

Synthetic Bible Studies

Containing an outline study of every book of the Bible
with suggestions for Sermons, Addresses and
Bible Expositions

By

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LESSON NINE

DEUTERONOMY

A book has been written by Thomas Dehaney Bernard, entitled, *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament*, in which he shows not only that the contents of those books are inspired, but that their present arrangement and order are also of the HOLY GHOST. The same thing might be said of the Old Testament, especially of the Pentateuch which we are at present considering.

It has been pointed out that the purpose of the Bible is to give us the history of redemption through a special seed.

- in Genesis, therefore, we have the election of that seed (Abraham),
 - in Exodus their redemption,
 - in Leviticus their worship,
 - in Numbers their walk and warfare, and
 - in Deuteronomy their final preparation for the experience towards which all has been directed.
- (C. H. M).

The Book of Review

A secondary name for Deuteronomy might be "*The book of review.*"

The word comes from two other Greek words, *deuter*, which means "*the second*," and *nomos*,

"law," *the second law, or the repetition of the law*. And yet your reading of the book has made it clear that it is more than a repetition of the law.

In the first place, it repeats, or reviews, the history of the previous journeyings, and when it comes to renewing the law it adds certain things not mentioned previously (29:1).

Compared with the other books also, it is characterized by a rather warm and oratorical style, and is more spiritual and ethical in its tone. The one great lesson it contains is that of obedience grounded on a known and recognized relationship to GOD through redemption.

We will study it in four great divisions.

I. The Journeyings Reviewed, Chapters 1-4

Mark the locality (1:1-5). This will show that the contents of the book were given to Moses at the place where we left him in Numbers.

Mark the time (1:3), just at the close of the wanderings, so-called, and before Moses is removed, and Joshua prepares to lead the people across the Jordan.

- at what point does the review begin (v. 6)?
- to what appointment does Moses refer in verses 9-18?
- to what does he allude at verse 37?
- what nations were they to omit from their conquests, and why (2:9-19)?
- whose history illustrates that GOD sometimes punishes by letting men go their own way (vv. 24-30)?
- what other king does Sihon recall?
- what allusion is contained in 4:10-13?
- what motive is ascribed to GOD in His dealings with Israel, verses 37, 38?

Notice as you pass along, some of the many expressions illustrative of the spiritual glow of this book, such as 1:11, 31; 2:7; 3:24; 4:7; etc. Preachers will find rich as well as fresh material in this precious book for texts and themes of sermons. The "*Homiletic and Practical*" part of Lange's commentary will be found very helpful here (pp. 79-84).

II. The Laws Reviewed, Chapters 5-26.

- At what point does Moses begin this review (v. 2)?
- with what reverence was this law to be regarded (6:6-9)?
- what caution is emphasized (vv. 10-12)?
- what secret of blessing (vv. 18, 19)?
- how does 7:1-6 illustrate II Corinthians 6:14-18? Compare in the same way verses 7, 8 with Titus 3:5-7, and 8:3 with Romans 8:28.
- by whom, and under what circumstances, do we find 8:3 quoted in the New Testament? The same question may be asked with reference to verse 5.
- what summary of the divine requirements is recorded in 10:12-13?
- what points to a central place of worship to be established in Canaan (12:5-14)? Compare

14:23-26.

- what instruction is given with reference to false prophets and lying wonders (13:1-4)?
- what teachings of CHRIST about discipleship is based apparently on 13:6-8?
- what promise looks towards the national supremacy of Israel (15:6)?
- how were they taught benevolence (15:7-11)?
- what words of I John does this recall?
- what directions are given about a king (17:14-20)?

Spiritualism

We have seen that this book contains several matters relatively new, but nothing yet touched on possesses a more "live" relationship to current religious events than the contents of chapter 18, beginning at verse 9.

Observe the "abominations" they were to avoid, verses 10, 11.

Observe what they cost the Canaanites (v. 12).

