

Reading time for Genesis: 2 hours.

Outline *of* The Book of Deuteronomy (God is Love)

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In our studies of the first four books of Moses, we have noticed that each portrays a different attribute of God, each corresponding to a need which we face in seeking to achieve His eternal purposes, not least our salvation to the ultimate honour of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Figure 1 shows this in tabular form.

Genesis:	God's Sovereignty over heaven and earth	- our ineffectiveness
Exodus:	God's Power to fulfil His grand purposes	- our weakness
Leviticus:	God's Holiness, which demands purity	- our uncleanness
Numbers:	God's Patience in leading His people	- our waywardness

Figure 1: The attributes of God revealed between Genesis and Numbers

How can these link into the culmination of the Pentateuch, the book of Deuteronomy? This fifth book seems to correspond to the key features of the first four. See Figure 2.

1 Sovereignty:	Genesis (Appreciation of God) - Deuteronomy	God's promises God's promises about to be fulfilled
2 Power:	Exodus (Movement towards God) - Deuteronomy	God bringing His people out God bringing His people in
3 Holiness	Leviticus (Appreciation of God) - Deuteronomy	The believer's inheritance foreshadowed The believer's inheritance about to be entered
4 Government:	Numbers (Movement towards God)	God's people wandering

Figure 2: The comparisons of the first four Books of Moses to their culmination in Deuteronomy

A bird's eye view will show that Genesis and Leviticus (1 and 3) show no movement, but rather an appreciation of God's promises and the believer's inheritance in Him, whereas Exodus and Numbers (2 and 4) show the movement of God's people towards this holy inheritance. So too in our lives, we need to both hear (appreciate) God's Word and do it (movement) as in James 1.

In Scripture we often see examples of groups of books linked by topic, where one book in particular contrasts, clarifies or acts as the culmination of the others:

- The gospels are split into three synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke), with much overlapping content, superseded by John, unique in its divine viewpoint.
- The nine New Testament Jewish writings (Hebrews – Revelation) culminate historically in Revelation, but theologically in Hebrews.
- The seventeen Old Testament prophets (Isaiah – Malachi) are superseded by Isaiah, where we see the culmination in the Person through Whom God will bring His plans for His people to pass
- The first four books of Moses are superseded by Deuteronomy, which teaches us not only what God is like, but Who God is!

So, what or who is God?

In Deuteronomy, we have brought before us the truth of I John, namely that "God is love". This is not an attribute of God, but rather describes His intrinsic Being! God is love!

The word, "love", "loveth", "loved", etc., is mentioned 22 times in Deuteronomy, which is more than any other historical book in our Bible (Genesis – Esther and John – Acts).

In Deuteronomy 7:7-8, we have that beautiful word from God,

"The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor chose you, because ye were more in number than any other people (indeed, the Chinese, Egyptians, etc., were much greater and mightier than the Israelites); for ye were the fewest of all people. But because the Lord loved you."

This is further explained and borne out in 33:27-29:

"The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms... happy art thou, O Israel! Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord!"

It is clear that the Lord Jesus was meditating on Deuteronomy, when He exclusively uses this book in rejecting Satan's subtle temptations (Matthew 4:1-11, etc.). Indeed, the Lord Jesus is not the only one to refer to this majestic book, as it is mentioned up to 200 times in our New Testament and also in some of the books of our Old Testament, for example, II Kings 23 and Nehemiah 8.

Therefore, this so neglected of Old Testament books is exceedingly important because it not only is the culmination of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, which show attributes of God but

Deuteronomy actually shows who God is. Also, it is used extensively both by the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit of God!

