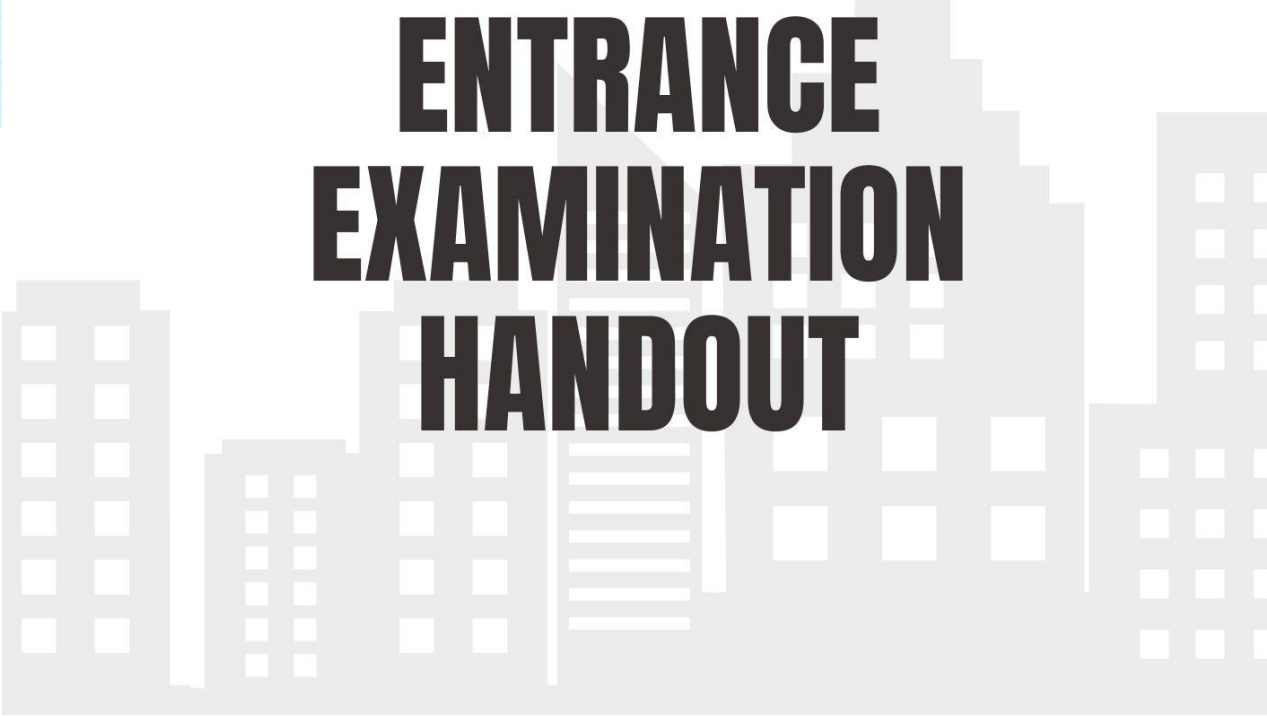


2026

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ENTRANCE EXAMINATION HANDOUT

A stylized, pixelated city skyline in light gray, featuring several buildings of varying heights and widths, positioned behind the main title text.

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Post Graduate Diploma
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OLD TESTAMENT: DEUTERONOMY

INTRODUCTION

The book of Deuteronomy occupies a decisive place within the canon of Scripture. As the fifth book of the Pentateuch, it functions simultaneously as a conclusion to the Torah and as a theological gateway into Israel's life in the Promised Land. The English title "Deuteronomy" is derived from the Greek *Deuteronomion*, meaning "second law," a designation that reflects the book's presentation of Mosaic instruction to a new generation of Israelites. In the Hebrew canon, however, the book is known as *Elleh Haddevarim*; "These are the words"; a title that emphasizes its sermonic and exhortative character. Deuteronomy is not merely a repetition of earlier legislation found in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. Rather, it represents a theological re-presentation of the law, shaped by memory, reflection, and covenantal exhortation. Moses addresses Israel on the plains of Moab at a critical transitional moment. The wilderness generation has largely passed away, and the people stand at the threshold of settled life in Canaan. Deuteronomy therefore seeks to shape Israel's identity, theology, and ethics for life beyond the wilderness.

Popular engagement with Deuteronomy has focused on questions of authorship, composition, covenant form, theology of law, and canonical function. Traditional Jewish and Christian interpretations affirm Mosaic authorship, while modern critical scholarship often emphasizes editorial activity and historical development. Regardless of one's position on composition, Deuteronomy presents a coherent theological vision centered on covenant faithfulness, love for God, and responsible communal life (Longman and Dillard 94–97). This study adopts a thematic approach in order to explore the major theological ideas of Deuteronomy. Rather than proceeding verse by verse, the chapters engage dominant motifs such as covenant, law, love, worship, justice, blessing and curse, leadership, and canonical reception. This approach reflects the way Deuteronomy itself teaches theology—through repeated emphasis, exhortation, and interpretive reflection. As the fifth and final book of the Pentateuch, Deuteronomy functions both as a conclusion to Israel's wilderness experience and as a theological bridge into life in the Promised Land. It gathers, interprets, and rearticulates Israel's covenantal obligations at a moment of historical transition, standing between journey and settlement, promise and fulfillment. More than a legal document, Deuteronomy is a covenantal sermon that seeks to form Israel's identity, faith, and ethical life for generations to come.

MEANING AND ORIGIN OF THE NAME “DEUTERONOMY”

The English title *Deuteronomy* is derived from the Greek word *Deuteronomion*, meaning “second law.” This title originated from the Septuagint’s translation of Deuteronomy 17:18, where the phrase *mishneh hattorah* (“a copy of this law”) was rendered as *to deuteronomion touto* (Longman and Dillard 94). The title does not imply a new or different law but rather a renewed presentation of the same covenantal instruction given earlier at Sinai. Deuteronomy therefore represents a restatement, interpretation, and application of the law for a new historical context. In the Hebrew Bible, however, the book is known by its opening words, *Elleh Haddevarim* (“These are the words”), emphasizing its sermonic and exhortative character. This Hebrew title highlights the book’s rhetorical nature, presenting Moses not merely as a lawgiver but as a preacher and theologian who addresses Israel with urgency, reflection, and pastoral concern. The contrast between the Greek and Hebrew titles already signals the dual character of Deuteronomy as both legal instruction and covenantal proclamation (Christensen 3–5).

