

INTRODUCTION TO DEUTERONOMY

Key Verse: Deuteronomy 6:5

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”

Deuteronomy is the 5th book of Moses. It provides the theological undergirding of the Old Testament. Its name means "a repetition or second giving of the law." Moses and the people were gathered on the border of Canaan in the plains of Moab, 40 years after they had left Egypt. When they were slaves in Egypt, God had promised to give them the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey. But 40 years before, when they had tried to cross over into Canaan at Kadesh Barnea, they had failed because of their unbelief and disobedience. Now, the 40 years of training was over; one generation of fighting men had died in the desert; it was the time to cross the Jordan and take the land. Already they had tasted victory in battle by defeating the Transjordan kings, but the great task lay ahead of them. Moses, their shepherd, would not go with them; it was the time for him to transfer the leadership to Joshua.

Moses spoke to them from his heart. His key word was "remember." He wanted them to learn from their past failures; he wanted them to remember the power and love and faithfulness of God. The book may be divided as follows:

- 1-4 (1st) Lessons from history--remember and live
- 5-11 (2nd) Remember the Covenant and the Law (Ten Commandments repeated)
- 12-26 (3rd) Laws for Life in Canaan
- 27-30 (4th) Choose Life (Blessings and Curses)
- 31-33 (5th) Final Words and Song of Moses
- 34 Epilogue

Moses gave many instructions, but his main message is summed up in 6:5: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength."