

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

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INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

THE NAME OF THE BOOK

In its Hebrew origin, the book is called (*Elah Hedbarim*) or “these are the words,” which are the opening words of chapter one. In the Septuagint, the book is called “Deuteronomos” or “The Second Law.” This is perhaps because (Deut. 17:18 LXX) says: “a copy of this Law;” or because the book is meant to be as a second Law in addition to what is recorded in the books of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. It is evident that what is mentioned in the book is not a repetition of what is mentioned in the previous three books but it is the constant reminder of God’s Law: “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” (Deut. 6:8). The book is an explanation of the Law in the light of what took place during the forty years in the wilderness. It is a review to the new generation about to enter Canaan given by the prophet Moses at the end of the journey in the plains of Moab (a month before entering) before his death, so that everyone can be prepared through faith-born obedience and practical divine love.

THE WRITER OF THE BOOK

Both Jews and Christians agree, through the tradition, that Moses wrote the whole book except its last part that dated back to his death. They ascribe the writing of that part to either Joshua the son of Nun or Eleazar the priest. Some think that Moses dictated the book orally at first to be written afterwards (1:3, 31: 24-26).

The school of criticism has tried to attack the book severely concerning its belonging to Moses. It claims that it was written by some

anonymous writers 600 years after Moses. However, some modern researches affirm that the book belongs to the age of Moses.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BOOK

1- The Law, undoubtedly, plays an essential role in Deuteronomy, which calls itself the “Law” (Deut. 1:5) or “the book of this Law” (Deut. 30:10). The text of the Law covers chapter 12-26 which is the core of the book. We have to understand that the book is not judiciary since the Law is given for saving dimensions of a large-scale objective, for the purpose of salvation. According to Deuteronomy 30:13, 11:14, the Law is a sign of Divine presence in the hearts of God’s people: whoever keeps it, lives a spiritual life. In plain language, we can say that the book reveals the mutual love between God and His people: With His Divine love, God has chosen His people bestowing salvation upon them; in turn they respond to love with love by consecration their hearts through obeying the commandments. Besides liturgical service as a practical way of expressing their love to God with all their hearts, with all the soul and with all the might (Deut.5).

2- The book contains a sermon by Moses on 3 parts. Rather, they are 3 sermons though some divide them into 8 discourses. However, the book is not a mere sermon; it is a review of the Law in an attractive way whose aims are: God’s people enjoyment of salvation, practicing the practical love for God (Deut. 6:4), thanksgiving (through reminding them of God’s deeds with them and their fathers) with humbleness (Deut. 9:6) and practicing obedience as a preparation for entering the Promised Land so that the people can live in God’s care and enjoy the communion with Him.

3- Deuteronomy is considered to be a call directed by Moses to the generations coming after him so that they can have a chance of enjoying honestly and sincerely a covenant with God. By this way, they can realize God’s will and His dealings with their forefathers. This call is

directed to all, especially leaders such as kings when they are seated. It is said: “When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possesses it and dwell in it, and say, “I will set a king all the nations that are around me,” “You shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses; ... when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this Law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. “And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God” (Deut. 17: 14-20)

4-The Jews, in their spiritual childhood, were committed in a (covenant) bitter literal way to what come in the book. We, in the new testament, find in those laws and commandments deep spiritual notions and the gift of the life in the LORD.

5- For the first time, we hear about the curse of being hanged on a tree (Deut. 21: 22-23). The book pointed to the expectation of Christ’s coming (Deut. 18: 15-19)

DEUTERONOMY AMONG MOSES BOOKS

Genesis prepares humanity to accept salvation. God has given love while man has responded to love with rebellion and living away from God the source of his life.

Exodus declares God’s choice for his people as a yeast of sanctifying the whole humanity. Man had to be freed from the slavery and effects of sin.

Leviticus gives the Divine Law concerning the service of worship to show the sanctification by the Blood and enjoying Redemption.

In numbers, the people are trained and educated by God in their errantry in the wilderness of this world.

Now, the people is about to enter Canaan of which the previous generation was deprived due to its revolt and rebellion. Therefore, comes the Law to make them rejoice with the glory if they express their

love to God and their communion with Him through obedience. This is the ton of Deuteronomy.

DEUTERONOMY AND THE TEMPTATION OVER THE MOUNTAIN

This book has a special place for Christ; it was the only book from which Christ quoted in his conversation with the tempter. Compare Mat 4-4 with Deut. 8-3; Mat 4-7 with Deut. 6-16; Mat 4-10 with Deut. 6-13; Matt 5-31 with Deut. 24-1; and Mark 12-3, with Deut. 6-5.

DEUTERONOMY AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

One of Deuteronomy's outcomes was the emergence of the Eessenes group who, in the second century B.C., moved from Judea wilderness to the North-west of the Dead Sea (Qumran). One of their epithets was the group of the Eternal Covenant. The beginning of the book that regulates the group says: "Whoever joins the group order shall pass over to the covenant before God" (1 Qs 1:16). One of their hymns says: "Every day and knight, I shall enter to the covenant of God" (1 Qs 10:10). One of their most essential liturgies was the annual celebration of renewing the covenant as it was mentioned in Deut. 27; where priests declare blessings and Levites curses (1 Qs 1:18) FF) The group organized itself like the new generation in the wilderness Deut. 1:15. Among the manuscripts of Qumran were 14 of Deuteronomy.

DEUTERONOMY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Some realize the importance of Deuteronomy for the Christian society of the new Testament. It is one of 4 books from which the new Testament quoted (about 83 times). This book also has an influence on theology according to the Gospel of John. The full concept of the new commandment of love (John 13:34, 15:12) is typical of the concept of

the commandment in Deuteronomy as an essential Divine ordinance of love asking man his whole entity.

DIVISIONS OF THE BOOK

- 1- The first sermon Deuteronomy 1- 4
- 2- The second sermon Deuteronomy 5-28.
- 3- The third sermon Deuteronomy 29-30.
- 4- The fourth sermon Deuteronomy 31-34 (An appendix to the three previous sermons).

THE FIRST SERMON

DEUTERONOMY 1 - 4

Moses talks to the wilderness-in-born new generation before entering the Promised Land to remind them of God's dealing with their fathers and forefathers, not by giving them a historic review of events but to stress the following:

1- God's care for man especially in the wilderness of this world
Deut. 1:34 - 2:7

2- Disobedience is the cause of their father's deprivation of the Promised Land; therefore, he urges them to be obedient, to God.

3- Thanksgiving to God for His gifts and care instead of grumbling and disobedience.

4- Through the commandments and worship service, we enjoy life
(4)

1- 3 A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE JOURNEY FROM HOREB TILL THE ARRIVAL AT MOAB

The writer, by saying "on this side of the Jordan" (1:1), meaning the Eastern bank of the Jordan, does not necessarily mean that he is in the western bank of Jordan the cross to the Eastern one. This is a term of calling the Eastern bank of Jordan "this side of the Jordan" that was used in the past and is still used till these days. However, some say that the introduction and the end of the book were written by either Joshua the son of Nun or Eleazar the priest after recording Moses' sermons.

These chapters reveal God's care for his people and his dealings with them:

1- The repetition of "all Israel" (1:1) throughout the whole book focuses upon God's dealings with them as one people; not because they are the offspring of Jacob but because they are united together in a

covenant with God. This covenant is for the whole people through which every believer enjoys a personal relationship with God as if the Covenant is personally for him; yet without isolation, individuality or selfishness. The Lord builds his church as one bride; and we are members of the bride that is united with her bridegroom.

2- By saying: “Moses began to explain this Law” (1:5), the book does not mean to repeat the old laws but interprets them to benefit the new generation about to enter into Canaan. The commandments of the Lord do not change but they fulfill the needs of every generation according to its conditions.

3- God is attributed to His people; it is said: “God our Lord” 1:6 God is the Lord of the church 5:6 and it is God’s and His own people. There is a personal relationship between the heavenly Bridegroom and His bride.