Within the Pentateuch, Deuteronomy occupies a unique theological role. While Genesis through Numbers narrate Israel’s origins, deliverance, covenant formation, and wilderness wandering, Deuteronomy pauses the narrative movement in order to interpret these experiences theologically. It does not introduce new historical events but revisits earlier ones with reflective depth. In this sense, Deuteronomy serves as a theological lens through which the preceding books are understood. Deuteronomy also anticipates the historical books that follow. Its emphasis on obedience, covenant loyalty, blessing, and curse provides the interpretive framework for Israel’s later history in Joshua through Kings. The book thus functions canonically as both a conclusion to the Torah and an introduction to Israel’s national life in the land, making it one of the most strategically placed books in Scripture (Noth 15–18).

In the Hebrew canon, Deuteronomy concludes the Torah and stands at the threshold of the Former Prophets. This placement is theologically significant. By ending the Torah with Moses’ death outside the land, Deuteronomy emphasizes that possession of the land is contingent upon covenant obedience rather than the leadership of a single figure. The book deliberately leaves Israel with the law and the call to choose life, underscoring the enduring authority of God’s instruction beyond Moses’ lifetime. Jewish tradition accords Deuteronomy exceptional importance. The daily recitation of the Shema (Deut. 6:4–9) reflects the book’s central role in shaping Jewish identity, worship, and ethical life. Deuteronomy is thus not merely a historical

artifact but a living text that continues to form communal faith and practice (Menken and Moyise 18–21).

The historical setting of Deuteronomy is explicitly located on the plains of Moab, east of the Jordan River, shortly before Israel's entry into Canaan. This setting is crucial for understanding the book's tone and purpose. The generation that left Egypt has largely died in the wilderness, and a new generation now stands poised to inherit the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moses addresses a people who did not personally experience Sinai but who must nevertheless embrace its covenantal demands. This liminal context explains Deuteronomy's emphasis on remembrance. Moses repeatedly urges Israel not to forget the acts of God, warning that prosperity and settlement can lead to spiritual amnesia. The law is therefore presented not as abstract legislation but as guidance for faithful living in a settled, agricultural, and politically organized society (Christensen 32–35).

PURPOSE AND THEOLOGICAL AIM OF THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

Deuteronomy as a Book of Theological Formation: The primary purpose of Deuteronomy is theological formation rather than the mere repetition of laws. The book seeks to shape Israel into a covenant community whose identity, ethics, and future are grounded in a living relationship with Yahweh. Spoken on the plains of Moab at a decisive transitional moment, Deuteronomy functions as Moses' final theological instruction to a people about to move from nomadic existence into settled nationhood (Deut. 1:1–5). Deuteronomy emphasizes that obedience is not an abstract legal demand but a formative process intended to shape Israel's character and communal life. The law is presented as instruction (*torah*) designed to cultivate wisdom, reverence, and faithfulness (Deut. 4:5–8). In Thompson's system, this aligns with the chain on Divine Law as Moral Instruction, which highlights obedience as a pathway to life and stability (cf. Ps. 19:7; Prov. 6:23).

Grace before Law: Obedience as a Response to Redemption: A central theological aim of Deuteronomy is to affirm that grace precedes obligation. Moses repeatedly reminds Israel that the covenant was established after God's redemptive act of delivering them from Egypt (Deut. 5:6). The law is therefore grounded in divine grace, not human merit. Israel is chosen not because of strength or righteousness, but because of God's love and faithfulness to the patriarchs (Deut. 7:7–9). This theological ordering challenges legalistic interpretations of obedience. Obedience in Deuteronomy is framed as a grateful response to redemption rather

than a means of earning divine favor (Longman and Dillard 96–97). Thompson’s chain on Grace as the Foundation of Covenant Relationship reinforces this theme, connecting redemption with faithful obedience (cf. Exod. 20:2; Titus 2:11–12).

Covenant Relationship Defined by Love and Loyalty: At the heart of Deuteronomy’s theological vision is a relational understanding of covenant. Love, rather than fear or ritual precision alone, is presented as the defining posture of Israel’s relationship with God. The command to love the LORD with heart, soul, and strength (Deut. 6:5) encapsulates the book’s theology. In Deuteronomy, love is covenantal and practical. It is expressed through obedience, loyalty, and exclusive devotion to Yahweh (Deut. 10:12–13). Thompson’s chain on Love as the Fulfillment of the Law links love directly with obedience and faithfulness (cf. Josh. 22:5; Matt. 22:37–40). Thus, Deuteronomy aims to internalize obedience so that covenant faithfulness flows from genuine devotion rather than external conformity.

The Theology of Remembrance and Intergenerational Faith: Another major purpose of Deuteronomy is to preserve covenant memory. Moses repeatedly warns Israel against forgetting the LORD once they experience prosperity in the land (Deut. 8:11–14). Forgetfulness is treated not as a minor lapse but as a spiritual danger that leads to pride, idolatry, and covenant failure. To counter this danger, Deuteronomy emphasizes teaching the law diligently to future generations (Deut. 6:6–9; 11:18–21). Faith is to be woven into daily life, spoken at home, along the road, in moments of rest and labor. Thompson’s chain on Remembrance as Spiritual Discipline highlights how memory sustains obedience and identity (cf. Ps. 78:5–7; 103:2). The theological aim here is continuity: a covenant community sustained across generations by shared memory and instruction.

