

Text: Dt 14.1-29

THEOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF DEUTERONOMY¹

- 1. Consider:** a review of God’s faithfulness (1.6–4.40)
- 2. Covenant:** an exposition of the law (5–26)

5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
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- 3. Commence:** preparations for renewing the covenant (27.1–28.68)
- 4. Commit:** an exhortation to obedience (29.2–30.20)

Chapter 5 gave us the Ten Commandments, one writer² thinks that the rest of the “Covenant” sermon is a meditation on each of the Commandments in succession:

Major Issues	Godward	Manward
Authority	Commandment 1 Expounded in Dt 6-11	Commandment 5 Expounded in Dt 16.18-18.22
Dignity	Commandment 2 Expounded in Dt 12	Commandments 6, 7, 8 Expounded in Dt 19.1-24.7
Commitment	Commandment 3 Expounded in 13.1-14.21	Commandment 9 Expounded in 24.8-16
Rights and Privileges	Commandment 4 Expounded in 14.22-16.17	Commandment 10 Expounded in 24.19-26.15

Dt 5.7 ¶ ‘You shall have no other gods before Me.

Dt 5.8 ¶ ‘You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.

Dt 5.11 ¶ ‘You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

¹ Adapted from an outline in Lawrence O Richards, *The Bible Readers Companion*, electronic ed. (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1991), 117.

² John H. Walton, “Deuteronomy: An Exposition of the Spirit of the Law,” *Grace Theological Journal* 8, no. 2 (1987): 214ff.

Following John Walton's theory, we look to Deuteronomy 13 to see whether the chapter turns to taking the Lord's name in vain as its main theme.

Interestingly, Tom Constable (who pointed out Walton's summary) makes 13.1-18 continue the exposition of the second commandment. He labels 14.1-21 as "Laws arising from the third commandment." Here is his comment:

"The third commandment is: 'You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain' (5:11). The essence of this command is to treat God as special (cf. Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2). This section of laws deals with the exclusiveness of the Lord and His worship—as this pertains to Israel's separation from all other nations. The theme of refraining from Canaanite practices continues in this chapter. However, in this section it is not the obviously idolatrous practices, but the more subtle ones associated with Canaanite religion that Moses proscribed."³

We will have to see if this reasoning fits with what we find in Dt 14.

Paragraph divisions & themes/subjects:

1. (1-2) No cutting: you are a holy people [header statement]
2. (3-8) Dietary laws — land animals: a distinction between Israel and the nations
3. (9-10) Dietary laws — water creatures
4. (11-20) Dietary laws — winged creatures
5. (21) Dietary laws — road kill and boiling kids in milk
6. (22-27) The tithe and worship
7. (28-29) The tithe and the Levite

What phrase is repeated in v. 2 and v. 21? **You are a holy people to the Lord**

What is the key distinction Moses makes in vv. 1-2? **The distinction between Israel as a holy people and "all the peoples ... of the earth"**

What are "cutting rituals" connected with? (1) **death, that is, funeral rites and mourning the dead**

³ Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Dt 14.1.

Compare Leviticus 19.27-28:

Lev 19.27-28 'You shall not round off the side-growth of your heads nor harm the edges of your beard. ²⁸ 'You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves: I am the LORD.

"God created man in his image and pronounced all creation very good (Gen 1). Man is not to disfigure the divine likeness implanted in him by scarring his body. The external appearance of the people should reflect their internal status as the chosen and holy people of God (Dt 14.1-2). Paul uses a similar line of argument in 1 Cor 6. The body of the believer belongs to Christ, therefore 'glorify God in your body' (1 Co 6.20)."⁴

What prohibitions do we find in v. 21? **Eating that which dies of itself and boiling a kid in its mother's milk**

The boiling a kid in its mother's milk is enigmatic – we don't know exactly what it means. The context clearly implies a religious (Canaanite ritual).

"It is reasonable to conclude that the boiling of a young goat in its mother's milk was part of a Canaanite festival ritual that so epitomized that depraved cultus that it came to symbolize all that was evil and detestable in it."⁵

With the holiness of the nation and the separation from Canaanite rituals in mind, what should we take as the significance of the intervening dietary laws (land, sea, and air animals)? (3-20) **God intends to mark Israel out as distinct from the nations with these food practices**

Application: How should we apply these principles to a New Testament context? **We should not conform to the world, but live lives transformed by the Holy Spirit — turning away from the things the world values (including dress, body markings, culture, etc.**

Does this seem connected to the third commandment as Constable and Walton suggest? **I would say no.**

⁴ Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans, 1979), 272.

⁵ Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, The New American Commentary, v. 4 (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 239.

vv. 22-29:

“There was a yearly tithe (vv. 22–27), and an additional three-year tithe (vv. 28–29), in Israel. ...

“The Israelites were to invite the Levites to the celebration at the tabernacle each time the Israelites consumed the yearly tithe (vv. 23, 27). They were also to invite both the Levites and the needy (the stranger, orphan, and widow) to the third-year celebration every third and sixth year in the seven-year sabbatical cycle, which they held in each town (vv. 28–29).”⁶

What was God’s purpose in these requirements? (23) **To cause the people to fear the Lord**

How would obedience to these requirements bring about God’s purpose? (see v.27 and v.29) **By making festivals about more than self-indulgence. They were to provide for others who could not prosper from the land as the average Israelite could.**

“The Lord does not require these tithes of Christians, but He has taught us to express thanksgiving to Him for His provisions, and to demonstrate His compassion. We should have compassion on those who serve God, and the especially needy, by sharing what God has given us with them (1 Cor. 9:11, 14; Gal. 6:6, 10; et al.).”⁷

⁶ Constable, *Expository Notes*, Dt 14.22.

⁷ Constable, Dt 14.22.