4- Israel lived almost 40 years in errantry I the wilderness. However, the secret of the delay is the lingering and rebellious man who is unready to enter. As for God, from the beginning He almost holds our hands and pulls us to run with Him to the Promised Land. Thus, He urges us by saying: “You have dwelt enough in that mountain. Turn and take your journey ... go in and possess the land” 1:7-9. God wants to hurry with us, carrying us as sons in the bosom of their father 1:31 to possess 1:21, Rev:3.

5- The road is difficult; it is a continuous war against the devil. However, we are not a part of the spiritual war against evil; it is God’s war as He goes before us to fight (1:30)

6- In the way, we shall not need anything as God becomes like fire by night so that we may not wander and a cloud by day so that we may not stop (1:33)

7- With His care, God blesses His people and multiplies the blessings ceaselessly 1:10-11

8- God punishes the grumbling people who are inconfident by depriving them from the Promised Land, but He does not deprive their children (1:39)

9- Although God, due to His love for His people, for them many nations and gave them the Promised land, He wished them to follow His plan wisely. Therefore, He asked them not to attack the sons of Esau since they were their brethren (2:1 -8) (Jacob and Esau were brothers). The sons of Esau were promised by God to inherit the mount of Seir (Gene 36:8). God also ordered them not to enter in a war against Moab and Amon (2:9-13) for they were the sons of Lot> However, they were to fight against Sihon, the king of Amorites, (2:24) whose heart was hardened and would not allow Israel to pass by him; thus, God gave them to be victorious over the Amorite king army and to have all the towns of Sihon (2:26-36). They were also to fight against the king of Bashan and his people (3:1 -10) to have Gilead and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, for the two and half tribes (2:13). Moreover, they were to fight all the nations they passed though afterwards (3:21)

10- Since the people of Israel did not trust that God could give them victory over these kingdoms, He left them till all the men of war were consumed (2:13) to realize that the victory is from God and not by their might. God wants to use our energy for the good; but if we depend on it, ignoring God's hand, we are deprived of God's blessings to know that we can do nothing without Him. Then, He works strongly in and with us..

11- Moses' heart, (the symbol of the Law) was swelling with yearning to enter Canaan. Although, because of the people, he was deprived of entering, he was not deprived of rising us to the top of the Pisgah to see the land with his eyes (3:27). Then, comes Joshua to cross with the people and divide the land among them (3:28) By Law, we yearn to the above Jerusalem while by Jesus, symbolized by Joshua, we enter it and enjoy the inheritance.

As for Moses, declared his inability to bear the burdens of God's people alone. Therefore, he assigned some leaders for war,

judgment and caring for the tribes problems (1:9-17) without leaving off his responsibility especially concerning the difficult problems (1:17).

As for the people, they responded to God’s love and Moses care with the following:

- Although the spies affirmed the fertility of the land given by God (1:25) they were afraid and terrified (1:26-29) disbelieving God who fought for them.

4 - OBEYING THE COMMANDMENTS AND APPOINTING THE REFUGE CITIES

Through reviewing God’s dealings with His people in the wilderness, Moses reached the following results:

1- By the statutes, we enjoy life and enter the Promised Land to possess (4:1)

2- By them, we know that God is very near to His people, hears them (4:70 and talks to them (4:36)

3- A warning against worshipping pictures and statues; it is said: “The Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God” (4:24). God does not accept a mixture of worship Him and paganism; there is no other God but Him (4:39)

* Some cities of pagan worship became refuge cities to which any manslayer who killed accidentally fled. There, he enjoyed peace and safety; thus, those cities represented God’s house that gave comfort.

*N.P. To study the Refuge Cities, refer to Numbers 35:6-15

THE SECOND SERMON DEUTERONOMY 5-28

THE COMMANDMENTS AND THE STATUTES OF THE LAW

This sermon is considered to be the body of the whole book or the essential part of it. It gives us the divine commandments (Deut. 5-11) that we have to obey in order to live and enter into the heavenly Canaan to inherit and possess. These commandments and the statutes of the Law have a great importance in the life of the Christian man (Deut. 12:28):

1- God, who put the laws of the Old Testament, completed them in the new testament; the two covenants testaments are the unchanging word of God.

2- Through the Cross, the Christian understands the laws, not literally but with profound spiritual meaning.

3- The new testament commandments reveal the depth of the old testament ones; while the latter reveal evidently the concepts of Salvation and the Cross.

5-11 DEUTERONOMY

THE DIVINE COMMANDMENTS

5 - THE COVENANT AND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1- The commandments, as shown by Moses, are not merely Divine ordinance to be obeyed by man. However, in their depth, they are a covenant between God and man. It is a new covenant that does not grow old between God and the present Church. God says in Deuteronomy: "The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers,

but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive” (5:3). Through that covenant God talked to His people face to face (5:4). It is true that the Lord is a feared consuming fire God, but He bestows life upon His people as he says: “For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?” (5:26) “And you said: “Surely the Lord our God has shown us His Glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire. We have seen this day that God speaks with man; yet he still lives””(5:24).

In this way, we understand that the commandments are not given orders but a rising as if on a mountain to meet with God in His glory; there God talks to us face to face; yet we live and never die.

2- The ten commandments are regarded as being the core of the Law and the essence of God’s covenant. The people of the old covenant were interested in implementing them outwardly, but our Lord Jesus Christ has revealed their depth. The old people thought they could be righteous by having the Commandments. In the new covenant having realized that humanity is unable to fulfil the Commandments in depth, we realize our need for Christ who makes us righteous through His Blood and supports us with His Holy Spirit and fulfilling the Command the Law.

3- We can divide the Ten Commandments into 3 full parts:

(A) Commandments concerning our relationship with God; Being united with God alone (Commandment 1). We have known the mysteries of that God through the Incarnation of the Word (Matt 11:27). Prohibiting statues worshipping (Commandment 2) so as not worship idols. (Building statues in the heart such as egoism and love of possession). Prohibiting taking the name of the Lord in vain (Commandment 3) At old times, the oath by God was a sign of God’s honor and fear. Therefore, it was allowed. In the new covenant, as man has been risen to spiritual maturity, it does not become of him to swear at all. (Matt 5); keeping the Sabbath (Commandment 4) (exodus 20).

Now, God is our Sabbath, in him the Father finds His rest and we find ours.

(B) Commandments concerning our relations with our relatives in the Lord: Honoring the parents (Commandment 5)

(C) Commandments concerning our relationship with the society in the Lord:

“You shall not murder” (Commandment 6) Christ has shown that man can murder with his tongue (Matt 5) “You shall not commit adultery” (Commandment 7)

In (Matt 5) the Lord asks us to possess the inward purity of the heart. “You shall not steal” (Commandment 8) “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (Commandment 9) “You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, his house and his field” (Commandment 10). This happens if the heart is preoccupied with the Lord; thus it is satisfied and flows with love due to demanding things from others.

6 - THE LAW BETWEEN THE INTERNAL LIFE AND WITNESSING BEFORE OTHERS

1- As the book talks about the Law and its relationship to establishing a covenant with God, it shows us the necessity of our commitment to the Commandment as a lived experience, witnessing for it at home, among the colleagues among strangers.

This text goes hand in hand with Christ's words to His disciples concerning preaching (Acts 1:8)

DEUTERONOMY 6:6-9

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart; You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house

when you walk by the way.”

ACTS I 1:8 (NIV)

“you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem,

and in all Judea,

and Samaria,

and to the end of the earth.

2- In its essence, the Law is unity with the Word of God who, alone, can take away man's feeling of isolation. He dwells in his heart (6:8) 6); He prevails over his family relations (6:7); He accompanies him in the way (6:7). He does not leave him when he rises up or lies down (6:7); He prevails on his daily work (6:8); and He fills his heart and thoughts (6:8).

3- The Lord asked Israel to put the blood of the Passover lamb on their doorposts (Exodus 12:7). In Deuteronomy, He asks them to write the Law on the doorposts and gates of their houses (6:9). Thus the blood of the Passover lamb is related to the Law granting salvation.

Through the Blood, we are rescued from death to enjoy the unity with the Word through His blood by the Law. In plain English, we cannot separate the belief in Blood from the acceptance of the Scriptures in their deep meaning in order to meet with Christ the Sacrifice as a personal intimate friend.

The unity between the Blood and the Law also means the unity of faith through the practical obedience to God in His Law.

