves lives, but one who breathes out lies is deceitful.
- Prov. 19:5. A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who breathes out lies will not escape.
- Prov. 24:28. Be not a witness against your neighbor without cause, and do not deceive with your lips.
- Prov. 25:18. A man who bears a false witness against his neighbor is like a war club, or a sword, or a sharp arrow.

## 5. Deuteronomy in the NT

## a. Deuteronomy was apparently one of Jesus' favorite books (Matt 4:4, 7, 10 with Deut 8:3; 6:16, 13).

- Matt 4:4, 7, 10. But he answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." . . . <sup>7</sup> Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" . . . <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'"
- Deut 8:3. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of Yahweh.
- Deut 6:13, 16. It is Yahweh your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear. . . . <sup>16</sup> You shall not put Yahweh your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah.

- b. James echoes it when detailing the story of Gentile inclusion into the people of God (Acts 15:13–18 with Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18–19).
- Acts 15:13–18. After they finished speaking, James replied, “Brothers, listen to me. <sup>14</sup> Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for his name. <sup>15</sup> And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, <sup>16</sup> ‘After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, <sup>17</sup> that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things <sup>18</sup> known from of old.’”
  - Deut 7:6. For you are a people holy to Yahweh your God. Yahweh your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.
  - Deut 14:2. For you are a people holy to Yahweh your God, and Yahweh has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.
  - Deut 26:18–19. And Yahweh has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments, <sup>19</sup> and that he will set you in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations that he has made, and that you shall be a people holy to Yahweh your God, as he promised.”
- c. Peter and Stephen portray Jesus as “the prophet like Moses” anticipated in it (Acts 3:22–23; 7:37 with Deut 18:15, 18–19; 34:10).
- Acts 3:22–26. Moses said, “The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. <sup>23</sup> And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.” <sup>24</sup> And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days. <sup>25</sup> You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with you fathers, saying to Abraham, “And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” <sup>26</sup> God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.
  - Acts 7:37. This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, “God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.”
  - Deut 18:15, 18–19. Yahweh your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen— <sup>18</sup> I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. <sup>19</sup> And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.
  - Deut 34:10. And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom Yahweh knew face to face.
- d. Paul uses it to clarify how a Christian’s faith in God relates to keeping God’s law (Rom 9:30–10:13, esp. 10:6–7 with Deut 30:11–14).
- Rom 10:6–7. But the righteousness based on faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) <sup>7</sup> “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).
  - Deut 30:11–14. For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. <sup>12</sup> It is not in heaven, that you should say, “Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?” <sup>13</sup> Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, “Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?” <sup>14</sup> But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.
- e. Paul portrays Jesus’ death and resurrection as the climax of Israel’s covenantal judgment and restoration anticipated in it (Gal 3:13–14 with Deut 21:23; chs. 29–30).

- Gal 3:13–14. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”—<sup>14</sup> so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.
  - Deut 21:23. His body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that Yahweh your God is giving you for an inheritance.
- f. Paul drew upon the portrait of Israel’s history and mission in Deut 32 to explain how the inclusion of the Gentiles into the people of God was part of God’s plan (Rom 10:19–11:26 with Deut 32:21) and to exhort his Roman audience to embrace the multi-national nature of the Gospel (Rom 15:7–10 with Deut 32:43)
- Rom 15:7–10. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. <sup>8</sup> For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God’s truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, <sup>9</sup> and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, “Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name.” <sup>10</sup> And again it is said, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”
  - Deut 32:43. Rejoice with him, O heavens; bow down to him, all gods, for he avenges the blood of his children and takes vengeance on his adversaries. He repays those who hate him and cleanses his people’s land. [ESV text note identifies the numerous variant readings that account for Paul’s rendering; sadly, the ESV translators did not think Paul was right!]
6. Deuteronomy’s Lasting Significance. Deuteronomy is an important book that Moses believed had lasting significance in the new covenant age (Deut 30:1–2, 6–8).
- Deut 30:1–2, 6–8. And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where Yahweh your God has driven you, <sup>2</sup> and return to Yahweh your God, you and your children, *and obey his voice in all that I command you today*, with all your heart and with all your soul. . . . <sup>6</sup> And Yahweh your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. <sup>7</sup> And Yahweh your God will put all these curses on your foes and enemies who persecuted you. <sup>8</sup> *And you shall return and obey the voice of Yahweh and keep all his commandments that I command you today.*

### III. Critical Issues in the Study of Deuteronomy

#### A. Josiah’s Reform and the Origin of Deuteronomy

1. M. Weinfeld refers to Deuteronomy as “the touchstone for dating the sources in the Pentateuch and the historical books of the Old Testament” (“Deuteronomy,” *ABD*, 2:174ab). Reasons:
  - a. What instigated Josiah’s reform was the discovery of the “Book of the Law” (2 Kgs 22:8), which is the same title Moses and Joshua employ for the material in Deuteronomy (Deut 29:21; 30:10; 31:26; Josh 1:8; cf. Deut 28:58, 61; Josh 8:32; 24:26).
  - b. In 1805, W. M. L. de Wette posited that Deuteronomy did not even exist prior to Hezekiah’s reforms, because there is no evidence that Deuteronomy’s teachings on centralization were heeded (e.g., 1 Sam 9:14; 10:3; 1 Kgs 18). In Weinfeld’s words: “Hezekiah was the first to centralize worship in Israel (2 Kgs 18:4, 22). Before the time of Hezekiah, places of worship throughout the land were considered indispensable for the religious

life of Israel, so that, for Elijah, destroying altars of YHWH was tantamount to slaying his prophets (1 Kgs 19:10, 14). On the other hand, in the legislative literature in Israel the demand for cult centralization occurs for the first time in Deuteronomy. This book would therefore be a model or inspiration, or a reflection of them, for reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah” (ibid.; cf. McConville, “Deuteronomy,” *DOT:P*, 185a).

- c. Weinfeld further asserts that Deuteronomy’s “prophetic style” was not found in Israel until the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (*ABD*, 2:174ab).
2. Weinfeld’s concession (179a): “I refer to the Hezekianic or Josianic period because it is very hard to date the various layers of Deuteronomistic literature. Since the book of Deuteronomy was discovered in the days of Josiah (622 B.C.E.) we must suppose that the main layout of the book was existent long before that time—that is, at the time of Hezekiah. However, we still do not know what belongs to the later Josianic elaboration and what existed before.”
3. A biblical response:
  - a. Centralization:
    - i. De Wette’s observation neither accounts for the historical reality of centralization pre-Hezekiah at Shiloh (Josh. 18:1; 1 Sam. 1:3; 4:3–4; Jer. 7:12),<sup>1</sup> Gibeon (2 Chr. 1:3–6; cf. Josh. 9:27; 1 Kgs. 3:4; 1 Chr. 16:39–40), and Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:17; 7:2; 1 Kgs. 8) nor of Israel’s disobedience in not taking the central sanctuary seriously during this time. It may be in this context, without any hint of fault, that the men of Beth-Shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrifices to Yahweh upon the ark’s return to Israel (1 Sam 6:14–15) and that David sacrificed an ox and a fattened animal when the ark entered Jerusalem (2 Sam 6:13). It is also in this context that David sacrificed at the future site of the temple (24:25).
    - ii. It also does not account for the allowance in the Pentateuch and beyond for other Yahweh altars in certain places (not to be confused with pagan high places) that would serve certain (often temporary) functions within Israel’s worship not directly linked to the pilgrimage feasts and the central sanctuary.
      - (1) Provision for such is initially made in Exod 20:24–25 where altars made of “earth or unhewn stones” explicitly stand in contrast to the tabernacle’s “bronze altar,” which is made of poles of acacia wood overlaid with bronze (Exod 27:6).
      - (2) With a description very much like that of Exod 20:24–25, Deut 27:5–6 then speaks of the altar that was to be built at Mt. Ebal after entry into the Promised Land, and Josh 8:30–31 records the fulfillment.

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<sup>1</sup> During the period of Joshua and Eleazar the high priest (son of Aaron), we are told that central sanctuary shifted to Shiloh (Josh. 18:1), and it continued to be the location of the tabernacle and ark of the covenant generations later in the days of Samuel and Eli the high priest (1 Sam. 1:3; 4:3–4). In Judg. 20:26–28, however, during the priestly ministry of Phinehas, Eleazar’s son, we are told that the ark of the covenant was located around Bethel and that sacrifices were offered there, which means either that the central sanctuary shifted away from Shiloh for a time, only to return later, or that the sanctuary was in Shiloh (see Judg. 21:12), which stood in the general region of Bethel, which allowed the latter to be used for the general location designation (see Judg. 21:19).

- (3) Similarly, in Judg 6, Yahweh instructs Gideon to “pull down the altar of Baal” and to “build an altar to Yahweh your God on the top of the stronghold here, with stones laid in due order” (Judg 6:25–26). He is then called to “take the second bull and offer it as a burnt offering” (6:26; cf. 2:5). A similar account is recorded with respect to Samson’s father Manoah, who is told by the angel of Yahweh, “If you prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to Yahweh. . . . So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, and offered it on the rock to Yahweh, to the one works wonders, and Manoah and his wife were watching. And when the flame went up toward heaven from the altar, the angel of Yahweh went up in the flame of the altar” (13:16, 19–20).
  - (4) Accordingly, without any hint of Deuteronomic covenant breach, the narrator notes that during his ministry, Samuel offered sacrifices at Mizpah (1 Sam 7:9) and Gilgal (10:8; 11:15; 13:9–14) and built an altar to Yahweh at Ramah (7:17).
  - (5) Elijah too, built an altar of uncut stones “in the name of Yahweh,” laid on it wood and a cut bull for a burnt offering, and, “at the time of the offering of oblation” (a statement that suggests the regularity of the event), prayed to Yahweh and saw him respond in fire so that it might “be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things according to your word” (1 Kgs 18:31–38). As with Joshua’s altar in Shechem and Gideon’s altar in the days of Midian oppression, Elijah’s altar was “according to God’s word.”
  - (6) Finally, Elisha offered his blessing when Naaman requested a “load of earth” from Israel in order to have a place of worship in Aram (2 Kgs 5:17–19).
  - (7) I believe it was the destruction of these kind of altars (and perhaps those associated with the patriarchs at Shechem [Gen 12:7], Bethel [12:8; 13:4; 35:1, 3, 7], Moriah [22:9]), and Beersheba [26:25]) for which Elijah grieved (1 Kgs 19:10, 14).<sup>2</sup>
- iii. Significantly, in Josh 22 the Israelites stationed on the west side of the Jordan condemn the Transjordanian Reubenites, Gadites, and half tribe of Manasseh for building an altar of sacrifice apart from the central sanctuary. They declared: “What is this breach of faith that you have committed against the God of Israel in turning away this day from following Yahweh by building yourselves an altar this day in rebellion against Yahweh” (Josh 22:16). In response, the three tribes of the

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<sup>2</sup> Deut 12 is clear that Israel was to “destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree” (Deut 12:2). It is in view of the direct violation of this command that the author of 1–2 Kings highlights five times: “But the high places were not removed; the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense on the high places” (1 Kgs 22:43; 2 Kgs 12:3; 14:4; 15:4, 35). The critique is further evident in the numerous references to “high places” throughout the book (1 Kgs 3:2–4; 11:7; 12:31–32; 13:2, 32–33; 14:23; 15:14; 22:43; 2 Kgs 12:3; 14:4; 15:4, 35; 16:4; 17:9, 11, 29, 32; 18:4, 22; 21:3; 23:5, 8–9, 13, 15, 19–20). The passing comment of Absalom’s sacrifices at Hebron (2 Sam 15:12) may be more akin to these judgmental critiques than to that which was permitted.

