

OLD TESTAMENT EXPERT
The Law, Genesis to Deuteronomy
Lesson # 5

I. **SEE IF YOU CAN FILL OUT THE CHAPTER SUMMARY CHART BELOW FOR THE PREVIOUS WEEK'S ASSIGNED READINGS.**

chapter	Chapter summary
Deuteronomy 1-4	
5	
6	
10	
28	
31	
Joshua 1	
6-8	
22	
23	

II. **FILL OUT THE CHRONOLOGY CHART AS BEST YOU CAN**

- A. **Write in the backbone books.**
- B. **Write in titles, captivities, and any books that easily come to mind.**
- C. **Think through the books that are left, filling in the easiest books first.**
- D. **Fill in the dates starting with the easiest ones first and then any others.**

III. THEMES AND STRUCTURES OF GENESIS THROUGH DEUTERONOMY

A. Things to remember about Genesis

1. Theme – Beginnings or The Sovereignty of God in Making and Preserving a Chosen People
2. Outline
 - a. Chapters 1-11 Four key events: Creation, Fall, Flood, Nations from Tower of Babel
 - b. Chapters 12-15 Four key people: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph
3. Key People to know
 - a. Adam and Eve – first created humans
 - b. Cain – Adam’s son who killed his brother Abel
 - c. Enoch – Father of Methuselah, raptured before death
 - d. Noah – righteous man who built the ark before the flood and whose sons were Shem, Ham, Japheth, and Canaan who was cursed
 - e. Shem – godly line that produced Abraham
 - f. Nimrod – hunter, great King, founder of cities, father of Cush
 - g. Terah – Abraham’s father
 - h. Abraham – father of the nation Israel
 - i. Lot – Abraham’s Nephew
 - j. Sarah – Abraham’s wife, Isaac’s mother
 - k. Melchizedek – priest, king of Salem
 - l. Isaac – Son of Abraham and Sarah, father of Jacob
 - m. Esau – Isaac’s firstborn son, sold birthright for a bowl of soup
 - n. Rebekah – Isaac’s wife, favored Jacob
 - o. Jacob – renamed Israel by God, father of 12 tribes
 - p. Leah – Jacob’s less loved first wife
 - q. Rachel – Jacob’s most loved second wife, mother of Joseph, dies giving birth to Benjamin
 - r. Joseph – Favored son of Jacob, hated and sold as slave by brothers, ruler of all Egypt
4. Summary of Genesis
 - a. **The Four Great Events:** Chapters 1–11 lay the foundation upon which the whole Bible is built and center on four key events. (1) *Creation:* God is the sovereign Creator of matter, energy, space, and time. Man is the pinnacle of the Creation. (2) *Fall:* Creation is followed by corruption. In the first sin man is separated from God (Adam from God), and in the second sin, man is separated from man (Cain

from Abel). In spite of the devastating curse of the Fall, God promises hope of redemption through the seed of the woman (3:15). (3) *Flood*: As man multiplies, sin also multiplies until God is compelled to destroy humanity with the exception of Noah and his family. (4) *Nations*: Genesis teaches the unity of the human race: we are all children of Adam through Noah, but because of rebellion at the Tower of Babel, God fragments the single culture and language of the post-Flood world and scatters people over the face of the earth.

The Four Great People: Once the nations are scattered, God focuses on one man and his descendants through whom He will bless all nations (12–50). (1) *Abraham*: The calling of Abraham (12) is the pivotal point of the book. The three covenant promises God makes to Abraham (land, descendants, and blessing) are foundational to His program of bringing salvation upon the earth. (2) *Isaac*: God establishes His covenant with Isaac as the spiritual link with Abraham. (3) *Jacob*: God transforms this man from selfishness to servanthood and changes his name to Israel, the father of the twelve tribes. (4) *Joseph*: Jacob's favorite son suffers at the hands of his brothers and becomes a slave in Egypt. After his dramatic rise to the rulership of Egypt, Joseph delivers his family from famine and brings them out of Canaan to Goshen. Genesis ends on a note of impending bondage with the death of Joseph. There is great need for the redemption that is to follow in the Book of Exodus.¹

