
DEUTERONOMY

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SMYTH & HELWYS BIBLE COMMENTARY

DEUTERONOMY

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ADVANCE PRAISE

This really fine commentary on Deuteronomy combines attention to literary and redactional features of the book with excellent exposition. Mark Biddle's close reading of the text elicits both literary and theological understanding of the text. The reader is aided by the clarity of his writing. Of no small significance are the illustrations and special boxes that offer to the interpreter delightful surprises that would not be expected in the typical commentary.

Patrick D. Miller
Princeton Theological Seminary

Mark Biddle's commentary adds power and luster to the new, rapidly appearing Smyth & Helwys Commentary series. Biddle understands the complexities of the tradition of Deuteronomy and is well versed in critical issues. Beyond that, he makes fine use of the format of the series in order to make pertinent connections to faith issues in the contemporary world. Readers will find this to be an accessible and useful interpretive text.

Walter Brueggemann
Columbia Theological Seminary

TO MY GRANDPARENTS
ARTHUR O. AND EDNA MILLER
IN MEMORIAM

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION		1
1	The Introduction to Deuteronomy	<i>Deut 1:1-46</i> 13
2	Passage through Friendly and Hostile Territories	<i>Deut 2:1-3:11</i> 37
3	The Distribution of Israel's Transjordanian Territory	<i>Deut 3:12-22</i> 67
4	Theophany, Covenant, Idolatry, Exile, and and Monotheism: Paranesis and Tradition	<i>Deut 4:1-40</i> 77
5	Israel at Mt. Horeb: The Decalogue	<i>Deut 5:1-33</i> 101
6	The Shema: The Centrality of the First Commandment	<i>Deut 6:1-25</i> 123
7	Israel's Neighbors-to-be: The Danger Posed by Foreign Cultures	<i>Deut 7:1-26</i> 135
8	Desert and Promised Land: The Dangers Posed by Want and Prosperity	<i>Deut 8:1-20</i> 149
9	Election and Arrogance	<i>Deut 9:1-10:11</i> 159
10	A Summary Call to Covenant Obedience	<i>Deut 10:12-11:32</i> 177
11	The Deuteronomic Code: Deuteronomy 12-26	197
12	Explication of the First Commandment: "You Shall Have No Other Gods"	<i>Deut 12:2-13:18</i> 205
13	Explication of the Second Commandment: "Do Not Misuse the Name of YHWH, Your God"	<i>Deut 14:1-21</i> 235
14	Explication of the Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath Day"	<i>Deut 14:22-16:17</i> 249
15	Explication of the Fourth Commandment: "Honor Father and Mother"	<i>Deut 16:18-18:22</i> 277
16	The Protection of Innocent Life	<i>Deut 19:1-21</i> 301
17	Limits on Killing in War	<i>Deut 20:1-20</i> 313
18	Life and Death in Tension	<i>Deut 21:1-23</i> 321
19	Protect Life	<i>Deut 22:1-8</i> 329
20	Explication of the Sixth Commandment: "Do Not Commit Adultery"	<i>Deut 22:9-23:18</i> 335
21	Explication of the Seventh Commandment: "Do Not Steal"	<i>Deut 23:19-24:7</i> 351
22	Explication of the Eighth Commandment: "Do Not Bear False Witness"	<i>Deut 24:8-25:4</i> 359
23	Explication of the Ninth Commandment: "Do Not Covet Your Neighbor's Wife"	<i>Deut 25:5-12</i> 369

24	Explication of the Tenth Commandment: “Do Not Cover Anything Belonging to Your Neighbor”	<i>Deut 25:13–26:15</i>	377
25	Conclusion to the Deuteronomomic Code	<i>Deut 26:16-19</i>	391
26	The Shechem Ceremony	<i>Deut 27:1-26</i>	393
27	Covenant Blessings and Curses	<i>Deut 28:1-68</i>	405
28	Covenant Renewal in Moab	<i>Deut 28:69–32:52</i>	435
29	The Transferal of Leadership and the Deposit of Witnesses	<i>Deut 31:1-29</i>	453
30	Moses’ Song	<i>Deut 31:30–32:52</i>	469
31	Moses’ Blessing	<i>Deut 33:1-29</i>	491
32	Moses’ Death and Burial	<i>Deut 34:1-12</i>	505
	BIBLIOGRAPHY		511
	INDEX OF MODERN AUTHORS		514
	INDEX OF SIDEBARS		517
	INDEX OF SCRIPTURES		521
	INDEX OF TOPICS		530
	ILLUSTRATION CREDITS		535

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS COMMENTARY

Books of the Old Testament, Apocrypha, and New Testament are generally abbreviated in the Sidebars, parenthetical references, and notes according to the following system.

The Old Testament

Genesis	Gen
Exodus	Exod
Leviticus	Lev
Numbers	Num
Deuteronomy	Deut
Joshua	Josh
Judges	Judg
Ruth	Ruth
1–2 Samuel	1–2 Sam
1–2 Kings	1–2 Kgs
1–2 Chronicles	1–2 Chr
Ezra	Ezra
Nehemiah	Neh
Esther	Esth
Job	Job
Psalms (Psalms)	Ps (Pss)
Proverbs	Prov
Ecclesiastes	Eccl
or Qoheleth	Qoh
Song of Solomon	Song
or Song of Songs	Song
or Canticles	Cant
Isaiah	Isa
Jeremiah	Jer
Lamentations	Lam
Ezekiel	Ezek
Daniel	Dan
Hosea	Hos
Joel	Joel
Amos	Amos
Obadiah	Obad
Jonah	Jonah
Micah	Mic

Abbreviations

Nahum	Nah
Habakkuk	Hab
Zephaniah	Zeph
Haggai	Hag
Zechariah	Zech
Malachi	Mal

The Apocrypha

1–2 Esdras	1–2 Esdr
Tobit	Tob
Judith	Jdt
Additions to Esther	Add Esth
Wisdom of Solomon	Wis
Ecclesiasticus or the Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach	Sir
Baruch	Bar
Epistle (or Letter) of Jeremiah	Ep Jer
Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three	Pr Azar
Daniel and Susanna	Sus
Daniel, Bel, and the Dragon	Bel
Prayer of Manasseh	Pr Man
1–4 Maccabees	1–4 Macc

The New Testament

Matthew	Matt
Mark	Mark
Luke	Luke
John	John
Acts	Acts
Romans	Rom
1–2 Corinthians	1–2 Cor
Galatians	Gal
Ephesians	Eph
Philippians	Phil
Colossians	Col
1–2 Thessalonians	1–2 Thess
1–2 Timothy	1–2 Tim
Titus	Titus
Philemon	Phlm
Hebrews	Heb
James	Jas
1–2 Peter	1–2 Pet
1–2–3 John	1–2–3 John
Jude	Jude
Revelation	Rev