Preparing Israel for Ethical Nationhood: Deuteronomy also aims to prepare Israel for the ethical demands of nationhood. Life in the land would involve political authority, economic inequality, warfare, and social vulnerability. Deuteronomy addresses these realities by integrating theology and ethics. Laws concerning care for the poor, widows, orphans, and foreigners reveal that covenant faithfulness must express itself through justice and compassion (Deut. 10:18–19; 15:7–11). Justice in Deuteronomy is rooted in imitation of God’s character. Because Yahweh is just and compassionate, Israel is called to reflect those attributes in communal life. Thompson’s chain on Justice as God’s Character Revealed in Human Conduct reinforces this theological logic (cf. Mic. 6:8; Prov. 14:31). The book thus aims to form a society where worship and ethics are inseparable.

Leadership under the Authority of the Covenant: This is another theological concern of Deuteronomy is the regulation of leadership. As Israel transitions into nationhood, Moses anticipates the dangers of unchecked power. Judges, priests, prophets, and kings are all placed under the authority of the covenant law (Deut. 16:18–20; 18:15–22). The law of kingship (Deut. 17:14–20) is especially significant. The king is commanded to study the law continually so that he may rule with humility and fear of the LORD. Thompson’s chain on Authority Subject to Divine Law highlights this principle (cf. 1 Sam. 12:14; Ps. 72:1–4). Deuteronomy’s aim is to affirm that ultimate sovereignty belongs to God, not human rulers.

Choice, Consequence, and Covenant Accountability: Deuteronomy culminates in a stark presentation of covenant choice. Blessings and curses (Deut. 27–28) frame obedience and disobedience as matters of life and death. These sanctions reflect ancient covenant patterns and underscore the seriousness of Israel’s moral responsibility. Yet the purpose of these warnings is not despair but decision. Israel is called to choose obedience so that it may experience life, prosperity, and divine presence (Deut. 30:15–18). Thompson’s chain on Choice and Moral Consequence illustrates this dynamic throughout Scripture (cf. Josh. 24:15; Gal. 6:7–8).

Hope beyond Failure: Repentance and Restoration: Despite its strong emphasis on accountability, Deuteronomy affirms hope beyond failure. Moses anticipates Israel’s disobedience and exile, yet proclaims God’s willingness to restore the people when they return with sincere repentance (Deut. 30:1–10). Covenant judgment does not cancel divine mercy. This balance between justice and grace reveals a redemptive theological vision. Thompson’s chain on Restoration after Repentance supports this theme (cf. Jer. 31:18–20; Hos. 14:1–4). Deuteronomy’s aim is not only to warn but to sustain hope in God’s enduring faithfulness.

Choosing Life: The Enduring Theological Vision: The theological aim of Deuteronomy is ultimately summarized in the call to “choose life” (Deut. 30:19–20). This choice involves loving God, obeying his voice, remembering his acts, and living responsibly within the covenant community. Life, in Deuteronomy, is holistic; spiritual, ethical, communal, and future-oriented. By integrating love, law, memory, justice, leadership, and hope, Deuteronomy presents a comprehensive vision of covenant faithfulness. Its enduring relevance lies in this integration, challenging every generation to embody faith that is lived, remembered, and obedient before God (Benjamin 41–45).

This integrative vision encourages a deep engagement with one's community and a commitment to justice that transcends individualism. It compels individuals to reflect upon their actions and the impact these actions have on the collective, fostering a shared responsibility for the welfare of all. The principles of care and stewardship extend beyond mere obligation; they inspire acts of kindness and mutual support, creating a fabric of relationships that honors God's covenant. In this framework, faith is not only a personal journey but also a communal call, demanding involvement in social matters that uphold dignity and respect for every person. Ultimately, life in Deuteronomy cultivates an awareness of our duties to one another, reminding us of the interdependence that characterizes human existence and the sacredness of every moment lived in service to God and each other (Smith 76–80).

AUTHORSHIP AND COMPOSITION OF THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

The traditional Jewish and Christian position affirms Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy. The book itself repeatedly presents Moses as the speaker and mediator of the covenant, explicitly stating that “Moses spoke to all Israel” (Deut. 1:1) and that he set before them the law of the LORD (Deut. 4:44–45). Throughout the narrative, Moses is portrayed as prophet, teacher, and covenant mediator who faithfully transmits divine instruction to the people (Deut. 5:1–5). This view understands Deuteronomy as the written form of Moses' final covenant sermons, delivered near the end of his life on the plains of Moab. Thompson's chain on Prophetic Authority and Divine Revelation supports this understanding, linking Moses' role to later prophetic figures who speak God's word authoritatively (cf. Num. 12:6–8; Deut. 18:15–18). The New Testament also affirms Mosaic authority, with Jesus and the apostles frequently attributing the law to Moses (Matt. 19:7–8; John 7:19).

While acknowledging the presence of editorial framing such as the account of Moses' death (Deut. 34)—traditional scholarship maintains that such additions do not undermine Mosaic authorship but rather reflect faithful preservation of his teaching by later scribes. The theological authority of the book, in this view, rests on its origin in divine revelation mediated through Moses (Longman and Dillard 94–97). Internally, Deuteronomy consistently presents itself as a covenant document delivered by Moses. The book is structured around a series of speeches, not narrative storytelling, reinforcing its sermonic character. Moses repeatedly recounts Israel's history, interprets God's actions, and exhorts the people toward obedience (Deut. 1–4; 5–26). This literary self-presentation aligns with the Thompson chain on Law Given through a Mediator, emphasizing Moses as the divinely appointed teacher of Israel (cf.

Exod. 24:3–8; Ps. 103:7). The emphasis on remembrance, “remember and do not forget” (Deut. 8:2) also suggests an eyewitness perspective rooted in lived experience rather than distant historical reflection.

Deuteronomy is seen as a composite work shaped over time. Influenced by source criticism and historical analysis, many scholars argue that while Deuteronomy preserves early Mosaic traditions, it was edited and expanded during later periods of Israel’s history. This view emphasizes the role of scribes, priests, and reform movements in shaping the book’s final form. A key argument for this position is the book’s concern for centralized worship, which some scholars associate with the religious reforms of King Josiah in the seventh century BCE (2 Kings 22–23). Deuteronomy’s insistence on worship at “the place the LORD will choose” (Deut. 12:5) is seen as reflecting later historical realities rather than the wilderness setting alone. Thompson’s chain on Preservation of God’s Word provides theological space for this view by affirming that divine revelation can be faithfully transmitted and reapplied across generations (cf. Isa. 40:8; Jer. 36:32). From this perspective, editorial activity does not negate inspiration but demonstrates the living nature of covenant tradition (Christensen 20–25).