B. Exodus

1. Theme – Redemption and deliverance of Israel from Egypt
2. Outline –
 - a. Chapters 1-13 Israel in Egypt
 - b. Chapters 14-18 Israel in the wilderness
 - c. Chapters 19-40 Israel at Sinai
3. Or
 - a. Chapters 1-18 Exodus
 - b. Chapters 19-24 Law
 - c. Chapters 25-40 Tabernacle
4. Key people to remember –
 - a. Aaron – Moses' brother and spokesman, first high priest
 - b. Jethro – Moses' father-in-law, encouraged Moses to delegate
 - c. Miriam – Moses' sister, prophetess who led women in worship
 - d. Moses – Prophet, author of the books of law and maybe Job, deliverer of Israel
 - e. Zipporah – Moses' wife

¹Wilkinson, Bruce, and Kenneth Boa. *Talk Thru the Bible*. Nashville: T. Nelson, 1983.

5. Summary of Exodus

- a. Exodus abounds with God's powerful redemptive acts on behalf of His oppressed people. It begins in pain and ends in liberation; it moves from the groaning of the people to the glory of God. It is the continuation of the story that begins in Genesis with the seventy descendants of Jacob who move from Canaan to Egypt. They have multiplied under adverse conditions to a multitude of over two million people. When the Israelites finally turn to God for deliverance from their bondage, God quickly responds by redeeming them "with an outstretched arm and with great judgments" (6:6). God faithfully fulfills His promise made to Abraham centuries before (Gen. 15:13–14).

The book falls into two parts: (1) redemption from Egypt (1–18); and (2) revelation from God (19–40). Redemption from Egypt (1–18): After four centuries of slavery, the people of Israel cry to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for deliverance. God has already prepared Moses for this purpose, and has commissioned him at the burning bush to stand before Pharaoh as the advocate for Israel. However, Pharaoh hardens his heart: "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go?" (5:2).

God soon reveals Himself to Pharaoh through a series of object lessons, the ten plagues. These plagues grow in severity until the tenth brings death to the firstborn of every household of Egypt. Israel is redeemed through this plague by means of the Passover lamb. The Israelites' faith in God at this point becomes the basis for their national redemption. As they leave Egypt, God guides them by a pillar of fire and smoke, and saves them from Egypt's pursuing army through the miraculous crossing of the sea. In the wilderness He protects and sustains them throughout their journeys.

Revelation from God (19–40): Now that the people have experienced God's deliverance, guidance, and protection, they are ready to be taught what God expects of them. The redeemed people must now be set apart to walk with God. This is why the emphasis moves from narration in chapters 1–18 to legislation in chapters 19–40. On Mount Sinai, Moses receives God's moral, civil, and ceremonial laws, as well as the pattern for the tabernacle to be built in the wilderness. After God judges the people for their worship of the golden calf, the tabernacle is constructed and consecrated. It is a building of beauty in a barren land and reveals much about the person of God and the way of redemption.²

C. Leviticus

1. Theme – Worship in Holiness before a Holy God
2. Outline –
 - a. Chapters 1-17 The way to God – Sacrifice
 - b. Chapters 18-27 The walk with God – Sanctification

²Wilkinson, Bruce, and Kenneth Boa. Talk Thru the Bible. Nashville: T. Nelson, 1983.

