

# VIA EMMAUS: A CHRIST-CENTERED WALK THROUGH THE BIBLE

## Deuteronomy: God's Royal Covenant with Israel (8)

### Learning to Read the Bible Better: What is a Genre?

Genre:

Modern examples

- *Dear beloved, we are gathered here today...*
- *John Williams is survived by his three sons...*
- *Gentlemen, start your engines...*

Conventions of language set parameters for interpretation

- *Poetry is not like lab report; genealogy is not exhaustive; apocalyptic is figurative*
- *The shape of Deuteronomy is like an Ancient Near Eastern Suzerainty Treaty*

### Covenants & Treaties in the Bible

Suzerain-Vassal Treaties:

Parity Treaties: Jacob & Laban

Divine Human Covenants: Noah; Abraham; Israel; Levites

### Ancient Treaty Structure

Preamble	Deuteronomy 1:1-5	
Historical Prologue	Deuteronomy 1:6-4:49	<i>First Sermon</i>
General Stipulations	Deuteronomy 5:1-11:32	<i>Second Sermon</i>
Specific Stipulations	Deuteronomy 12:1-26:19	
Blessings & Curses	Deuteronomy 27:1-28:68	<i>Third Sermon</i>
Document Clause	Deuteronomy 31:9-29	
Witnesses	Deuteronomy 32:1-47	

### Significance

1. The Covenant formalizes an already existing relationship
2. The Covenant stipulates how each side must act and warns of deviation
3. The Covenant anticipates the future

### Preamble (Deut 1:1-5)

When: After 40 years (v. 3)

Where: Beyond the Jordan (v. 1); On the Plains of Moab (v. 5)

Who: Moses + Joshua + The Next Generation of Israelites (Num 26:51)

What: Moses final exhortation and instruction (v. 5)

### Historical Prologue (Deut 1:6-4:43)

➔ Not simply history, but historiography. *History for the purpose of faith!*

- Starts with how Israel wound up in the wilderness (Deut 1:19-46)
  - Unbelief Towards God's Promises (Deut 1:32-40; cf. Ps 95; Heb 3-4)
  - Self-confident Works Against God's Warning (Deut 1:41-46)
- Wilderness Wanderings / Victories over Sihon & Og (Deut 2-3)
- Moses exhortation to keep covenant (Deut 4)
- Highlights the Uniqueness of God (Deut 4:32-40)

## General Stipulations (Deut 4:44-11:32)

Moses begins his second sermon (Deut 4:44-49)

Contents: Ten Commandments; Greatest Commandment; Motivations

- The Mercy of God & the Unworthiness of Israel (Deut 7:7-11; 9:4-7)
- The judgment of God (11:1-7)
- The promises of God (11:8-12)

## Specific Stipulations (Deut 12:1-26:19) – Reiterate & Expand the Levitical Laws

First to third commandments (12:1-14:21) – Instructions for worship, against idolatry

Fourth commandment – The Sabbath (14:22-16:17) – Sabbaths & Festivals

Fifth and sixth commandment (16:18-21:9) – Authority Structures, Warfare, Murders

Seventh to tenth commandment (Deut 21:10-22:9) – Property rights

*These laws find their fulfillment in Christ (Matt 5:17; Rom 10:4)*

- Prophet like Moses – Jesus is this prophet (cf. Matt. 17:5; Acts 3:22-26)
- True King of Israel – King of Israel + Word of God (cf. Psalms 1-2)
- Firstborn Son (21:15-17); Obedient Son (21:18-21); Cursed Son (21:22-23)

## Blessings & Curses (Deut 27:1-28:68 )

Mount Ebal + Mount Gerizim (Deut 27:11-14; cf. Josh 8:30-35; 24:1ff)

Harkens back to Genesis 12:1-3

- Blessings: God's People Prospering in the Land, receiving God's blessing
- Curses: God's People Perishing without the Land, incurring God's judgment

*Why do the curses outnumber the blessings?*

## Postlude

Covenant Renewal (Deut 29:1-30:20) – Moses calls Israel to renew covenant (30:6)

Document Clause (Deut 31:9-29) – Reading (31:9-13); Remembering (31:24-29)

Witnesses (Deut 32:1-47) – Moses' song will witness against Israel in future gen.

Final Blessing (33:1-29) – Joseph is prince (v. 16) ?

Moses' Death (34:1-12) – A scribal addition (?); Now Israel is ready to enter the land

## Themes:

### 1. What we can learn about God

God delights in justice

Deut 28:43

God is a covenantal God

Deut 27-28; esp. 28:68

God's ways are hidden & revealed

Deut 29:29

### 2. What we can learn about our relationship with God

Our relationship with God is covenantal

- God Initiates + Man Responds || *Emphasis is on God's Gracious Redemption*

- The Old Covenant      God commands the obedience of faith

Deut 10:16, 20 | cf. Deut 5:1ff; 28:43

- The New Covenant      God commands and grants the obedience of faith

Deut 30:1-6

God requires joy (Deut 28:43) & despises false presumption (Deut 29:19)