4-Moses affirms two related to each other issues:

(A) Remembering God's saving deeds for us in order that we should thank and obey Him without grumbling. We remember that He has given us beautiful and large cities that we have not built (6:10); that is sanctifying the soul, the body, the thoughts, the senses and the feelings which are cities we have possessed by the Divine grace. He gives us fullness free; "houses full of all good things which you did not fill;" He has given us abundant wells of the work of God's inward Spirit; "hewn-out wells which you did no dig," He also gives us abundant fruits of the Spirit;" "vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant - when you have eaten and are full" (6:11)

(B) The testimony to God's deeds especially in the family: (6:20-23). We testify that we were slave of Pharaoh and were delivered by his mighty hands. This testimony is tasted by the infant, the child, the husband, the wife and everyone who meets with us and feels the swelling of our hearts with love, thanking and obedience and not through the outside appearance of dead spirit.

7 - ELIMINATING SIN

2- Why did God allow Israel to ruthlessly exterminate the surrounding peoples?

(A) The Israelites, in the beginning of their spiritual life, could not distinguish between sin and sinners. Therefore, murdering the sinners meant eliminating and destroying sin.

(B) Corruption among those peoples was unbearable. In worshipping the Baal mothers put their children in fire to be burnt among the sounds of drums so that their voices could not be heard. Woman and girls devoted themselves to adultery in order to collect money for the temples. The perishableness of the (nations) Gentiles, due to their corrupt and violent life, was more dangerous than murdering the body.

(C) Although there were strict Divine ordinances of elimination, the Jewish people fell many times in participating the Gentiles their pagan worship, abomination and violence through giving human sacrifices. What would be their state if those ordinances did not exist? God wanted to make the Jews pure to prepare them to be a pure Divine people serving the Gentiles afterwards.

2- Those strict ordinances symbolize the following in our life:

(A) “You shall make no covenant with them” (7:2). This means that we have to refuse giving way to sin and entering into a dialogue with it.

(B) “Nor shall you make marriages with them” (7:3). There is no part between the believer and the unbeliever or between light and darkness in a marital life. The acceptance of the believer to part with the unbeliever in social or bodily relationship comes on the account of the salvation of the soul and the sanctification of the family.

(C) Destroying altars, breaking down sacred pillars, cutting down wooden images and burning carved images mean purifying the heart (god’s place) of having other gods such as egoism, the love of praise or satisfying the corrupt desires of the flesh.. etc.

(D) “Your eye shall have no pity on them.” The word of God must be a “double - edged sword” (Heb 4:12). It should separate truth from falsehood and distinguish between them strongly and strictly.

(E) “You shall not be afraid of them” (7:18). The spiritual man has power (DEUT. 10:1) and does not fear sin or the devil confident in the Lord who gives victory (1cor 15:57)

2- The fruits of eliminating sin faithfully and strictly through the mighty Divine grade are:

(A) The Lord your God “will love you” (7:13). This means our entering into the sphere of Divine love that gives fullness to the soul.

(B) “You shall be placed above all peoples” (7:14). The spiritual man, in his meekness, becomes great and feared and gets Internal power.

(C) Always spiritually regenerated in your inward life and in attracting others to God. Deuteronomy says: ”There shall not be a male or female barren among you” (meaning the fruit of the spirit) “or among your livestock” (meaning the spiritual fruit of the flesh) (7:14).

(D) The health of the soul, the thoughts and the flesh; the book says: “And the Lord will take away from you all sickness” (&:15).

(E) The Lord fights for you in your spiritual battle. He says: The Lord your God will send hornet among them until those who are left, who hide themselves from you, are destroyed” (7:20) God does not end our battle speedily for our spiritual peace so that we may not fall in pride; thus the beasts of wilderness are destroyed; they are arrogance and self-conceit. The heart is the battlefield; The Lord says: “And the Lord your God will drive out those nations before you little by little; you will be unable to destroy them at once, lest the beasts of the field become too numerous for you.”

8 - THE NARROW ROAD

In His love for man, God grants him His life-giving commandment to give him Himself. God enters with man in a love relationship in which He gives him blessings abundantly. With such love, He enters with him in the narrow road. Why?

1- For schooling in faith: “To humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not#. (8:2)

2- To crown us our honesty appears evidently in hardships so much that we deserve much greater blessings: “For the Lord your God is

bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills;’ 98;70

3- For chastisement: “As a man chastens his son, so the Lord your God chastens you” (8:5)

4- In order that we may not fall in pride and self-righteousness: “Then you say in your heart, “My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth”” (8:17)

5- To be a chance to see the Lord, meet Him and enjoy His deeds through new experiences: “So He humbled you, allowed to hunger, and fed you with Manna which you did not know nor did your fathers” (8:3). In the midst of the fiery furnace, the three young men got new experience. The son of God appeared with them surrounding and accompanying them turning the fire into wet. Similarly, the believer, with the fire of any hardship, experiences a new vision of God and tastes a heavenly food that he considers new.

6- For turning evil capabilities to positive ones for the benefit. He gets water out of “the rock of flint” (8:15). If our senses and capabilities have become like stones, the Lord gets fountains of water out of them that quench the thirst of the needy souls and turn the wilderness into a Divine paradise.

9-10 ESCAPING SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

In these two chapters, Moses prepares the people to obey the Divine commandment through escaping self-righteousness:

1- The victory Israel has enjoyed is a Divine gift and not a human one.

The book says: “Hear O Israel: You are to cross over the Jordan today, and go into dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourself, cities great and fortified up to heaven. A people great and tall, the descendants of the Anakim” (9:i-2).

According to human logic, Israel would not win and possess, but this is a Divine gift from the God of the impossible who does miracles. He leads us into baptism (Jordan) to possess with Him (Rev 6:10), destroying the might of the adversary (the descendants of Anakim).

2- The mystery of power: “The Lord your God is He who goes over before you as a consuming fire,” (9:3). If the arrows of the evil one are flaming (EPH 6:116), the Lord will be a wall of fire around us destroying these arrows for us. (ZACH 2:5).

3- Do not say: “because of my righteousness the Lord has brought me in to possess this land. “(9:4-6) According to human nature, we are” “Stiff-necked people.” (9:6) God does so to fulfill the Divine promise and God’s covenant with man (9:5). We must adhere to the Divine covenant as it turns the hardness of our heart to the righteousness of Christ.

4- While God gave the two tablets of the Law to Moses who fasted for the sins of the people (9:18), and the mountain burned with fire (9:15), while the people sinned and compelled Aaron to make for them a molded calf, God, His prophet and nature act for the benefit of the people.

Moses reminded them of their rebellion: When God ordered them to go up and possess in Kadesh Barnea, they did not obey Him nor did they obey his Order (9:22-24) (ALSO REVIEW NUMBERS 13,32:8)

In the midst of all this corruption appears the overwhelming Love of God. He has written the same commandments on two other tablets (10:1-5) to be put in the covenant a Ark as testimonies.

5- God’s choice for Aaron and his sons as priests is to be their inheritance Himself (10:9). This is a living example of God giving Himself free and not out of self-righteousness.

6- In response to that Divine love, we respond to love with love though choosing God who chooses us (10:15) and caring for the brethren especially the orphans, the widows and the strangers.

Finally, Moses ends the two chapters by affirming God's action based on His love and choice. He says: "Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the Lord your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude." (10:22)

11 - KEEPING THE COMMANDMENT

To keep the Divine commandments, we have to do the following:

1- Making use of the old experiences. We must remember God's deeds with us and with our fathers and learn from the mistakes of others (11:1-7)

2- Remembering the commandments: "Therefore, you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and find them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up. And shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates" (11:18-19). If the commandment or the words of God is the incarnated Word, He must possess our hearts and our souls, sanctifies the works of our hands and be the focus of our contemplation (Between your eyes). He must be the focus of our talks in the family and accompany us at home, in the road and in sleepiness and wakefulness. Through Him, we enter into the new life (On your doorposts).