Transjordan declared that the altar was “not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice, but to be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, that we do perform the service of Yahweh in his presence with our burnt offerings and sacrifices and peace offerings, so your children will not say to our children in time to come, ‘You have no portion in Yahweh’” (22:26–27). While some interpreters may initially read this as a blanket statement that the central sanctuary was to be the sole sanctuary in the Promised Land, it is noteworthy that the text stresses that the altar they built, while “of imposing size” (22:10), was nevertheless “the copy of the altar of Yahweh” (22:28) at the tabernacle. The text also states that they would “not . . . turn away this day from following Yahweh by building an altar for burnt offering, grain offering, or sacrifice, other than the altar of Yahweh our God that stands before his tabernacle!” (22:29). Only the tabernacle altar of the central sanctuary was to be made of acacia overlaid with bronze; all other altars were to be made of “earth or unhewn stone.” Because the Transjordanian altar was a “copy” of the tabernacle altar, I suggest it was this fact made the nine and a half other tribes think that the Transjordanian Israelites were separating themselves from the community of faith. Had the altar been of uncut stone or of earth, the main group of Israelites would have likely perceived the actions of the Transjordanian tribes differently.

b. Prophetic style:

- i. By “prophetic style,” Weinfeld appears to be comparing the vocabulary and theology of Deuteronomy’s long written speeches to comparable homilies found in books like Hosea and Jeremiah.
- ii. However, while the sermons of prophets like Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, and Elisha—all prior to the 7<sup>th</sup> century—were never collected into written documents, we do have in the Former Prophets some of their highly “Deuteronomic” messages (e.g., 1 Sam. 2:27–36; 8:11–18; 12:6–17; 2 Sam. 12:1–3).
- iii. Furthermore, the Pentateuch of Moses was clearly foundational to Israel’s history all the way back to Joshua, which means Moses’ sermons had to have been solidly established in Israel’s tradition (e.g., Josh. 1:7–8; 8:32; 1 Kgs. 2:2–4).
- iv. Finally, it also fails to recognize that it was only in the 7<sup>th</sup> century that the role of Yahweh’s prophets shifted focus from seeking to alter the course of the nation through the king to directly correcting the people apart from the king (see the parallel pattern of a king’s messenger speaking to the population rather than the king in the days of Hezekiah, 2 Kgs. 18:26). The more public role of the prophet at this time was likely due to one of two factors:
  - (1) Because generations of kings had failed to heed the prophetic word and because the exile was looming for the entire nation, God, in his grace, went around the king and extended his call to covenant faithfulness directly to the nation at large.



- (2) Because the exile was inevitable, God set forth to ready the people directly for the day when the king would not be present to shepherd them.

### B. The Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon and the Dating of Deuteronomy

1. M. Weinfeld (“Deuteronomy,” *ABD*, 2:170ab–171a) suggests that the first millennial Neo-Assyrian treaties of Esarhaddon (ca. 672 B.C.) stand as better parallels with Deuteronomy than the second millennial Hittite treaties, dated to around the time of Moses.<sup>3</sup>
2. Succession:
  - a. *Claim*: Deuteronomy comes at the exact point when Moses is passing his lead on to Joshua as successor. Similarly, the VTE were fealty oaths imposed by the retiring king on his vassals concerning succession (Weinfeld, “Deuteronomy,” *ABD*, 2:169b–170a).
  - b. *Response*: Moses is only the mediator of the covenant, and Yahweh is always portrayed as Israel’s king who enters into relationship with them (Deut 33:5); Israel did not bind themselves to Moses but were surrendered through Moses to Yahweh, with whom there is no succession (so too Mendenhall, 1954, p. 63). Furthermore, few treaties were actually *imposed* on weaker parties; Assyrian treaties were considered royal “favours” toward the vassal kings (Parpola and Watanabe, p. xvi).
3. Content and Order of Curses:
  - a. *Claim*: The curses in Deut 28:23–35 are paralleled in both content and order in VTE lines 419–30, so Deuteronomy’s structure likely originated from a Mesopotamian tradition (Weinfeld, *ABD*, 2:170a).
  - b. *Response*: In seeking to build a similar connection between Deut and VTE, Frankena notes that the annals of Esarhaddon speak of Manasseh of Judah being a vassal of Assyria, and that when the arrangements for Esarhaddon’s succession took place (672 B.C.), it would have certainly been attended by vassal-kings of Palestine or their representatives, thus allowing Jews before Josiah’s day (622 B.C.) to have a copy of a treaty text similar to VTE (Frankena, 1965, pp. 151–152). In contrast, Weinfeld himself highlighted long ago that the common curse structure between Deut and VTE is related to a tradition reaching back to the early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium in Old Babylonia (i.e., the time of the Patriarchs) (Weinfeld 1965, pp. 422–23). It seems unjustified, therefore, to see the close parallel between Deut and VTE as demanding the reliance of the former on the latter (so too Kitchen, 1989, p. 129).
4. The Language of Covenant Love
  - a. *Claim*: The terms used for the demands of loyalty in both Deut and VTE are identical: “to love, go after, fear, hear the voice of” (Weinfeld, *ABD*, 170a). Neo-Assyrian stipulations carry the implications of “a solemn, oath-bound

<sup>3</sup> Other sources interacted with: R. Frankena, “The Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon and the Dating of Deuteronomy,” *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 14 (1965): 122–154; K. A. Kitchen, “The Fall and Rise of Covenant, Law and Treaty,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 40 (1989): 118–135; G. E. Mendenhall, “Covenant Forms in Israelite Tradition,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 17 (1954): 50–76; S. Parpola and K. Watanabe, *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths*, XV–XLII; M. Weinfeld, “Traces of Assyrian Treaty Formulae in Deuteronomy,” *Biblica* 46 (1965): 417–27.

pledge” (Parpola and Watanabe, p. xxxix). Those found in 1<sup>st</sup> person verbal forms mark solemn promises or assertions, whereas 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person forms mark solemn pledges or assertions, depending on the tense of the verb.

- b. *Response:* As Weinfeld himself notes, while “love” is demanded of the vassal to the suzerain, there is no mention of “love” from suzerain to vassal (170b). Furthermore, like Deut, the Hittite treaties include reciprocal expressions of “love” from vassal to suzerain and suzerain to vassal (Weinfeld, *ABD*, 2:170a).
5. Absence of Historical Prologue and Blessings
    - a. *Claim:* Weinfeld believes that the lack of historical prologue and blessings in VTE is likely due to the fact that the arrogant Assyrian king felt it both unnecessary and humiliating to motivate by recalling past grace or future promise; his command should alone spark action (Weinfeld, *ABD*, 2:170b). Frankena suggests the absence is because for the Assyrians obedience implied a blessed and happy situation for vassals (Frankena, 1965, p. 135), but this seems unlikely in light of the long list of curses.
    - b. *Response:* Hittite treaty structure parallels Deut, though curses are placed before blessings: title, historical prologue, stipulations, witnesses, curses and blessings, recital of covenant and deposition (Weinfeld, *ABD*, 2:170a). The arrangement of blessings then curses in Deut is likely due to the desire to highlight the curses and to allow the sanctions to parallel how Israel would experience them: a period of blessing followed by a period of curse (Deut 30:1).
  6. Self-imprecatory oaths
    - a. *Claim:* Both Deut and VTE contain the theme of self-condemnation in connection with the violation of the oath: punishment comes because of willful disobedience (Weinfeld, *ABD*, 2:170b).
    - b. *Response:* Self-imprecation through oath is part of all ancient treaties, including those of the Hittites and evidenced as far back as Abraham (Gen 21:22–34; cf. 15:9–10, 17–18).
  7. Treaty structure
    - a. *Claim:* Weinfeld asserts that when placed against the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium Hittite treaties, “The treaties of Esarhaddon (dated 672 B.C.E.) ... provided a better understanding of the Deuteronomic covenant” (Weinfeld, *ABD*, 170a).
    - b. *Response:*
      - i. K. A. Kitchen provides a more balanced, fair view when he observes that the covenant materials in Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Joshua are actually a confluence of law and treaty from the second millennium.

**Fig. 7.2. Ancient Near Eastern Treaty Forms & Biblical Covenants**

<b>(II) Early &amp; Mid-2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium</b>		<b>(III) Mid to Late 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium</b>			<b>(IV) 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium</b>	
Mari & Leilan	Patriarchs	Mid-Hittite	Later Hittite	Exod, Deut, Josh	Sfire	Assyria
Witnesses Oath Stipulations	Witnesses Oath Stipulations	Title Witnesses Stipulations	Title Prologue Stipulations	Title Prologue Stipulations	Title Witnesses Curses Stipulations	Title Witnesses Stipulations
Curses	Curses	Oath Curses	Deposit Witnesses Curses Blessings	Deposit Witnesses Blessings Curses		Curses

ii. In comparing Deuteronomy to these structures, Kitchen writes (1989, p. 128): “The Sinai Covenant has the closest expectable links with both third/early second millennium Laws and the late second millennium Treaties, the links varying directly with function. Of distinctive features, Prologue, Laws, Epilogue, and few Blessings/many Curses all go with Law; the historical component of Prologue, Deposit/Reading, Witnesses and a Curses/Blessings topoi are all held in common with Treaty type III [late second millennium B.C.], and *not* with I [third millennium B.C.], II [early second millennium B.C.], IV [first millennium B.C.] other than basic Witnesses/Curses [and title and stipulations]. Thus, the form and content of the Sinai Covenant is beyond serious doubt a clear confluence of the much older Law tradition with the late-second-millennium treaty format—and the covenant represents a fresh and distinctive formulation, intelligently using those two components.”

**Fig. 7.3. Kitchen’s Comparison of Law, Treaty, and Biblical Covenant Patterns**

<b>Law Structure</b>	<b>Treaty Structure &amp; Description</b>		<b>Biblical Parallel</b>	
Title / Preamble	Title / Preamble	Identity of the suzerain & his right to proclaim the treaty	Title / Preamble	Exod. 20:1–2; Deut. 1:1–4; Josh. 24:1–2
Prologue (religious)	Historical Prologue	Survey of the past relationship between the parties (indicative)	Historical Prologue	Exod. 20:2; Deut. 1:5–3:29; Josh. 24:2–13
Laws	Stipulations	Obligations of the vassal (imperative)	Basic commands & detailed laws	<i>Basic laws:</i> Exod. 20:3–17 (Decalogue); <i>Detailed Laws:</i> 20:22–23:19 (Covenant Code); Exod. 34:10–26; Lev. 1–25 (Ritual); Deut. 4–26; Josh. 24:14–25
Epilogue	Document Clause	Storage & public reading	Document Clause	Exod. 25:16; Deut. 27:2–3; 31:10–13, 24–26; Josh. 24:26
	Witnesses	Usually gods, called to witness the oaths & sanctions	Witnesses	Exod. 24:4; Deut. 31:19–22, 26, 30, 32; Josh. 24:22, 27

Sanctions: blessings (few) & curses (many)	Sanctions: curses & blessings	Blessings & curses; the responses of the deities to covenant (dis)loyalty	Sanctions: blessings (brief) & curses (extensive)	Lev. 26:1–33; Deut. 28; Josh. 24:19–20
			Epilogue	Deut. 29:2–30:20

Adapted from Kenneth A. Kitchen, "The Fall and Rise of Covenant, Law and Treaty," *TynBul* 40 (1989): 124, 127.

#### IV. The Context for Covenant Relationship: Taking God and His Word Seriously

##### A. God's Word and Life. Deuteronomy establishes a strong correlation between heeding God's Word and the enjoyment of life, a correlation celebrated only by the remnant few in the old covenant.

- Deut 4:1. And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you.
- Deut 6:24. And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as we are this day.
- Deut 8:1, 3. The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. . . .<sup>3</sup> Man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. (Cf. Matt. 4:4.)
- Deut 32:46–47. Take to heart all the words by which I am warning you today, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law.<sup>47</sup> For it is no empty word for you, but your very life, and by this word you shall live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.
- Deut 30:15–20. See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil.<sup>16</sup> If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.<sup>17</sup> But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them,<sup>18</sup> I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess.<sup>19</sup> I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live,<sup>20</sup> loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."
- Ps 119:93. I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have given me life.

##### B. The Deuteronomical Pattern for Enjoying Life

<i>Life =</i>	<i>Teaching or Reading of God's Word &gt; Hearing God's Word &gt; Learning to Fear God &gt; Obeying God</i>
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##### 1. Overview of texts:

###### a. In Deuteronomy:

- Deut. 6:1–2. Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules—that the LORD your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it,<sup>2</sup> that you may fear the LORD your God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long.
- Deut. 17:19–20. And [the law] shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them,<sup>20</sup> that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right

hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.

- Deut. 31:11–13. When all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing.<sup>12</sup> Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law,<sup>13</sup> and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.
- Cf. 4:10; 5:23–29; 6:1–2; 10:12–13.

b. Implications:

- i. Obedience is a fruit of a heart-encounter with God. Godward fear overflowing in obedience is cultivated in the context of God’s Word.
- ii. Where sin is prevalent, one is not fearing God enough.
- iii. Fear is generated in the context of God’s gracious disclosure of himself and his will in a way that captures the hearts of people. Without God speaking, enabling hearing, and inciting fear, there is no obedience or life.