The commission of these wickednesses was not the only cause of their extermination as was seen previously, but it was one of them, and a serious one.

It is not within the province of Our present work to examine the different shades of meaning in the words, "divination," "observer of times," "enchanter," "consulter with familiar spirits," etc., but one is not far wrong who describes them as identical in spirit with what we call fortune-telling, clairvoyance, lucky and unlucky days, mesmerism, and perhaps certain forms of hypnotism, and especially all that class of phenomena known as spiritualism.

How GOD hates it! How plainly He warns against it! Let teachers not fail to emphasize what He says.

A book recommended in an earlier lesson will be a valuable aid here, *Earth's Earliest Ages*, by Pember. The author shows the connection between these things now being done, and those for which the Canaanites were dispossessed, and the antediluvians swept away. *Demon Possession*, by John L. Nevius, D.D., is also to the point, and for pamphlets on the subject, cheap of price and easy to read, write the Scriptural Tract Repository, (H. L. Hastings), 47 Cornhill, Boston. Christians should be fortified on such subjects.

The Prophecy of CHRIST

It is not a little strange, and worthy of careful thought, that the chapter which contains these allusions to the "**lying wonders**" of a false CHRIST, should also contain the clearest prediction of the true CHRIST we have yet met. It has always seemed to me like this:- The Israelites might be afraid that when Moses left them, they would be driven by the necessity of the case to do what the Canaanites did in the matter of worship. They would have no leader such as he, what else then could they do? The answer to meet their case is in verse 15. To whom does Moses refer approximately? To whom ultimately? For the answer to this last question consult the marginal references to John 1:45 and Acts 3:22, 23. This clear and definite prophecy of CHRIST affords

an opportunity to speak of another law of the rhetoric of the HOLY SPIRIT of importance to be understood. The first law thus emphasized was called the law of recurrence, but this will be known as

The Law of Double Reference

Now, what is "*the law of double reference*"?

It is that peculiarity of the writings of the HOLY SPIRIT, by which a passage applying primarily to a person or event near at hand, is used by Him at a later time as applying to the person of CHRIST or the affairs of His kingdom. It is not claimed that the human writers had this two-fold sense in mind always, even if at all, but that this was the mind of the HOLY GHOST, in inspiring their words. As one of the ancient commentators puts it, "GOD, as the original Author of both Testaments, shaped the Old in relation to the New." Or, as Alford says, "No word prompted by the HOLY GHOST had reference to the utterer only. All Israel was a type. * * * * CHRIST is everywhere involved in the Old Testament, as He is everywhere evolved in the New."

To get hold of this principle of interpretation is vital, especially in the study of the Psalms and prophetical books.

In the present instance, the primary reference to Joshua, and the ultimate to JESUS CHRIST is only a representation of what will be found to occur again and again as we proceed.

Do not leave this prophetic allusion to CHRIST, without observing the marked advance it indicates in the clearness of the conception of the coming One. Compare the previous allusions to Him, and see how the material for His identification grows.

He is not only to be of the seed of Abraham, and the tribe of Judah, but He is to be a Prophet like unto Moses.

III. The Future History of Israel, Chapters 27-30

The next general division of the book is peculiarly fascinating as containing one of the most notable prophecies in the whole Bible. It will be seen to give a forecast of the early history of Israel almost from the time they entered Canaan until the present period. Let us observe how the subject is approached.

- what was one of the first things to be done on crossing the Jordan (27:1-8)?
- what else is commanded (vv. 11-13)?
- what outline of the curses is given (vv. 14-26)?

Observe the number and character of the blessings to be bestowed on the ground of obedience (28:1-14). Observe particularly in what these blessings would eventuate (v. 13). Compare the previous allusion to their national supremacy, as all these intimations in that direction have an important bearing on our later study of the prophetical books.