3- Remembering the blessings of obeying the commandment (possessing Christ) and the curses of being deprived of them:

(A) Enjoying the gift of the Holy Spirit "the early and late rain" (11:14) Who turns the land (our Heart) from a wilderness to a fruitful paradise; thus we harvest grain (for spiritual fullness), get wine (for spiritual rejoicing) and the oil (the kingly anointment and spiritual power) (11:14). These things fill our souls as well as our bodies; as the book says: "And I will sent grass in your fields for your livestock" (11:15) and "A land (the body) for which the Lord your God cares; the eyes of the

Lord your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the very end of the year” (11:12).

God grants us this land as a gift and cares for it forever.

(B) Enjoying the blessings of Mount Gerizim and being saved from the curses of Mount Ebal (11:29) (27-28)

DUET 12-18

THE STATUTES OF THE LAW

THE BOOK OF THE LAW

This part is considered to be the body of the book. It gives statutes related to the daily worship life of the people of Israel and to anyone who lives in their cities and villages. It is the clue that connects the age of the fathers (Abram, Isaac and Jacob) to the New Testament paving the way through prophecies and the Law. Therefore, this part, spiritually, is the bases of our Christian faith.

In the age of the fathers (Abram, Isaac and Jacob), we have realized God's love and care for His chosen people individually. Now, the Lord expresses His love and care through statutes related to the daily life of the individuals and the whole group. Thus, we experience God's interest in our life with its details through our obedience to the Divine commandment.

Through this Law, God reveals Himself as being Holy unbarring to sin and at the same time merciful. He is Holy and does not bear the deviation towards pagan worship in its corruption. He is merciful in that we reveals that the animal sacrifice symbolizes the unique giving-happiness sacrifice of Christ.

12 - BLOOD AND SACRIFICE

Some may think that the book of the Law started with the negative aspect since it declared destroying what belonged to the nations (12:1-30). However, it is evident that it aims at a positive aspect: That is confirming the important role of the sacrifice and blood in Israel's life; this cannot be achieved with the existence of the heathen worship.

1- The book links between destroying all that belongs to the nations especially the pagan worship, and establishing a house for God among them (12:5-7). The land that was used before for sin is now itself

sanctified to be a place for God to dwell in. The Lord does not want destruction but construction, turning our capabilities from evil to good.

2- Why did God allow the killing of the Gentiles (nations)?: “For they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods” (12:31). There was no way of restoring humanity except by eliminating those whose hearts were hardened to the extent that they gave their sons as offerings. The Gentiles were devoted to pagan worship, corruption and violence..

3- As the place of God is the place of the sacrifice and the center of the life of God’s people who enter in a covenant with Him, the book affirms that God Himself chooses His place (12:5 -11-18). It is one place where His God’s name is called ... Although the animal sacrifices are many to reveal the many aspects of the Cross, they are given in one place since they are unrepeatd sacrifices.

4- Through the sacrifice, the offering of God’s people, their tithes and all what they give were accepted (12:6). Through it, they also practiced the inward life of rejoice “And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God.” (12:12,7). Through the sacred Sacrifice, we enjoy rejoice and being full.

5- To emphasize the importance of Blood for having the Divine salvation, the book warns against eating blood (12:6, 23:27).

6- There must be no mixing between the Sacred sacrifices and the pagan ones (12:29-32).

13 - A WARNING AGAINST THE SOURCES OF DEVIATION

In His emphasis on that the sacred sacrifice should be in God’s one place. God warned us against 3 sources of deviation:

1- The false prophecy: (13:1 -6): In every age, there are false prophets who deceive the simple people with miracles and wonders as

the magicians did in Moses' age (REVIEW 2:9 MATT 24:23-25) (rev 13:13-14).

2- Kinship and blood relationships: (13:7-11): This was exactly what happened to the Wise Solomon who followed strange gods because of his foreign wives. Our eternal salvation makes it incumbent upon us to eliminate every relationship that destroys our eternity without hesitation.

3- Congregational deviation (13:12-18): Many people deviate due to congregational pressure in order that they may not appear as strangers. St Athanasius the apostolic believed that he practiced the work of God. Therefore, he said strongly: "I am against the world." Let us love the inhabitants of the world and be kind to them without being deviated by that trend, but we must behave as our message dictates upon us.

Therefore, it is better that we carry the spirit of distinction so as not to be deceived with the previous deviations.

14 - THE HOLY LIFE AND THE ALLOWED FOODS

Leviticus 11 talks about the allowed and forbidden foods as a symbol for holy life. For holy life. In Deuteronomy, Moses, or rather God, talks to the people to experience the same life as the Levites. This chapter has the following:

1- Refusing the pagan habits in funerals (14:1-2): Such as cutting the body (Levi 19:27) and shaving the hair (The bald). God's people must have a special holiness and be unlike the surrounding peoples.

2- Refusing the profane foods (14:3-21) Most probably, those foods (meat) were used as pagan sacrifices such as the pig and the camel.

3- Giving the tithes is a sign of sanctifying all that we possess for the Lord. It seems that this was a traditional Law throughout generations. (JACOB in GOD'S house Gene 28:22). The believer feels that what he

has (land) is a holy gift from the Lord. Therefore, he commits himself to giving the tithes as a sign of the response of his heart, full of love, to the Divine love. In his love, he gives to the Levites (The servants of the word), strangers, orphans and widows (14:29)... The outcome of this is rejoicing (14:26) and blessings (14:29).

Thus, the believer practices the holy life through his habits even in hard times such as death; and in his daily life such as in eating and drinking; in his worship such as in giving; and in his relationship with others such as caring about the strangers and the needy.

15 - THE YEAR OF RELEASE

The holy life is not limited to certain habits but is concerned with our relationship with ourselves, God and the people. Therefore, the Law “the year of release” reveals God’s interest, and consequently the interest of His sons, in the debtors who are unable to fulfill their debts and releasing them for the sake of the Lord Himself, the very poor and the servants who have no one to care for them.

Having poor people who are in need among us is a chance for us to open our hearts with love and our hands with giving (15:11).

The scripture talked before about the Sabbath year (EXO 23:10), (Leviticus 25:1-7). It also talked about releasing the Hebrew slave (EXODUS 23:2-10) and piercing the ears to the slave who would accept slavery willingly.

As we care for the land (agriculture), the poor and the slaves, we must care for God’s house through giving the unblemished incense to God. (REVIEW exodus 13:I-2,34:19-20, Leviticus 27:26-29 and Numbers 18:15-19)

16 - THE FEASTS

God talks to the people about rejoicing in 3 major feasts. (EXODUS 23:14-17),(34:18-23) (LEVITICUS 23). They may be

called “The feasts of sojourn or pilgrimage” in which the people happily and rejoicing remember their pilgrimage, giving offerings to God’s house as much as they can. These feasts are:

1- The feast of the Passover: It stands for redemption in which humanity rejoiced in its victory over Satan.

2- The feast of weeks: It stands for our joy because of the Pentecost.

3- The feast of tabernacles: Here, we live as if in tabernacles watching the perfection of glory in the Christ.

* He talks about the justice of the judges and the responsible people (15:18-20) and rejecting the influences of Paganism. (15:21-22). There is no separation between the statutes that judge among the believers and those concerning the worship. This is what we realize throughout the whole book. There is no justice or judgment without pure worship; and there is no acceptable worship without justice and mercy towards the brethren.... Thus, worship and behavior mix together to be one holy life. (TO STUDY THE FEASTS, REVIEW NUMBERS 28-29)

17-18 PROFESSION STATUTES

1- Concerning the judges and officers: They should judge with justice (16-18), they should avoid partiality and bribes (16-19), they should not divert from the true worship (16:20-22, 17:1) and they should stone to death whoever transgresses against the worship of God (17:2) on the testimony of 2 or more witnesses (17:6-7).

The difficult cases are raised to the Levi priests and the judge in the temple as what happens now in the case of the high judgment.” Whoever does not accept that judgment must be killed (17:8-13).

2- As for the king: (17:14-30): He should be chosen by God from His people. He must not live in luxury and must write a copy of the Law to read from it all his life so as not to be proud of himself.

3- Concerning the sojourn Levi priests in the cities (18:1 -8):

The people must fulfil their material needs.

