

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO DEUTERONOMY 10

In this chapter an account is given of an order to Moses to hew two tables of stone, on which the Lord would write the words that were on the first, and to make an ark and put them into it, all which was accordingly done, (~~5005~~Deuteronomy 10:1-5) and of some of the journeys of the children of Israel, (~~5006~~Deuteronomy 10:6,7) and of the separation of the tribe of Levi to the service of the sanctuary, (~~5008~~Deuteronomy 10:8,9) and of Moses's stay in the mount forty days and nights, and his success there, and the direction he had to lead on the people of Israel towards Canaan's land, (~~5009~~Deuteronomy 10:10,11) and who by various arguments are exhorted to fear the Lord, and serve him, and keep his commands, (~~5012~~Deuteronomy 10:12-22).

Ver. 1. *At that time the Lord said unto me*, etc.] On the fortieth day, mentioned in the preceding chapter, as Aben Ezra, or at the end of forty days, as Jarchi; not of the first forty, for then were given him the first two tables of stone, with the law written on them, which he broke when he came down; but at the end of the second forty days, as some think, when he had fallen before the Lord, and entreated him for the people, and, as a token of his reconciliation to them, gave the following order:

hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, etc. Of the same sort of stone, of the same size and form with those God gave him in the mount the first time he was there, and which he broke in his descent from thence; they were the work of God, but these were to be hewed by Moses: the order seems to be given between the request Moses made to see the glory of the Lord, and the proclamation made of it, (see ~~1230~~Exodus 34:1), and come up unto me into the mount; Mount Sinai; this was certainly the third time of his going up there, and where he continued forty days and nights; but whether he continued there so long the second time may be a matter of question, though he certainly did the third time; (see ~~1231~~Exodus 32:30,31 34:1,4,28)

and make thee an ark of wood; Jarchi thinks this was not the ark Bezaleel made, but made after, and is that which went out to battle; and some take it to be a temporary ark, made for the present purpose till that was finished; but Aben Ezra is of opinion it is the same that Bezaleel made: and it may be said to be made by Moses, because he was not only ordered to make it, but it was by his orders and the direction he gave to Bezaleel that it was made; and this seems the more probable, because there the tables remained, (^{<6105>}Deuteronomy 10:5).

Ver. 2. *And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest*, etc.] ^{f99} Though they were hewn by Moses, the writing on them was the Lord's; and the very same laws, in the same words, without any alteration or variation, were written by him on these as on the former; partly to show the authenticity of them, that they were of God and not Moses, of a divine original and not human; and partly to show the invariableness of them, that no change had been made in them, though they had been broken by the people; of which Moses's breaking the tables was a representation;

and thou shall put them in the ark; which being a type of Christ may signify the fulfilment of the law by him, who is the end, the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness to every believer; and that as this was in his heart to fulfil it, so it is in his hand as a rule of faith and conversation to his people.

Ver. 3. *And I made an ark of shittim wood*, etc.] That is, ordered it to be made, and it was made by Bezaleel, and that of shittim wood: so the ark that was put into the holy of holies was made of this wood; see (see Gill on "^{<02510>}Exodus 25:10"), (see Gill on "^{<02501>}Exodus 37:1"),

and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; two marble ones, as the Targum of Jonathan; that is, he ordered them to be hewed, and took care that they should be exactly made as the former were, of which he had perfect knowledge, having received them of the Lord, and brought them with him down the mount:

and went up into the mount, having the two tables in my hand; in order to have the words of the law, the ten commands, written on them, these being only hewn stones, without anything on them: they were very probably marble, of which great quantities were near at hand.

Ver. 4. *And he wrote on the tables according to the first writing*, etc.] The same laws, in the same letters:

the ten commandments which the Lord spake unto you in the mount; in Mount Sinai, on which he descended, and from whence he delivered the decalogue by word of mouth in an audible manner, that all the people could hear it:

out of the midst of the fire; in which he descended, and where he continued, and from whence he spake, so that it was indeed a fiery law;

in the day of the assembly; when all the people of Israel were assembled together at the bottom of the mount to hear it:

and the Lord gave them unto me; the two tables, when he had wrote upon them the ten commands.

Ver. 5. *And I turned myself*, etc.] From the Lord, out of whose hands he had received the tables:

and came down from the mount; with the two tables in his hand as before, one in one hand, and the other in the other hand:

and put the tables in the ark which I had made; or ordered to be made:

and there they be, as the Lord commanded me; there they were when Moses rehearsed what is contained in this book, on the plains of Moab, about thirty eight years after the putting them, into it; and there they continued to be when the ark was brought into Solomon's temple, (¹⁰⁸⁹1 Kings 8:9) and there they were as long as the ark was in being; which may denote the continuance of the law in the hands of Christ under the Gospel dispensation as a rule of walk and conversation to his people.