2. Israel’s problem: Moses’ Israel was spiritually deaf (i.e., they couldn’t “hear”) (29:4[3]), and therefore they did not and would not fear and obey God as they were being called to do; the only result could be death (31:16, 20, 27, 29). “Life” was not enjoyed by the majority, for whom the old covenant bore “a ministry of condemnation” (2 Cor 4:9).
  - Deut. 29:4. But to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.
  - Deut. 31:16, 20. And the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers. Then this people will rise and whore after the foreign gods among them in the land that they are entering, and they will forsake me and break my covenant that I have made with them.<sup>20</sup> For when I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to give to their fathers, and they have eaten and are full and grown fat, they will turn to other gods and serve them, and despise me and break my covenant.
  - Deut. 31:27, 29. For I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD. How much more after my death! . . .<sup>29</sup> For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way that I have commanded you. And in the days to come evil will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands.
  - 2 Cor. 3:9. For if there was glory in the [old covenant’s] ministry of condemnation, the [new covenant’s] ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory.
3. In accordance with declaring Israel’s deafness, God promised a day when they would “hear his voice” and “do all his commandments” (Deut 30:8; cf. 9–14). For Moses, this day of heart circumcision that will overflow in radical love for God (30:6) appears to coincide with the day he will be replaced by a new covenant mediator to whom all Yahweh-followers will “listen” (18:15). In this day, Israel will no longer be stubborn and will therefore be counted righteous (9:6; 10:16).
  - Deut 30:6, 8–14. And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. . . .<sup>8</sup> And you shall *again obey* [= return and listen unto] the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today.<sup>9</sup> The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your

womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers,<sup>10</sup> when you obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.<sup>11</sup> For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off.<sup>12</sup> It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’<sup>13</sup> Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’<sup>14</sup> But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

- Deut 18:15. The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall/will listen.
  - Deut 9:6. Know, therefore, that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stubborn people.
  - Deut 10:16. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.
4. The NT is uniform both that Yahweh did not enable Israel to hear him (Rom 11:7–10) and that the day of sensory awakening comes in the new covenant and relates it directly to the ministry of Christ (Luke 9:35 with Acts 3:22–26; John 5:25; 6:44–45; 10:27–30; 2 Cor 3:14).
- Rom 11:7–10. What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened,<sup>8</sup> as it is written, “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day.”<sup>9</sup> And David says, “Let their table become a snare and a trap, a stumbling block and a retribution for them;<sup>10</sup> let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs forever.”
  - Luke 9:35. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!”
  - Acts 3:22–26. Moses said, “The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you.<sup>23</sup> And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.”<sup>24</sup> And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days.<sup>25</sup> You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, “And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”<sup>26</sup> God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.”
  - John 5:24–25. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.<sup>25</sup> “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.
  - John 6:44–45. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.<sup>45</sup> It is written in the Prophets, “And they will all be taught by God.” Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.
  - John 10:27–30. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.<sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.<sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.<sup>30</sup> I and the Father are one.”
  - 2 Cor 3:14. But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away.

### C. The Moab Covenant vs. the Horeb Covenant

1. The word that the Moab generation must heed is intimately connected to the word originally given at Sinai. The book treats Moses’ teaching in Deuteronomy as an extension of what started at Horeb, and it also identifies later generations with the first.
  - a. The Moab covenant is a renewal and counterpart to what God did at Horeb.

- Deut 29:1[28[69]. These are the words of the covenant that the LORD commanded Moses to make with the people of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant that he had made with them at Horeb.
- b. Moses treats the Moab generation as being one with the Horeb generation and calls parents to help their kids recognize this. The unity of the initial generation with the later generations is one both of experience and sinfulness.
- Deut 1:6. The LORD our God said to *us* at Horeb. . . .
  - Deut 4:9–10. Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that *your* eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children’s children—<sup>10</sup> how on the day that *you* stood before the LORD your God at Horeb. . . .
  - Deut 6:20–24. When your son asks you in time to come, “What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the LORD our God has commanded you?”<sup>21</sup> then you shall say to your son, “*We* were Pharaoh’s slaves in Egypt. And the LORD brought *us* out of Egypt with a mighty hand.<sup>22</sup> And the LORD showed signs and wonders, great and grievous, against Egypt and against Pharaoh and all his household, before *our* eyes.<sup>23</sup> And he brought *us* out from there, that he might bring *us* in and give *us* the land that he swore to give to *our* fathers.<sup>24</sup> And the LORD commanded *us* to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for *our* good always, that he might preserve *us* alive, as *we* are this day.
  - Deut 9:7, 24. Remember and do not forget how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day *you* came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD. . . .<sup>24</sup> You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.
  - Deut. 31:27, 29. For I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD. How much more after my death! . . .<sup>29</sup> For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way that I have commanded you. And in the days to come evil will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands.
- c. Moses even asserts that the Moab rather than Horeb generation was the group with whom Yahweh covenanted.
- Deut 5:2–3. The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.<sup>4</sup> Not with our fathers did he make this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive today.
2. Because of the nature of the book as a constitution for Israel’s time in the land (12:1) and as instruction that will bear relevance even in the new covenant age (30:8), the repeated “today” of Deuteronomy bears a trans-generational character.
- a. The lasting relevance of Moses’ commandments for the old covenant people:
- Deut. 4:8. And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you *today*?
  - Deut. 4:26. I call heaven and earth to witness against you *today*, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed.
  - Deut. 4:39–40. Know therefore *today*, and lay it to your heart, that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.<sup>40</sup> Therefore you shall keep his statutes and his commandments, which I command you *today*, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for all time.”
  - Deut. 5:1. 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.

- Deut. 6:6. And these words that I command you *today* shall be on your heart.
  - Deut. 7:11. You shall therefore be careful to do the commandment and the statutes and the rules that I command you *today*.
  - Deut. 8:1. The whole commandment that I command you *today* you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers.
  - Deut. 8:11, 19. Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you *today*. . . .<sup>19</sup> And if you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you *today* that you shall surely perish.
  - Deut. 10:12–13. And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,<sup>13</sup> and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you *today* for your good?
  - Deut. 11:2, 8. And consider *today* (since I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen it), consider the discipline of the LORD your God, his greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm. . . .<sup>8</sup> You shall therefore keep the whole commandment that I command you *today*, that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land that you are going over to possess.
  - Deut. 11:26. See, I am setting before you *today* a blessing and a curse.
  - Deut. 26:17–18. You have declared *today* that the LORD is your God, and that you will walk in his ways, and keep his statutes and his commandments and his rules, and will obey his voice.<sup>18</sup> And the LORD has declared *today* that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments.
  - Deut. 28:1, 15. And if you faithfully obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you *today*, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. . . .<sup>15</sup> But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you *today*, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.
  - Deut. 32:46. Take to heart all the words by which I am warning you *today*, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law.
- b. The lasting relevance of Moses' commandments for the new covenant people:
- Deut. 30:8, 11. And you shall again obey the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you *today*. . . .<sup>11</sup> For this commandment that I command you *today* will not be too hard for you, neither will it be far off.
- c. The sustained reality of Israel's rebellion from Moses to Paul:
- Deut 9:7, 24. Remember and do not forget how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you came out of the land of Egypt *until you came to this place*, you have been rebellious against the LORD. . . .<sup>24</sup> You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.
  - Deut 29:4[3]. But *to this day* the LORD has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.
  - Rom 11:8. God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, *down to this very day*.
  - 2 Cor 3:15. Yet *to this day*, whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts.



### D. The Lasting Relevance of Deuteronomy for Christians

1. Moses declares in Deut 30:8 that in the day of heart circumcision Israel “will return and listen unto the voice of Yahweh and keep all his commandments that I command you today.” By this, Moses highlights the lasting relevance of Deuteronomy for Christians, who are living in the day of heart circumcision by the Spirit (Rom 2:29; cf. Ezek 36:27).
  - Deut 30:8. And you shall return and *obey* [i.e., hear] the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today.
  - Rom 2:29. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.
  - Ezek 36:27. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.
2. The stress on the ability to *listen* in 30:8 counters the reality of Moses’ day, where people had ears but could not hear (Deut 29:4[3]) and identifies this age of sensory awakening with the period when the “prophet like Moses” would come, establishing a new covenant with new instruction to which the people would *listen* (18:15–19; cf. 34:10–12).
  - Deut 29:4[3]. But to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to *hear*.
  - Deut 18:15–19. The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall *listen*—just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, “Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.” And the LORD said to me, “They are right in what they have spoken. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not *listen* to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.”
  - Deut 34:10–12. And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, none like him for all the signs and the wonders that the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, and for all the mighty power and all the great deeds of terror that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.
3. Moses continues in chapter 30 giving clarity as to *how* Moses’ words will guide believers in the new covenant age, when they only brought death during the old covenant age. The answer is that God will cause the commandment to be near ... in both the heart and soul, resulting in both obedience and flourishing (Deut 30:9–14). Paul picks up on this, highlighting the central place of Christ in bringing this about (Rom 10:4–9).
  - Deut. 30:9–14. The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers, when you obey [i.e., hear] the voice of the LORD your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. For this commandment that I command you today will not be too hard for you, neither will it be far off. It will not be in heaven, that you should say, “Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?” Neither will it be beyond the sea, that you should say, “Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?” But the word will be very near you. It will be in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

- Rom 10:4-9. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. But the righteousness based on faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down) or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
4. Below I will develop the way Christ’s obedience to the law secures of our justification, whereas our obedience to the law identifies our sanctification.

<b>Contents for Lecture 7b</b>	
V. The Essence of Covenant Relationship: Love	35
A. Covenant Love outside and inside Deuteronomy	35
B. The Centrality of Covenant Love in Deuteronomy	37
C. The Context and Scope of Loving God	37
D. The Nature of Covenant Love	38
E. Excursus: The Makeup of OT Laws	41
VI. The Foundation and Perpetuation of Covenant Relationship: All Grace	44
A. Two Dangers That Awaited Israel as They Entered the Land	44
B. Motivation for Obedience: Gracious Blessings, Curses, and Restoration Blessings	45
C. Foundations for Obedience: Past Gracious Preservation Despite Israel's Sins	48
D. The Deadly Problem: Israel's Hardness	49
E. YHWH's Solution: Bring Salvation and Transformation on the Other Side of Curse	53
VII. The Purpose of Covenant Relationship: God-Exalting Influence on the Nations	55
A. Missions Exists Because Worship Doesn't	55
B. Israel's "Come and See" Call to International Impact	56
C. Israel's Failed Calling and God's Fulfillment	56
VIII. The Lord of Covenant Relationship: Yahweh God	57
A. YHWH's Universal Supremacy	57
B. YHWH's Special Care for Israel	59
IX. Summary	62
X. Guided Reading for Deuteronomy	62
A. Points of Focus	62
B. Questions	62

## V. The Essence of Covenant Relationship: Love

### A. Covenant Love outside and inside Deuteronomy

1. "Love" is a common part of treat relationships, in that suzerains and vassals "love" each other (i.e., are loyal to one another).
  - a. Outside the Bible:
    - i. "My lord, just as I love the king my lord, so do the king of Nuhasse, the king of Ni'i—all these kings are servants of my lord" (2<sup>nd</sup> millennium).
    - ii. "Behold the city of Byblos! Half of it love the sons of 'Abd-Asir-ta, half o it loves my lord" (2<sup>nd</sup> millennium).
    - iii. "You will love as yourselves Assurbanipal" (1<sup>st</sup> millennium).
    - iv. "The king of Assyria, our lord, we love" (1<sup>st</sup> millennium).
  - b. OT:
    - i. Hiram of Tyre was "loving" or "befriending" David (1 Kgs 5:1), which points to the treaty relationship they enjoyed.
    - ii. "Those who love" David are his servants (2 Sam 19:6-7).
2. Familial language of "love" characterized the titles enjoyed within treaties:
  - a. Overview:
    - i. Suzerains were "fathers" (e.g., 1 Sam 24:12)
    - ii. Suzerains counted vassals as adopted "sons" (e.g., 1 Sam 25:8; 2 Kgs 8:9; 16:7)
    - iii. Fellow vassals were "brothers" (e.g., Num 20:14; 1 Kgs 9:13; 20:32)