4- As for prophets: (18:9-22): By all means, God refuses the false prophecies such as the passing through fire of the sons and daughters, especially in hard times to satisfy the gods (Leviticus 18:10 20:2-5), practicing witch craft, soothsaying, interpreting omens, sorcery, conjuring the spells (Using God's name in magic), being a spiritist and calling up the dead.

Meanwhile, the book has a prophecy about the coming of the Christ saying: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear. "He is unique in His prophecy, the Lord of the prophets. He grants life for whoever hears Him. Any soul that does not listen to him must be cut off from His people. (ACTS 3:22-23 7:37)

THE CRIMINAL LAW (1)

19 - REFUGE CITIES

* We talked above about the refuge cities (NUMBERS 35)

* Deuteronomy was interested in the land inherited by God's people.

The chapter starts by affirming: "You shall put away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel that it may go well with you" (9:13), it continues: "You shall not remove your neighbor's landmark, which the men of old have set, in your inheritance which you will inherit in the land that the Lord your God is given you to possess." (19:14) It is as if removing the landmark to usurp a part of anyone's portion is as dangerous as shedding an innocent blood. (I) This is an indication that the Promised Land stands for the promised heavenly life; whoever sheds an innocent blood has lost his eternal share and the salvation of his soul through the things cause people to sin. (REVIEW THE CHRIST'S WORDS ABOUT THINGS THAT CAUSE PEOPLE TO SIN MATT 8:7)

* In order that an innocent blood may not shed, the testimony is not based on one witness but on two or three (19:15-17). If a witness proves to be a false witness, he is judged by what he has intended to do his brother so that others may fear (19:18-21). Moses' Law said: "Life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (19:21). Thus, it raised man, at the beginning of his spiritual life, from the spirit of revenge with more than his affliction, man's nature is to defy evil by more evil, to gradually prepare him for love; by the Divine grace, he practices to love his enemy and defy evil by good.

The Law trains man gradually to love and forgiveness in order to train him gradually on self-control.

20 - THE MILITARY LAW

1- The first principle of the spiritual battle is fearlessness (20:1 -9). The book says: "What man is there who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return to his house, lest the heart of his brethren faint like his heart" (20:1-8)

The mystery of courage is confidence in God the leader of the spiritual battle: "For the Lord your God is he who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you" (20:4). The mystery of fear is the yearning of the heart for temporary things. Therefore, the book orders who builds a new house, or plants a vineyard without giving its First Fruit (in the 4th year) betrothed to a woman before he has not yet married her to go and return to his house. This is a symbol for the weak souls that cling to the world and cannot give spiritual fruits; they are an obstacle for others.

2- Concerning the far cities that do not belong to the Promised Land, peace can be offered to them and their peoples can be used to serve Israel (20:10-15).

This is a symbol for the wish of the spiritual man for peace and turning evil capabilities into capabilities submitting to God's Kingdom in us.

3- The nations which the people enjoyed their lands stood for sin and their elimination meant destroying all evil. Historically, those peoples' life was violent; They gave their sons and daughters as sacrifices to the gods, women and girls committed adultery for the benefit of the gods. There were other terrible abominations; therefore, they were very dangerous for God's people (20:18)

4- Fruitful trees ready for eating must not be cut down (20:19). It is God's new creation. If God cares for trees, care He not for man? The commandment of eliminating the pagans was not out of the harshness of the Law, but they, with their evil and hard hearts, put themselves under punishment.

5- Unfruitful trees must be destroyed ... This is to eliminate all effects of Pagan worship. The pagans used to worshipping under all green trees (HER 2:20)

21 - CRIMINAL LAW (2

1- Murder: If a slain man whose murderer is unknown is found, (21:1-9) his innocent blood is washed away by asking the elders and judges of the nearest city and breaking the neck of a heifer that has not worked or been pulled with a yoke. This signifies the desire of achieving justice through washing the hands of all the elders of the nearest city.

No one is slain but humanity that is destroyed by sin! Who can wash away the sin of humanity except the righteous sacrifice of Christ?!

2- The captive woman (21:10-14): Whoever is attached to her has to appreciate her human feelings. He must not marry except when she expresses her grief over her deprivation of her people. This is done by cutting off her hair and her nails, taking away her captive dress and leaving her wail upon her parents for a month. If he is not satisfied with her, he cannot sell her or take her as a slave.

3-Since the first-born status was essential as life for the Jews, Whoever his first-born right is usurped becomes as if he has lost his life, the elder son is given the first-born right even if his mother is unloved; for what is the guilt of the son?

4- The stubborn and rebellious son is stoned to death (21:18-21); thus appears the danger of being stubborn sons ... In this way, we realize the role of the unique Son who has carried the fruit of our stubbornness through the Cross to reflect on us his obedience to the Father (HEB 5:5).

5- Crucifixion: Whoever is hanged on a tree must not be left after sunset "for he who is hanged upon a tree is accursed of God" (21:23).

The Christ has accepted to be cursed to make us holy (GAL 3:13)

22 - CIVIL AND LITURGICAL LAW (1)

1- Caring for the lost thing: (22:3): It is not becoming of any believer to ignore any lost thing that belongs to his brother, but must care about turning it back to him.

2- Caring about the animals fallen down along the road (22:4): God cares even about our care for animals.

3- Homosexuality (22:5): Man must not wear clothes that belong to the other sex. This means that each sex must be proud of what god has made it like and no one must not desire to belong to the other sex.

4- Caring for the birds in the road (22:6-7): The believer can let the mother go and take her young.

5- Negligence: Whoever does not build a parapet for his roof bears the blood guiltiness of anyone who falls off it (22:8)

6- Caring for agriculture (22:9-11): One must not plant two kinds of seeds simultaneously, so that harvesting each kind can be done easily. There must be no use of a donkey and an one plough in order that there should be a balance between them. Wood and linen must be mixed in one garment ... All this symbolizes the prohibition against mixing truth with false philosophy of the world (Lev 19:19). God wants His people to be characterized with purity and uprightness.

7- Concerning the tassels fixed in the helms of the garment, review Lev. 15:38-39. God wants by this to distinguish His people among the other peoples so that no one be not ashamed of belonging to God's people. This also refers to remembering the Divine commandments even regarding simple things that may be considered as trivial as a garment.

8- Marriage holiness (22:13-30): The infidel wife, who yet is attached to her husband, defiles the whole people. Therefore, she is stoned to death. Any corruption in marital life affects the whole community. However, if her husband scandals her unjustly, he is to compensate her materially and is committed not to divorce her for all his life. Stoning to death was the punishment of adultery among the married

or the engaged to show the terribleness of marital infidelity. But if the betrothed woman was in the field and could not escape being raped, she is not guilty. Whoever committed an adultery with a virgin without her will had to marry her and not to divorce her for all his life. Finally, the son had to respect the awe of his father's bed.

23 - OTHER DIFFERENT STATUTES

1- The deprived of the congregation of the Lord in the Old Covenant: (23:1-8). Most probably, God does not mean to deprive them from the salvation of their souls and their worship of Him, but depriving them of enjoying all their rights such as undertaking certain responsibilities or entering the holy places and participating with the congregation. The deprived are:

(A) The emasculated: (They are deprived of priesthood Leviticus (21:17-21) and their sons to the tenth generation. This is to emphasize the holiness of all the body members.

(B) The illegitimate sons to the tenth generation: This is to show the danger of that sin. (In Christ's blood, the sons are not judged by their father's guilt.

(C) The Ammonite and the Moabite to the tenth generation: This is to protect the congregation against the influence of paganism. Through faith, Ruth of the Gentiles surpassed many women-believers and deserved to have a book in the scripture carrying her name and to have Christ as her offspring; moreover, her name was mentioned in God's fathers.

(D) The Edomite and the Egyptian only to the third generation: Israel should not forget that the Edomite is his brother (ESAU was Jacob's brother) and that the Egyptian have hosted him in his land though have enslaved him. Thus, we learn not to ignore any good act for us whatever small it is.

2- The holy war: (23:9-14): God did not mean by war usurping land and possessing but preparing His people as a yeast to sanctify other

peoples. Therefore, the preparation for that war was not by war tools or military organization but through the inward and outward holy life such as being clean.

