

Themes of Deuteronomy

(by chapter)

The intention of this study is for parents to read the entire book of Deuteronomy, verse by verse, to see the context of the entire book.

One of the purposes of the book of Deuteronomy is to be a repetition of God's laws, from the word deuterios (Greek, meaning "second") and nomos (Greek, meaning "law") and also devarim (Hebrew, meaning "words").

Since God repeatedly tells us to "teach these things" to our children, the following study shows specific themes and topics that should be kept in mind as we teach God's laws, repeating His words, to our children.

Chapters 1-3

God rehearses what He has already done for them, so that they will trust Him and not rebel.

Fear is rebellion.

When we don't obey, it's because we don't trust God (1:32).

Looking at everything but the LORD = rebellion (1:26).

- Unwilling to go (1:26)
- Grumbled ("the LORD hates us") (1:27)
- It's our brothers' fault (1:28)
- Comparing self to others (1:28)

Key Verses -

"You have seen with your own eyes all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings. The LORD will do the same to all the kingdoms over there where you are going. Do not be afraid of them; the LORD your God himself will fight for you" (3:21-22).¹

Because of what God has done, "**Hear now, O Israel, the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them...**" (4:1).

Chapter 4

"**Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract** from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you" (4:2).

- Baal Peor
- Other nations are watching

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- Don't make for yourselves an idol, an image of any shape. Do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshipping things... (4:16, 19, 23, 25, 28).

Key Verses -

Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when he said to me, "Assemble the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children" (4:9-10).

Chapter 5

1. **Hear**
2. **Learn**
3. **Follow** (5:1, 27, 29, 32-33)

Commands given ("the Ten Commandments")

Chapter 6

Commands given so that you may:

1. Fear the LORD your God as long as you live
2. So that you may enjoy long life (6:2)

How to do it "as long as you live" - with your children.

"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates" (6:6-9).

When you have large, flourishing cities, etc.,

1. **be careful that you do not forget the LORD...** (6:10-12, 25)
2. **Fear the Lord... only** (6:13)
3. **Do not follow other gods** (6:14)
4. **Be sure to keep the commands** (6:17)
5. **Do what is right and good** (6:18)

"In the future, when your son asks you... tell him..." (6:20-21)

Chapter 7

You must destroy [the nations] totally (7:2)

- Make no treaty with them
- Show them no mercy
- Do not intermarry with them
- Break down altars, smash sacred stones, cut down Asherah poles, burn idols in fire

Key Verse –

For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession (7:6).

Chapter 8

God disciplines you, as a man disciplines his son (8:3, 5).

1. Humbles you
2. Tests you
3. Teaches you

Key Verse –

"...to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD" (8:3).

Chapters 9-10

"**It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity** that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations... It is not because of your righteousness..., for you are a stiff-necked people" (9:5-6)

1. Remember this and never forget how you provoked the LORD (9:7)
2. Do not be stiff-necked any longer (10:16)
3. God shows no partiality and accepts no bribes... and you are to love those who are aliens (10:19)

Key Verses -

To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. Yet the LORD set his affection on your forefathers and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations, as it is today (10:14-15).

Chapter 11

"Your children were not the ones who saw and experienced..." (11:1, 5).

Therefore,

"Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. **Teach them to your children**, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates..." (11:18-20).

Chapter 12

"You must not worship the LORD your God in their way. But you are to seek the place the LORD your God will choose..." (12:4-5, 30-31).

- You are not to do... everyone as he sees fit... (12:8, 13)
- God will choose (12:5, 11, 14, 21, 26)

Key Verse -

See that you do all I command you; do not add to it or take away from it (12:32).

Chapter 13

If...

- a prophet appears and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder... (13:1-5)
- If your very own brother, or your son or daughter, or the wife you love, or your closest friend secretly entices you... (13:6-11)
- If you hear it said... that wicked men have arisen among you and have led the people of their town astray... (13:12-18)

You must not listen (13:3)

You must purge the evil from among you (13:5)

Chapters 14-26

Various Laws Given -- Why?

You are a people holy to the LORD your God (14:2, 14:21, 15:19 "set apart", 18:13, 18:14, 23:14, 26:18-19).

Key Verses -

And the LORD has declared this day that you are his people, his treasured possession as he promised, and that you are to keep all his commands. He has declared that he will set you in praise, fame and honor high above all the nations he has made and that you will be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised" (26:18-19).

Chapter 27

Set up large stones (27:2, 4)

Write all the words of this law on these stones that you have set up. (27:8)

Recite to all the people in a loud voice... (27:14)

Chapter 28

Blessings and Curses

Chapters 29-30

You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with the LORD your God, a covenant the LORD is making with you this day and sealing with an oath, to confirm you this day as his people, that he may be your God as he promised you and as he swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I am making this covenant, with its oath, not only with you who are standing here with us today in the presence of the LORD our God but also with those who are not here today" (29:12-14).

- Your children will see (will be witnesses) - 29:22
- Foreigners will see (29:22)
- All the nations will ask (29:24)

Key Verse (Promise of God) -

...then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you (30:3).

Chapters 31-34

Concluding chapters

Key verses -

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous... The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged" (31:6-8).

Reading of the Law - You shall read this law before them in their hearing (men, women and children) (31:10-12)

- So they can listen (31:12)
- Learn to fear the LORD your God (31:12)
- Follow carefully all the words of this law (31:12)
- Their children, who do not know this law, must hear it and learn to fear the LORD your God (31:13)

They will forsake me and break the covenant, so... (31:16)

- Write down for yourselves this song
- Teach it to the Israelites
- Have them sing it (31:19, chapter 32)