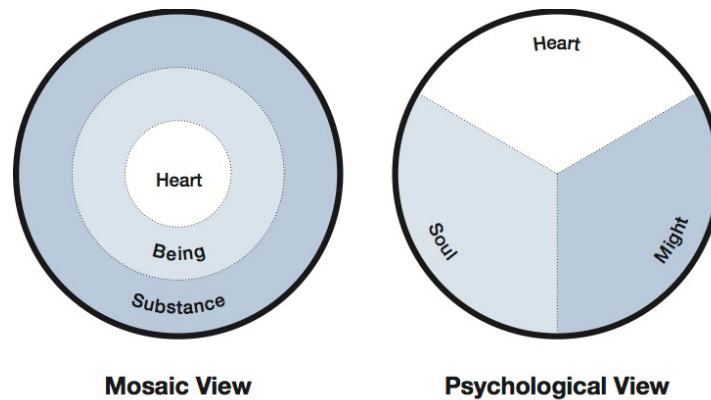
- b. Examples:
  - i. If PN1 (proper name of adopted child) fails to show respect for PN2 (adoptive father), then just as a man treats his son so too shall PN2 treat PN1” (2<sup>nd</sup> millennium).
  - ii. “The great king grasped me with his hand and said: When I will conquer the land Mittanni, I shall not reject you; I shall make you my son. I will stand by to help in war and will you sit on the throne of your father. The word that comes out of his mouth will not turn back” (2<sup>nd</sup> millennium).
  - iii. “Behold, I declared for you the young Labarna: He shall sit on the throne; I, the king, called him my son” (2<sup>nd</sup> millennium).
  - iv. “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son” (2 Sam 7:14).
  - v. “I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, ‘You are my Son; today I have begotten you’” (Ps 2:7).
  - vi. “He shall cry to me, ‘You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.’ And I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth” (Ps 89:26–27).
- 3. In Deuteronomy, God “loves” Israel and calls them to “love” him.
  - a. God’s love for Israel:
    - i. In accordance with his love for the patriarchs (4:37; 10:15), he set his affections on Israel, electing them (7:6; 14:2), redeeming them (7:8), becoming their covenant king (33:3, 5), and protecting them through the wilderness (23:5).
    - ii. He was Israel’s “father” (32:6), and they were his adopted “sons” (14:1) in order that they might become God’s “inheritance” (4:20; 9:26, 29; 32:9), “treasured possession” and “holy people” (7:6; 26:18–19; cf. 19:5–6).
  - b. God’s call for Israel’s love as the supreme command:
    - i. Love is the answer to a unique claim of allegiance (Deut 6:4–5).
    - ii. Love for Yahweh necessitated love for one’s “brother” (10:19; cf. 14:27–29; 15:11; Lev 19:18)—a title representative of everyone (male and female, Deut 15:12), unless specified otherwise (13:6).
    - iii. Love is a way of choosing life (30:20) and is an expression of:
      - (1) Fearing God (10:12)
      - (2) Keeping God’s commandments (11:13; 30:16[?])
      - (3) Keeping the whole commandment (11:22; 19:9; cf. John 14:15. Jesus said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments”).
    - iv. Love stands parallel to:
      - (1) Walking in all God’s ways (Deut 10:12; 11:22; 19:9; 30:16)
      - (2) Serving God with all one’s heart and soul (10:12; 11:13)
      - (3) Keeping God’s charge, statutes, rules, commandments (11:1; 30:16)
      - (4) Holding fast to God (11:22; 30:20)
      - (5) Heeding his voice (30:20)

## B. The Centrality of Covenant Love in Deuteronomy

1. Deut 6:4–5 declares, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” Here loving God with *all* is an outgrowth of truly “hearing” the truth of God’s oneness and sole supremacy over all things.
2. Jesus tagged the call to love God “the great and first commandment” (Matt 22:38). It is *great* in the sense that there is no higher call than to love God with all and that in fulfilling this you fulfill everything else. It is *first* both in the sense of priority (everything starts with love) and in the sense that within the constitution of Deuteronomy it is the first formal commandment given (the recollection of the Ten Words in 5:6–21 simply provides backdrop for the call to love that follows). From Jesus’ perspective (Mark 12:34), the following summary of Deut 6:4–5 supplied by a scribe characterizes a “wise” understanding of the passage: “You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices” (Mark 12:32–33).
3. The call to love God with all in Deut 6:5 is captured in the first four commandments of the Decalogue, each of which includes an explicit use of “the LORD your God.”
  - a. “I am *the LORD your God*... You shall have no other gods before me.... You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I *the LORD your God* am a jealous God” (5:6–7, 9).
  - b. “You shall not take the name of *the LORD your God* in vain...” (5:11).
  - c. “Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as *the LORD your God* commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to *the LORD your God*.... *The LORD your God* commanded you to keep the Sabbath day” (5:12–14).
  - d. “Honor your father and your mother, as *the LORD your God* commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may go well with you in the land that *the LORD your God* is giving you” (5:16).

## C. The Context and Scope of Loving God

1. Deut 6:5 is Deuteronomy’s supreme command. Love for God is both life encompassing and community impacting.
  - a. It includes *all* one’s heart, soul, and strength, which are likely three expanding, yet overlapping, human spheres of life, all of which are to proclaim God’s supremacy.
    - i. Heart: *all things internal*—one’s desires, will, emotions, attitudes, perceptions, and thoughts (see Deut 29:3[4]; Jer. 5:21; Hos. 7:11).
    - ii. Soul: *one’s whole “being”* as a living person, whether referring to humans (Gen. 2:7; 9:5; Lev. 21:11; cf. 2 Sam. 23:17) or to God (Lev. 26:11).
    - iii. Might: *one’s substance or resources*.

**Fig. 7.4. The Spheres of Covenant Love in Deuteronomy 6:5**

- b. The Spring of God-centered Living: Covenant Love (6:4–9)
- i. The call to covenant love (6:4–5)
    - (1) The generator of covenant love: affirming Yahweh’s singularity (6:4)
    - (2) The call to and scope of covenant love (6:5)
  - ii. The plea to personally appropriate and apply the call to covenant love (6:6–9)
    - (1) The plea for personal appropriation (6:6; cf. Jer 31:33)
    - (2) The plea for personal application (Deut 6:7–9)
      - (a) In parenting (6:7; cf. 6:20–25; 11:19)
      - (b) In public witness (6:8–9)
        - (i) In deeds and worldview (6:8; cf. 21:7; Exod 3:9, 16)
        - (ii) At home and in the public square (Deut 6:9)
2. Love for God demands that we value his image in others. As such, our love for God is the spring from which love of neighbor flows, and the latter identifies whether or not love for God is actually present (Deut 10:12–19).
- a. The call to love God (Deut 10:12–13)
  - b. The backdrop for loving God (10:14–15)
  - c. Obstacles to loving God (10:16–18)
    - i. Loving God is a heart issue (v. 16)
    - ii. Loving God is an idolatry issue (v. 17a)
    - iii. Loving God is about caring for others as God cares (vv. 17b–18)
  - d. The test of loving God: Loving God is about loving others as God has loved us (v. 19)

**D. The Nature of Covenant Love**

1. The call to love God and neighbor necessitates the need to maintain a radical God-centeredness (6:10–25) and the need to remove all obstacles to such God-centeredness (7:1–26). As Moses highlights in 6:25, keeping the supreme command would result in “righteousness,” which was the goal of old covenant life.

2. If love is *what* Israel was to do, all the other commandments detailed *how* they were to do it. Deut 12–26 highlight the various “statutes and rules” that Israel needed to follow as expressions of their love for God (12:1; 26:16), and this love would impact all aspects of human existence, whether criminal offenses, civil cases, family relationships, societal norms, or community worship. Moses charged the people, “Righteousness, righteousness you shall pursue!” (16:20). This life of love would include three spheres:
  - a. Righteousness in community worship (12:1–16:17)
  - b. Righteousness in community oversight (16:18–18:22)
  - c. Righteousness in daily community life (19:1–26:15)
3. Covenant love was an internal surrender that was to go public through outward loyalty to God and care for the needy (4:39; 6:5–6; 8:5; 10:12–13, 16; 11:18; 26:16; 32:46). That God so clearly articulated the nature of love was an amazing grace that, if heeded, would distinguish Israel from the nations that surrounded her (4:5–8; 26:18–19; 32:46–47; Ps 19:9–10).
  - Deut 4:5–8. See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. <sup>6</sup> Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” <sup>7</sup> For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? <sup>8</sup> And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?
  - Deut 4:39. Know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.
  - Deut 6:5–6. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. <sup>6</sup> And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.
  - Deut 8:5. Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you.
  - Deut 10:12–13. And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>13</sup> and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good? ... <sup>16</sup> Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.
  - Deut 11:18. You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.
  - Deut 26:16. This day the LORD your God commands you to do these statutes and rules. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul.
  - Deut 26:18–19. And the LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments, <sup>19</sup> and that he will set you in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations that he has made, and that you shall be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised.”
  - Deut 32:46–47. Take to heart all the words by which I am warning you today, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law. <sup>47</sup> For it is no empty word for you, but your very life, and by this word you shall live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.
  - Ps 19:9–10. the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. <sup>10</sup> More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.

4. Nevertheless, Moses is clear that Israel was sickened by a spiritual disability (Deut 29:4[3]). They were not righteous but stubborn (9:6), which meant that they needed heart surgery in order to love rightly (10:16). While heart circumcision was rare in the old covenant age (but see Pss 37:31; 40:8; 119:10–11; Isa 51:7), Moses and the later prophets anticipated a day when God’s people would love and obey truly with all their heart and soul (Deut 30:6, 8; Jer. 31:33–34; Ezek 36:26–27; cf. Rom 2:25–29; 8:3–9, 13; 13:8–10).
- Deut 9:6. Know, therefore, that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stubborn people.
  - Deut 10:16. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.
  - Deut 29:4[3]. But to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.
  - Deut 30:6, 8. And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live....<sup>8</sup> And you shall again obey the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today.
  - Ps 37:31. The law of his God is in his heart; his steps do not slip.
  - Ps 40:8. I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.
  - Ps 119:10–11. With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments!<sup>11</sup> I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.
  - Isa 51:7. Listen to me, you who know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear not the reproach of man, nor be dismayed at their revilings.
  - Jer 31:33–34. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.<sup>34</sup> And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”
  - Ezek 36:26–27. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.<sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.
  - Rom 2:25–29. For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision.<sup>26</sup> So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?<sup>27</sup> Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law.<sup>28</sup> For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical.<sup>29</sup> But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.
  - Rom 8:3–9, 13. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,<sup>4</sup> in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.<sup>5</sup> For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.<sup>6</sup> For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.<sup>7</sup> For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot.<sup>8</sup> Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.<sup>9</sup> You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him....<sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.
  - Rom 13:8–10. Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.<sup>9</sup> For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are



summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”<sup>10</sup> Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

### E. Excursus: The Makeup of OT Laws

- Moses’ laws come to us in two forms: *Apodictic* laws are those that are base principles stated in such a way that there is no qualification or exception. *Casuistic* laws are always situational, related to specific circumstances. Casuistic laws are often applications of apodictic laws.

**Fig. 7.5. Formal Distinctions in OT Law**

Apodictic	Casuistic
<u>Deut 5:7</u> . You shall have no other gods before me. <u>Deut 5:20</u> . You shall never bear false witness against your neighbor.	<u>Deut 21:22–23</u> . And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God.
Unconditional and imperative, usually beginning with a volitional verb	Conditional and declarative, usually beginning with “if” or “when”
2nd person	Usually 3rd person
General: without qualification or exception	Specific: based on actual situations, often with motive or exception clauses
Often in negative form	Usually in positive form

Adapted from Daniel I. Block, “Reading the Decalogue from Right to Left: The Ten Principles of Covenant Relationship in the Hebrew Bible,” in *How I Love Your Torah, O LORD! Studies in the Book of Deuteronomy* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2011), 31.