Martin Noth’s influential theory of the Deuteronomistic History argues that Deuteronomy served as the theological foundation for the historical books from Joshua through Kings. According to this view, a group of editors shaped Israel’s history around Deuteronomy’s covenant theology, explaining national success or failure in terms of obedience or disobedience (Noth 15–18). This theory highlights how Deuteronomy’s theology of blessing and curse (Deut. 28) becomes the interpretive lens for Israel’s later experiences, including exile. Thompson’s chain on National Obedience and Divine Judgment parallels this theme (cf. Josh. 23:14–16; 2 Chron. 7:19–22). Even scholars who critique Noth’s model acknowledge Deuteronomy’s profound influence on Israel’s historical theology.

Date of Composition of the Book of Deuteronomy

Several dates have been proposed for Deuteronomy’s composition. Scholars propose several possible periods for the composition and shaping of Deuteronomy. Some locate it in the late second millennium BCE, aligning with the traditional view of Mosaic authorship and situating the book shortly before Israel’s entry into Canaan in the thirteenth century BCE. Others associate Deuteronomy with the seventh century BCE, linking it to King Josiah’s reform and viewing it as a covenant renewal document discovered and reapplied in a time of religious

reform (2 Kings 22). A further group of scholars suggests an exilic or post-exilic shaping, arguing that the book reflects theological reflection on covenant failure and national catastrophe. Despite their differences, each proposal seeks to account for Deuteronomy's theological depth, historical awareness, and enduring relevance, affirming that divine truth may be reaffirmed in multiple historical contexts without loss of authority, in line with the biblical witness to God's sovereignty over times and seasons (Eccl. 3:1; Dan. 2:21).

Rather than undermining faith, these debates concerning authorship and composition underscore Deuteronomy's enduring theological vitality. Whether understood as the direct words of Moses or as Mosaic tradition faithfully preserved and reapplied by later communities, the book consistently bears witness to a living covenant between God and Israel. Its authority rests not merely in its historical origins but in the faithful transmission of divine instruction across generations. As Scripture itself affirms, God's word remains effective and authoritative beyond its original setting (Deut. 32:46–47; Heb. 4:12). Deuteronomy therefore reflects both continuity and development within Israel's faith tradition, standing as a reliable and inspired testimony to God's covenant will, dynamically engaged with the life of the covenant community (Benjamin 301–05).

LITERARY STRUCTURE AND FORM OF THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

Deuteronomy as a Book of Covenant Speeches: The Book of Deuteronomy is distinctive in its literary form, being structured primarily as a series of covenant speeches delivered by Moses to Israel. Unlike the narrative-driven structure of Exodus or Numbers, Deuteronomy is sermonistic and exhortative in nature. The book opens by explicitly framing itself as Moses' address to "all Israel" on the plains of Moab (Deut. 1:1–5), emphasizing spoken instruction rather than narrative development. This speech-centered structure reflects Deuteronomy's theological purpose: the renewal of covenant commitment. Moses does not merely repeat laws but interprets them pastorally, urging Israel toward obedience grounded in remembrance and love. Thompson's chain on Covenant Renewal through Proclamation highlights the role of spoken instruction in sustaining covenant faithfulness (cf. Josh. 24:1–15; Neh. 9:1–3). Deuteronomy's literary form therefore reinforces its function as a call to renewed allegiance rather than a static legal code.

MAJOR STRUCTURAL DIVISIONS OF THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

There are three major literary divisions within Deuteronomy. The first section (chapters 1–4) functions as a historical prologue, recounting Israel’s journey from Horeb to Moab. This section is not mere history but theological interpretation, highlighting God’s faithfulness and Israel’s repeated disobedience (Deut. 1:30–33; 4:9–10). Thompson’s chain on Remembrance as the Foundation of Obedience underscores this function (cf. Ps. 105:5; 1 Cor. 10:11). The second and largest section (chapters 5–26) contains the covenant stipulations. It begins with the restatement of the Ten Commandments (Deut. 5) and expands into detailed laws governing worship, leadership, justice, family life, and social responsibility. The final section (chapters 27–34) presents blessings and curses, covenant renewal, and transition of leadership, culminating in the death of Moses. Together, these divisions reflect a movement from memory, through instruction, to decision and commitment.

Rhetorical and Pedagogical Features: Deuteronomy employs distinctive rhetorical techniques designed to persuade and instruct rather than merely inform. Repetition is one of its most prominent features. Key themes; love, obedience, remembrance, and covenant—are revisited repeatedly to reinforce their importance (Deut. 6:4–9; 8:2; 11:1). This pedagogical strategy reflects ancient oral teaching methods, where repetition aided memory and internalization. The book also makes extensive use of exhortation and warning, appealing to Israel’s emotions, conscience, and communal identity. Moses frequently uses second-person address (“you” and “your”), creating immediacy and personal engagement. Thompson’s chain on Divine Instruction through Teaching and Warning illustrates how God forms his people through exhortative speech (cf. Prov. 4:1–4; Isa. 1:18–20). Deuteronomy’s rhetoric thus serves its theological goal of shaping the heart as well as the behavior.

Deuteronomy and Ancient Near Eastern Treaty Forms: Literarily, Deuteronomy closely resembles ancient Near Eastern suzerainty treaties, particularly those of the Hittite period. Such treaties typically included a preamble, historical prologue, stipulations, blessings and curses, and provisions for continuity. Deuteronomy follows this pattern, identifying Yahweh as the sovereign Lord and Israel as the covenant people (Deut. 1:1–5; 6:10–15; 28:1–68). This treaty form is theologically significant. It presents Israel’s relationship with God not as voluntary association but as binding covenant loyalty grounded in divine kingship. Thompson’s chain on God as Sovereign King reinforces this imagery (cf. Ps. 47:7–8; Isa. 33:22). By adopting and

transforming this literary form, Deuteronomy communicates covenant authority while emphasizing God's grace and redemptive initiative (Benjamin 41–45).