Other commonly used abbreviations include:

BC	Before Christ
(also commonly referred to as BCE = Before the Common Era)	
AD	<i>Anno Domini</i> (“in the year of the Lord”)
(also commonly referred to as CE = the Common Era)	
v.	verse
vv.	verses
C.	century
c.	<i>circa</i> (around “that time”)
cf.	<i>confer</i> (compare)
ch.	chapter
chs.	chapters
d.	died
ed.	edition or edited by or editor
eds.	editors
e.g.	<i>exempli gratia</i> (for example)
et al.	<i>et alii</i> (and others)
f./ff.	and the following one(s)
gen. ed.	general editor
ibid.	<i>ibidem</i> (in the same place)
i.e.	<i>id est</i> (that is)
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
lit.	literally
n.d.	no date
rev. and exp. ed.	revised and expanded edition
sg.	singular
trans.	translated by or translator(s)
vol(s).	volume(s)

Selected additional written works cited by abbreviations include:

AB	Anchor Bible
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
<i>ANET</i>	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . J. B. Pritchard, ed. Princeton, 1954.
AnOr	Analecta orientalia
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AThANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>BASOR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BDB	Brown, F., S.R.Driver, and C.A. Briggs, <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford, 1907.
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium

<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BiBe	Biblische Beiträge
BibOr	Biblica et orientalia
<i>BibRev</i>	<i>Biblical Review</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
GTA	Göttinger theologischer Arbeiten
<i>HBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
<i>IDB</i>	<i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.</i> G.A. Buttrick, ed. 4 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1962.
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>IOS</i>	<i>Israel Oriental Society</i>
ITC	International Theological Commentary
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBR</i>	<i>Journal of Bible and Religion</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JSOTS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
<i>MGWJ</i>	<i>Monatschrift für Geschichte un Wissenschaft des Judentums</i>
NAC	New American Commentary
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
OTL	Old Testament Library
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation
Series	
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph
Series	
SBL.SCSS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SWBAS	Social World of Biblical Antiquity Series
<i>TLOT</i>	<i>Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament.</i> E. Jenni, et al, ed. M. Biddle, trans. 3 vols. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1997.
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries
<i>TQ</i>	<i>Theologische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

I began my academic career in the book of Jeremiah, which requires its students to turn again and again to Deuteronomy, Jeremiah's primary linguistic and theological predecessor. Later studies in Isaiah, Micah — in short, practically everywhere my interests took me — brought me repeatedly to recognize Deuteronomy as perhaps the chief interlocutor among books in the Hebrew canon. Jesus and Paul quote Deuteronomy with regularity. This centrality of Deuteronomy within the canon, alone, renders it worthy of careful, thoughtful study. It is all the more perplexing, therefore, that the church in all its eras has largely disregarded Deuteronomy. I hope in this commentary to open Deuteronomy to new consideration by the church's preachers and teachers so that they may come to see in it something of the significance seen by Jeremiah, Isaiah, Jesus, and Paul.

I am grateful to many people for the parts they played in my life while I undertook this project and before. I dedicate it to the memory of my maternal grandparents, Arthur O. and Edna Miller, whose examples of genuinely pious lives often came to mind as I read Deuteronomy's call to authentic holiness. The collaboration of my editors and friends, Kandy Queen-Sutherland and Samuel Balentine, has been invaluable.

Finally, and especially, of course, I am grateful that my work takes place in the context of life with my wife, Priscilla, and my children, Colin, Alec, Ellen, and Graeme. Deuteronomy's call to faithfully commit the tradition to the next generation sounds poignantly for me.

Mark E. Biddle

SERIES PREFACE

The *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary* is a visually stimulating and user-friendly series that is as close to multimedia in print as possible. Written by accomplished scholars with all students of Scripture in mind, the primary goal of the *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary* is to make available serious, credible biblical scholarship in an accessible and less intimidating format.

Far too many Bible commentaries fall short of bridging the gap between the insights of biblical scholars and the needs of students of God's written word. In an unprecedented way, the *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary* brings insightful commentary to bear on the lives of contemporary Christians. Using a multimedia format, the volumes employ a stunning array of art, photographs, maps, and drawings to illustrate the truths of the Bible for a visual generation of believers.

The *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary* is built upon the idea that meaningful Bible study can occur when the insights of contemporary biblical scholars blend with sensitivity to the needs of lifelong students of Scripture. Some persons within local faith communities, however, struggle with potentially informative biblical scholarship for several reasons. Oftentimes, such scholarship is cast in technical language easily grasped by other scholars, but not by the general reader. For example, lengthy, technical discussions on every detail of a particular scriptural text can hinder the quest for a clear grasp of the whole. Also, the format for presenting scholarly insights has often been confusing to the general reader, rendering the work less than helpful. Unfortunately, responses to the hurdles of reading extensive commentaries have led some publishers to produce works for a general readership that merely skim the surface of the rich resources of biblical scholarship. This commentary series incorporates works of fine art in an accurate and scholarly manner, yet the format remains "user-friendly." An important facet is the presentation and explanation of images of art, which interpret the biblical material or illustrate how the biblical material has been understood and interpreted in the past. A visual generation of believers deserves a commentary series that contains not only the all-important textual commentary on Scripture, but images, photographs, maps, works of fine art, and drawings that bring the text to life.

The *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary* makes serious, credible biblical scholarship more accessible to a wider audience. Writers and editors alike present information in ways that encourage readers to gain a better understanding of the Bible. The editorial board has worked to develop a format that is useful and usable, informative and pleasing to the eye. Our writers are reputable scholars who participate in the community of faith and sense a calling to communicate the results of their scholarship to their faith community.

The *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary* addresses Christians and the larger church. While both respect for and sensitivity to the needs and contributions of other faith communities are reflected in the work of the series authors, the authors speak primarily to Christians. Thus the reader can note a confessional tone throughout the volumes. No particular “confession of faith” guides the authors, and diverse perspectives are observed in the various volumes. Each writer, though, brings to the biblical text the best scholarly tools available and expresses the results of their studies in commentary and visuals that assist readers seeking a word from the Lord for the church.