- Another more general catalog of the OT’s commandments comes from the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD Jewish philosopher and exegete Maimonides. He published a definite list of laws in the whole Pentateuch titled *Sepher Mitvoth* (A Book of Commandments), wherein he catalogued 613 directives—248 positive and 365 negative. They addressed the following areas:

**Fig. 7.6. Categories of the 613 Commandments in the Pentateuch (according to Maimonides)**

Commands	1–9	Commands relating to one’s relationship with God (9)
	10–19	Commands relating to the study of the Torah (10)
	20–38	Commands relating to the temple (19)
	39–91	Commands dealing with sacrifices (53)
	92–95	Commands dealing with vows (4)
	96–113	Commands dealing with ritual purity (18)
	114–133	Commands dealing with donations to the temple (20)
	134–142	Commands dealing with the Sabbath year (9)
	143–153	Commands dealing with slaughtering of animals (11)
	154–170	Commands dealing with festivals (17)
	171–184	Commands dealing with order in community (14)
	185–189	Commands relating to idolatry (5)
	190–193	Commands dealing with war (4)
	194–208	Commands dealing with social structure (15)
	209–223	Commands relating to the family (15)
	224–231	Commands dealing with the administration of law (8)
232–235	Commands dealing with treatment of servants (4)	
236–248	General commands (13)	
oh ibi	1–45	Prohibitions relating to idolatry and false religion (45)
	46–59	Prohibitions relating to historical events (14)

60–66	Prohibitions relating to blasphemy (7)
67–88	Prohibitions relating to the temple (22)
89–157	Prohibitions relating to sacrifice (69)
158–171	Prohibitions relating to the priests (14)
172–201	Prohibitions relating to dietary laws (30)
202–209	Prohibitions relating to the Nazarite (8)
210–229	Prohibitions relating to agriculture (20)
230–272	Prohibitions relating to business affairs (43)
273–329	Prohibitions relating to the administration of justice (57)
330–361	Prohibitions relating to family relationships (32)
362–365	Prohibitions relating to the king (4)

For a listing of the specific commandments and texts that align with the various categories, see John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary*, Library of Biblical Interpretation (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 482–516.

3. Finally, we can distinguish different types of laws based on their variations in content: criminal, civil, family, cultic/ceremonial, and compassion.

**Fig. 7.7. Types of OT Laws by Content**

<b><i>Criminal Laws</i></b>
Laws governing crimes or offenses that put the welfare of the whole community at risk; the offended party is the state or or national community, and therefore the punishment is on behalf of the whole community in the name of the highest state authority, which in Israel meant YHWH.
<b>Kidnapping</b> (Exod. 21:16; Deut. 24:7) <b>Sustained insubordination to parents</b> (Exod. 21:15, 17; Deut. 21:18–21) <b>Homicide/Premeditated or avoidable murder</b> (Exod. 21:14; Num. 35:16–21, 30–31; Deut. 19:11–13) <b>Religious malpractice:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sabbath breaking (Exod. 31:14–15; 35:2; cf. Num. 15:32–36)</li> <li>False prophecy (Deut. 13:1–5; 18:20)</li> <li>Idolatry (Exod. 22:20; Lev. 19:4; Deut. 13:1–18; 17:2–7)</li> <li>Child sacrifice (Lev. 20:1–5)</li> <li>Witchcraft (Exod. 22:18; Lev. 19:26, 31; 20:27)</li> <li>Blasphemy (see Lev. 24:14–23)</li> </ol> <b>Sexual offenses:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adultery when married or engaged (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22–24; cf. Gen. 38:24)</li> <li>Concealed premarital unchastity (Deut. 22:20–21)</li> <li>Rape of an engaged girl (Deut. 22:25)</li> <li>Prostitution of a priest's daughter (Lev. 21:9)</li> <li>Incest (Lev. 20:11–12, 14)</li> <li>Homosexuality (Lev. 20:13)</li> <li>Bestiality (Exod. 22:19; Lev. 20:15–16)</li> </ol> <b>False witness in a capital case</b> (Deut. 19:16–21) <b>Note:</b> Nearly all the commands and prohibitions in the Decalogue are considered criminal offenses.
<b><i>Civil Laws</i></b>
Laws governing private disputes between citizens or organizations in which the public authorities are appealed to for judgment or called upon to intervene; the offended party is not the state or national community.
1. <b>Non-premeditated killing:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accidental death (Exod. 21:13; Num. 35:9–15; Deut. 19:1–13)</li> <li>Death due to self-defense (Exod. 22:2–3)</li> </ol> <b>Assault:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human against human (Exod. 21:18–19, 22)</li> <li>Animal against human (21:28–32)</li> <li>Animal against animal (21:33–36)</li> </ol> <b>Breaches of trust:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theft (Exod. 22:1–4, 7–9, 12; Lev. 19:11, 13)</li> <li>Destruction of property (Exod. 22:5, 6, 14)</li> </ol> <b>Falsehood as a witness:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In non-capital case (Exod. 23:1–3)</li> <li>In commerce/trade (Lev. 19:35–36)</li> </ol>

<p><b>Limited family issues:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Premarital unchastity between consenting adults, whether real (Exod. 22:16–17; Lev. 19:20–22; Deut. 22:28–29) or potential (Deut. 22:13–21)</li> <li>Post-divorce situations (Deut. 24:1–3)</li> <li>The mistreatment of slaves (Exod. 21:20–21, 26–27)</li> <li>The handling of runaway slaves (Deut. 23:15–16)</li> <li>Failure to accept levirate marriage duties (25:7–10)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Family Laws</b></p>
<p>Non-civil, domestic laws governing the Israelite household.</p> <p><b>Levirate marriage</b> (Deut. 25:5–6)</p> <p><b>Inheritance</b> (Deut. 21:15–16)</p> <p><b>Jubilee and the redemption of land and persons</b> (Lev. 25)</p> <p><b>Family discipleship</b> (Deut. 6:6–9, 20–25; 11:18–21)</p> <p><b>Respect of and obedience to parents</b> (Exod. 20:12; Lev. 19:3; Deut. 5:16)</p> <p><b>Turning a daughter into a prostitute</b> (Lev. 19:29)</p> <p><b>Slavery including limits of service, inheritance, and protection</b> (Exod. 21:2–11; Deut. 15:1–23)</p> <p><b>Maintaining gender distinctions</b> (Deut. 22:5)</p>
<p><b>Cultic/Ceremonial Laws</b></p>
<p>Laws governing the visible forms and rituals of Israel’s religious life.</p> <p><b>Sacrifice:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Altar and sacrifices (Exod. 20:24–26)</li> <li>Offering of firstfruits (Exod. 22:29–30; 23:19)</li> <li>Sacrifices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General guidelines (Exod. 23:18; 29:38–46; Lev. 1–7; 19:5–8)</li> <li>Day of Atonement (Lev. 16)</li> <li>Location (Lev. 17:1–9; Deut. 12)</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><b>Sacred Calendar:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly Sabbaths (Exod. 20:8–11; 23:12; 31:12–17; 35:1–3; Lev. 19:3, 30; Deut. 5:12–15)</li> <li>Sabbatical year (Exod. 23:10–11; Lev. 25:3–7; Deut. 15:1–6)</li> <li>Feasts and sacred days (Exod. 23:14–19; 34:22–23; Lev. 23:9–22; Deut. 16:1–17)</li> <li>Jubilee (Lev. 25:8–55)</li> </ol> <p><b>Sacred Symbolism and Distinction:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tabernacle (Exod. 25–30)</li> <li>Priesthood: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garments (Exod. 28)</li> <li>Consecration (Exod. 29:1–37; Lev. 8)</li> <li>Administration of sacrifices (Exod. 29:38–46; Lev. 6–7)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Ritual Purity (Clean/Unclean): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food laws (Lev. 11:2–47; 20:24–26; Deut. 14:4–20) and the eating of blood (Lev. 17:10–16; 19:26)</li> <li>Childbirth (Lev. 12)</li> <li>Leprosy (Lev. 13–14)</li> <li>Bodily discharges (Lev. 15)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Distinction from the pagan nations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interbreeding/mixing of cattle, seeds, garments (Lev. 19:19; Deut. 22:9–11)</li> <li>Trimming of sideburns, cutting of body, tattoos (Lev. 19:27–28; Deut. 14:1)</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p><b>Compassion Laws</b></p>
<p>“Laws” dealing with charity, justice, and mercy toward others. These are not exactly the kind of laws that can be brought to court, but God knows the heart.</p> <p><b>Protection and care of others:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sojourner (Exods. 22:21; 23:9; Lev. 19:9–10, 33–34; Deut. 14:28–29; 24:19–22)</li> <li>The widow and orphan (Exod. 22:22–24; Deut. 14:28–29; 24:19–22)</li> <li>The poor (Exod. 22:25–27; 23:6; Lev. 19:9–10; Deut. 15:7–11; 24:10–13, 19–22)</li> <li>One’s neighbor (19:13, 16–18)</li> <li>The disabled (Lev. 19:14; Deut. 27:18)</li> <li>The Levite (Deut. 14:28–29)</li> <li>The released slave (Deut. 15:12–15)</li> <li>The hired servant (Deut. 24:14–15)</li> </ol> <p><b>Justice and impartiality</b> (Exod. 23:7–8; Lev. 19:15; Deut. 24:17–18; 27:19, 25)</p> <p><b>Honor of the elderly</b> (Lev. 19:32)</p> <p><b>Return of an enemy or brother’s lost goods</b> (Exod. 22:4; Deut. 22:1–3)</p> <p><b>Help of an enemy or brother in need</b> (Exod. 23:5; Deut. 22:4)</p>

**Excusal from war:**

- a. For a new home owner (Deut. 20:5)
- b. For a new business owner (Deut. 20:6)
- c. For a newly married man (Deut. 20:7; 24:5)

**Marriage to foreign widows of war** (Deut. 20:10–14)**Preservation of means for food for future generations** (Deut. 20:6–7; 25:4)**Building safe homes** (Deut. 20:8)**Respect for other's means of sustenance** (Deut. 23:24–25; 24:6)

Prepared by both Jason S. DeRouchie and Kenneth J. Turner. Originally published in DeRouchie, ed., *What the Old Testament Authors Really Cared About*, 466–67. Used by permission. The examples are only illustrative. The five main categories are taken from Christopher J. H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 288–301, which he adapted from Anthony Phillips, *Ancient Israel's Criminal Law: A New Approach to the Decalogue* (New York: Schocken Books, 1970), 2, 13.

## VI. The Foundation and Perpetuation of Covenant Relationship: All Grace

### A. Two Dangers That Awaited Israel as They Entered the Land:

1. *Prosperity* can easily lead to self-reliance and forgetting YHWH as the ultimate provider.
  - Deut 6:10–12. And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great and good cities that you did not build,<sup>11</sup> and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and when you eat and are full,<sup>12</sup> then take care lest you forget the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
  - Deut 8:10–18. And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.<sup>11</sup> Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today,<sup>12</sup> lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them,<sup>13</sup> and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied,<sup>14</sup> then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery,<sup>15</sup> who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock,<sup>16</sup> who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end.<sup>17</sup> Beware lest you say in your heart, “My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.”<sup>18</sup> You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.
  - Deut 9:4. Do not say in your heart, after the LORD your God has thrust them out before you, “It is because of my righteousness that the LORD has brought me in to possess this land,” whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is driving them out before you.
  - Deut 29:19. one who, when he hears the words of this sworn covenant, blesses himself in his heart, saying, “I shall be safe, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart.” This will lead to the sweeping away of moist and dry alike.
  - Deut 32:15. But Jeshurun grew fat, and kicked; you grew fat, stout, and sleek; then he forsook God who made him and scoffed at the Rock of his salvation.
2. *Paganism* can lure people away from following YHWH.
  - Deut 7:3–4, 16, 25. You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons,<sup>4</sup> for they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly....<sup>16</sup> And you shall consume all the peoples that the LORD your God will give over to you. Your eye shall not pity them, neither shall you serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you....<sup>25</sup> The carved images of their gods you shall burn with fire. You shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them or take it for yourselves, lest you be ensnared by it, for it is an abomination to the LORD your God.
  - Deut 11:16. Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them.

- Deut 17:17. And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold.
- Deut 20:17–18. But you shall devote them to complete destruction, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the LORD your God has commanded, <sup>18</sup> that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the LORD your God.

