

## Title

Hebrew title: 'elleh haddebarim – “these are the words” (1.1)

Greek title (LXX): Deuteronomion – “second law” (Second voicing of the law, not a new law)

Source Dt 17.18, due to a mistranslation in the Greek OT:

Dt 17.18 ¶ “Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests.

Gk: “he shall write for himself this second Law”

Acc. to Constable, 50% of the Book of the Covenant (Ex 20.23-23.33) is paralleled in Deuteronomy.

## Date and Writer

The date of the exodus is well-established by several passages:

1 Ki 6.1 ¶ Now it came about in the four hundred and eightieth year after the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.

- The date of 1 Ki 6.1 is well established at 967/966 BC.
- The exodus would thus begin 1447/1446 BC. (967/966 + 480 = 1447/1446)
- The conquest would begin (wilderness era end) about 1407/1406 BC.

The evidence of Jephthah

Jdg 11.26 ‘While Israel lived in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities that are on the banks of the Arnon, three hundred years, why did you not recover them within that time?’

The judgeship of Jephthah ran from c. 1106-1100 BC, with good attestation, thus Jephthah’s 300 years would correspond to a 1406 BC end of the wilderness period.

Since Deuteronomy consists of final speeches by Moses to Israel, the bulk of it came about in 1406 BC (or 1407 BC).

Critics (only arising in the 19th c.) tend to think Moses is from the 7th c. BC, i.e., the 600s BC. They claim it was written by a fraudster, claiming to be Moses, and placed in the temple so Josiah's men could "discover" it.

Tradition considers Moses to be the author of Deuteronomy, except for editorial additions like Dt 34.5-12, which records Moses' death. Other small additions appear in 1.1, 2.10–11, 20–23, 3.9, 11, 13b-14, 10.6–9

Dt 1.1 ¶ These are the words which Moses spoke to all Israel across the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel and Laban and Hazeroth and Dizahab.

The tradition of Mosaic authorship begins with this verse.

The rest of the OT has references to Moses as author, and the NT does likewise, including Jesus who should know! (See Mt 19.7-9 — about certificate of divorce, only mentioned in Deuteronomy)

Jdg 1.20, 3.4; 1 Kgs 2.3; 2 Kgs 14.6; 2 Chr 25.4; Ezra 3.2; Mt 19.7; Mk 12.19; Lk 20.28; Ac 3.22; Rm 10.19; 1Co 9.9

### Example:

Jdg 1.20 Then they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had promised; and he drove out from there the three sons of Anak.

This promise only mentioned in Deuteronomy.

## Suzerainty Treaties

In 1955, George Mendenhall wrote an article noting parallels between "the formal structure of Israelite covenants and ancient Near Eastern suzerain-vassal treaties."

Evangelicals took this theory up, notably in the work of Meredith Kline, in his book, *Treaty of the Great King*.

1. The peoples whose treaties the biblical covenants resemble lived and operated in a time roughly corresponding to the Exodus
2. If Moses used "contemporary forms," it would defeat the liberal arguments that the Law was composed by multiple authors at much later dates. (Especially significant for Deuteronomy.)

Problems with this view, in my opinion (I am in the minority!)

1. It makes Moses an imitator, not an innovator (implying a human construction, not divine revelation)
2. Despite alleged parallels to suzerainty treaties, Deuteronomy “is much longer than any extant documents of that kind” and it includes much other material that isn’t covenantal/legal at all.
3. The Biblical record (noted above) proves Mosaic authorship without resorting to dependence on human literary models.

“Deuteronomy is similar to Leviticus in that both books consist, almost entirely, of instructions and speeches. Deuteronomy is not so much a book of history, as Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers are, as it is a book of law. In contrast to Leviticus, however, Deuteronomy is law preached rather than law revealed.”

### Outline:

- I. Introduction. the covenant setting (1.1–5)
- II. Moses’ first major address. a review of God’s faithfulness (1.6–4.40)
  - A. God’s past dealings with Israel (1.6–3.29)
  - B. An exhortation to observe the law faithfully (4.1–40)
- III. Historical interlude. preparation for the covenant text (4.41–49)
  - A. The appointment of cities of refuge in Transjordan (4.41–43)
  - B. Introduction to the second address (4.44–49)
- IV. Moses’ second major address. an exposition of the law (5–26)
  - A. The essence of the law and its fulfillment (5–11)
  - B. An exposition of selected covenant laws (12–25)
  - C. Covenant celebration, confirmation, and conclusion (26)
- V. Preparations for renewing the covenant (27.1–29.1)
  - A. The ceremony at Shechem (27.1–13)
  - B. The curses that follow disobedience to specific stipulations (27.14–26)
  - C. The blessings that follow obedience (28.1–14)
  - D. The curses that follow disobedience to general stipulations (28.15–68)
  - E. Narrative interlude (29.1)
- VI. Moses’ third major address. an exhortation to obedience (29.2–30.20)
  - A. An appeal for faithfulness (29.2–29)
  - B. A call to decision (30)
- VII. Moses’ last acts (31–34)
  - A. The duties of Israel’s future leaders (31.1–29)
  - B. The Song of Moses (31.30–32.44)
  - C. Narrative interlude (32.45–52)
  - D. Moses’ blessing of the tribes (33)
- VIII. Moses’ death and burial. narrative epilogue (34)