

# DEUTERONOMY - A STUDY GUIDE

## THE CENTRAL QUESTION:

### What does this book/story say to us about God?

This question may be broken down further as follows:

a. Why did God do it/allow it?

b. Why did He record it for our study?

1. What picture of God would you have if you had only the book of Deuteronomy? Where and when was the book given to Moses and written down? (see Deuteronomy 1:1)
2. Why does Moses give a completely different reason for keeping the Sabbath in Deuteronomy 5:12-15 than what he gave in Exodus 20:8-11? Which form of the commandment do you think was given by God and written on the tables of stone? (Deuteronomy 5:22) Does this mean that God is not too particular about the reasons why we are to worship Him?
3. What is the purpose of the whole theme of "obey Me and I will bless you, disobey Me and I will curse/destroy you" in the book of Deuteronomy? (Deuteronomy 8:18-20; 11:26-29; 27:11-28:68; 30:1-20)
4. What are the real reasons that God destroyed the inhabitants of Canaan and gave the land to the Israelites? (Deuteronomy 9:1-6; Compare 9:27-29 Compare Exodus 23:27-31; 34:10-17; Leviticus 18; Numbers 14:13-19; 33:50-56; Deuteronomy 12:29-31; 13:12-16) Doesn't God seem very paranoid about any of the Israelites worshiping any other "gods"? (Deuteronomy 17:2-7)
5. In light of God's statements that He wanted Moses to step aside and allow Him to destroy the Israelites, (Exodus 32:7-10; Numbers 14:11,12; Deuteronomy 9:12-14) why does Moses say, "It was not His will to destroy you"? (Deuteronomy 10:10, *NIV*) What was really going on between God and Moses? Had Moses succeeded in convincing God to change His mind?
6. Why did God take so long to say exactly what it was that He wanted of the people--reverence, love, obedience, faithfulness (trust) and worshipful praise? (Deuteronomy 10:12-22) Is there anything in these verses that we would object to today?
7. What was God really asking them to do when He said, "Remember these commands and cherish them. Tie them on your arms and wear them on your foreheads as a reminder?" (Deuteronomy 11:18) If He really commanded them to do this, why did He speak against it in Matthew 23:5?
8. How could Moses make the statement, "When that time comes, you must not do as you have been doing. Until now you have all been worshiping as you please?" (Deuteronomy 12:8)
9. Should we still be following the advice in Deuteronomy 13:1-3? God Himself seemed to use miracles to convince even Pharaoh to believe in Him, but now He says, "A prophet or an interpreter of dreams may promise a miracle or a wonder, in order to lead you to worship and serve gods that you have not worshiped before. Even if what he promises comes true, do not pay any attention to him." (GNB) What criteria is God suggesting that we should use to judge miracle workers?
10. Why does God forbid the eating of blood? (Deuteronomy 12:16,23,24) Why is it that if you live in the original part of the promised land, you are not to kill and eat any of the sacrifices at home, but if the land is expanded and you live in an outlying area, it is okay to kill and eat the sacrifices at home? (Deuteronomy 12:14; Compare 12:20-21)
11. Why would God forbid them to shave the forehead (the front of the head) as a sign of mourning? (Deuteronomy 14:1) Why would God forbid them to boil a kid in its mothers milk? (Compare Exodus 23:19; 34:26; Deuteronomy 14:21)

12. Why does God say to them, you are free to “spend (the tithe) on whatever you want--beef, lamb, wine, beer...eat and enjoy yourself?” (Deuteronomy 14:22-27, *GNB*) Should we return to this custom today? (Please note that these are the strongest forms of alcoholic beverage mentioned in the Bible)
13. Why did Moses wait until Deuteronomy for giving the “great commandment”? (Deuteronomy 6:4-6) Shouldn't he have started with this commandment?
14. Deuteronomy seems to have a “kinder, gentler” approach to almost everything. Why would the previous books be written in harsher language? Why the change? Did God change, did Moses change, or had the people changed?
15. Who wrote Deuteronomy 34--the account of Moses' death? If it was not written by Moses, does that mean it is not inspired?
16. What do you think of Moses' final words to the people in Deuteronomy 27:1-33:29? Does it sound like a parent speaking to his children?
17. How long is the “forever” in Deuteronomy 15:17? (Compare Exodus 21:6) Does this shed any light on other uses of the word “forever” in the Bible? (Compare Revelation 14:9-11)
18. What do you think of the uncannily precise predictions of what would happen to the children of Israel if they turned away from God to serve other “gods”? (for example: Deuteronomy 7:3-6; 11:16-17; **28:15-68**) Didn't virtually all these predictions come to pass almost exactly as He had predicted?
19. What was the purpose of all the detailed instructions about going to war, if they were not supposed to fight? (Deuteronomy 20) Why do you suppose they were to treat the peoples of Canaan differently than the peoples of other areas that they might conquer in later years? Did they give the people of Jericho or Ai a chance to surrender as they were instructed? (Deuteronomy 20:10-12)
20. Why did Moses give them the divorce laws? (Deuteronomy 24:1-4 Compare Matthew 5:31,32; 19:3-10; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18 but note Malachi 2:16)
21. Why would God ask them to exclude from the assembly for 10 or more generations any child born illegitimately? (Deuteronomy 23:2) Why were sexually deformed males also excluded? (Deuteronomy 23:1) Why were women excluded? Do we have any information about how some of these illegitimate children may have been conceived? (Deuteronomy 23:17,18)
22. How could they spare the family of Rahab after all that God had said about Canaanites, prostitutes, etc.? After the specific instructions regarding Moabites and Ammonites given in Deuteronomy 23:3-6, how could they elect David as their most famous king when his great grandmother was a Moabitess and his great, great grandmother was a Canaanite prostitute? (Matthew 1:5,6) Why didn't they at least keep quiet about it? Does it sometimes seem like God is saying, “Do as I say, and not as I do?” Why would Jesus then choose this exact family as the ancestors of King David and later of Jesus Himself? Is He taking delight in breaking His own rules?
23. What was the purpose of the Levirate marriage law? (Deuteronomy 25:5-10) If it were in force today, do you think you would comply?
24. Does Deuteronomy 29:17-28 make you think of a kind and loving God who is forgiveness personified?

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