Ver. 6. *And the children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan*, etc.] Not when or soon after they removed from Sinai; for if this place is the same with Benejaakan, as is generally supposed, they had a great many journeys, mansions, and stations before they came to it; (see ¹⁰⁹⁰Numbers 33:31) and besides, since Aaron, according to this account, died at their next station from hence, that was thirty eight years after their departure from Mount Sinai; and it is hard to say what should be the reason of making mention of these two or three journeys here; and whereas they are here said to journey front the place here mentioned

to Mosera; on the contrary in (^{<0831>}Numbers 33:31) they are said to depart from Mosera, and pitch in Benejaakan; which is accounted for by their going backwards and forwards, and so both may be true. Aben Ezra is of opinion, that Beeroth Benejaakan, or the wells of the children of Jaakan, is not the same with Bene Jaakan, nor Mosera the same with Moseroth; but Beeroth is Kadesh, and Mosera is the name of the desert of Mount Hor; and it is certain that Moseroth was the twenty seventh station, and Mosera, or the desert of Mount Hor, where Aaron died, was the thirty fourth, and therefore must be distant; (see ^{<0832>}Numbers 33:30-37), which seems to agree with what follows:

there Aaron died, and there he was buried; it is certain that Aaron died on Mount Hor, (^{<0833>}Numbers 20:23,28 33:38,39), or there died and was buried when in the desert of Mosera:

and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead; so that though the high priest died, the office continued, and the law of it remained in force, and the tribe of Levi was separated for the service of the sanctuary, as afterwards expressed.

Ver. 7. *From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah*, etc.] Which Jarchi takes to be the same with Horhagidgad, and so do most; (see ^{<0832>}Numbers 33:32,33), but Aben Ezra says it is not, but is a general name, including Zalmonah, Punon, and Oboth, places the Israelites came to after they removed from Mount Hor, where Aaron died; (see ^{<0834>}Numbers 33:41-43)

and from Gudgodah to Jotbath, a land of rivers of waters; which the above writer takes to be the same with Beer, the well, (^{<0216>}Numbers 21:16) and by this description of it, it was a place where there was much water.

Ver. 8. *At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi*, etc.] Not at the time that Moses came down from the mount with the tables of the law, but some considerable time after, even after the tabernacle was erected; nor at the time that Aaron died, and Eleazar succeeded him, but many years before that; unless there was a fresh separation of them, or a renewal of it when Eleazar became high priest in his father's stead; and so that being mentioned is the reason of its being repeated here;

to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord; even that into which the law, sometimes called the covenant, was put, and therefore here called the ark of the covenant: when this was carried from place to place, as it was

especially in the wilderness, it was the business of the Levites to bear it, particularly the Kohathites; (^{<0433>}Numbers 3:31 10:21 ^{<3301>}1 Chronicles 6:1),

to stand before the Lord to minister unto him; that is, to his priests, in the tabernacle, and to keep and guard that:

and to bless in his name unto this day; not to bless the people, which was the work of the priest, but to sing praise in the name of the Lord, to give thanks unto him, and bless and praise him.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren*, etc.] In the division of the land of Canaan, because being separated to the service of the sanctuary, he had no leisure to plough and sow, as Jarchi observes:

the Lord is his inheritance, as the Lord thy God promised him; not in a spiritual sense, for so the Lord was an inheritance and portion of other Israelites; though these being taken off of worldly employments, and devoted to sanctuary service, might have more communion with God than others; but in a temporal sense, provision being made particularly by tithes, which were the Lord's, for their maintenance; and so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase the words;

“gifts which the Lord gave him are his inheritance;”

(see ^{<0433>}Numbers 18:20,21).

Ver. 10. *And I stayed in the mount, according to the first time, forty days and forty nights*, etc.] Which is to be connected with (^{<5006>}Deuteronomy 10:6) and relates what passed before he came down from the mount with the two tables; as that he stayed there as long as he did when he received the first tables, and fasted also as long as he did then; (see ^{<0338>}Exodus 34:28)

and the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also; to his prayer on the behalf of the people:

and the Lord would not destroy thee; though he had threatened it, and their sin had deserved it.

Ver. 11. *And the Lord said unto me, arise, take thy journey before the people*, etc.] Here Moses goes on with his relation of things at Mount Sinai, how that upon his supplication for the people, on account of the

destruction they were threatened with for their idolatry, the Lord was graciously pleased not only to hear him and forgive the people, but ordered him to go before them, and lead them on towards the land of Canaan he had promised them, (~~Exodus~~ Exodus 32:34 33:1),

that they may go in and possess the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give unto them; and which had it not been for their later murmurings and rebellions, they had been in the possession of it in a little time, especially after their departure from Sinai.

Ver. 12. *And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee*, etc.] For all these favours bestowed upon them, the forgiveness of their sins, and a fresh intimation of their possession of the land of Canaan, and the renewal of the promise of it made to their fathers:

but to fear the Lord thy God; to fear him with a filial fear, to fear him and his goodness, and him for his goodness sake, and particularly for his pardoning grace and mercy vouchsafed to them; (see ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 130:4),

to walk in all his ways; prescribed and directed to by him, every path of duty, whether moral, ceremonial, or judicial:

and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; for that is the best service which springs from love, and love constrains unto, and which is hearty and sincere, as that is, and is performed in the best manner such are capable of.