The Song, Blessing, and Death of Moses as Literary Testimony: The final chapters of Deuteronomy (31–34) contain poetic and narrative materials that function as theological testimony. The Song of Moses (Deut. 32) serves as a covenant witness, calling heaven and earth to testify against Israel in times of disobedience. Thompson's chain on Witness in Covenant Relationship highlights the role of testimony in sustaining accountability (cf. Isa. 1:2; Mic. 6:1–2). The Blessing of Moses (Deut. 33) affirms God's ongoing care for the tribes of Israel, while the account of Moses' death (Deut. 34) marks a transition in leadership without diminishing covenant continuity. Though Moses dies outside the land, the covenant endures. This literary conclusion reinforces the theme that obedience to God's word, not reliance on a single leader, secures Israel's future (Longman and Dillard 102–04).

Unity and Coherence of the Book: Despite scholarly discussions about composition and redaction, Deuteronomy displays remarkable theological and literary coherence. Its consistent emphasis on covenant loyalty, love for God, remembrance, and obedience binds the book together. The unity of message suggests intentional shaping aimed at theological clarity rather than accidental compilation. affirms that God's word speaks coherently across diverse forms and contexts (cf. Deut. 32:46–47; Ps. 119:160). Deuteronomy's literary structure thus serves its theological purpose, presenting a unified call to faithful covenant living. This theological emphasis is also underscored by the centralization of worship in Deuteronomy, which advocates for a single place of worship as pivotal to the covenant community's identity. This notion not only reflects a specific historical context but also reinforces the concept of collective responsibility in upholding God's statutes.

Furthermore, the historical recapitulation found within Deuteronomy serves to remind the Israelites of their covenant journey, illustrating God's faithfulness amidst their chronic failures. The intertwining of narrative and instruction throughout the text fosters a dynamic engagement with its audience, inviting reflection and application. It challenges readers to consider how the principles of covenant loyalty and obedience remain relevant in contemporary faith practices. This enduring message extends beyond ancient Israel, presenting a call to all believers to nurture their relationship with God through intentional acts of love and remembrance. Thus, Deuteronomy stands as not merely a historical document but as a living testament to the path of faithful discipleship.

LITERARY SHAPE AND RHETORICAL DESIGN

Deuteronomy is structured primarily around a series of speeches attributed to Moses. These speeches are framed as covenantal exhortations rather than legal codifications. The book opens with a historical prologue recounting Israel's journey from Horeb to Moab. This section is not merely historical narration; it is theological interpretation. Moses selects events that demonstrate both divine faithfulness and Israel's repeated failure, thereby grounding future obedience in remembered experience. The central portion of Deuteronomy contains the covenant stipulations. Beginning with a restatement of the Ten Commandments in chapter five, the text expands into laws addressing worship, leadership, justice, warfare, family life, and social responsibility. Scholars have noted that these laws are arranged rhetorically rather than systematically, reinforcing their pedagogical function (Christensen 32–35).

The final major section presents blessings and curses, followed by calls to covenant renewal. This climactic portion of the book frames obedience as a matter of life and death, blessing and curse. The appendices, including the Song of Moses, the Blessing of Moses, and the account of Moses' death, function as theological testimonies that reinforce the enduring authority of the covenant. Literarily, Deuteronomy resembles ancient Near Eastern suzerainty treaties. These treaties typically included a preamble, historical prologue, stipulations, blessings and curses, and provisions for continuity. Deuteronomy adapts this form to articulate Israel's unique covenant relationship with Yahweh, presenting God as sovereign Lord and gracious redeemer (Benjamin 41–45).

THEOLOGICAL THEMES AND CENTRAL MESSAGES OF DEUTERONOMY

Covenant Grounded in Divine Grace: Dillard emphasizes that Deuteronomy must be read within the larger Pentateuchal narrative in which grace precedes law. Israel receives the covenant not because of moral superiority or numerical strength but solely because of Yahweh's electing love and faithfulness to the patriarchal promises (Deut. 7:7–8). For Dillard, this theological order is decisive: obedience is never the basis of covenant membership but the response to divine grace already given (Longman and Dillard 96–97). Deuteronomy's covenant theology reinterprets Sinai for a new generation, stressing continuity rather than novelty. The law functions as a means of sustaining redeemed life, not earning salvation (Miller 25–27; Wright 36–39). Thompson's chain on Grace as the Basis of Covenant Relationship reinforces this pattern (Exod. 20:2; Ps. 103:8–10).

Obedience as Relational and Pedagogical: Dillard highlights that Deuteronomy reshapes obedience as a matter of the heart, not mere conformity to regulation. The repeated call to “hear” (*shema*) underscores that obedience involves attentive listening, internalization, and faithful response (Deut. 6:4–6). The law is therefore pedagogical, designed to form Israel’s character and sustain covenant loyalty across generations (Longman and Dillard 98–99). Deuteronomy’s sermon style reinforces this pedagogical aim, presenting law within exhortation and narrative rather than abstract legal form (Christensen 33–35). Thompson’s chain on Teaching as Covenant Preservation supports this theological vision (cf. Ps. 78:5–7; Prov. 22:6). This narrative approach not only aids in memorization and understanding but also promotes community engagement, as shared stories reinforce collective identity (Deut. 6:7). Augsburger notes the significance of intergenerational transmission of faith, emphasizing the role of personal testimony in educating future generations (112). Moreover, the integration of law within lived experience highlights the relational aspect of covenant fidelity, urging adherence through lived examples rather than mere compliance. The sustained emphasis on community dynamics as a means of covenantal preservation enhances both accountability and support in the faith journey (Heb. 10:24–25). Thus, the teachings encapsulated in Deuteronomy serve not only as legal guidelines but also as a communal call to embody and transmit the covenant’s values through lived practice.