## B. Motivation for Obedience: Gracious Blessings, Curses, and Restoration Blessings

1. Within all of God’s covenant dealings, promises of favor or dread are a key means by which he motivates believers to grow in holiness (1 Pet 1:4; cf. Rom 4:18–21; 2 Cor 7:1; 1 John 3:3). Within the old covenant, God promised both blessings and curses dependent on Israel’s obedience (Deut 11:13–17, 26–28; 30:15–20; cf. Lev 26; see Fig. 7.1 above). Blessings related to God’s commitment to protect and provide for his people so long as they continued to live as his people—remaining loyal to him from the heart (Deut 28:1–14; 30:3–10). The curses warned of the removal of all provision and protection that would result from covenant rebellion (28:15–68; 29:19–21).
  - Deut 11:13–17. And if you will indeed obey my commandments that I command you today, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>14</sup> he will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil. <sup>15</sup> And he will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you shall eat and be full. <sup>16</sup> Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them; <sup>17</sup> then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and he will shut up the heavens, so that there will be no rain, and the land will yield no fruit, and you will perish quickly off the good land that the LORD is giving you.
  - Deut 11:26–28. See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: <sup>27</sup> the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, <sup>28</sup> and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known.
  - Deut 30:15–20. See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. <sup>16</sup> If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. <sup>17</sup> But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, <sup>18</sup> I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup> I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, <sup>20</sup> loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.
  - Rom 4:18–21. In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” <sup>19</sup> He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. <sup>20</sup> No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup> fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.
  - 2 Cor 7:1. Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.
  - 2 Pet 1:4. He has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.
  - 1 John 3:3. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

2. The covenant blessings and curses address both spiritual and physical wellbeing, but the focus is on the latter (e.g., national security and influence, personal health and fertility, etc.). Deuteronomy's longer list of curses and its explicit statements made clear that, while Israel would enjoy sporadic communal blessings, the general pattern for them would be sin and the experience of covenant curses culminating in exile, synthesized as punishment, destruction, and banishment.
  - Deut 4:25–28. When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger,<sup>26</sup> I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed.<sup>27</sup> And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you.<sup>28</sup> And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.
  - Deut 31:16–17. And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers. Then this people will rise and whore after the foreign gods among them in the land that they are entering, and they will forsake me and break my covenant that I have made with them.<sup>17</sup> Then my anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide my face from them, and they will be devoured. And many evils and troubles will come upon them, so that they will say in that day, "Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?"
  - Deut 31:26–29. Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against you.<sup>27</sup> For I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD. How much more after my death!<sup>28</sup> Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears and call heaven and earth to witness against them.<sup>29</sup> For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way that I have commanded you. And in the days to come evil will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands."
3. The prophets make clear that ultimately Israel's exile would be overcome by her representative Messiah's curse-bearing work (Isa 49:6; 53:5, 11; Gal 3:13–14; 2 Cor 5:21). In his day, as Moses himself anticipated (Deut 4:29–31; 30:3–10; 32:34–43; 33:26–29), the Eden-like, utopian picture of joy portrayed in the blessings would be realized in restoration, culminating in the new heavens and earth (Isa 51:3; 65:17; Ezek 36:35; Rev 21:1–4; 22:1–5). In that day, the curse would be no more (Deut 30:7; 32:43; Rev 22:3), and believers, who now enjoy every spiritual blessing in Christ (Eph 1:3; 2 Cor 6:16) would receive their full inheritance (Eph 1:14; 1 Pet 1:4).
  - Deut 4:29–31. But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.<sup>30</sup> When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice.<sup>31</sup> For the LORD your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.
  - Deut 30:3–10. then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you.<sup>4</sup> If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there he will take you.<sup>5</sup> And the LORD your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers.<sup>6</sup> And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.<sup>7</sup> And the LORD your God will put all these curses on your foes and enemies who persecuted you.<sup>8</sup> And you shall again obey the

voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today. <sup>9</sup> The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers, <sup>10</sup> when you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

- Deut 32:34–43. “Is not this laid up in store with me, sealed up in my treasuries? <sup>35</sup> Vengeance is mine, and recompense, for the time when their foot shall slip; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and their doom comes swiftly.” <sup>36</sup> For the LORD will vindicate his people and have compassion on his servants, when he sees that their power is gone and there is none remaining, bond or free. <sup>37</sup> Then he will say, “Where are their gods, the rock in which they took refuge, <sup>38</sup> who ate the fat of their sacrifices and drank the wine of their drink offering? Let them rise up and help you; let them be your protection! <sup>39</sup> See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand. <sup>40</sup> For I lift up my hand to heaven and swear, As I live forever, <sup>41</sup> if I sharpen my flashing sword and my hand takes hold on judgment, I will take vengeance on my adversaries and will repay those who hate me. <sup>42</sup> I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh— with the blood of the slain and the captives, from the long-haired heads of the enemy. <sup>43</sup> Rejoice with him, O heavens; bow down to him, all gods, for he avenges the blood of his children and takes vengeance on his adversaries. He repays those who hate him and cleanses his people’s land.”
- Deut 33:26–29. There is none like God, O Jeshurun, who rides through the heavens to your help, through the skies in his majesty. <sup>27</sup> The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms. And he thrust out the enemy before you and said, “Destroy.” <sup>28</sup> So Israel lived in safety, Jacob lived alone, in a land of grain and wine, whose heavens drop down dew. <sup>29</sup> Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, the shield of your help, and the sword of your triumph! Your enemies shall come fawning to you, and you shall tread upon their backs.
- Isa 49:6. It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.
- Isa 51:3. For the LORD comforts Zion; he comforts all her waste places and makes her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song.
- Isa 53:5, 11. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. . . . <sup>11</sup> Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.
- Isa 65:17. For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.
- Ezek 36:35. And they will say, “This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.”
- Gal 3:13–14. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”—<sup>14</sup> so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.
- 2 Cor 5:21. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- Eph 1:3, 14. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. . . . <sup>14</sup> who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

- 2 Cor 6:16. What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”
- 1 Pet. 1:3–4. He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead <sup>4</sup> to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.
- Rev 21:1–4. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. <sup>4</sup> He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”
- Rev 22:1–5. Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup> through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. <sup>3</sup> No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. <sup>4</sup> They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

### C. Foundations for Obedience: Past Gracious Preservation Despite Israel’s Sins

1. Future grace motivated Israel’s obedience, but past grace grounded it. Israel far too quickly forgot all that God had done for them in the past.
2. They needed to remember:
  - a. Their unworthiness to receive God’s affection (Deut 7:7; 9:6–8, 22–24).
    - Deut 7:7. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples.
    - Deut 9:6–8, 22–24. Know, therefore, that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stubborn people. <sup>7</sup> Remember and do not forget how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD. <sup>8</sup> Even at Horeb you provoked the LORD to wrath, and the LORD was so angry with you that he was ready to destroy you. . . . <sup>22</sup> At Taberah also, and at Massah and at Kibroth-hattaavah you provoked the LORD to wrath. <sup>23</sup> And when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, “Go up and take possession of the land that I have given you,” then you rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God and did not believe him or obey his voice. <sup>24</sup> You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.
  - b. The seriousness with which God took their past sins (1:35).
    - Deut 1:34–35. And the LORD heard your words and was angered, and he swore, <sup>35</sup> “Not one of these men of this evil generation shall see the good land that I swore to give to your fathers.”
  - c. YHWH’s vowed commitment to the patriarchs and their offspring (1:8; 9:5; cf. Gen 12:1–3; 15:18; 17:7; 22:16–18).
    - Deut 1:8. See, I have set the land before you. Go in and take possession of the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their offspring after them.
    - Deut 9:5. Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.
    - Gen 12:1–3. Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a



- blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”
- Gen 15:18. On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.”
  - Gen 17:7. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.
  - Gen 22:16–18. By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup> I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, <sup>18</sup> and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.
- d. The freedom YHWH alone gave them from slavery (Deut 5:15; 6:22–23).
- Deut 5:15. You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.
  - Deut 6:22–23. And the LORD showed signs and wonders, great and grievous, against Egypt and against Pharaoh and all his household, before our eyes. <sup>23</sup> And he brought us out from there, that he might bring us in and give us the land that he swore to give to our fathers.
- e. The gracious provision that YHWH alone supplied for them through the wilderness (2:7; 8:3–4; 29:5–6).
- Deut 2:7. For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He knows your going through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you. You have lacked nothing.
  - Deut 8:3–4. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. <sup>4</sup> Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years.
  - Deut 29:5–6. I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn off your feet. <sup>6</sup> You have not eaten bread, and you have not drunk wine or strong drink, that you may know that I am the LORD your God.
- f. The fact that they alone among all the nations of the world were set apart to be YHWH’s treasured possession (7:6; 14:2; 26:18; cf. Exod 19:5–6).
- Deut 7:6. For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.
  - Deut 14:2. For you are a people holy to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.
  - Deut 26:18. And the LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments.
  - Exod 19:5–6. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; <sup>6</sup> and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. <sup>7</sup> These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

#### D. The Deadly Problem: Israel’s Hardness

1. The words Moses most commonly used to describe Israel were “stubborn” (Deut 9:6, 13; 10:16; 31:27), “unbelieving” (1:32; 9:23), and “rebellious” (1:26, 43; 9:7, 23–24; 31:27).
  - Deut 1:26, 32, 43. Yet you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God.... <sup>32</sup> Yet in spite of this word you did not believe the LORD your God.... <sup>43</sup> So I

spoke to you, and you would not listen; but you rebelled against the command of the LORD and presumptuously went up into the hill country.

- Deut 9:6–7, 13, 23–24. Know, therefore, that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stubborn people.<sup>7</sup> Remember and do not forget how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD....<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the LORD said to me, “I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stubborn people.”...<sup>23</sup> And when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, “Go up and take possession of the land that I have given you,” then you rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God and did not believe him or obey his voice.<sup>24</sup> You have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.
  - Deut 10:16. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn.
  - Deut 31:27. For I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD. How much more after my death!
2. The people remained spiritually disabled and hardened from God, because he did not overcome their resistance; therefore, they would not obey God’s law (29:4[3]; Isa 29:10; Rom 11:8, 10; cf. Rom 8:7–8; 1 Cor 2:14; Eph 4:18).
- Deut 29:2–4[1–3]. You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land,<sup>3</sup> the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, and those great wonders.<sup>4</sup> But to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.
  - Isa 29:10. For the LORD has poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes (the prophets), and covered your heads (the seers).
  - Isa 44:18. They know not, nor do they discern, for he has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, and their hearts, so that they cannot understand.
  - Rom 8:7–8. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot.<sup>8</sup> Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
  - Rom 11:8, 10. As it is written, “God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day.” ...<sup>10</sup> let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see, and bend their backs forever.”
  - 1 Cor 2:14. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.
  - Eph 4:18. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.
3. Moses declared that their rebellion would only continue after his death and into the promised land, so that YHWH would pour out upon them covenant curses culminating exile, which he defines in terms of punishment, destruction, and banishment (Deut 4:25–28; 29:18–28; 31:16–21, 27–29; cf. Dan 9:11).
- Deut 4:25–28. When you father children and children’s children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger,<sup>26</sup> I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed.<sup>27</sup> And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you.<sup>28</sup> And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.
  - Deut 29:18–28. Beware lest there be among you a man or woman or clan or tribe whose heart is turning away today from the LORD our God to go and serve the gods of those nations. Beware lest there be among you a root bearing poisonous and bitter fruit,<sup>19</sup> one who, when he hears the words of this sworn covenant, blesses himself in his heart, saying, ‘I shall be safe, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart.’ This will lead to the sweeping away of moist and dry alike.<sup>20</sup> The LORD will not be willing to forgive him, but rather the

anger of the LORD and his jealousy will smoke against that man, and the curses written in this book will settle upon him, and the LORD will blot out his name from under heaven. <sup>21</sup> And the LORD will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for calamity, in accordance with all the curses of the covenant written in this Book of the Law. <sup>22</sup> And the next generation, your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, will say, when they see the afflictions of that land and the sicknesses with which the LORD has made it sick—<sup>23</sup> the whole land burned out with brimstone and salt, nothing sown and nothing growing, where no plant can sprout, an overthrow like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger and wrath—<sup>24</sup> all the nations will say, “Why has the LORD done thus to this land? What caused the heat of this great anger?” <sup>25</sup> Then people will say, “It is because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt, <sup>26</sup> and went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they had not known and whom he had not allotted to them. <sup>27</sup> Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, bringing upon it all the curses written in this book, <sup>28</sup> and the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger and fury and great wrath, and cast them into another land, as they are this day.”

- Deut 31:16–21. And the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers. Then this people will rise and whore after the foreign gods among them in the land that they are entering, and they will forsake me and break my covenant that I have made with them. <sup>17</sup> Then my anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide my face from them, and they will be devoured. And many evils and troubles will come upon them, so that they will say in that day, ‘Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?’ <sup>18</sup> And I will surely hide my face in that day because of all the evil that they have done, because they have turned to other gods. <sup>19</sup> Now therefore write this song and teach it to the people of Israel. Put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the people of Israel. <sup>20</sup> For when I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to give to their fathers, and they have eaten and are full and grown fat, they will turn to other gods and serve them, and despise me and break my covenant. <sup>21</sup> And when many evils and troubles have come upon them, this song shall confront them as a witness (for it will live unforgotten in the mouths of their offspring). For I know what they are inclined to do even today, before I have brought them into the land that I swore to give.”
  - Deut 31:27–29. For I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD. How much more after my death! <sup>28</sup> Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears and call heaven and earth to witness against them. <sup>29</sup> For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way that I have commanded you. And in the days to come evil will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands.”
  - Dan 9:11. All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him.
4. Deuteronomy’s salvation-historical perspective clarifies how Paul could assert that “the law is not of faith” (Gal 3:12) and “is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient” (1 Tim 1:9). The law was a temporary reality added after the Abrahamic covenant “to increase the trespass” (Rom 5:20) and “because of transgressions, until the offspring [i.e., Jesus Messiah] should come to whom the promise had been made” (Gal 3:19). It was a provisional “guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith” (3:24). “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes” (Rom 10:4). YHWH’s divine purposes, culminating in Christ, required that the old covenant

would bear a ministry of death and condemnation so that the new covenant might bear a ministry of life and righteousness (Rom 9:22–24; 2 Cor 3:7, 9).