To accomplish this goal, writers in this series have drawn from numerous streams in the rich tradition of biblical interpretation. The basic focus is the biblical text itself, and considerable attention is given to the wording and structure of texts. Each particular text, however, is also considered in the light of the entire canon of Christian Scriptures. Beyond this, attention is given to the cultural context of the biblical writings. Information from archaeology, ancient history, geography, comparative literature, history of religions, politics, sociology, and even economics is used to illuminate the culture of the people who produced the Bible. In addition, the writers have drawn from the history of interpretation, not only as it is found in traditional commentary on the Bible but also in literature, theater, church history, and the visual arts. Finally, the *Commentary* on Scripture is joined with *Connections* to the world of the contemporary church. Here again, the writers draw on scholarship in many fields as well as relevant issues in the popular culture.

This wealth of information might easily overwhelm a reader if not presented in a “user-friendly” format. Thus the heavier discussions of detail and the treatments of other helpful topics are presented in special-interest boxes, or Sidebars, clearly connected to the passages under discussion so as not to interrupt the flow of the basic interpretation. The result is a commentary on Scripture that

focuses on the theological significance of a text while also offering the reader a rich array of additional information related to the text and its interpretation.

An accompanying CD-ROM offers powerful searching and research tools. The commentary text, Sidebars, and visuals are all reproduced on a CD that is fully indexed and searchable. Pairing a text version with a digital resource is a distinctive feature of the *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary*.

Combining credible biblical scholarship, user-friendly study features, and sensitivity to the needs of a visually oriented generation of believers creates a unique and unprecedented type of commentary series. With insight from many of today's finest biblical scholars and a stunning visual format, it is our hope that the *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary* will be a welcome addition to the personal libraries of all students of Scripture.

The Editors

HOW TO USE THIS COMMENTARY

The *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary* is written by accomplished biblical scholars with a wide array of readers in mind. Whether engaged in the study of Scripture in a church setting or in a college or seminary classroom, all students of the Bible will find a number of useful features throughout the commentary that are helpful for interpreting the Bible.

Basic Design of the Volumes

Each volume features an Introduction to a particular book of the Bible, providing a brief guide to information that is necessary for reading and interpreting the text: the historical setting, literary design, and theological significance. Each Introduction also includes a comprehensive outline of the particular book under study.

Each chapter of the commentary investigates the text according to logical divisions in a particular book of the Bible. Sometimes these divisions follow the traditional chapter segmentation, while at other times the textual units consist of sections of chapters or portions of more than one chapter. The divisions reflect the literary structure of a book and offer a guide for selecting passages that are useful in preaching and teaching.

An accompanying CD-ROM offers powerful searching and research tools. The commentary text, Sidebars, and visuals are all reproduced on a CD that is fully indexed and searchable. Pairing a text version with a digital resource also allows unprecedented flexibility and freedom for the reader. Carry the text version to locations you most enjoy doing research while knowing that the CD offers a portable alternative for travel from the office, church, classroom, and your home.

Commentary and Connections

As each chapter explores a textual unit, the discussion centers around two basic sections: *Commentary* and *Connections*. The analysis of a passage, including the details of its language, the history reflected in the text, and the literary forms found in the text, are the main focus

of the *Commentary* section. The primary concern of the *Commentary* section is to explore the theological issues presented by the Scripture passage. *Connections* presents potential applications of the insights provided in the *Commentary* section. The *Connections* portion of each chapter considers what issues are relevant for teaching and suggests useful methods and resources. *Connections* also identifies themes suitable for sermon planning and suggests helpful approaches for preaching on the Scripture text.

Sidebars

The *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary* provides a unique hyper-link format that quickly guides the reader to additional insights. Since other more technical or supplementary information is vital for understanding a text and its implications, the volumes feature distinctive Sidebars, or special-interest boxes, that provide a wealth of information on such matters as:

- Historical information (such as chronological charts, lists of kings or rulers, maps, descriptions of monetary systems, descriptions of special groups, descriptions of archaeological sites or geographical settings).
- Graphic outlines of literary structure (including such items as poetry, chiasmus, repetition, epistolary form).
- Definition or brief discussions of technical or theological terms and issues.
- Insightful quotations that are not integrated into the running text but are relevant to the passage under discussion.
- Notes on the history of interpretation (Augustine on the Good Samaritan, Luther on James, Stendahl on Romans, etc.).
- Line drawings, photographs, and other illustrations relevant for understanding the historical context or interpretive significance of the text.
- Presentation and discussion of works of fine art that have interpreted a Scripture passage.

Each Sidebar is printed in color and is referenced at the appropriate place in the *Commentary* or *Connections* section with a color-coded title that directs the reader to the relevant Sidebar. In addition, helpful icons appear in the Sidebars, which provide the reader with visual cues to the type of material that is explained in each Sidebar. Throughout the commentary, these four distinct hyperlinks provide useful links in an easily recognizable design.

ΑΩ

Alpha & Omega Language

This icon identifies the information as a language-based tool that offers further exploration of the Scripture selection. This could include syntactical information, word studies, popular or additional uses of the word(s) in question, additional contexts in which the term appears, and the history of the term's translation. All non-English terms are transliterated into the appropriate English characters.



Culture/Context

This icon introduces further comment on contextual or cultural details that shed light on the Scripture selection. Describing the place and time to which a Scripture passage refers is often vital to the task of biblical interpretation. Sidebar items introduced with this icon could include geographical, historical, political, social, topographical, or economic information. Here, the reader may find an excerpt of an ancient text or inscription that sheds light on the text. Or one may find a description of some element of ancient religion such as Baalism in Canaan or the Hero cult in the Mystery Religions of the Greco-Roman world.



Interpretation

Sidebars that appear under this icon serve a general interpretive function in terms of both historical and contemporary renderings. Under this heading, the reader might find a selection from classic or contemporary literature that illuminates the Scripture text or a significant quotation from a famous sermon that addresses the passage. Insights are drawn from various sources, including literature, worship, theater, church history, and sociology.



Additional Resources Study

Here, the reader finds a convenient list of useful resources for further investigation of the selected Scripture text, including books, journals, websites, special collections, organizations, and societies. Specialized discussions of works not often associated with biblical studies may also appear here.

Additional Features

Each volume also includes a basic Bibliography on the biblical book under study. Other bibliographies on selected issues are often included that point the reader to other helpful resources.

Notes at the end of each chapter provide full documentation of sources used and contain additional discussions of related matters.

Abbreviations used in each volume are explained in a list of abbreviations found after the Table of Contents.

Readers of the *Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary* can regularly visit the Internet support site for news, information, updates, and enhancements to the series at <www.helwys.com/commentary>.