Memory, History, and Covenant Identity: Deuteronomy is deeply concerned with how Israel remembers its past. Historical recollection is not neutral reportage but theological interpretation, intended to shape identity and obedience in the present (Longman and Dillard 100–102). Moses selectively recalls Israel’s wilderness failures and God’s faithfulness to warn against pride and forgetfulness in the land (Deut. 8:2–18). Miller argues that remembrance functions as a covenant discipline, sustaining humility and dependence on God (63–66). Thompson’s chain on Remembering God’s Works highlights memory as essential to faithfulness (cf. Deut. 5:15; Ps. 105:5).

Law as Gift and Guide for National Life: Dillard consistently stresses that Deuteronomy presents the law (*torah*) as instruction that promotes life, wisdom, and justice within Israel’s emerging national identity (Longman and Dillard 103–05). Laws regulating kingship, courts, worship, and economic practices demonstrate that covenant faith encompasses political, social, and moral life. Wright observes that Deuteronomy integrates theology and ethics so thoroughly

that no area of life is religiously neutral (58–61). Thompson’s chain on Law as Life-Giving Instruction affirms this understanding (Ps. 19:7–11; Prov. 6:23).

Blessings, Curses, and Covenant Accountability: Dillard interprets Deuteronomy 27–30 as the theological climax of the book, where covenant commitment is framed as a decisive choice with real historical consequences (Longman and Dillard 106–08). Blessings and curses are not mechanistic rewards but covenantal outcomes embedded within Israel’s relationship with God. This theology should not be reduced to simplistic retribution but understood within a relational covenant framework where repentance and restoration remain possible (Brueggemann 128–32). Thompson’s chain on Moral Accountability under God’s Rule supports this balanced view (Prov. 3:33; Hos. 14:1–4).

Canonical and Theological Significance: Dillard views Deuteronomy as a theological bridge, concluding the Pentateuch while providing the interpretive framework for Israel’s later history (Joshua–Kings). Its emphasis on covenant obedience becomes the lens through which Israel’s success and failure are evaluated (Longman and Dillard 109–11). Deuteronomy’s enduring authority lies not merely in questions of authorship but in its faithful transmission of divine instruction. Thompson’s chain on The Living Word of God affirms Scripture’s capacity to speak across generations (Deut. 32:46–47; Isa. 40:8; Heb. 4:12).

CONCLUSION

The book of Deuteronomy is one of the most important theological texts in the Old Testament because it explains what it truly means to live in a covenant relationship with God. Rather than presenting the law as a set of harsh rules, Deuteronomy shows that God’s instructions are a gift given to a people who have already experienced His grace. As Dillard explains, obedience in Deuteronomy is not about trying to earn God’s favor; it is a loving response to what God has already done for Israel through redemption and faithfulness. Deuteronomy also teaches Israel how to live responsibly as God’s people in the land. By reminding them of their journey through the wilderness, Moses helps the people understand that remembering God’s past actions is essential for staying faithful in the future. The book connects belief with everyday life—family, leadership, worship, justice, and care for others. This shows that faith is not private or occasional but something that should shape the whole community and every part of life.

Even beyond its original setting, Deuteronomy continues to guide later generations. It provides the foundation for understanding Israel's later history and strongly influences both Jewish faith and Christian teaching. Its call to choose life, love God wholeheartedly, and walk in obedience remains meaningful in every age. Deuteronomy reminds readers that God's word is living and active, able to speak to new situations while remaining faithful to eternal truth. Deuteronomy teaches that real life comes from trusting God, remembering His goodness, and living out that trust through loving obedience. Its message is simple but powerful: those who love the Lord and follow His ways will find life, purpose, and blessing within the covenant relationship He graciously offers.

NEW TESTAMENT: ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

INTRODUCTION

This entrance examination handout explores the literary, historical, and theological dimensions of Acts of the Apostles. It provides a great insight into the understanding of the emergence of the Early Church within its Jewish and Greco-Roman context, and will include a consideration of how the book of Acts informs the beliefs and practices of the contemporary Church. Acts of the Apostles is unique in the Bible. It serves as the transition between the Gospel and the Epistles. For Christians, Acts of the Apostles is a historical book that presents the insight on how Christianity began and is then widespread (Bruce 7). The Book of Acts is the second volume of a two-volume work. The first volume is the Gospel According to Luke and the second volume is the Acts of the Apostles. The arrangement of our Bibles confuses the close relationship between these two works by separating them with the Gospel of John (Cadbury 209). Traditionally both volumes have been attributed to Luke. In the prologue to Acts, Luke states clearly that this is the second volume of his work. Both prefaces are addressed to Theophilus. Theophilus may have been Luke's patron, the one who invited him to write the two volumes. Or he may have been simply a friend and acquaintance with whom Luke wanted to share his convictions. The name "Theophilus" means "Friend of God", and it is also possible that Luke uses the name as a kind of code for a whole group of seekers who have accepted the monotheism of the synagogue but have yet to be persuaded that Jesus is the great prophet predicted by Moses and indeed is God's own son. One of the goals of this course is to examine the historicity of the book of Acts. Within the historical issues in the studies of Acts, one creative approach is to classify Acts as a Greco-Roman novel.

The historicity of Acts will greatly explore the early church, how it started and spread. Therefore, at the end of this course, the student should be able to

1. Recognize how the Jewish and Roman contexts of Luke contribute to our understanding of the message of the book of Acts.
2. Analyze the literary genre, structure, and theology of Acts in order to understand the mission and identity of the Church.
3. Trace the central literary and theological themes of the book of Acts.
4. Understand the implications of the message of Acts for contemporary Christian beliefs, practices, identity, and mission.

THE BACKGROUND OF ACTS

To understand clearly the message of Acts, it is important to grasp the knowledge of its setting. Setting here is understood as the place, time, or social circumstances in which any character acts (Kingsbury 3). The attempt to understand and interpret Acts correctly is better served when these historical settings involving authorship, date and place of composition, purpose, the audiences and their social settings are succinctly established. This establishment is what this session presents in a very clear term.

