



Whittlesey
BAPTIST CHURCH

DEUTERONOMY

MAY 2019

Read on your own or with others,
which ever you prefer.

This leaflet is just a brief overview of the 'big picture' of this book. If you have been reading the Bible for some time you will be aware there is much more to it than you'll find here.

If you are new to reading the Bible don't worry too much if there are details you do not quite get at the moment - focus on the 'big picture'.

INTRODUCTION

Deuteronomy is the final book of the 5 written by Moses, traditionally called the Pentateuch. These 5 books tell us how God called the nation of Israel to be his people, brought them through the wilderness and into the Promised Land.

The events in this book take place just a few weeks before the people enter into the land of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua. The Israelites are camped on the east side of the Jordan waiting to cross over.

Deuteronomy means 'second law'. Its purpose is not to give a new law, but to be a second reading of God's law as a reminder to the people before they enter the Promised Land. Moses speaks of past failures as well as giving the people instructions and encouragement for the future.

OUTLINE

1. LOOKING BACK: DEUTERONOMY 1-3

How did we get here? Moses answers this question in these chapters. Chapter 1 speaks about the Israelites' failure the first time they tried to enter the land (Numbers 13 & 14).

Chapters 2 and 3 focus on the 40 years the Israelites spent wandering in the desert. There is a particular emphasis here on the battles that they won and God's choice of Joshua as the next leader.

2. A CALL TO OBEY: DEUTERONOMY 4-11

Deuteronomy 4:1 is a summary of this section. Through Moses, God again reminds the people of the 10 commandments. Over and over the people are urged not to forget God's laws, but to follow them in their lives.

3. LIVING AS GOD'S PEOPLE: DEUTERONOMY 12-26

The generation that had left Egypt had died in the wilderness. A new generation would now enter into the land of Canaan and God wants them to be clear how they should live.

The section falls into three main parts:

1. 12:1-16:17 – This part contains laws regarding the worship of God. The people should destroy any semblance of the worship of idols (12:2) and they are to worship God in his way and at the place of

his choosing (12:5). We know from later books that this place would eventually be the temple in Jerusalem. When we come to the New Testament, we find that Jesus is the true temple – the ultimate ‘place’ where we are to worship God (John 2:13-22, John 4:19-26).

2. 16:18-18:22 – Here Moses lays out laws about leaders. They contain instructions regarding judges, kings, priests and prophets. All of these are roles that point us to aspects of the work of Jesus.
3. 19-25 – These laws cover how the people were to live as a community of God’s people.

Chapter 26 brings this section to an end. The offerings and tithes at the beginning are instituted as a reminder that the land and its produce was a gift from God and as a spur to call out to him to continue to provide for them. The chapter is a restatement of the command to obedience and their commitment to follow God.

4. WILL YOU OBEY? DEUTERONOMY 27–30

Here God lays out the covenant before the people. The section begins with the curses that God promises if the people disobey and the blessings they will know if they obey God. Chapter 30 ends with a challenge: Will you choose life by walking in obedience to God’s laws?

An important question for us as we look at these chapters is: Is this how it works for Christians today? In one sense yes. God still calls people to obey him and if we do not then we will undergo his fatherly discipline. Yet, in another sense it is different. Jesus kept the law of God perfectly on our behalf and has secured for us the life promised. Nothing, not even our disobedience, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:39).

As we read these words we should be challenged by what they reveal of God and of our sin, yet we should also be thankful that salvation is 100% secure in Jesus.

5. THE NEXT STEP: DEUTERONOMY 31–34

The book ends by looking forward to the next chapter in Israel’s history as they look to enter the land. It is filled with hope and mixed with sadness. The saddest note is the prediction God gives of covenant unfaithfulness (31:16). This covenant is not the final secure solution for God’s people. That will only come about with Jesus.

ASKING THE QUESTIONS THE BIBLE WANTS YOU TO ASK

What does this book teach you about Jesus? (Luke 24:45-47)

What does this book teach you about yourself? (James 1:23 & 2 Tim 3:16-17)

How were you encouraged? (2 Tim 3:16-17)

How were you corrected? (Romans 15:4)

What difference do the truths of this book make in your life? (Matthew 7:24-27)