Several thorough indexes enable the reader to locate information quickly. These indexes include:

- An *Index of Sidebars* groups content from the special-interest boxes by category (maps, fine art, photographs, drawings, etc.).
- An *Index of Scriptures* lists citations to particular biblical texts.
- An *Index of Topics* lists alphabetically the major subjects, names, topics, and locations referenced or discussed in the volume.
- An *Index of Modern Authors* organizes contemporary authors whose works are cited in the volume.

INTRODUCTION

Deuteronomy, the last of the five books of the Torah, as they are called in Hebrew, or of the Pentateuch (from the Latin expression for “five books”), preserves the three addresses Moses delivered to the people of Israel just prior to his death and their entry into the promised land. Its name, which means “second law,” derives from the title assigned it in the Septuagint, the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. The Greek name, in turn, probably reflects the Greek translator’s misunderstanding of the reference in Deuteronomy 17:18 to a “copy” of the Torah to be made for the king’s personal use as a reference to a “second law.” In a sense, however, the name is still appropriate; the substance of Moses’ addresses to the people of Israel is an explication of the one covenant given at Mt. Horeb/Sinai (Deut 1:5). In other words, Deuteronomy does not represent a “second” law in the sense of a different (alternative or additional) covenant. It does, however, represent a *reiteration*, *explication*, and, to a degree, *expansion*, of the sole covenant between YHWH and Israel. [God’s Proper Name]

Deuteronomy within the Canon of the Hebrew Bible

In many ways, Deuteronomy is the lynchpin of the Old Testament canon. Evidence suggests, for example, that the discovery in the Jerusalem temple of a prototype of the current book during the reign of King Josiah may have given impetus to the collection of the canon itself. According to 2 Kings 22–23, King Josiah instituted a series of religious reforms based upon an otherwise unidentified “Torah scroll” discovered in the Jerusalem temple during renovations (c. 623/622 BC). The account of this discovery immediately raises a number of questions. Perhaps the first and foremost has to do with the likely identity of the scroll. Theoretically, the phrase “Torah scroll” could have been a reference, as it usually is today, to the entirety of the Pentateuch, to some portion of it (all or part of one of the five books of Moses that constitute the Torah) or to some other document no longer preserved that could lay claim to Torah status. The fact that Josiah’s officials could read aloud the entirety of the scroll in a relatively brief period and that, later, Josiah would have the entire document read aloud to the people gathered in solemn assembly tends against the first option. Similarly, the seriousness with which

God's Proper Name

ΑΩ The Hebrew Bible employs a variety of divine names and titles for the God of Israel. Except for the Song of Moses (Deut 32), the book of Deuteronomy normally restricts itself to two of the more common designations used in conjunction with one another, YHWH ^ʾ *lôhîm*. This compound phrase consists of God's proper name, YHWH, and the noun meaning "God, god" or "gods," which can also refer to a deity (or deities) other than the God of Israel. Grammatically, ^ʾ *lôhîm* is a plural form of the noun ^ʾ *ʾēl*, "god" in virtually all the Semitic languages (compare Arabic, ^ʾ *ʾillâ*). Occasionally, as in Deut 3:24, Deuteronomy employs the additional title ^ʾ *donāy*, "my Lord," a form of an honorific title that can also be used in reference to human beings. In modern Hebrew, in fact, ^ʾ *ʾadôn* can be rendered by the English terms "sir" or "Mr." Jewish scribes distinguished between uses of ^ʾ *ʾadôn*, "lord," and ^ʾ *donî*, "my lord," in reference to human beings, and ^ʾ *donāy*, "my Lord," in reference to God, by reserving the (probably artificial) spelling with *-āy* for the deity.

It is important to remember that, whereas ^ʾ *lôhîm* refers to a deity or deities generically, and ^ʾ *ʾadôn(f)* is a title of respect suitable for beings other than God, YHWH is the proper name of Israel's God. It is a name shrouded in mystery. Neither its origins, its meaning, nor even its pronunciation are certain. Exod 3:14-15 maintains that God revealed this name, presumably for the first time, to Moses at the burning bush. Portions of Genesis, in contrast, place it on the lips of the patriarchs, generations earlier, and even attribute knowledge of the name to the second or third generation of humanity (Gen 4:26). The origins of Israel's worship in the name of YHWH lie in Israel's obscure past. The name may be attested outside Israel in a few unclear instances of Babylonian personal names dating as far back as the third millennium.

The meaning of the name is equally unclear. According to Exod 3:14 ("I am that I am"), it is related to the Semitic verb *hyh/hwh*, "to be" (*y* and *w* are sometimes interchangeable in Semitic languages). Many scholars consider

this etymology very probable. In this case, the name would mean "the one who is," "the one who causes to be," "the one who is or will be present [to help]," or the like. Alternative suggestions include the view that the short forms *yāh* and *yāhu* attested in personal names may point to origins as a cultic exclamation, that the name is related to the Arabic root *hwy*, "to be passionate," or to the Ugaritic root *hwy*, "to speak," or that it means "the one who sends down [lightning or rain]." In any case, YHWH does not mean "Lord," as it is conventionally rendered. This convention traces to the Septuagint, and probably reflects the Hellenistic practice of referring to deities as *kurios*, "lord."

Even the proper pronunciation of the name is unknown. Prompted by fear of inadvertently violating the commandment against improper use of the divine name, Jewish practice discourages pronouncing the name at all. Semitic languages, including Hebrew, were originally written without vowels. When scribes copied manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible that incorporated an innovative system of vowel notation, they supplied the divine name with the vowels of the terms ^ʾ *lôhîm* or ^ʾ *donāy*—a circumstance that led to the artificial English pronunciation "Yehovah/Jehovah"—to remind readers not mistakenly to pronounce the name, but one of the substitutes.

English translations often follow a convention that permits those who do not know Hebrew to recognize whether the Hebrew Bible employs God's proper name, the common noun, or the honorific title. YHWH is typically translated "LORD" or, when it appears in conjunction with ^ʾ *donāy*, "GOD" (in either case spelled with small capitals); ^ʾ *lôhîm* is translated "God" or "god/gods" depending on its referent; ^ʾ *donāy* is translated "Lord" with only an initial capital.

Since only the four consonants, YHWH, are assured, the name is sometimes called the "Tetragrammaton" (Greek for "four letters"). This commentary will employ "YHWH" in order to refer to the God of Israel by name.