Authorship

While the author of the book of Acts does not give us his name, the tradition of the early church (external evidence) and the contents of the book itself (internal evidence) identify Luke the Physician as the author. Luke is identified as a physician and as Paul's travel companion (see Philemon 24, Colossians 4:14 and 2 Timothy 4:11). Although there are arguments surrounding the attribution of the authorship of Acts to Luke, both internal and external evidences strongly suggest Luke as the writer of the book.

External evidence has it that "the tradition of Christian writers since the second century has been that the Third Gospel and the Acts were written by Luke the Physician who is mentioned by Paul in Colossians, Philemon, and 2 Timothy" (Cadbury 209). In the words of Theron, "The Muratorian Canon (ca. A.D. 170-190) says that the third book of the Gospel is that according to Luke. Luke, 'the' physician, after the ascension of Christ, when Paul had taken him with him as a companion of his traveling, wrote in his own name... The Acts of all the Apostles, however, were written in one volume. Luke described briefly 'for' most excellent Theophilus particular things, which happened in his presence, as he also evidently relates indirectly the death of Peter and also Paul's departure from the city as he was proceeding to Spain" (107-109)

Theron further noted that Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp, attributed the book Acts to Luke (77). He also said that other early writers who attributed the book of Acts to Luke include Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, and Jerome (69-79). In addition to these church fathers, the earliest copies of the third gospel have the title *Kata Loukan* (According to Luke). These titles can be traced back to at least A.D. 130 (Cadbury 212). Since it is universally recognized that whoever wrote Luke also wrote Acts, this evidence would favor Luke as the author of Acts. In other words, Luke is universally believed to be the author of the Acts of the Apostle, according to the tradition of the early church.

Internal evidence proves that the contents of the book of Acts itself largely identify Luke the Physician as its author. First, within the book of Acts itself, the so-called “we-sections” found in Luke are also found in Acts. And as it is universally believed that whoever wrote Luke also wrote Acts, it can be believed that the “we-sections” in Acts were composed by the same person who composed them in Luke. This fact is shown by comparing the contents and style of the “we-sections” in Luke with those in Luke (Hawkins 182). Second, the author of Acts had access to the eyewitnesses who participated in the events described. This is stated to be the case in the prolog to Luke. “The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after he through the Holy Spirit had given commandment to the apostles whom he had chosen, to whom he also presented himself alive after his suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts 1:1-3).

The third internal evidence is that the author of Acts was a companion of Paul. The book of Acts shows this to be the case by containing the “we-sections”. In three different passages (in some manuscripts, four) the author includes himself among Paul’s party by using the first person plural (Hawkins 185). For example, after telling how Paul and Silas were led by the Holy Spirit to Troas, and how Paul had seen the vision of the man from Macedonia, the book continues, “After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them” (Acts 16:10). These are the three “we-sections” of Acts:

1. On the second missionary journey, in Troas and Macedonia (Acts 16:10-17).
2. On the third missionary journey, from Macedonia back to Jerusalem (Acts 20:5-21:18)
3. On the voyage and journey to Rome, from Caesarea to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:16)

From both the external and internal evidences expounded above, one can see that many early church writers had no doubt in attributing the book of Acts to Luke. Again, it has been established that the contents of Acts itself identify Luke as its author. Therefore, we too will accept Luke as the author of the Acts of the Apostle.

Date of Composition

Scholars have suggested different dates of composition of the book of Acts of Apostles.

A.D. 59: This is the earliest date suggested for Acts. According to Bruce, “the narrative in Acts ends, rather suddenly, after Paul was in prison in Rome two years, in A.D. 59 (Acts 28:30).

There is no statement from the early church which dates the book. The most important result is the relation of the date of Luke with the other Gospels (11). Bruce defended this earliest date by the following arguments:

1. Acts shows little acquaintance with Paul's epistles, which would not have been the case had Acts been written later.
2. The ending of Acts is abrupt. How did Paul's appeal fare? What happened to him? If the book had been written later, these questions probably would have been answered.
3. There is no hint in the book of Paul's death, not even in Acts 20:25. This seems unnatural if it was written ca. A.D. 70 or later.
4. Acts reveals a positive attitude toward Roman power. This fits with its being written before Nero's persecution in A.D. 64. The ending of Acts seems optimistic about the church's relation with the Roman government.
5. There is no hint in Acts of the Jewish war with Rome of A.D. 66-70, nor of the fall of Jerusalem.

A.D. 70: Many scholars favour this date for Acts, in spite of the arguments listed above. Harrison noted the primary reason for this date as follows, "If Mark was the first Gospel to be written, and if it was written close to A.D. 70, then Luke must have been written after that. Since Acts was written after Luke (Acts 1:1), Acts could be no earlier than ca. A.D. 70" (240). This argument assumes that Mark was the first Gospel, and this assumption, however, is not proved. The question is still debated. Another major argument for this position is the detailed manner in which Jesus predicts the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (Luke 19:43-44; 21:20, 24). Bruce asserts that most critics say that such a prediction could not have been written before the event took place (13). However, if Jesus really was the Son of God, he could predict the future, and that prophecy could have been written earlier. So while it is possible to hold to this date for Acts, it still seems that the weight of evidence favours the earlier date.

A.D. 90-100: Many critics who do not believe that Acts is accurate or historical place the book at the end of the century. They say that the author must not have been an eyewitness, and the audience could not have been Paul's contemporaries. They also assume that Acts used the history of Josephus, produced ca. A.D. 93. This view, based on a negative and destructive criticism, is unacceptable to the Christian who trusts in the inerrancy of Scripture, and is not required by historical evidence; nor is it supported by early testimony. As a matter of fact, it overlooks much data which confirms the accuracy of the book (Theron 109). Flowing from the

above, this course will assume that Acts was written between A.D. 59 to A.D. 70, since they are the dates most related to Luke and other Gospels.

