

Deuteronomy And Other Scripture

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Introduction:

The US Constitution is, from a fleshly vantage point, the most important document of our nation. The Constitution is quoted or paraphrased regarding every arena of life: political, legal, religious, business, familial, and individual. It is used to settle disputes, punish evildoers, and give relief to victims.

This is a great mystery, but I speak of the book of Deuteronomy. As the nation of Israel prepares to inherit the land God has given them, Moses lays forth a series of speeches intended to guide them for generations to come.

It is therefore no surprise to find references to this great book throughout the rest of the Old Testament, as well hearing it often quoted by Jesus and then even applied by His followers.

The importance of finding the book of Deuteronomy in the rest of Scripture may be best illustrated by an example of someone, in Scripture, who found the book of Deuteronomy.

In 2 Kings 22-23 Josiah gives instructions to have the temple repaired. In the process, the Book of the Law is found (22:11). There are multiple arguments made for Deuteronomy being the book that was found but perhaps the strongest is simply the language found in the text.

Consider these comparisons:

22 Now the future generation, your sons who rise up after you and the foreigner who comes from a distant land, when they see the plagues of that land and the diseases with which the Lord has afflicted it, will say, 23 All its land is brimstone and salt, burned debris, unsown and unproductive, and no grass grows on it, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the Lord overthrew in His anger and in His wrath. 24 All the nations will say, Why has the Lord done all this to this land? Why this great outburst of anger? 25 Then people will say, It is because they abandoned the covenant of the Lord, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt. 26 And they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods that they have not known and whom He had not assigned to them. 27 Therefore, the anger of the Lord burned against that land, to bring upon it every curse which is written in this book; 28 and the Lord uprooted them from their land in anger, fury, and in great wrath, and hurled them into another land, as it is this day.

(Deuteronomy 29:22-28)

13 Go, inquire of the Lord for me and for the people and all Judah concerning the words of this book that has been found, for the wrath of the Lord that burns against us is great, because our fathers did not listen to the words of this book, to act in accordance with everything that is written regarding us. 14 So Hilkiah the priest, ... went to Huldah the prophetess, ... and they spoke to her. 15 Then she said to them, This is what the Lord, the God of Israel says: Tell the man who sent you to Me, 16 This is what the Lord says: Behold, I am going to bring disaster on this place and on its inhabitants, all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read. 17 Since they have abandoned Me and have burned incense to other gods so that they may provoke Me to anger with all the work of their hands, My wrath burns against this place, and it shall not be quenched. 18 But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the Lord, this is what you shall say to him: This is what the Lord, the God of Israel says: Regarding the words which you have heard, 19 since your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they would become an object of horror and a curse, ..." (2 Kings 22:13-20)

“Then the Lord will single him out for disaster from all the tribes of Israel, in accordance with

all the curses of the covenant which is written in this Book of the Law.” (Deuteronomy 29:21)

“if you obey the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law, if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.” (Deuteronomy 3:10) (See also: Deuteronomy 10:12; 30:2)

“Then the king sent messengers, and they gathered to him all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. And the king went up to the house of the Lord and every man of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, the prophets, and all the people, from the small to the great; and he read in their presence all the words of the Book of the Covenant which was found in the house of the Lord. And the king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep His commandments, His provisions, and His statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to carry out the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people entered into the covenant.” (2 Kings 23:1-3) (See also 2 Chronicles 34:15)

One of the greatest and clearest lessons from the life of Josiah is seeing what a life-changing transformation can occur when one finds God=s Word while having a tender heart and humility (2 Kings 22:19).

To emphasize the significance of the power of Deuteronomy in Josiah=s life, only in 2 Kings 23:25 is the fulness of Deuteronomy 6:5 stated in the Old Testament.¹ Josiah turned to the LORD with all his heart and all his soul and with all his might, according to the law of Moses ...@

More Well-known Quotes from Deuteronomy

1. The Greatest Command

Hear, Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)

Heart and soul: Deuteronomy 4:29; 10:12; 11:13; 13:3; 26:16; 30:2, 6,
10
Joshua 22:5; 1 Kings 2:4; 8:48; 2 Chronicles 6:38; Jeremiah
32:41

Heart, soul, and might 2 Kings 23:25

Quoted in New Testament Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:29-30; Luke 10:27

2. The Temptation Responses

You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name.@ (Deuteronomy 6:13)

You shall not put the Lord your God to the test, as you tested Him at Massah.@ (Deuteronomy 6:16)

And He humbled you and let you go hungry, and fed you with the manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, in order to make you understand that man shall not live on

bread alone, but man shall live on everything that comes out of the mouth of the Lord.@ (Deuteronomy 8:3)