- Rom 5:20. Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.
  - Rom 9:22–24. What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,<sup>23</sup> in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—<sup>24</sup> even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?
  - Rom 10:4. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.
  - 2 Cor 3:7–9. Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end,<sup>8</sup> will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory?<sup>9</sup> For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory.
  - Gal 3:12, 19, 24. But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.” ...<sup>19</sup> Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary....<sup>24</sup> So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.
  - 1 Tim 1:9. The law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers.
5. Gary Millar rightly notes that the “strange paradox” of Deuteronomy is that Moses rightly calls for obedient choices in response to God grace yet stands convinced that Israel will fail to deliver the faithful response for which God calls (“Deuteronomy,” *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, 163): “Moses believes that the standards he preaches are ultimately beyond the reach of Israel; therefore he regards them as only interim measures.” He further records (164–65) that Deuteronomy provides the theological framework for properly grasping Christ’s work, for it:
- a. Develops most fully the theology of blessing and curse, which stands at the heart of Jesus’ sin-bearing work;
  - b. Exposes the hopelessness of humanity trapped in sin, even when chosen by God;
  - c. First tells of the prospect of a radical divine intervention that changes people at the core of their being.
6. If the Jews, even with their special privileges (Rom 9:4–5), gained only a knowledge of sin from the law, what hope did the Gentiles have who never received such privileges (3:19)? The Jewish failure to keep the law proved to the world that “by works of the law no human being will be justified in [God’s] sight” (3:20). As such, the only hope for Jew and Gentile alike is “the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe” (3:21–24).
- Rom 3:19–24. Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.<sup>20</sup> For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.<sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—<sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,<sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

- Rom 9:4–5. They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. <sup>5</sup> To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.
7. While ethnic Israel predominantly rejected YHWH, through the Christ the message of salvation reaches the Gentiles (Rom 15:10; cf. Deut 32:43), thus condemning those who are only Jews outwardly and not inwardly (Rom 2:26–29). And as Moses anticipated (Deut 32:21), the salvation of the Gentiles will ultimately make the elect of Israel jealous, moving them to turn to God in faith and repentance (Rom 10:19; 11:11–12, 25–26).
- Deut 32:21, 43 (NIV). They made me jealous by what is no god and angered me with their worthless idols. I will make them envious by those who are not a people; I will make them angry by a nation that has no understanding. . . . <sup>43</sup> Rejoice, you nations, with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his servants; he will take vengeance on his enemies and make atonement for his land and people.
  - Rom 2:26–29. So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? <sup>27</sup> Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. <sup>28</sup> For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. <sup>29</sup> But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.
  - Rom 10:19. But I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, “I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry.”
  - Rom 11:11–12, 25–26. So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. <sup>12</sup> Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean! . . . <sup>25</sup> Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. <sup>26</sup> And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob.”
  - Rom 15:10. And again it is said, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”

#### E. YHWH’s Solution: Bring Salvation and Transformation on the other Side of Curse

1. God’s choice of Israel and initial working on their behalf had everything to do with his promises to the patriarchs and with his unmerited love for his people and had nothing to do with any greatness *of* Israel (Deut 7:7–8) or any greatness *in* Israel (9:5–6), for they were stubborn, and not righteous (9:6, 13; 31:27). If Israel was to enjoy lasting covenant relationship, it would be only due to the blood-bought mercy of God.
  - Deut 7:7–8. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, <sup>8</sup> but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.
  - Deut 9:5–6, 13. Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. <sup>6</sup> Know, therefore, that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stubborn people. . . . <sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the LORD said to me, “I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stubborn people.”

- Deut 31:27. For I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against the LORD. How much more after my death!
2. While Moses' Israel was spiritually disabled (Deut 29:4[3]), the prophet envisioned that curse would not be the final word. God's mercy would lead Israel in the latter days to turn to him and to listen to him (4:29–31; cf. Exod 34:6–7). He would perform heart surgery on them for the sake of their lives, resulting in their truly loving him with all their heart and soul (30:6) and heeding all that he was teaching in Deuteronomy (30:8). Moses' "heart circumcision" (30:6) seems to anticipate Jeremiah's "heart inscription" (Jer 31:33) and Ezekiel's "heart transplant," which would be accompanied by God's indwelling Spirit (Ezek 11:19–20; 36:26–27). All this would come because of God's *mercy* (Deut 4:31).
- Exod 34:6–7. The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. <sup>7</sup> keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."
  - Deut 4:29–31. But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. <sup>30</sup> When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice. <sup>31</sup> For the LORD your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.
  - Deut 29:4[3]. But to this day the LORD has not given you a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.
  - Deut 30:6, 8. And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.... <sup>8</sup> And you shall again obey the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today.
  - Jer 31:33. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
  - Ezek 11:19–20. And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, <sup>20</sup> that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.
  - Ezek 36:26–27. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.
3. Paul considered the work of God's Spirit in Christians through Christ to be the fulfillment of Moses' heart circumcision (Rom 2:28–29; 2 Cor 3:3; Gal 3:13–14). The apostle also stressed that the restoration day anticipated in Deuteronomy found its fulfillment in the redemptive work of Jesus, whose death provided not only the answer to humanity's curse through Adam (Rom 5:19; 1 Cor 15:21–22) but also stood as the climax of Israel's covenantal judgment and restoration anticipated in Deuteronomy (Gal 3:13–14 with Deut 21:23 and chs. 29–30).
- Rom 2:28–29. For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. <sup>29</sup> But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.
  - Rom 5:19. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.
  - 1 Cor 15:21–22. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

- 2 Cor 3:3. And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.
- Gal 3:13–14. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”—<sup>14</sup> so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.
- Deut 21:23. His body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

## VII. The Purpose of Covenant Relationship: God-exalting influence on the nations

**A. Missions Exists Because Worship Doesn't.** Deuteronomy portrays YHWH as the only God (Deut 4:35, 39; 6:4), holy (26:15; 32:51), sovereign over all things (10:14), the creator of mankind (4:32) and Israel (32:6), and the overseer of nations (32:8), who is rightly jealous for his people's affection (4:24; 5:9; 29:20; 32:16, 21) and must act to maintain right order (righteousness) in the world, wherein he is recognized as supreme (4:8; 16:20; 32:4). Part of God's revealed purpose for setting Israel apart for himself in the midst of the world was that through their obedience and surrender they might proclaim his worth to the nations and stand as an agent of God-honoring impact on a global scale.

- Deut 4:8, 24, 32, 35, 39. And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today? ... <sup>24</sup> For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.... <sup>32</sup> For ask now of the days that are past, which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and ask from one end of heaven to the other, whether such a great thing as this has ever happened or was ever heard of.... <sup>35</sup> To you it was shown, that you might know that the LORD is God; there is no other besides him.... <sup>39</sup> know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.
- Deut 5:9. You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,
- Deut 6:4. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.
- Deut 16:20 (DeRouchie). Righteousness, righteousness you shall pursue, that you may live and inherit the land that the LORD your God is giving you.
- Deut 26:15. Look down from your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless your people Israel and the ground that you have given us, as you swore to our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.
- Deut 29:20. The LORD will not be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of the LORD and his jealousy will smoke against that man, and the curses written in this book will settle upon him, and the LORD will blot out his name from under heaven.
- Deut 32:4, 6, 8, 16, 21, 51. The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.... <sup>6</sup> Do you thus repay the LORD, you foolish and senseless people? Is not he your father, who created you, who made you and established you? ... <sup>8</sup> When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God.... <sup>16</sup> They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger.... <sup>21</sup> They have made me jealous with what is no god; they have provoked me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are no people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.... <sup>51</sup> because you broke faith with me in the midst of the people of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, and because you did not treat me as holy in the midst of the people of Israel.

**B. Israel’s “Come and See” Call to International Impact.** With echoes of Exod 19:5–6, Deut 4:5–8 proclaims that, if Israel would follow God’s word closely, living wisely, their lifestyle would attract the attention of the nations (4:6b), who would stand amazed at God’s nearness to Israel (4:7) and at the uprightness of his revelation (4:8). Israel’s heeding of God’s commands would result in the display of God’s greatness in the sight of the world (26:18–19; 28:1, 9–10; cf. Matt 5:16).

- Exod 19:5–6. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; <sup>6</sup> and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.
- Deut 4:5–8. See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. <sup>6</sup> Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” <sup>7</sup> For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? <sup>8</sup> And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?
- Deut 26:18–19. And the LORD has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, as he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments, <sup>19</sup> and that he will set you in praise and in fame and in honor high above all nations that he has made, and that you shall be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised.
- Deut 28:1, 9–10. And if you faithfully obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.... <sup>9</sup> The LORD will establish you as a people holy to himself, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in his ways. <sup>10</sup> And all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you.
- Matt 5:16. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

**C. Israel’s Failed Calling and God’s Fulfillment**

1. Instead of heeding God’s voice, Moses knew that Israel would reject the Lord resulting in his cursing them. But YHWH would then act on behalf of his “servants” (Deut 32:36). In light of the jealousy that Israel’s disloyalty had caused God, he would now cause them to be jealous toward the nations (32:21; cf. Rom 10:19–11:26), would avenge his enemies (Deut 32:35, 41, 43; cf. Rom 12:19; Heb 10:30), would atone for the polluting effects of sin (Deut 32:43), and would have compassion on his servants (32:36), resulting in world-wide joy and the inclusion of Gentiles in the people of God (32:43 [KJV, NASB, NIV, CSB]; cf. Rom 15:10).
  - Deut 32:21, 35–36, 41, 43.<sup>4</sup> They have made me jealous with what is no god; they have provoked me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are no people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation....<sup>35</sup> “Vengeance is mine, and recompense, for the time when their foot shall slip; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and their doom comes swiftly.” ...<sup>36</sup> For the LORD will vindicate his people and have compassion on his servants, when he sees that their power is gone and there is none remaining, bond or free....<sup>41</sup> if I sharpen my flashing sword and my hand takes hold on judgment, I will take vengeance on my adversaries and will repay those who hate me....<sup>43</sup> Rejoice, you nations, with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his servants; he will take vengeance on his enemies and make atonement for his land and people.
  - Rom 12:19. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”

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<sup>4</sup> Deut 32:43 is taken from the NIV.



- Rom 15:10. And again it is said, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”
  - Heb 10:30. For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.”
2. While the church’s mission now includes a “go and tell component” not present in the old covenant (Matt 28:18–20; Acts 1:8), God’s old covenant “come and see” charge for Israel to heed his voice finds fulfillment in the church’s role of proclaiming God’s excellencies in the world (1 Pet 2:9) and of showing the world that we are Christ’s disciples (John 13:35).
- a. John 13:35. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”
  - b. 1 Pet 2:9. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

## VIII. The Lord of Covenant Relationship: Yahweh God

### A. YHWH’s Universal Supremacy

1. The central truth in Israel’s worldview: YHWH alone is God (Deut 4:35; 6:4; 33:26)—a rock (32:4, 15, 18, 30–31), a great (5:24, 7:21, 10:17; 11:2; 32:3) and consuming presence (4:24; 9:3; 33:2) that stands unique in his perfections, fully distinct from his creation (7:21; 10:17) yet fully present and active in it (4:7; 6:15; 7:21; cf. 1:45; 31:17).
- Deut 1:45. And you returned and wept before the LORD, but the LORD did not listen to your voice or give ear to you.
  - Deut 4:7, 24, 35. For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? ... <sup>24</sup> For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.... <sup>35</sup> To you it was shown, that you might know that the LORD is God; there is no other besides him.
  - Deut 5:24. And you said, “Behold, the LORD our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire. This day we have seen God speak with man, and man still live.”
  - Deut 6:4, 15. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.... <sup>15</sup> For the LORD your God in your midst is a jealous God—lest the anger of the LORD your God be kindled against you, and he destroy you from off the face of the earth.
  - Deut 7:21. You shall not be in dread of them, for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God.
  - Deut 9:3. Know therefore today that he who goes over before you as a consuming fire is the LORD your God. He will destroy them and subdue them before you. So you shall drive them out and make them perish quickly, as the LORD has promised you.
  - Deut 10:17. For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe.
  - Deut 11:2. And consider today (since I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen it), consider the discipline of the LORD your God, his greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm.
  - Deut 31:17. Then my anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide my face from them, and they will be devoured. And many evils and troubles will come upon them, so that they will say in that day, “Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?”
  - Deut 32:3–4, 15, 18, 30–31. For I will proclaim the name of the LORD; ascribe greatness to our God! <sup>4</sup> The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.... <sup>15</sup> But Jeshurun grew fat, and kicked; you grew fat, stout, and sleek; then he forsook God who made him and scoffed at the Rock of his salvation.... <sup>18</sup> You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth.... <sup>30</sup> How could one have chased a thousand, and two have put ten thousand

to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had given them up? <sup>31</sup> For their rock is not as our Rock; our enemies are by themselves.