Josiah, his officials, and the people took the document renders it unlikely that, having been found, it would once again be lost to posterity. The likeliest hypothesis argues that the book discovered in the temple should be identified with all or part of one of the five books of the biblical Torah. As it turns out, the language of the account in 2 Kings provides significant clues that link Josiah's scroll with the book of Deuteronomy. Josiah assembled the people to hear the scroll read and to ratify the covenant it described in a fashion reminiscent of Moses' convening of the so-called

Deuteronomy and the Josianic Reform

ΑΩ The following phrases found in 2 Kings 23 are typically Deuteronomic and point to the close relationship between the two documents:

“to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his testimonies” (2 Kgs 23:3; Deut 6:17; compare Deut 4:40, 45; 6:2, 20; etc.)

“with all his heart and all his soul (and all his might)” (2 Kgs 23:3, 25; Deut 4:29; 6:5; 10:12; 11:13, 18; 13:4; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10)

burning the vessels of Asherah (2 Kgs 23:4, 6, 15; Deut 7:5; 12:3)

“the sun, the moon, the stars, and the hosts of heaven” (2 Kgs 23:5; Deut 4:19; 17:3)

“beat it to dust” (2 Kgs 23:6, 15; Deut 9:21)

“male cult prostitutes” (2 Kgs 23:7; Deut 23:18)

“to cause his son or his daughter to pass through the fire” (2 Kgs 23:10; Deut 18:10; compare Deut 12:31)

“broke the masseboth” (2 Kgs 23:164; Deut 12:3; compare 7:5)

“provoke YHWH to anger” (2 Kgs 23:19, 2; Deut 4:25; 9:18; 31:29; 32:16, 21)

“mediums and wizards” (2 Kgs 23:24; Deut 18:11)

“idols (*gillulim*) and abominations (*šiqqûšim*)” (2 Kgs 23:24; Deut 29:16)

“[YHWH’s] name there” (2 Kgs 23:27; Deut 12:5, 11, 21; 14:23, 24; 16:2, 6, 11; 26:2)

“Covenant Renewal in Moab” described in Deuteronomy 29:1 [2 Eng]–31:13. For his part, Josiah covenanted to keep the provisions of this covenant “with all his heart and all his soul,” just as Deuteronomy exhorts its readers to do in the famous passage known as the “Shema” (especially, Deut 6:5). In an effort to conform Judean religious practices to the provisions of the newly found scroll, Josiah instituted a number of reforms described in 2 Kings 23. Almost without exception, they correspond to provisions outlined in the book of Deuteronomy. [Deuteronomy and the Josianic Reform]

If, as seems likely, Josiah’s scroll was some form of Deuteronomy, a second question arises from the account of its discovery. What was the status of the previously unknown law scroll prior to its discovery? This question has the potential to provide significant insight not only into the role of Deuteronomy in seventh-century Judah, but also into the development of the canon of the Hebrew Bible. To rephrase the question as pointedly as possible, one may well ask: How could ancient Israel have misplaced and forgotten a book of the Bible? The answer, of course, is that had Israel, at any moment prior to finding the scroll in the temple, regarded it as Scripture—as a book of the Bible—the scroll would not have suffered such a fate. For one thing, there would have been more than one copy. For another, had Deuteronomy already enjoyed canonical status, it would have commanded appropriate respect. It is inconceivable that a book with scriptural authority would fall into disuse to be forgotten! Apparently, in Josiah’s time, the first major

section of the Hebrew Bible, the Torah, was either incomplete (missing at least the book found in the temple) or, as seems more likely given the fact that the Pentateuch gives evidence of having reached its final form in the post-exilic period, only in the seminal stages of formation. In fact, since all of the books of the Hebrew Bible outside the Pentateuch date to around the time of Josiah or later, Josiah's mystery Torah scroll is arguably the first biblical book mentioned in the historical sources. How did the book come to be where it was? Although scholars speculate that refugee priests from the conquered northern kingdom may have brought with them a copy of a law scroll in use in the north, the history of the scroll prior to 622/23 is entirely hypothetical, if not downright conjectural. This much is certain: The idea of authoritative "Scripture"

Authorship



Did Moses himself write the book of Deuteronomy? Since the eighteenth century, scholars have focused considerable attention on the authorship of the Pentateuch in general, and the book of Deuteronomy in particular. The classical theory, the so-called "Documentary Hypothesis" or "JEDP Theory" widely accepted in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, holds that the Pentateuch is a composite of four anonymous ancient written sources (J, E, D, and P), identifiable by differences in literary style, varied forms of the divine name, theological perspectives, clues as to dates of composition, etc. At the moment, no consensus opinion as to details prevails among scholars other than the conviction that the Pentateuch is probably a composite.

The question has always been controversial.

Conservatives charge those willing even to consider the possibility that Moses may not have written every word in the Pentateuch with irreverence, at best, if not outright heresy. Critical scholars respond that they are simply trying to understand and explain phenomena observable in the Pentateuch, and that the issue is not whether the Pentateuch contains material that traces back to Moses, but whether a single author can have written the Torah. In terms of a tenet of faith, the question involves whether God can inspire anonymous authors.

What evidence can be brought to bear? Both Jewish and Christian traditions have long considered Deuteronomy one of the five "books of Moses." Even the New Testament and Jesus refer to the writings of Moses (see John 1:45; 5:46, for example), although these statements can be interpreted as references to the legal material within the Pentateuch and not to the entirety of all five books. The books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and

Deuteronomy are anonymous; the ancient manuscripts have no title pages or headings. Tradition and the Bible clearly associate these books with Moses as the source of the material, but they make no absolute claim that Moses wrote every word in them.

As for evidence found within the books, one need read no farther than Deut 1:1-5 before encountering specific indications that someone other than Moses was responsible for committing Deuteronomy to writing. Every reference to Moses in this introduction is in the third person. Moses speaks in the first person beginning only in v. 6 in the quotation introduced in v. 5. The introduction refers to the site of Moses' address as "beyond (on the other side of) the Jordan," indicating that the author writes from Palestine, west of the Jordan. Moses never crossed west of the river. Similarly, if one assumes that one (or more) editor(s)/compiler(s) gathered authentic Mosaic traditions, the difficulties associated with place names in Deut 1:1 (see commentary) can also be explained. Later editors may not have been familiar with these ancient place names.

Even the ancient Jewish rabbis recognized that Moses probably did not compose the entirety of the books associated with his name. "Our masters taught: . . . Moses wrote his own book, as well as the oracles of Balaam, and Job. Joshua wrote the book that bears his name and the last eight verses of the Five Books" (*b. B. Bat* 14b-15a). Another rabbinic tradition speculates that Samuel may have also contributed to the Torah.