Purpose of Acts

Much has been written about the purpose of Acts. According to Hawkins, the question is closely linked to its authorship and date. Assuming that Luke was the actual author, it is apparent that he particularly desired to show to the reader that the gospel preached in Rome by Paul was the same gospel that began with Jesus Christ himself in Galilee and Judea (180). If Theophilus was his financial sponsor for the project, then the two-volume work of Luke-Acts would have been used for evangelism as well as doctrinal confirmation of the largely Gentile church in Rome and throughout the Empire. Secondary purposes are clear from the book's contents as well (Hawkins 182). Luke's emphasis on Roman rulers' time and again approving of Paul's ministry and message probably was directed to Roman officials, encouraging them to approve the spread of Christianity and not to persecute the new movement. Of course, a large part of the work is dedicated to showing that the Gentile Christians were equal in status to Jewish believers in the church, and supporting that fact by the united testimony of the apostles as well as by various ministries of the Holy Spirit. The book was also designed to prepare Christians to live for Christ and to be willing to suffer for him

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

New Testament

- Bruce, Fred F. *Commentary on Acts*. John Knox Press, 1993.
- Cadbury, Henry J. “The Tradition”, *Beginnings of Christianity*, 2(1), 2017, 209-264.
- Harrison, Edward F. *Introduction to the New Testament*. Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999.
- Hawkins, John C. “Luke-Acts Relationships”, *Horae Synopticae*, 183(4), 2008, 181-188.
- Kingsbury, Jack Dean. *Jesus Christ in Matthew, Mark, and Luke*. Fortress Press, 1989.
- Theron, Daniel J. *Evidence of Tradition*. Jossey-Bass Press, 2014.

Old Testament

- Benjamin, Don C., editor. *The Oxford Handbook of Deuteronomy*. Oxford UP, 2020.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Deuteronomy*. Abingdon Press, 2001.
- Christensen, Duane L. *Deuteronomy 1–21:9*. Vol. 6A, *Word Biblical Commentary*, Word Books, 2001.
- Christensen, Duane L. *Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12*. Vol. 6B, *Word Biblical Commentary*, Word Books, 2001.
- Longman, Tremper III, and Raymond B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Zondervan, 2006.
- Menken, M. J. J., and Steve Moyise, editors. *Deuteronomy in the New Testament*. T&T Clark, 2007.
- Miller, Patrick D. *Deuteronomy. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, Westminster John Knox Press, 1990.
- Noth, Martin. *The Deuteronomistic History*. Sheffield Academic Press, 1981.
- Wright, Christopher J. H. *Deuteronomy. New International Biblical Commentary*, Hendrickson, 1996.

INFORMATION

Candidates should study the following information and act accordingly.

1. You are expected to study the two books of the bible as provided in the handout thoroughly
2. Your ability to write a good essay will be examined.
3. You will be examined on general knowledge: Current Affairs and Presbyterianism 4.
4. You are required to build four files with the following documents:
 - a. Baptism Certificate
 - b. Confirmation Certificate
 - c. First School Leaving Certificate
 - d. O Level Certificate (WAEC, NECO, NABTEB, GCE) and First-Degree Certificate
 - e. Birth Certificate/Age Declaration
 - f. Medical Report
 - g. Letter from your Sponsor(s)
 - h. Letter from your Parish/Recommendation Letter
 - i. Admission Form
 - j. General Assembly Form (Ministerial candidates)
 - k. 2 Copies of Passport (if possible recent) for each file (Red Background)
5. Examination Date is Wednesday 6th May 2026
6. You are required to come with your original credentials and the filled application form.
7. In addition to the entrance examination handout, read the Old and New Testament Passages, Current Affairs, Presbyterianism and random English language.
8. Those writing online should call Rev Dr. Albert (08030922266) two weeks before the examination.
9. Examination time is 11:00 am prompt at Hugh Goldie, New Chapel.
10. It is advisable to be in the school the night before the examination date.
11. Make all your payments to the school account number: 0032998561 Union Bank Hugh Goldie Institution
12. Cost of the forms: Degree - 10,000, PGD-15,000, MTh-20,000
13. Those leaving far from the venue can come a day earlier.

For more information kindly call ICT Officer (08030922266), Registrar (08036905195), and Rector (08037346202).

Note: All candidates (Ministerial and Non-Ministerial) MUST pass through the Session, Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly of the Board of Education before coming to write the entrance examination



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SCHEDULE OF FEES

Description of Fees	Certificate Programme	Diploma	BD	PGDT	MTH
Tuition	8,500.00	19,500.00	21,500.00	21,500.00	28,500.00
Accommodation	15,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00
Library	2,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,500.00	8,000.00
Examination	2,000.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	5,500.00	8,500.00
Development Project	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
Maintenance	1,500.00	3,200.00	5,020.00	6,000.00	7,000.00
Sports	1,000.00	3,500.00	4,000.00	5,000.00	7,000.00
ICT	9,400.00	10,400.00	10,400.00	11,400.00	16,400.00
Electricity	3,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Security	2,500.00	3,000.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00
Records	2,500.00	3,500.00	4,500.00	5,500.00	8,000.00
Medical	4,500.00	5,000.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	7,500.00
Church Planting	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
Alumni	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Goldie Matric Fee (New Students)	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Total	₦78,000.00	₦108,600.00	₦114,920.00	₦131,400.00	₦156,400.00

NOTE:

1. Acceptance Fee ₦10,000.00 (New Students only)
2. MTH Acceptance Fee ₦15,000.00
3. Matriculation Fee ₦7,000.00 (ABSU Affiliated Students)
4. BA Affiliation Fee ₦40,000.00 (ABSU)
5. Development Project-Additional ₦10,000.00 (New Students)
6. Student Union Government to be paid into the SUG Account ₦10,000.00 (New Students)
7. Budget for Books to be paid @ the Bookshop ₦20,000.00
8. All fees should be paid completely on or before the beginning of the Session.
9. MTH 2nd year pays ₦136,000.00

All payments except the Student's Union Government Dues should be deposited at SCHOOL'S BANK ACCOUNT With the following details

a. For Regular Students

Account Name: Hugh Goldie Institution
Account Number: 0032998561
Bank: Union Bank

b. For Sandwich Students

Account Name: Hugh Goldie Institution
Account Number: 0032992428
Bank: Union Bank

MRS. OBIAGERIBASSEY
Bursar