3. Key people to remember –
 - a. Nadab and Abihu – Two eldest sons of Aaron, did not treat God as holy by offering strange fire, were incinerated by God

4. Summary of Leviticus

- a. It has been said that it took God only one night to get Israel out of Egypt, but it took forty years to get Egypt out of Israel. In Exodus, Israel is redeemed and established as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation; and in Leviticus, Israel is taught how to fulfill their priestly call. They have been led out from the land of bondage in Exodus and into the sanctuary of God in Leviticus. They move from redemption to service, from deliverance to dedication. This book serves as a handbook for the Levitical priesthood, giving instructions and regulations for worship. Used to guide a newly redeemed people into worship, service, and obedience to God, Leviticus falls into two major sections: (1) sacrifice (1–17), and (2) sanctification (18–27).

Sacrifice (1–17): This section teaches that God must be approached by the sacrificial offerings (1–7), by the mediation of the priesthood (8–10), by the purification of the nation from uncleanness (11–15), and by the provision for national cleansing and fellowship (16–17). The blood sacrifices remind the worshipers that because of sin the holy God requires the costly gift of life (17:11). The blood of the innocent sacrificial animal becomes the substitute for the life of the guilty offerer: “without shedding of blood there is no remission” (Heb. 9:22).

Sanctification (18–27): The Israelites serve a holy God who requires them to be holy as well. To be holy means to be “set apart” or “separated.” They are to be separated from other nations unto God. In Leviticus the idea of holiness appears eighty-seven times, sometimes indicating ceremonial holiness (ritual requirements), and at other times moral holiness (purity of life). This sanctification extends to the people of Israel (18–20), the priesthood (21–22), their worship (23–24), their life in Canaan (25–26), and their special vows (27). It is necessary to remove the defilement that separates the people from God so that they can have a walk of fellowship with their Redeemer.³

D. Numbers

1. Theme – Wanderings in the Wilderness
2. Outline –
 - a. Chapters 1-10 Ordering the people of the exodus
 - b. Chapters 11-25 Disorder among the people in the wilderness
 - c. Chapters 26-36 Reordering the new generation for entrance into the promised land

³Wilkinson, Bruce, and Kenneth Boa. Talk Thru the Bible. Nashville: T. Nelson, 1983.

3. Key people to remember –

- a. Balaam – A conceited, greedy, pagan prophet who was hired by Balak, King of Moab, to curse Israel. Rebuked by donkey, life threatened by angel, forced by God to bless Israel rather than curse.

4. Summary of Numbers –

- a. Israel as a nation is in its infancy at the outset of this book, only thirteen months after the Exodus from Egypt. In Numbers, the book of divine discipline, it becomes necessary for the nation to go through the painful process of testing and maturation. God must teach His people the consequences of irresponsible decisions. The forty years of wilderness experience transforms them from a rabble of ex-slaves into a nation ready to take the Promised Land. Numbers begins with the old generation (1:1–10:10), moves through a tragic transitional period (10:11–25:18), and ends with the new generation (26–36) at the doorway to the land of Canaan.

The Old Generation (1:1–10:10): The generation that witnessed God’s miraculous acts of deliverance and preservation receives further direction from God while they are still at the foot of Mount Sinai (1:1–10:10). God’s instructions are very explicit, reaching every aspect of their lives. He is the Author of order, not confusion; and this is seen in the way He organizes the people around the tabernacle. Turning from the outward conditions of the camp (1–4) to the inward conditions (5–10), Numbers describes the spiritual preparation of the people.

The Tragic Transition (10:11–25:18): Israel follows God step by step until Canaan is in sight. Then in the crucial moment at Kadesh they draw back in unbelief. Their murmurings had already become incessant, “Now when the people complained, it displeased the Lord; for the Lord heard it” (11:1). But their unbelief after sending out the twelve spies at Kadesh-barnea is something God will not tolerate. Their rebellion at Kadesh marks the pivotal point of the book. The generation of the Exodus will not be the generation of the conquest.

Unbelief brings discipline and hinders God’s blessing. The old generation is doomed to literally kill time for forty years of wilderness wanderings—one year for every day spent by the twelve spies in inspecting the land. They are judged by disinheritance and death as their journey changes from one of anticipation to one of aimlessness. Only Joshua and Caleb, the two spies who believed God, enter Canaan. Almost nothing is recorded about these transitional years.