In other words, whether or not Moses wrote the words of Deuteronomy (and he probably did not), they have scriptural authority because they are faithful to Moses' teaching and because they present an authentic unfolding of it. God can also inspire anonymous authors.

per se was a relatively new phenomenon in Israel. Furthermore, since this “law scroll”—whether Deuteronomy or some other portion of the Torah—would have claimed Mosaic authority, its sudden appearance on the stage as late as the seventh century BC suggests that, for ancient Israel, Mosaic “authority” itself cannot have been simply identified with Mosaic “authorship.” While it is already exceedingly difficult to imagine that Israel would have misplaced and forgotten a book considered part of the Bible, it is virtually impossible to imagine that Israel would have neglected a book that had been written by Moses. [\[Authorship\]](#)

Structure and Literary Characteristics

As it turns out, however, when seen in the light of this evidence concerning the sudden and late appearance of some form of the book, several internal features of Deuteronomy take on new significance precisely in relation to this question of “Mosaic authority.” For example, the structure of the book of Deuteronomy corresponds in interesting ways to the picture of the composition history of the book suggested by 2 Kings 22 and 23. More importantly, taken together, composition history and literary structure provide significant clues to the purpose and message of the book. Introductory formulae divide the book into three major speeches of unequal length and differing character that Moses is to have delivered, just prior to his death, to the Israelites encamped on the plains of Moab awaiting entry into the promised land. The second and longest of these addresses (5:1–28:68), the core of the book, consists of the so-called “Deuteronomistic Code,” the detailed explanation of the Horeb/Sinai covenant (chs. 12–26) through a series of regulations and case law examples. This “Deuteronomistic Code” is prefaced (chs. 5–11) by an exhortation to obey the covenant, which it identifies specifically with the Decalogue as expressed most essentially in the commandment to worship YHWH only. A collection of covenant blessings and curses (27–28) concludes the core address. [\[Outline\]](#)

Several literary features of this core address are noteworthy. First, both the Decalogue (ch. 5) and portions of the Deuteronomistic Code have parallels elsewhere in the Pentateuch (the Decalogue also appears in Exod 20; for parallels to the Deuteronomistic Code, see commentary on Deut 12 and especially [\[Parallels Between the Covenant and Deuteronomistic Codes\]](#) and [\[Parallels Between the Deuteronomistic and Holiness Codes\]](#)). Why does the Torah include in Deuteronomy a second version of these laws? Did Moses forget that he had already

Outline

- I. Moses' First Address: From Sinai to Moab, Deut 1:1–4:43
 - A. Introduction, 1:1-5
 - B. Events on the Journey, 1:6–3:22
 - 1. Moses Appoints Assistants, 1:6-18
 - 2. Rebellion at Kadesh-barnea, 1:19-46
 - 3. Passage through the Transjordan, 2:1-23
 - a. Through Edom, 2:1-8a
 - b. Through Moab, 2:8b-13
 - c. "Passage" of Rebels, 2:14-16
 - d. Through Ammon, 2:17-23
 - C. Conquest of Israel's Transjordanian Holdings, 2:24–3:22
 - 1. Conquest of Heshbon, 2:24-37
 - 2. Conquest of Bashan, 3:1-11
 - 3. Distribution of Territory, 3:12-22
 - D. Moses' Death Foreshadowed, 3:23-29
 - E. A Sermon on the Significance of the Sinai/Horeb Experience, 4:1-40
 - F. Cities of Refuge, 4:41-43
- II. Moses' Second Address, Deut 4:44–28:68
 - A. Introduction, 4:44-49
 - B. Introductory Sermons, 5:1–11:32
 - 1. On the Sinai/Horeb Covenant, 5:1-33
 - 2. On the First Commandment, 6:1-25
 - 3. On the Dangers of Syncretism, 7:1-26
 - 4. On Want and Prosperity, 8:1-20
 - 5. On Election and Arrogance, 9:1–10:11
 - 6. On Covenant Obedience, 10:12–11:32
 - C. The Deuteronomic Code, 12:1–26:19
 - 1. The First Commandment, 12:1–13:18
 - 2. The Second Commandment, 14:1-21
 - 3. The Third Commandment, 14:22–16:17
 - 4. The Fourth Commandment, 16:18–18:22
 - 5. The Fifth Commandment, 19:1–22:8
 - 6. The Sixth Commandment, 22:9–23:19 [23:18 Eng]
 - 7. The Seventh Commandment, 23:20[19 Eng]–24:7
 - 8. The Eighth Commandment, 24:8–25:4
 - 9. The Ninth Commandment, 25:5-12
 - 10. The Tenth Commandment, 25:13–26:15
 - D. Covenant Curses and Blessings, 27:1–28:68
 - 1. Stone Memorial and Altar, 27:1-10
 - 2. Rituals of Covenant Blessing and Cursing, 27:11-26
 - 3. Covenant Blessings and Curses, 28:1-68
 - a. Covenant Blessings, 28:1-14
 - b. Covenant Curses, 28:15-46
 - c. Extrapolation and Commentary, 28:47-68
- III. Moses' Third Speech: Preparations for Moses' Passing, Deut 28:69[29:1 Eng]–34:12
 - A. Covenant Renewal in Moab, 28:69[29:1]–30:20
 - B. Moses' Successors, 31:1–32:47
 - 1. Joshua, 31:1-8
 - 2. The Torah scroll, 31:9-13
 - 3. Moses' Song, 31:14-22
 - 4. Joshua, 31:23
 - 5. The Torah scroll, 31:24-29
 - 6. Moses' Song, 31:30–32:47
 - C. Moses' Death, 32:48–34:12
 - 1. Foretold, 32:48-52
 - 2. Moses' Parting Blessing, 33:1-29
 - 3. The Account of Moses' Death, 34:1-12

treated these matters in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers? Comparison of the duplicate laws reveals that, in many cases, Deuteronomy's version seems to reflect social, economic, and political circumstances much later than the other version (especially when the parallel is found in the so-called "Covenant Code," Exod 21–23). Is it possible that the Deuteronomic Code represents an independent revision of Israel's predominantly oral case-law tradition undertaken in an effort to update the Mosaic tradition?

Second, it may be significant that the Deuteronomic Code is, for the most part, anonymous (exceptions include 18:15-17). In fact, the Code, and the prefatory exhortation and blessings/curses appendix in particular, participate in a sophisticated tri-level scheme of speakers and addressees that governs the rhetorical strategy of the entire book. Three voices can be heard: God, Moses, and an anonymous narrator who is identical with the author(s)

/editor(s) responsible for putting the book in its final form. In effect, the narrator reports the words of Moses who, in turn, reports the words of God. As with any report, the time lapsed between the events reported and the record may have been of any duration. While Moses' address can be dated with relative certainty, the narrator, theoretically, may have written at any time afterward.