Ver. 13. *To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes*, etc.] Both the ten commands and all others:

which I command thee this day for thy good; promises of temporal good things, introduction into the land of Canaan, possession of it, and continuance in it, being made to obedience to them.

Ver. 14. *Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, are the Lord's thy God*, etc.] Made and possessed by him; the airy and starry heaven, the third heaven, which is the heaven of heavens, the seat of the divine Majesty, the habitation of angels and glorified saints:

the earth [also], with all that therein is; that is his property, and at his disposal, being made by him, and all that is upon it, or contained in it, even whatsoever is on or in the whole terraqueous globe; (see ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 115:15,16).

Ver. 15. *Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them*, etc.]

Though the heavens and the earth, and all the inhabitants of them are the Lord's by creation, yet he had a special regard unto, and a peculiar complacency in, the fathers of the Israelites, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; from whence arose some particular expressions of love to them, signified by various acts of kindness done them, and promises made unto them:

and he chose their seed after them, even you above all the people, as [it is] this day; to be a special people to him, to enjoy civil and religious privileges greater than any other; and particularly to have his law given to them, his tabernacle and worship set up among them, which were at this time, and which gave them the preference to all other nations; (see ^{<884>}Deuteronomy 4:7,8 7:6,7,8 ^{<879>}Psalms 147:19,20 ^{<881>}Romans 3:1,2 9:4,5).

Ver. 16. *Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart*, etc.] Content not yourselves with, nor put your confidence in outward circumcision of the flesh, but be concerned for the circumcision of the heart; for removing from that whatever is disagreeable to the Lord, even all carnality, sensuality, hypocrisy, and superfluity of naughtiness, and for having that put there which is well pleasing in his sight; and which though it is the work of God, and he only can do it and has promised it, yet such an exhortation is made to bring men to a sense of their need of it, and of the importance of it, and to show how agreeable it is to the Lord, and so to stir them up to seek unto him for it; (see ^{<886>}Deuteronomy 30:6)

and be no more stiffnecked; froward, obstinate, and disobedient, as they had been hitherto; (^{<886>}Deuteronomy 9:6,13).

Ver. 17. *For the Lord your God is God of gods*, etc.] Of angels and civil magistrates, who are sometimes so called: these are his creatures, act for him and under him, and are accountable to him:

the Lord of lords; of the kings and princes of the earth, who have their crowns, sceptres, and kingdoms from him, and hold them of him, by and under whom they reign and decree judgment, and who are subject to his authority and control:

a great God; as the perfections of his nature, the works of his hands, the blessings of his providence and grace, and the extensiveness of his dominion in heaven, earth, and hell, show him to be:

a mighty and a terrible; mighty and powerful to help, protect, and defend his people; terrible to his and their enemies, even to the kings of the earth:

which regardeth not persons; but bestows his favours, whether in a way of providence or grace, according to his sovereign will and pleasure, without regard to the works and merits of men, their characters or circumstances:

nor taketh reward; or bribes, to avert threatened and deserved judgments; (see ^{<1838>}Job 36:18,19).

Ver. 18. *He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow*, etc.] Who have none to help them, and whose patron and defender he is, and will do them justice himself, and take care that it is done them by others, or avenge their injuries, for he is a Father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow, in his holy habitation; (^{<1838>}Psalm 68:5)

and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment; one that is in a foreign country, at a distance from his native land, and destitute of friends; such God in his providence takes care of, and expresses his love and kindness to, by giving them the necessaries of life, food, and raiment.

Ver. 19. *Love ye therefore the stranger*, etc.] Because the Lord loves him; and another reason follows, particularly binding on the Israelites:

for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt; and therefore should sympathize with such, and show them compassion, relieve them in distress, and afford them whatever they want, and is in the power of their hands to communicate to them; remembering their own condition in Egypt, and how welcome such a treatment would have been to them then, as well as the kind and careful providence of God towards them at that time.

Ver. 20. *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God*, etc.] Which includes the whole worship of him, external and internal:

him shalt thou serve; heartily and sincerely, according to his revealed will, and him only:

and to him shall thou cleave; and not turn aside to follow other gods, and worship them:

and swear by his name; and his only, whenever it is necessary to take an oath, which should not be done rashly or on trivial accounts; and never by any creature, but by the living God; (see ^{<1833>}Deuteronomy 6:13).

Ver. 21. *He is thy praise*, etc.] The object and matter of it, who deserves the praises of all his creatures, because of his perfections, works, and blessings of goodness; for all mercies temporal and spiritual come from him, and therefore he is greatly to be praised for them: praise is his due, and it is comely in his people to give it to him; (see ^{<4174>}Jeremiah 17:14)

and he is thy God which hath done for thee these great and terrible things which thine eyes have seen; which were done upon the Egyptians for their sakes, both in the land of Egypt and at the Red sea; and also what he had done for them in the wilderness, to Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, (^{<1946>}Psalm 106:22 136:10-21).

Ver. 22. *Thy fathers went down into Egypt with seventy persons*, etc.] That is, in all; for there were not seventy besides Jacob and the patriarchs his sons, but with them; (see ^{<0465>}Genesis 46:26,27) and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude; as he promised they should be, (^{<0155>}Genesis 15:5).