3- Protecting the slave who escapes the harshness of his master (23:15-16). We must care for the weak and those who suffer injustice.

4- The holiness of the congregational worship. Contrary to the pagan atmosphere surrounding them, God orders Israel to refuse adultery, homosexuality for the benefit of the temple, the hire of the harlot and the price of a dog as an offering in God's house (23:17-18). God does not want our money but the holiness of our life.

5- Charging without interest for the needy (23:19-20).

6- Paying the vows: (23:21-22) "For God loves a cheerful giver" (1 COR 9:7 NIV).

7- Refusing being needy concerning the possessions of others (23:24-25). Man has the right to eat his neighbor's crops to fill his stomach. However, he must not carry anything of it out of the field in order not to be an exploiter of his neighbor's love and generosity.

24 - DIFFERENT OTHER STATUTES

1- Divorce: (24:1-4): If a man divorces his wife and she is married to another, the first cannot marry her again even if the second dies. The purpose behind this is to prevent rashness in divorce and realizing the holiness of marriage.

2- The newly married man must not go out for war for a year (24:5).

3- Not taking the necessities of life in pledge in order not to destroy the life of our brethren. It says: "No man shall take the lower or the upper millstone in pledge, for he takes one's living in pledge" (24:6). The millstone was one of the necessities of life at that time. All families grinded grain daily and bake it. Without the millstone, man could not eat his daily bread.

4- A man must not be stolen from among the people and be sold as a slave (24:7).

5- Being committed to fulfilling the Law of leprosy as it was mentioned in Leviticus 13,14.

6- Taking in pledge (24:10-13, 17): No one must enter a house to take something in pledge not to wound the debtor. If he takes the debtor's garment in which he sleeps, he has to give it back to him before sunset so that he may not catch cold.

7- The wages of the poor worker (24:14-15): It should not be delayed to the next day so that the worker may not be wounded.

8- Each man is punished by his sin not his parents or his sons (24:16).

9- Caring for the orphan, the stranger and the widow without injuring their feelings: If a man forgets a sheaf in the field, he must not come back and take it. Some fruits must be left in trees (24:19-21).

25 - THE STATUTE CONCERNING THE WIDOW OF A DEAD

1- Chastisement should be to certain limits (25:1-3): The punishment of the guilty in a dispute must not exceed 40 blows.

2- "You shall not muzzle no ox while it treads out the grain" (25:4) St. Paul sees that God is not interested in oxen (1Cor 9:9) but that these words point to the servant of the altar who must eat from the altar.

3- The statute of marrying the widow of the dead brother who did not have children to bring an offspring to succeed to the name of the dead (25:5-10) (REVIEW RUTH 4;1-8): Ruth of the gentiles got married to the old Boaz when the kinsman redeemer refused to marry her and bear a succeeding son to her dead husband. Boaz represents the Christ who has accepted to take the Church of the gentiles as His wife.

The kinsman redeemer who refuses to marry his brother's or kinsman's wife, his sandal is removed before the elders of the city and the woman spits at his face saying: "So shall it be done to the man who will not build up his brother's house. And his name shall be called in Israel, "the house of him who had his sandal removed." This shows the care of the Law of keeping the name of the dead. All believers hopped that the Messiah would come of their offspring.

God asked Moses to remove his sandal in front of the fiery tree. Now priests remove their sandals at entering into the temple as a holy land, signifying that they are not the groom. They are the servants of the bridegroom while the only groom is Christ the Savior of the world.

4- Woman's life: A woman has the right to defend her husband in a dispute, but she must be modest; therefore, if she seizes the genitals of the other man, her hands must be cut off (25:11-12).

5- Different weights and measures (25:13-16): We must not weigh by different weights and measures. We must not prefer not to another by weighing with one measure for one and another for another, such as preferring the rich to the poor.

6- Plotting out the remembrance of Amalek (25:17-19): This means eliminating the effects of the violent resisting sin that stands as an obstacle in the way of our salvation.

26 -THE STATUE OF THE NEW LAND FIRST FRUIT

1- The statute of the first year (25:1-11): They had to give their first fruit as a thanksgiving sacrifice to God who granted them the Promised Land after their bitter slavery in Egypt. Christ is our first-fruit through whom we have eternal life and are considered to be possessions for God.

2- Giving the tithes for the Levis, the strangers, the orphans and the widows (26:12-15): Tithes are given in all cases. (It was given in the third year as a symbol of our resurrection with Christ on the third day.

Through his resurrection, our hearts are open for all, especially for the servants of God's house and the needy strangers). While the first fruits were given in God's house in front of His altar (26:4), the tithes were given to the poor believers (26:13). The first-fruits stand for Christ who carries us to His heaven. Tithes stand for sanctifying us in Him in order that our land or life may be holy in Him.

The believer testifies that he has not eaten of the tithes of his land in his mourning (26:14). He has not used them as a sacrifice for the idols as was mentioned in Hosea (9:4 Niv): "Such sacrifices will be to them like the bread of mourners: all who eat them will be unclean." In the book of Ezekiel, it is said: Do not eat the customary food of mourners" (NIV EZEKIEL 24:17). This sacrifice was related to the god of fertility who died, was buried and was risen; the pagans contributed in mourning him.

The same meaning is affirmed by the words: "Nor given any of it for the dead" (26:14). This means that the believer did not participate with the tithes in the liturgy regarding the Canaanite god of fertility.

3- The care for keeping the commandments of the Lord profoundly for covenant between God and His people. The Law confirms two things: Unity with God "I will be their God. And they will be my people." (Jeremiah 31:33 NIV) and the holy life in the Holy God "And that you may be a holy people to the Lord your God" (Deut. 26:19).

THE FORM OF BLESSINGS AND CURSES DEUTERONOMY 27-28

1- Moses and the elders obliged the people to do the following at entering the Promised Land:

(A) Engrave the Law on large stones on Mount Ebal (Shikim) to be seen by all. This refers the Christ our Divine word who has descended to us.

(B) Set an altar for the Lord of upright stones. This refers to Christ the cornerstone who gave Himself a sacrifice for the Father on our behalf. He is the mystery of our being full and happy since He says: “And shall eat there, and rejoice before the Lord your God” (27:7). Christ is the case of our entering the heavenly promised Land as He is the word and sacrifice.

(C) 6 tribes would stand on Mount Gerizim saying blessing while the other 6 on Mount Ebal saying the curses (27:12-13) ... (Review the blessings of obedience to God and the curses of rebellion against Him Leviticus 26).

2- The blessings (28:1-14): They are terrestrial, psychological and spiritual. About them, we notice the following:

(A) God directs His words to the whole people as if they are one person. The mystery of blessing is the unity of the people together to enjoy what benefits them if they obey God’s voice.

(B) Blessings cover every place: “Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country” (28:3). We enjoy both heavenly blessings regarding the above Jerusalem and temporary ones concerning our service in the world.

(C) Blessings related to all the aspects of our life: “Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, (The sanctification of the spirit) the produce of your ground (Sanctifying the body) and the increase of your herds, “(Sanctifying the human reshources)” (28:4)

(D) “Blessed shall be your basket (the unnecessary things such as fruits at that time) and your kneading bowl (the necessary things as the daily bread)” (28:5).

(E) A blessing in every movement: in the coming in or out (28:6).

(F) A blessing in resisting enemies (28:7-12).

(G) A blessing in the treasures. They themselves become holy people I.E a blessing for others.

(H) Abundant limitless blessings: “The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens to give the rain to your land in its season, (Meaning He sends His Holy Spirit to us)and to bless all the work of your hand” (28:12).

(I) Ceaseless blessing and glory: “And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath” (28:13).

3- The curses (28:15-68): They come upon the rebellious people against the voice of the Lord. They are contrary to the above-mentioned blessings in addition to: The full destruction due to leaving God the source of life (28:20). The heaven becomes as copper to them and the land as iron; meaning that heaven does not hear their prayers and men do not listen to their appealing. Rains turn into dust; meaning that the building things turn to destruction. Man loses his honor, the best of what he has. He betroths a woman for himself and another man sleeps with her (28:30). He toils and others usurp the fruit of his toiling (28:30). For example, he builds a house to be inhabited by another. he lives in humility; his sons are taken captives before his eyes (28:32). He goes mad due to what befalls him (28:34). He would like to get rid of his life (28:67).