These three voices correspond roughly to the three audiences addressed in the book. On the surface, Moses directs his address to the generation of Israel gathered on the plains of Moab. These Israelites were the children of those who had been present at Mt. Sinai. With the passing of Moses, that earlier generation, with the exceptions of Joshua and Caleb, came to an end. Moses spoke to a generation that had *not* participated in the covenant-making at Sinai/Horeb. They needed to hear the substance of the covenant, to learn how to apply it, and to be encouraged to obedience. Yet, at times, the book obscures the distinction between the Sinai/Horeb generation and the conquest generation, addressing the latter as though it had been present at Sinai/Horeb (see 11:7), collapsing, as it were, these two generations into one Israel. At the same time, however, the narrator knows and the reader should not forget that—whereas YHWH may have spoken directly to the generation assembled at Sinai/Horeb, and Moses to the generation gathered in Moab—the book addresses any generation that reads the book: “*You* were shown so that you would acknowledge that YHWH is God . . . He brought *you* out of Egypt with his own presence, by his great power . . . to bring you in, giving you their land for a possession, *as it is still today*” (4:35-38, my emphasis).

In fact, although Deuteronomy makes no systematic effort to differentiate between them, it seems to be aware of the three layers of its own documentary nature. These three layers correspond roughly to the three speakers and the three audiences. The book refers to the Decalogue document, written by YHWH himself to be delivered originally to the Sinai/Horeb generation and thereafter stored in the Ark of the Covenant (10:1-5). The contents of this Decalogue are reproduced *within* Deuteronomy (ch. 5). In turn, Moses is said to have committed his exposition of the Decalogue (1:5), addressed originally to the Moab generation and roughly equivalent to the Deuteronomic Code plus addenda, to writing in a document to be deposited *beside* the Ark of the Covenant (31:26). Finally, the narrator composed the present book of Deuteronomy, containing the Deuteronomic Code, which in turn contains the Decalogue, for Israelites in any generation.

Although the voice of the narrator(s)/editor(s) can be heard throughout the book, it is concentrated in the speeches that comprise the framework around the Deuteronomic Code. The first and last of these speeches consist primarily of narrative instead of exhortation and explication; in fact, they relate a narrative sequence that breaks off at the end of the first speech to be resumed only later in the final speech. Unlike the Code, which develops an explication of the Decalogue, the narrative framework focuses on the person and ministry of Moses. Furthermore, the final speech almost has the character of addendum; it includes a wide variety of genre and perspectives—poems, songs, and a third-person account of Moses' death. Portions of this narrative framework to the book, like portions of the exhortation and consequence framework to the Deuteronomic Code, seem to reflect a very late era in Israel's history. In fact, circumstances that prevailed in Josiah's day and later seem to be assumed in discussions of Israel's fate at the hands of invading enemy nations, for example. (See commentary on Deut 28.) In short, features evident within the book confirm the complicated history of its composition and transmission suggested by the testimony of the Kings account (2 Kgs 22–23).

Deuteronomy in Context

This narrative framework functions to set the Deuteronomic Code in two key and interrelated contexts: (1) Moses' addresses to Israel on the plains of Moab *and* the documentary record of these addresses complete with narrative framework were motivated by concerns arising from Moses' death and the resultant crisis of transition. On every level of speaker/audience/document, the book of Deuteronomy addresses trans-generational issues. The confusion of audiences seems to be entirely intentional. In the book of Deuteronomy, each and every successive generation of Israel finds itself at Moses' feet hearing Moses' challenge to live out the possibilities inherent in the Sinai/Horeb covenant as explicated by the Deuteronomic Code. (2) In a related manner, the narrative framework relates the history of Israel's wandering and the early stages of conquest (the narrative preamble) as a precedent for YHWH's dealings with Israel as a nation (among other nations). The ending, with its linkage to the treaty blessings and curses and its emphasis on the testimonial character of Moses' parting addresses, functions as a prophetic call to obedience, a glance toward the future. Together, they focus the book on the decision Israel always faces: Choose life!


In fact, the consensus of biblical scholarship is that Deuteronomy serves an even broader contextualizing function. Based on similarities in theme, theology, and language, and on the proximity of the date of the scroll's discovery (likely a form of Deuteronomy) to the date of the composition of Israel's major history, scholars theorize that this proto-Deuteronomy must have inspired the intellects and imaginations of the authors who penned the books of Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, and 1 & 2 Kings.¹ In turn, students of the Torah (Genesis–Deuteronomy) recognize its influence on the other four books of Moses. Similarly, the book of Jeremiah, whose ministry dates to just after the discovery of Deuteronomy, and to a lesser extent other books of the prophets, bear the stamp of Deuteronomistic theology and language. It would not be unreasonable to claim that, had proto-Deuteronomy gone undiscovered, approaching half the Old Testament would not have been written, or certainly would have been radically different.

Many scholars regard the position of Deuteronomy at the literary juncture between the Torah and the Former Prophets (as the Deuteronomistic History is known in the Hebrew canon) along with the literary peculiarities of the narrative framework of Deuteronomy as evidence, in fact, that Deuteronomy was edited at some point specifically to become the introduction to the Deuteronomistic History. After the discovery of “proto-Deuteronomy” in the temple, and after the composition of Joshua–2 Kings, an editor would have supplied the narrative account of the transition moment in Israel's history and prefaced the newly edited version of Deuteronomy to the whole. At some point, Deuteronomy would have also been included in the five books of the Pentateuch. The result would have been an eleven-volume “canon” that narrated the story of God's people from the creation of the world to the Exile. This literary placement accentuates Deuteronomy's pivotal role—at the juncture between the wilderness and the promised land.