The New Generation (21–36): When the transition to the new generation is complete, the people move to the plains of Moab, directly east of the Promised Land (22:1). Before they can enter the land they must wait until all is ready. Here they receive new instructions, a new census is taken, Joshua is appointed as Moses’ successor, and some of the people settle in the Transjordan.

Numbers records two generations (1–14; 21–36), two numberings (1; 26), two journeyings (10–14; 21–27), and two sets of instructions (5–9; 28–36). It illustrates both the kindness and severity of God (Rom. 11:22) and teaches that God’s people can move forward only as they trust and depend on Him.⁴

⁴Wilkinson, Bruce, and Kenneth Boa. Talk Thru the Bible. Nashville: T. Nelson, 1983.

E. Deuteronomy

1. Theme – Second Law, or User Friendly Version of the Law

2. Outline –

- a. Chapters 1-4 What God has done
- b. Chapters 5-26 What God expects now
- c. Chapters 27-30 What God will do
- d. Chapters 31-34 Moses' final words and death

3. Or

- a. Chapters 1-11 Looking back
- b. Chapters 12-32 Looking ahead
- c. Chapters 33-34 Looking up

4. Summary of Deuteronomy –

- a. Deuteronomy, in its broadest outline, is the record of the renewal of the old covenant given at Mount Sinai. This covenant is reviewed, expanded, enlarged, and finally ratified in the plains of Moab. Moses accomplishes this primarily through three sermons that move from a retrospective, to an introspective, and finally to a prospective look at God's dealings with Israel.

Moses' First Sermon (1:1–4:43): Moses reaches into the past to remind the people of two undeniable facts in their history: (1) the moral judgment of God upon Israel's unbelief, and (2) the deliverance and provision of God during times of obedience. The simple lesson is that obedience brings blessing, and disobedience brings punishment.

Moses' Second Sermon (4:44–26:19): This moral and legal section is the longest in the book because Israel's future as a nation in Canaan will depend upon a right relationship with God. These chapters review the three categories of the Law: (1) The testimonies (5–11). These are the moral duties—a restatement and expansion of the Ten Commandments plus an exhortation not to forget God's gracious deliverance. (2) The statutes (12:1–16:17). These are the ceremonial duties—sacrifices, tithes, and feasts. (3) The ordinances (16:18–26:19). These are the civil (16:18–20:20) and social (21–26) duties—the system of justice, criminal laws, laws of warfare, rules of property, personal and family morality, and social justice.

Moses' Third Sermon (27–34): In these chapters Moses writes history in advance. He predicts what will befall Israel in the near future (blessings and cursings) and in the distant future (dispersion among the nations and eventual return). Moses lists the terms of the covenant soon to be ratified by the people. Because Moses will not be allowed to enter the land, he appoints Joshua as his successor and delivers a farewell address to the multitude. God Himself buries Moses in an unknown place, perhaps to prevent idolatry. Moses finally enters the Promised Land when he appears with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration

(Matt. 17:3). The last three verses of the Pentateuch (34:10–12) are an appropriate epitaph for this great man.⁵

IV. **HOMEWORK**

- A. **Work on your Old Testament Chronology chart if you don't have it memorized yet. Keep going over all of your flash cards. Look at how much you have learned already!**
- B. **Work at memorizing the themes, major outline points, and people for Genesis through Deuteronomy. No! It's not too hard. You can do it.**
- C. **Read through the summary information on each book as you memorize the theme, outline and people.**
- D. **Read the assigned chapters below and write down a one sentence summary of each.**

1. **Judges**

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 6
- e. 7
- f. 11
- g. 13-16
- h. 20-21

2. **Ruth – all four chapters!**

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 4

⁵Wilkinson, Bruce, and Kenneth Boa. Talk Thru the Bible. Nashville: T. Nelson, 1983.