This part gives a terrible example of what may happen to the people due to their deviation from God, the source of their life, growth, happiness, fullness, holiness and internal freedom.

29-30 THE THIRD SERMON

In order that the people may keep the covenant that God made with them in the lands of Moab and Horeb (29:1), Moses called them and addressed them with that sermon as a renewal of the covenant. The Sermon included:

(A) Reminding them of God' blessings for them (29:1-7): God freed them from the slavery of Pharo and cared for them in the wilderness. He granted them victory over kings and gave them the Promised Land to be served there by the nations ... Moreover, God entered with them in a covenant as being God's holy people; they are for him and He is for them (29:13). It is a covenant with all, the leaders, the people, children and women ... (29:10).

2- A warning against turning away to follow strange gods either individually or as a congregation (29:18). It is a turning away from God the giver of life to follow dead things. The apostle Paul warns us saying: "See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many" (HEB 12:15 NIV). Those who deceive are like weeds among the wheat in the field, spoiling that wheat and they are like seeds that bear bitterness and wormwood" (29:18).

3- The outcome of rebellion the curses mentioned in the previous sermon chapter (28) = an example for generations (28:22-29).

4- To encourage them to obey the commandment, God explained the following:

(A) The openness of the gates of repentance: There should be no despair since we are in the world. God waits for our repentance to restore us to Him (30:1-10). God can sanctify us by circumcising our hearts (30:6) to swell with His love. God rejoices over our good and becomes happy with us (30:9) .. If we return honest with all our hearts and souls (30:10).

(B) The commandment is not difficult or out of us. (A symbol for Christ who dwells in us): “But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.” (30:14) (Romans 10:6-8).

(C) The freedom of our will: “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil” (30;15). We have no excuse since God respects our free will and sanctify it to choose our way without compulsion or obligation.

FINAL DEEDS AND COMMANDMENTS

DEUTERONOMY 31-34

31 - JOSHUA IS TO SUCCEED MOSES

1- Moses' successful leadership appears in his adoption of Joshua, the successful leader who cares about the second line of the leadership so that work may not stop. Moses humbly declares: "I am one hundred and twenty years old today. I can no longer go out and come in..." (31:2) He declares his happiness that his disciple that his disciple has achieved what he failed to achieve. "Also the Lord has said to me, "You shall not cross this Jordan ... Joshua himself crosses over before you, just as the Lord has said" (31:2 -3). When does every leader desire the success of others more than himself?

2- Moses supported the people in order that Joshua may achieve his message. he also supported Joshua saying: "And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed" (31:8).

3- The necessity of reading the Law loudly before all the people, even children, in the feast of tabernacles in the year of release (the seventh year).

4- God appeared in the Tabernacle to bless the transference of leadership to Joshua ... God talked to His people frankly affirming their entering into the Promised Land and their turning away afterwards. He also told Joshua: "Be strong and of good courage; .. And I will be with you" (31:23).

5- The levis are committed to write the Law and put it beside the Covenant Ark.

32 - THE FINAL HYMN

According to God's order, Moses spoke the hymn which the imagination of the great writers and poets cannot produce anything similar to, at the last moments of his life. The hymn included:

1- An introduction (32:1-2): He asks the heaven and earth to listen to him ... I.E He calls the body and soul to say a praising hymn together that shows God's love and care in return of man's rebellion and harshness. God's words, like rains, turn the wilderness into paradise and as wet give peace and coolness to the soul.

2- A comparison between God's characteristics and those of His people (32:3-6): God is great in His love, justice and wisdom. He is changeless like a rock on whom the believers depend safely and in Him they take shelter. (Snakes cannot crawl on rocks, therefore, who depends on rocks cannot be beaten by snakes). Out of the rock, water sprang for the people in the wilderness (Numbers 20).

The people on the other hand, defiled themselves (Hosea 13:9). Foolishly, they ignored God's fatherhood. Every man, even God's children, has his weaknesses, but Israel was a twisted generation that needed to remember God's dealings with their fathers to quit the corruption of their hearts (32:7).

3- The mentioning of God's blessings to them (32:7-14): He gave them the Promised Land as a symbol for Heaven. They themselves became His inheritance as a sign of His respect and love for them: "For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance" (32:9) "He kept him as the apple of His eye" (32:10). God carries His people as the eagle carries his youngsters to take them up to Heaven.

He did miracles for them; He produced fruits out of the wilderness; honey out of rocks; and oil out of flinty rocks ... (32:13). The best of what He has given is His precious Blood: "And you drank wine, the blood of the grapes" (32:14).

4- Responding to blessings with rebellion (32:15-18): As man eats of God's blessings, he becomes full and fat (Jeshurun) to turn and kick

(32:15). The word Jeshurun is used satirically; it may be derived from the word “wall” or “left” meaning erect or upright. The people ignore God, the rock of times to cling to abominations.

5- Their chastisement (32:19-27): They ignored the kind fatherhood of the Lord a clinging to abominations. Therefore, God chastened them through the same people from whom they learned abominations “I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation” (32:21). What man may think to be the cause of his joy and happiness turns to be the cause of his humiliation. By saying “provoke them,” appears the Divine love since God provokes them to repent. In Romans 10:19, St. Paul sees in that a prophecy about the acceptance of faith by the Gentiles in order that the Jews may return at the end of times and accept Christ the Savior.

6- God chastens the evil people (32:28-43): The Lord uses the evil peoples to chastise His people. Then He finds that those evil peoples have become proud denying that what has happened is by His permission but by their high hand (32:27). Therefore, He chastises them for insulting Him.

He ends the hymn by calling the Gentiles to praise and rejoice ... This may be the call for the coming Gentile church to experience rejoicing in the Lord (32:43).

As he cited the final hymn, Moses affirmed to the people that those Divine words are their life (32:47). Then God told Moses to go up the Mount Nebo in the land of Moab across from Jericho to view the Promised Land from afar and die as Aaron did before him.

Moses and Aaron were deprived of entering the Promised Land as a punishment for what happened at the waters of Meribah Cadesh (32:51 Number 27:14). They did not sanctify the Lord among the children of Israel. This may be because they did not glorify God’s name before striking the rock by Moses’ stick (Numbers 20:10). Moses accepted chastisement before his death but he entered the Promised Land when Christ was revealed on Mount Tabor. He also saw the land

before his death and his soul rejoiced since he considered what was his people got to be his.

33 - THE WORDS OF BLESSINGS FOR THE TRIBES

* The blessing spoken by Jacob Genesis 49.

That blessing reviewed the deeds of Jacob's sons that were sometimes shameful. Moses' blessing here reviews the dealings of the Divine grace concerning Israel's entering into a covenant with God.

* The blessing directed to the tribes (except for Semion) bore consolatory words, showing God's ideas and grace that he bestows upon His people.

* It included the following:

1- The glorious appearance of God (31:2 -5) as the true king of all the tribes. On His right. His statute is the Law of the Lord; His statute is a flaming Law; His code is His love for His people. He carries His holy people in His hands so that no-one may be deprived of his care. They long for sitting under His foot while he embraces them through love. Sitting under the foot is a reference to learning and discipleship.

2- Reuben (33:6): Moses started with him through he lost his first-born right. His inheritance was on the border lines. Therefore, Moses assured him that God would protected and supported his men in order that the nations neighboring them might not consume them (Numbers 32:27).

3- Judah (33:7): His blessing is directed to David the symbol for Christ. He shows David as a man of prayers whose voice is heard by the Lord; and as a workingman who struggles with his hands to defeat the enemy. Our Christ intercedes with His blood and loves practically through the Cross.

4- Levi (33:8-11): The curses have turned into blessings. (Aaron, the head of priests who bears the thummim (completeness and

perfection) and the urim (Illumination or vision) is the righteous man meant here). Christ is the head of priests in whom we enjoy the complete life and eternal enlightenment. The service of the Levites obliged them to care for the people more than their families; while Christ condescended for our sake. They gave incense, sacrifices and offerings; while Christ is Himself the incense that intercedes for us to the Father and He is the holocaust and the sacrifice that give salvation.