Quoted in Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13

Quotable Quotes & Notable Notes

1. Seek and Find

But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. When you are in distress and all these things happen to you, in the latter days you will return to the Lord your God and listen to His voice. For the Lord your God is a compassionate God; He will not abandon you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.@ (Deuteronomy 4:29-31)

Gave encouragement to Asa 2 Chronicles 15:2, 4, 12, 15

“I love those who love me” Proverbs 8:17

Captives taught to seek and find Jeremiah 29:13

God is not far away Acts 17:27

Not everyone will find God Proverbs 1:28; Isaiah 41:12; Hosea 2:7; 5:6
John 7:34, 36

2. Our God is a Consuming Fire

For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.@ (Deuteronomy 4:24)

So be aware today that it is the Lord your God who is crossing over ahead of you as a consuming fire. He will destroy them and He will subdue them before you, so that you may drive them out and eliminate them quickly, just as the Lord has spoken to you.@ (Deuteronomy 9:3)

Quoted in Hebrews 12:9 (See also Exodus 24:17)

3. Circumcised Hearts and Stiff Necks

So circumcise your heart, and do not stiffen your neck any longer.@ (Deuteronomy 10:16) (See also Leviticus 26:41; Deuteronomy 30:6)

Referenced in Acts 7:51; Romans 2:28-29; Colossians 2:11; Jeremiah 4:4

4. Fatherless, Widows, and Strangers

He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love for the stranger by giving him food and clothing.@ (Deuteronomy 10:18)

Exodus 22:22 briefly condemns mistreatment of the fatherless and widow.

Deuteronomy adds strangers@ (and sometimes Levites@) and makes the under-represented a major theme of the Law.

10:18 God defends them

14:28-29 Need to share with those who have no inheritance

16:11, 14	Make sure to include less fortunate in the feasts
24:17-22	Do not try to collect all you are able and the LORD will bless you (19, 20, 21)
26:9-15	Milk and honey needs to be shared (12, 13)
27:19	A curse is awaiting those who pervert their justice. Amen!
Job 31:16-23	A man who mistreats the weak deserves to be armless
Psalm 94:6-7	Murderers of such think they will escape punishment
Psalm 146:9	God watches over them. Praise the LORD!
Isaiah 1:17	God=s people should fight for the vulnerable
Isaiah 1:23	The wicked will not help them because there is nothing to gain
Jeremiah 7:4-6	Do not trust the temple if you do not practice justice
Jeremiah 22:3	The king must protect the helpless
Ezekiel 22:7	Jerusalem will be destroyed because of mistreatment
Zechariah 7:9-10	True justice
Malachi 3:5	Those who exploit the widows and orphans do not fear Yahweh
James 1:27	Pure and undefiled religion is this ...

5. Treatment of the Poor

If there is a poor person among you, one of your brothers, in any of your towns in your land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother; but you shall fully open your hand to him, and generously lend him enough for his need in whatever he lacks.@ (Deuteronomy 15:7-8) (See also 15:4, 11)

Applied in Acts 4:34. Needy person@ is the same word as poor@ in the LXX.²

6. Rules for Kings

When you enter the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and you take possession of it and live in it, and you say, >I will appoint a king over me like all the nations who are around me,= you shall in fact appoint a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses. One from among your countrymen you shall appoint as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves, anyone who is not your countryman. In any case, he is not to acquire many horses for himself, nor shall he make the people return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the Lord has said to you, >You shall never again return that way.= And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, so that his heart does not turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself.” (Deuteronomy 17:14-17)

Israel sought a king to be like the nations in I Samuel 8:5-22.

Solomon disobeyed the three prohibitions according to 1 Kings 10:27-11:2.

7. The Future Prophet

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen; to him you shall listen. This is in accordance with everything that you asked of the

Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, >Do not let me hear the voice of the Lord my God again, and do not let me see this great fire anymore, or I will die! = And the Lord said to me, >They have spoken well. I will raise up for them a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them everything that I command him.” (Deuteronomy 18:15-18)

8. Two or Three Witnesses

AA single witness shall not rise up against a person regarding any wrongdoing or any sin that he commits; on the testimony of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.@ (Deuteronomy 19:15) (See also Numbers 35:30 and Deuteronomy 17:6 regarding murder.)

Quoted in Matthew 18:16; 26:60; 2 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Timothy 5:19; Hebrews 10:28

9. Train up a Child

“The officers also shall speak to the people, saying, >Who is the man that has built a new house but has not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, otherwise he might die in the battle and another man would dedicate it.’@ (Deuteronomy 20:5)

The same Hebrew word for dedicate is used in I Kings 8:63; 2 Chronicles 7:5.

Also, it is the same word translated train@ in Proverbs 22:6.