Seeing that it must be to our detriment if we neglect this book, it will be helpful to gain an overview of it, to contextualise our reading:

1:1 – 1:2	Introduction			
1:3 – 4:29	Discourse 1	1:3 – 3:29	a	Israel's disobedient history
	↑	4:1 – 4:29	b	Exhortation to obedience
5:1 – 26:19	Discourse 2	5:1 – 5:31	a	Israel's commandments
	↓	6:1 – 26:19	b	Israel's commandments explained
27:1 – 33:29	Discourse 3	27:1 – 30:20	a	Moses' final charge to Israel
		31:1 – 33:29	b	Moses' final charge to Joshua & Levites
34:1 – 34:12	Conclusion			

Figure 3: Chiasmic arrangement for Deuteronomy

At the apex or focal point of this chiasmic structure we find Discourse 2. After some forty years patiently and meekly leading His people through Moses, God gives a full explanation of the ten commandments of Exodus 20, as shown in Figure 4.

a	Israel's Commandments:	With few exceptions this is a copy of the commandments of Exodus 20
b	Israel's Commandments explained:	With the hindsight of 40 years, Moses expounds Exodus 20
	Commandment 1 (6:1 – 11:32)	= Do not have other gods before Me
	Commandment 2 (12:1 – 12:32)	= Do not have any graven image
	Commandment 3 (13:1 – 14:21)	= Do not bow to any graven image
	Commandment 4 (14:22 – 16:17)	= Do not take God's name in vain
	Commandment 5 (16:18 – 18:22)	= Keep the Sabbath day as holy
	Commandment 6 (19:1 – 22:12)	= Honour father and mother
	Commandment 7 (22:13 – 23:14)	= Do not kill
	Commandment 8 (23:15 – 24:7)	= Do not steal
	Commandment 9 (24:8 – 24:16)	= Do not bear false witness
	Commandment 10 (24:17 – 26:19)	= Do not covet

Table 4: God's commandments explained in Discourse 2

Thus, we see the culmination of Genesis to Numbers, in that

- God will achieve His purpose through these wayward people (Genesis);
- By this He will show His power (Exodus);
- He will not lower His holy standards in achieving His purposes (Leviticus);
- His patient leading will continue until He has completed what He set out to do (Numbers)
- He will make His people holy, like Himself (Deuteronomy)

What a God of love!

Finally, of the three types of law in the Old Testament: ceremonial, moral and civil, the former is the only group to have been fully set aside.

However, of the above ten commandments of the civil law, the fifth has been replaced, by the first day of the week, where the number eight in Scripture always speaks of a new beginning! See Figure 5 for the meanings given to certain numbers throughout Scripture.

Number 1	= unity of Godhead	Deuteronomy 6:4...
Number 2	= witness	Exodus 25:22; Luke 10:1...
Number 3	= divine perfection	Hosea 6:2; Matthew 12:40; John 2:19...
Number 4	= universal	Daniel 7:3; Matthew 13:1-23
Number 5	= grace	Genesis 43:34; Leviticus 1-5; Matthew 14:17...
Number 6	= man	Genesis 1:31; Revelation 13:18...
Number 7	= completion	Genesis 2:2; Luke 8:2...
Number 8	= new beginning	Genesis 7:13,23; 17:12...
Number 9	= fullness	Galatians 5:22,23...
Number 10	= human government	Exodus 20:1-17; I Kings 11:31-35...
Number 12	= divine government	Matthew 10:2-4; Revelation 21:12-14...
Number 30	= sorrow	Numbers 20:29; Deuteronomy 34:8
Number 40	= trial	Genesis 7:4; Numbers 14:33; Matthew 4:2...
Number 50	= celebration	Leviticus 23:15,16; Acts 2:1...
Numbers 70	= judgment	Numbers 11:16; Jeremiah 29:10...

Figure 5: Meanings of numbers in Scripture

Further, as having started something new, God showed that the eighth day (that is, the first day of the week, Sunday), four unique things happened:

- 1 Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week (Luke 24:1-6)
- 2 The Holy Spirit came to form the 'church' on the first day of the week (Acts 2:1)
- 3 The believers were to remember their Lord in the 'Breaking of Bread' on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7)
- 4 As an act of worship, the believers were to collectively give of their finances on the first day of the week (I Corinthians 16:1,2)

Figure 6: A new beginning for New Testament believers on the first day of the week

Thus we, through the narratives of our Old Testament Scriptures, are introduced into the wondrous truths of the greatness of the eternal God, whom we worship, to a much higher and loftier level.