Deuteronomy in the Context of the Christian Canon

The importance of Deuteronomy is not limited to the first half of the Christian canon. According to the Gospel writers, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy more often than any other biblical book. When asked what is the key to authentic faith, Jesus quoted the “Shema” (Deut 6:4-6; see Matt 22:37; Mark 12:29-30; Luke 10:27). Indeed, it has been suggested that the Gospel of Matthew can be considered a “deuteronomistic” work that takes the theology of

Deuteronomy in the New Testament

 According to the Gospel writers, apart from citations of the Decalogue (four times: Mark 7:10 [= Matt 15:4]; Mark 10:19 [= Matt 19:18-19; Luke 18:20]; Matt 5:21, 27), which can be attributed to either Deuteronomy or Exodus, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy more often than any other book in the Hebrew Bible (six times: Deut 6:4-6 [Mark 12:29-30 = Matt 22:37 = Luke 10:27]; Deut 8:3 [Matt 4:4 = Luke 4:4]; Deut 6:16 [Matt 4:7 = Luke 4:12]; Deut 6:13 [Matt 4:10 = Luke 4:8]; Deut 24:1 [Matt 5:31]; Deut 19:15 [Matt 18:16]); the Psalter follows closely with five citations; Exodus, Leviticus, and Isaiah are each cited three times and Hosea twice; Genesis, Jeremiah, Daniel, Zechariah, and Malachi are cited once each). Paul quoted most often from Isaiah (twenty-six times), the Psalter (eighteen times), Genesis (fourteen times), and Deuteronomy (ten times; thirteen times including the three citations of the Decalogue—Rom 7:7 [Exod 20:17 = Deut 5:21]; Rom 10:6-8 [Deut 30:12-14]; Rom 10:19 [Deut 32:21]; Rom 11:8 [Deut 29:4]; Rom 12:19-20 [Deut 32:35];

Rom 13:9 [Exod 20:13-17 = Deut 5:17-21]; Rom 15:10 [Deut 32:43]; 1 Cor 9:9 [Deut 25:4]; 2 Cor 13:1 [Deut 19:15]; Gal 3:10 [Deut 27:26]; Gal 3:13 [Deut 21:23]; Eph 6:2-3 [Exod 20:12 = Deut 5:16]; 1 Tim 5:18 [Deut 25:4]). Paul cites eleven other books five times or fewer: Leviticus, Exodus, Hosea, 2 Kings, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Numbers, Joel, Malachi, Proverbs, Job (in descending order of frequency). In descending order of frequency, the General Epistles cite the Psalter seventeen times; Deuteronomy, including the Decalogue, eight times (Heb 1:6 [Deut 32:43 LXX]; Heb 10:30a [Deut 32:35]; Heb 10:30b [Deut 32:36]; Heb 12:21 [Deut 9:19]; Heb 13:5 [Deut 31:6,8]; Jas 2:11a [Exod 20:14 = Deut 5:18]; Jas 2:11b [Exod 20:13 = Deut 5:17]; Jas 4:5 [Deut 32:11-12, 16-22]); Genesis, Exodus (including the Decalogue), Isaiah, and Proverbs five times each; Leviticus four times; Jeremiah twice; and 2 Samuel, Habakkuk, and Haggai once each. The importance of Deuteronomy to Jesus and the authors of the New Testament is self-evident.

R. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 57-59, 108-11, 164-66, 196-97.

Deuteronomy as the basis for its argument.² Paul, the trained rabbi, appeals to Deuteronomy regularly. [Deuteronomy in the New Testament] Yet, in comparison to its significance among and for the other books that comprise the Christian Bible, Deuteronomy is woefully neglected in the preaching and teaching of the church. Given its stature within the canon, the relative neglect of Deuteronomy among Christians is truly astonishing. What accounts for it?

Law and Grace: A False Dichotomy. At least two closely related misapprehensions seem to motivate Christian disregard for the riches of Deuteronomy. First, for most of Christian history, the church has operated with a disdainful caricature of Old Testament “Law.” The Law, it has been maintained, consists of a series of rigid, highly specific rules. They were imposed upon ancient Israel as the standards Israel must meet in order to satisfy God’s demands for righteousness. Since, however, human beings ultimately fall short of the standards of absolute righteousness, the Law failed as the means to Israel’s justification. Because of this failure of the Law—YHWH’s covenant with Israel—Jesus came announcing and enacting God’s grace. The failed Law, it has been argued, is therefore no longer binding on Christians; Christians have another, better avenue to relationship with God.

As the commentary that follows will repeatedly assert, however, this understanding of Old Testament “Law” is not a faithful representation of reality, especially not as it pertains to Deuteronomy. To begin with, the Old Testament nowhere maintains that relationship with God can be earned. Instead, the biblical statement concerning the establishment of the relationship between God and Israel can be described best under the theological heading of election. The Old Testament consistently maintains that, in an act of unmerited and inexplicable grace, *God chose and redeemed Israel well before and apart from the giving of the Law*. In fact, the Hebrew word often translated “law” can better be rendered “teaching,” “instruction,” or even “principles.” That is, Old Testament “Law” is not a set of restrictive rules, but the principles or guidance for living life as the people of God. In short, God “saved” Israel by grace, but the life God wishes for God’s people has a certain principled character. It manifests identity. Life as God’s people is neither anarchic nor formless. As Jesus put it, “By their fruits you shall know them” (Matt 7:20). In effect, the “Law” describes the character of the “fruits of grace.”

A Biblical Model for Interpretation. Second, Christians have never developed an adequate approach to interpreting Torah, so they neglect it. One of the most obvious features of the “legal” material in the Old Testament involves its antiquity. Quite often, it deals with matters pertinent to ancient Israel’s agrarian, pre-modern, Near Eastern culture that are entirely without parallel in the modern western world. Christians read Deuteronomy’s discussion of the manumission of slaves, for example, and quickly realize that (fortunately) circumstances have changed. The rules no longer apply. If read closely, however, Deuteronomy both calls for and models a more engaged, nuanced interpretive approach. Deuteronomy recognizes that specific circumstances change. But the basic principles do not. Commitment to the covenant’s call for the people of God to live as the people of God requires an approach to the interpretation of the basic principles that will result in new and faithful responses to new situations. In fact, according to Deuteronomy itself, Moses addressed Israel on the plains of Moab, and eventually the book was written precisely because Israel perpetually faced new situations that called for new applications of the basic principles of the covenant. Deuteronomy, then, models how to approach new circumstances on the basis of the fundamental and abiding principles of God’s will revealed in Torah. It establishes an authoritative biblical tradition of interpretation.

If the church is to live its life as God's people, responding to the ethical challenges of modern life, embodying the principles of holiness and godliness, it cannot afford to disregard such a rich resource.

NOTES

¹ Scholars refer to this six-volume work as the "Deuteronomistic History (= DH)." For a detailed exposition of the scholarly arguments for the association of these books with Deuteronomy, see M. Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien: Die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im Alten Testament*, SKG.G 18/2, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1967); E. Friedman, *The Exile and Biblical Narrative: The Formation of the Deuteronomistic and Priestly Works*, HSM 22 (Chico CA: Scholars Press, 1981); M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972); etc.

² See O. H. Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung des deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbildes im Alten Testament, Spätjudentum und Urchristentum* (WMANT 23; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967).