5- Benjamin (33:12): He was called the beloved by the Lord since he stood for the beloved Son sitting on the Father's right hand. Benjamin = the son of the right. The houses of his men is beside Mount Zion. Some think that the temple itself was in the midst of his inheritance. Therefore, it is said that the Lord dwells there among his mountains.

6- Joseph (33:13-17): The blessing included the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. Their inheritance was the fertile cities. Here, there is an indication that the mystery of fertility or blessing is God's grace "the precious things of heaven" (33:13). Joseph's power appears in his being separate from his brothers (33:16), his ability to destroy the enemy (33:17) and his victory over them.

7- Zebulun and Issachar (33:18-19): They are Leah's sons and are neighbours. As for the inheritance, Zebulun rejoices in his going out with ships since Zebulun is a harbor for ships (GENE 49:13), Issachar rejoices in his tents where he rests. God makes us rejoice wherever we are, in land or sea.

8- Gad (33:20-21): He is surrounded by nations and fights them as a lion destroying their heads.

9- Dan (33:22): He is compared to a lion cub due to his courage and resistance to those who have a snake-like head.

10- Naphtali (33:23): The mysteries of the happiness of that tribe are 3 : He becomes fully satisfied, He is filled with the blessing of the Lord, not only through the temporary blessings, but also through God's overwhelming grace according to the Divine promise, and it possesses the west and south he possesses the lake of Galilee.

11- Asher (33:24): Moses asks for 4 things for that tribe:

(A) The multiplication of their numbers as children of God.

(B) To be loved and accepted by his brothers.

(C) The richness of their lands so that their foot is covered with oil and their shoes are made of iron and copper due to the great amounts of metals they mine. Symbolically, the metal shoes stand for strength, glory and the ability to go through the unpaved roads.

(D) “As your days, so shall your strength be” (33:25). This means the continuity of strength through their life so they do not become weak in the road.

12- The glory of the whole people since they are called “Jeshurun” meaning the upright people. God hurries to their help riding heaven as a Divine chariot: “Who rides the heavens to help you, and in his excellency on the clouds” (33:26). The clouds refer to secrecy and the inability to realize God’s greatness in His care for His people.

34 - MOSES DEATH

* Since Moses used to meet with God on a mountain to receive the Law, his death took place on Mount Nebo; IE on a height ... He was to see by faith God’s promise to his fathers and what was to be done for his people; thus he became happy and his soul was to rejoice as if he himself had received the promise.

* God did not want the people to worship Moses, therefore, he hid his tomb from all (34:6).

* Moses lived 120 years and his eyes were not dim nor his natural figure was abated. This refers to that the believer enjoys permanent enlightenment and youthfulness without his inward soul being diseased with blindness or elderliness (PS 103:5)

* Moses delivered the leadership to Joshua by putting his hands on him, referring to his anointment.

- The book testifies: “But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face” (34:10) as if the mystery of his strength is meeting and conversing with God.

The Past 1:4	The present 4:44-26	
A Genuine church	The church is contemporary	
<p>God’s deeds and commandments do not grow old or be destroyed by time, His dealings with His people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * In Egypt * From Sinai to Cadesh * From Cadesh to Moab 	<p>The Commandments</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The commandments are contemporary and suit all ages. * God talks to His own people. * God cares for His people. * God hids His people with His grace. * God judges his people justly 	<p>The Law</p> <hr/> <p>God sanctifies His people through worship; through spiritual leaders; and through being committed to justice in all the statutes; taking in to consideration the first-fruit and tithes.</p>

The Future 27-30	Fare well speeches 31-34
The church is eternal	A new blessed and rejoiced church
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Confirming man’s free-will. * Being committed to the covenant with God. * Making a serious decision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Moses’s death (the laws) and Joshua’s taking over the leadership to enter Canaan (the covenant of grace). * The commandments end with a final hymn (the purpose behind the commandment is inwardly happiness). * The words of blessing To God’s people. <p>Commandments give happiness and blessing!</p>

DIVISIONS OF THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

The first sermon 1-4	The second sermon 5-28	The body of the whole book	The third sermon 29-30	Final Acts and commandments 31-34
<p>God's dealing with there Fathers urging on obedience, thanksgiving to God, and down rooting Faith (1:31:2:7)</p> <p>1- The order of moving from Horeb to Palestine Deut. 1</p> <p>2- The actual moving Deut. 2,3</p> <p>3- The outcome Deut. 4</p> <p>(A special appendix for the cities of refuge)</p>	<p>The commandment 5-11</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The Covenant and the Ten commandments Deut. 5</p> <p>And these words which I command you today Shall be in your heart (Jerusalem)</p> <p>You shall teach them diligently to your children (Judea) shall take of them when you sen in your haus (Samaria) when you walk by the way (all over earth Deut. 6:7 Acts 1:8</p>	<p>The statutes of the Law 12-28</p> <p>-----</p> <p>1- The statutes of worship 12-16</p> <p>2- Profession statutes 16-18</p> <p>(The Judge - The King - The Priest and the Prophet)</p> <p>3- The criminal Law 19,21</p> <p>4- The military Law 20</p> <p>5- Different statutes 21-25</p> <p>6- The First - Fruit and tithes statutes 26</p> <p>7- The form of blessings and Curses 27-28</p>	<p>Urging on being attached to the covenant in Moab and Hereb (1:29)</p> <p>+ Threatening those how violate the covenant and leaning the door of hope open for repentance</p> <p>+ The easiness of the commandment (11:30) in reference to CHRIST the word haw descended to us</p> <p>+ God sanctifies man's free - will man has the right to choose his way 30:15</p>	<p>It is an appendix for the sermons</p> <p>1- Joshua as Mose's successor 31</p> <p>2- The final hymn 32</p> <p>3- The words of blessing for the tribes 33</p> <p>4- Moes's death 34</p> <p>Be strong and of good courage "And the Lord, He is the one who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you, nor Forsake, do not fear not be dismayed</p>

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND ANALYSIS

1- The book of Deuteronomy is regarded as the final preparation for enjoying the Promised Land How?

Genesis: Choosing the seed (Abraham)

Exodus: Enjoying salvation (The Passover lamb)

Leviticus: Practicing worship.

Numbers: The struggle in wilderness.

Deuteronomy: The final preparation for enjoying Canaan.

2- The book of Deuteronomy is not mere commandments but experiencing life with God Explain?

(The book is historically a reminding of God's dealing with us)
(1-3)

It also included statutes, instructions and warnings;

prophecies about the future of the people; (28-30)

and hymns, praises and blessings. (32-33)

3- Why is the book called "Deuteronomy" and what are its parts?

4- What is the purpose of reviewing the past events in the book (1-3)

5- What is the purpose of the Divine commandment? (4)

6- What are the ten commandments? (5)

7- What is the relation between the commandment with an inward life and testimony and preaching? (6)

8- Why did God permit the old people to eliminate the pagan nations? (7)

9- Why does God give us the hard commandment? (8)

10- How did the Lord protect His people against self-righteousness? (9-10)

11- Compare the commandment (11) to Christ the Word who accompanies us alone the road?

12- What are the foundations on which the Law is based? (12-18)

13- What are the dangers of turning away from the commandment and its (13) implementation?

14- What are the most important components of the statutes of the Law?

15- What is the responsibility of public leaders? (17-18)

16- Give a summary of the principles of the criminal law (18-21), the military law (20) and the civil law (22).

17- What is the purpose behind the marriage between the kinsman redeemer and the widow of the dead? What does removing the sandals mean if he refuses the marriage? (25)

18- Explain the statute of the first-fruit and its symbolic meanings (26)

19- What are the blessings of obeying the Law? And what are the curses of rebellion? (27-28)

20- Summarise the third sermon by Moses. (29-30)

21- Mention the most important characteristics of Moses as a spiritual leader. (31)

22- God does not want our deprivation but our rejoicing through the Law. Explain. (32)

23- What are the blessings enjoyed by each tribe? (33)

24- Moses was to die and Joshua to take over the leadership. What is the role of each in salvation?