10. Hanging on a Tree

Now if a person has committed a sin carrying a sentence of death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body is not to be left overnight on the tree, but you shall certainly bury him on the same day (for he who is hanged is cursed of God), so that you do not defile your land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.” (Deuteronomy 21:22-23)

Quoted in Galatians 3:13 (See also Galatians 3:1; 5:11; 6:12, 14 and Acts 5:30; 10:39)

Some who were hanged:

Chief baker	Genesis 40:16-22
King of Ai	Joshua 8:29
Five Amorite kings	Joshua 10:23, 26
Saul and Jonathan	I Samuel 31:10; 2 Samuel 21:12
Ishbosheth’s murderers	2 Samuel 4:2-12
Ahithophel	2 Samuel 17:23 foreshadowing of Judas
Absalom	2 Samuel 18:9
Descendants of Saul	2 Samuel 21:8-9
Bigthan and Teresh	Esther 2:21-23
Haman and ten sons	Esther 7:10; 9:14-15
Judas	Matthew 27:5
Two criminals	Matthew 27:38; Isaiah 53:9

15. Ascending and Descending

For this commandment which I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it far away. It is not in heaven, that you could say, >Who will go up to heaven for us and get it for us, and proclaim it to us, so that we may follow it? = Nor is it beyond the sea, that you could say, >Who will cross the sea for us and get it for us and proclaim it to us, so that we may follow it? = On the contrary, the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may follow it. @ (Deuteronomy 30:11-14)

Applied to Jesus in John 3:13; Romans 10:6-8

16. The Song of God (Deuteronomy 31:19)

32:5	Perverse and crooked generation@ Philippians 2:15
32:10	Apple of His eye@ Zechariah 2:8
32:16-17	Provoking God to jealousy 1 Corinthians 10:20-22
32:20	God hides His face Isaiah 59:1-2
32:21	God provokes Israel to jealousy Romans 10:19
32:35-36	Vengeance is Mine Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30
32:36	God comforts Psalm 135:14
32:37	Let the gods rise up Jeremiah 2:28
32:43	Rejoice Romans 15:10; Hebrews 1:6 (LXX)

Nehemiah and Jeremiah are two of the men who took Deuteronomy to heart (pun intended). The books with their names are filled with quotes, references, and illustrations of the speeches of Moses. We will focus here only on Nehemiah.

Yahweh promised that a rebellious nation would receive captivity as a punishment (D 28:41). He also promised that He would free them if they sought Him (D 30:1-4). Just as the captivity did not occur overnight, neither did the return. Nehemiah learns of the distress of those who survived the captivity (N 1:1-3).

Nehemiah prays (N 1:4ff). His prayer calls upon the God who keeps His covenant and mercy@ (N 1:5). This phrase is taken from Moses= speeches (D 7:9, 12). Solomon appealed this phrase when he built the temple (1 Kings 8:63; 2 Chronicles 6:14). Daniel quoted it in his great prayer of confession of national and personal sin (Daniel 9:4).

The Israelites have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses.@ (N 1:7) The list of three is also found in Nehemiah 9:13 and 10:29. In the Torah only Deuteronomy uses the same list of three (D 5:31; 6:1; 7:11; 8:11; 11:1; 26:17; 30:16).

There was hope for the Israelites who were scattered. God would bring those who return to the LORD@ from the farthest part@ and bring them back to where His name dwelt (N 1:8-10). Nehemiah is again quoting Moses= words (D 30:2-4).

Nehemiah rebukes the leaders for charging interest to their brethren (N 5:1-13). Moses had condemned this practice in Deuteronomy 23:19, but perhaps Nehemiah has in mind Leviticus 25:35-38.

During the seventh month, the Israelites gathered together to hear the reading of the Book of the Law Moses (N 7:73-8:1; 8:8, 18; 9:3). This was in accordance with Moses= instructions in Deuteronomy 31:9-13. Not only that, but the book which was read was almost certainly the book of Deuteronomy. Only Deuteronomy is called the Book of the Law@ (D 28:61; 29:21; 30:10; 31:26).

In obedience to Moses= command to share at feast times, the Jews sent portions to those who were without (N 8:10-12; D 16:11, 14).

In promising to return to God and walk in His Law, there was an effort to separate themselves from the foreign women (N 10:28-30). The Israelites understood they needed to follow Moses= instructions from Deuteronomy 7:1-6.

Neither Ammonites nor Moabites were permitted to join the congregation according to Deuteronomy 23:3-6. In Nehemiah=s day, this prohibition was found, read, and followed (N 13:1-3), at least for a while (N 13:23-28).

The name Nehemiah@ means Yahweh comforts@. Certainly, that is the overall message of the book of Nehemiah and it is the promise of God in His song to His people:

“For the Lord will vindicate His people,
And will have compassion on His servants,
When He sees that their strength is gone,@

Deuteronomy 32:36

WORKS CITED

1. JPS Torah Commentary, page 77
2. AThere was no needy among them@ 2007 Lecture from Tommy Peeler at Florida College