- Deut 33:2, 26. He said, “The LORD came from Sinai and dawned from Seir upon us; he shone forth from Mount Paran; he came from the ten thousands of holy ones, with flaming fire at his right hand.... <sup>26</sup> There is none like God, O Jeshurun, who rides through the heavens to your help, through the skies in his majesty.
2. YHWH’s character (32:3–4): perfectly merciful (4:31; 13:17; 30:3), loving (5:10; 7:8, 13; 10:15, 18; 23:5), loyal (5:10; 7:9, 12), faithful (7:9; 32:4), holy (26:15; 32:51), eternal (33:27), impartial (10:17–18), and just (32:4).
- Deut 4:31. For the LORD your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.
  - Deut 5:10. [YHWH shows] steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.
  - Deut 7:7–9, 12–13. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, <sup>8</sup> but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. <sup>9</sup> Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.... <sup>12</sup> And because you listen to these rules and keep and do them, the LORD your God will keep with you the covenant and the steadfast love that he swore to your fathers. <sup>13</sup> He will love you, bless you, and multiply you. He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your wine and your oil, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock, in the land that he swore to your fathers to give you.
  - Deut 10:15, 17–18. Yet the LORD set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day.... <sup>17</sup> For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. <sup>18</sup> He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing.
  - Deut 13:17. None of the devoted things shall stick to your hand, that the LORD may turn from the fierceness of his anger and show you mercy and have compassion on you and multiply you, as he swore to your fathers.
  - Deut 23:5. But the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam; instead the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loved you.
  - Deut 26:15. Look down from your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless your people Israel and the ground that you have given us, as you swore to our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.
  - Deut 30:3. Then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you.
  - Deut 32:3–4, 51. For I will proclaim the name of the LORD; ascribe greatness to our God! <sup>4</sup> The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.... <sup>51</sup> [You could not enter the land] because you broke faith with me in the midst of the people of Israel at the waters of Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, and because you did not treat me as holy in the midst of the people of Israel.
  - Deut 33:27. The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms. And he thrust out the enemy before you and said, “Destroy.”
3. YHWH’s power (3:24; 32:39): the creator of humanity (4:32), the overseer of nations (32:8), the universal judge (9:4; 18:12; 32:41, 43), and the sole controller of all things in heaven and on earth (4:39; 10:14; cf. Heb 1:3).
- Deut 3:24. O Lord GOD, you have only begun to show your servant your greatness and your mighty hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as yours?

- Deut 4:32, 39. For ask now of the days that are past, which were before you, since the day that God created man on the earth, and ask from one end of heaven to the other, whether such a great thing as this has ever happened or was ever heard of....<sup>39</sup> Know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.
- Deut 9:4. Do not say in your heart, after the LORD your God has thrust them out before you, “It is because of my righteousness that the LORD has brought me in to possess this land,” whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is driving them out before you.
- Deut 10:14. Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it.
- Deut 18:12. For whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD. And because of these abominations the LORD your God is driving them out before you.
- Deut 32:8, 39, 41, 43. When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God....<sup>39</sup> See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand....<sup>41</sup> If I sharpen my flashing sword and my hand takes hold on judgment, I will take vengeance on my adversaries and will repay those who hate me....<sup>43</sup> Rejoice with him, O heavens; bow down to him, all gods, for he avenges the blood of his children and takes vengeance on his adversaries. He repays those who hate him and cleanses his people’s land.
- Heb 1:3. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

## B. YHWH’s Special Care for Israel

1. Yahweh alone is Israel’s “father” (Deut 32:6), their redeemer (4:20; 4:34; etc.), covenant maker (29:1), warrior (1:30; 3:22), protector (33:26–29), guide (1:33; 8:2; 32:12), instructor (1:3; 4:2; 6:1–2), prayer answerer (4:7; 9:19; 10:10), provider (2:7; 8:16–18), disciplinarian (8:3, 5; 11:2), tester (13:3), judge (1:17; 5:9; 7:10), restorer (4:30–31; 30:1–10; 32:34), and savior (4:31; 33:29).
  - Deut 1:3, 17, 30, 33. In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses spoke to the people of Israel according to all that the LORD had given him in commandment to them....<sup>17</sup> You shall not be partial in judgment. You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God’s. And the case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it....<sup>30</sup> The LORD your God who goes before you will himself fight for you, just as he did for you in Egypt before your eyes....<sup>33</sup> [He is the one] who went before you in the way to seek you out a place to pitch your tents, in fire by night and in the cloud by day, to show you by what way you should go.
  - Deut 2:7. For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He knows your going through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you. You have lacked nothing.
  - Deut 3:22. You shall not fear them, for it is the LORD your God who fights for you.
  - Deut 4:2, 7, 20, 30–31, 34. You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you....<sup>7</sup> For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? ...<sup>20</sup> But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day....<sup>30</sup> When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice.<sup>31</sup> For the LORD your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them....<sup>34</sup> Or has any god ever attempted to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, and by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great deeds of terror, all of which the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?

- Deut 5:9. You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.
- Deut 6:1–2. Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules—that the LORD your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it, <sup>2</sup> that you may fear the LORD your God, you and your son and your son’s son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long.
- Deut 7:10. And [he] repays to their face those who hate him, by destroying them. He will not be slack with one who hates him. He will repay him to his face.
- Deut 8:2–3, 5, 16–18. And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. <sup>3</sup> And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. . . . <sup>5</sup> Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the LORD your God disciplines you. . . . <sup>16</sup> who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. <sup>17</sup> Beware lest you say in your heart, “My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.” <sup>18</sup> You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.
- Deut 9:19. For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure that the LORD bore against you, so that he was ready to destroy you. But the LORD listened to me that time also.
- Deut 10:10. I myself stayed on the mountain, as at the first time, forty days and forty nights, and the LORD listened to me that time also. The LORD was unwilling to destroy you.
- Deut 11:2. And consider today (since I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen it), consider the discipline of the LORD your God, his greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm.
- Deut 13:3. you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the LORD your God is testing you, to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.
- Deut 29:1[28:63]. These are the words of the covenant that the LORD commanded Moses to make with the people of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant that he had made with them at Horeb.
- Deut 30:1–10. And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you, <sup>2</sup> and return to the LORD your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>3</sup> then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you. <sup>4</sup> If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there he will take you. <sup>5</sup> And the LORD your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. <sup>7</sup> And the LORD your God will put all these curses on your foes and enemies who persecuted you. <sup>8</sup> And you shall again obey the voice of the LORD and keep all his commandments that I command you today. <sup>9</sup> The LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb and in the fruit of your cattle and in the fruit of your ground. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, as he took delight in your fathers, <sup>10</sup> when you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep his commandments and his statutes that are written in this Book of the Law, when you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

- Deut 32:6, 12, 26, 34. Do you thus repay the LORD, you foolish and senseless people? Is not he your father, who created you, who made you and established you? ... <sup>12</sup> the LORD alone guided him, no foreign god was with him.... <sup>34</sup> Is not this laid up in store with me, sealed up in my treasuries? ... <sup>26</sup> There is none like God, O Jeshurun, who rides through the heavens to your help, through the skies in his majesty.
  - Deut 33:27–29. The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms. And he thrust out the enemy before you and said, “Destroy.” <sup>28</sup> So Israel lived in safety, Jacob lived alone, in a land of grain and wine, whose heavens drop down dew. <sup>29</sup> Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, the shield of your help, and the sword of your triumph! Your enemies shall come fawning to you, and you shall tread upon their backs.
2. As God, he is jealous for his people’s love (4:24; 5:9; 32:16, 21) and deserves their whole-hearted, life-encompassing, community-impacting, exclusive commitment (6:4–5).
- Deut 4:24. For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.
  - Deut 5:9. You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.
  - Deut 6:4–5. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
  - Deut 32:16, 21. They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger.... <sup>21</sup> They have made me jealous with what is no god; they have provoked me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are no people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.
3. As God, he is by nature both good and just (32:4), and he must hate and punish sin (7:4; 8:19–20; 9:8, 19–20, 22; 29:20; 31:17), detesting all influences that subvert his rule and all satisfactions that do not ultimately result in humility, gratitude, and praise (7:25–26; 12:31; 32:16).
- Deut 7:4, 25–26. for they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly.... <sup>25</sup> The carved images of their gods you shall burn with fire. You shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them or take it for yourselves, lest you be ensnared by it, for it is an abomination to the LORD your God. <sup>26</sup> And you shall not bring an abominable thing into your house and become devoted to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest and abhor it, for it is devoted to destruction.
  - Deut 8:19–20. And if you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. <sup>20</sup> Like the nations that the LORD makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.
  - Deut 9:8, 19–20, 22. Even at Horeb you provoked the LORD to wrath, and the LORD was so angry with you that he was ready to destroy you.... <sup>19</sup> For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure that the LORD bore against you, so that he was ready to destroy you. But the LORD listened to me that time also. <sup>20</sup> And the LORD was so angry with Aaron that he was ready to destroy him. And I prayed for Aaron also at the same time.... <sup>22</sup> At Taberah also, and at Massah and at Kibroth-hattaavah you provoked the LORD to wrath.
  - Deut 12:31. You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way, for every abominable thing that the LORD hates they have done for their gods, for they even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods.
  - Deut 29:20. The LORD will not be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of the LORD and his jealousy will smoke against that man, and the curses written in this book will settle upon him, and the LORD will blot out his name from under heaven.
  - Deut 31:17. Then my anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide my face from them, and they will be devoured. And many evils and troubles will

come upon them, so that they will say in that day, ‘Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?’

- Deut 32:4, 16. The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he....<sup>16</sup> They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger.
4. God’s people must tenaciously battle against all forms of idolatry (5:7; 6:14), for the preeminent one from whom, through whom, and to whom all things exist demands respect (Rom 11:36; Col 1:16).
- Deut 5:7. You shall have no other gods before me.
  - Deut 6:14. You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are around you.
  - Rom 11:36. For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.
  - Col 1:16. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

**IX. Summary:** Before entering the Promised Land, Moses instructs Israel in the way of righteousness, explains how they will enter the land, fail to love God and their neighbor, and undergo the curse of exile, and then predicts that at the end of the days God will have compassion on his people by bringing them back to the land and producing in them hearts that love God on account of the infused new covenant words of the messianic prophet-like Moses.

## X. Guided Reading for Deuteronomy:

### A. Points of Focus:

1. Key chapters: 4, 5–11, 28–32
2. Key persons: Yahweh, Moses, Israel
3. Key places: Plains of Moab

### B. Questions:

1. What three terms does Moses most often use to describe Israel?
2. In Deut 4:5–8, what is it about Israel that distinguishes her from the nations and that will draw the nations’ attention? See also 26:16–19; 28:9–10.
3. Deut 4:25–31 anticipates three distinct eras in the history of Israel’s relationship with Yahweh. What are they?
4. According to Deut 7, why did Yahweh set his love on Israel and choose her from all the nations of the earth? Why does Deut 9 say Yahweh is going to give Israel the promised land?
5. According to Deut 8, what must Israel be careful not to let happen when they arrive in the promised land?
6. In Deut 17, what qualifications were given for any king that would rule over Israel? What responsibilities did he have before God and the people?
7. In one sentence or less, clarify what Deut 28 says will bring about the blessings and curses of the covenant, respectively? According to Deut 30:15–18, what two options are being presented to Israel?
8. What two “P” words synthesize the nature of all blessing?
9. Substantiate from Deuteronomy why Moses would have agreed with Paul that the old covenant bore a ministry of condemnation (2 Cor 3:9).