At what verse are the curses on disobedience renewed? Follow them along as far as verse 36, and there pause a moment. From your general knowledge of Israel's later history, when would you say this prediction, at least the first part of it, was fulfilled? Does it not seem to point very unmistakably to what we call their Babylonian captivity, say about 600 B. C.? Compare II Kings 25.

Now follow your eye along the succeeding curses until you reach verse 49. What still later incident in their history does it recall? - was not the "**nation from far, whose tongue they did not understand**," the Latin nation? Does not this point to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the Roman general, A. D. 70? Read carefully the horrible details of the siege in the verses that immediately succeed, and compare them with Josephus' *History of the Jews*.

This last-named book should be owned and read by every Christian, if for no other reason than the demonstration it affords of the literal fulfillment of prophecy, and especially this prophecy.

But read further still until your eye rests, let us say, at verse 64. What have we here and in the following verses? Is not this a sad, but true forecast of the condition of the Jews in our own time? - we only need to read the current newspapers to answer that question.

But is there no gleam of hope for this people, so beloved and blessed of GOD? Read chapter 30, especially verses 1-10. In the light of such promises should not we Gentiles be more sincere and importunate in prayer for the Jews than many of us are? Read Psalm 122, particularly verse 6, to see what blessing we may expect if we do so.

I am led to close the consideration of this lesson with an extract from Dr. Gosman, the translator of Lange's commentary on this book. It is a little out of the line of the particular work before us, but its merit and timeliness are its justification. He says: "This chapter, in its prophetic declarations, which have been so strikingly fulfilled, contains clear proof of the divine foreknowledge, and of the inspiration of Moses. This is all the more clear since the prophecies relate mainly and in their extreme and awful particularity, to the curses which should rest upon the unfaithful people. Moses does not spare his own people, but holds before them the glass of their future defection and sufferings, as he foresaw them. There might have been a motive for dwelling particularly upon their prosperity, but there is no assignable motive for the character of this discourse, unless it is found in the clear foresight given to him of what was to occur."

IV. The Close of Moses' Life, Chapters 31-34

The general title at the head of this paragraph will answer for the fourth and last division of the book. It may be subdivided thus:

The charge to Joshua, chapter 31.

The song of remembrance, chapter 32.

The blessing on the tribes, chapter 33.

The burial on Mount Nebo, chapter 34.

- why was Moses as a leader, not absolutely essential to Israel (31:3)?
- to what virtue are they exhorted (vv. 6, 7)?

- what authority attached to the words of this book (vv. 9-13)?
- what was done with it (vv. 24-26)?
- why was the song written (vv. 19-21)?

Observe its spirit of adoration, so different from many of our songs and prayers (32:1-4).

Observe the touching and poetic allusion to GOD's providential care (vv. 9-14).

Observe the allusion to their position of privilege (vv. 29-31).

- while it speaks clearly of awful judgments on account of sin, what gleam of hope does it contain (v. 43)?
- how tersely are they taught the value of obedience (v. 47)?

Observe the precious promises in chapter 33, verses 3, 12, 23, 25, 27. How these have comforted the saints in all ages! How they enhance the value of this book! How we should praise GOD for them!

Who wrote the account of Moses' death, chapter 34?

Some think he wrote it by inspiration, prior to the event. Some ascribe it to a successor, perhaps Joshua. It is hardly necessary to the maintenance of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch to suppose that Moses wrote it himself. See the interest taken in the body of Moses, Jude 9. See the honor put upon Moses, Luke 9:28-36, also Revelation 15:1-3.

Some students of prophecy regard him as one of the two witnesses of Revelation 11, and think that in company with Elijah, he will appear in the flesh in Jerusalem in the culminating days of the present age.

He is a striking type of CHRIST, whose personal history will well repay prayerful study from that point of view. We part from him with sadness, but shall see him face to face one of these days, when, with ourselves he shall be found casting his crown at the feet of CHRIST, who loved him and gave Himself for him.

~ end of Lesson 9 ~
