



*Christ, the LORD, in the  
Book of Deuteronomy*

Prepared by:

**FR. TADROS Y. MALATY**

Translated by  
**Mary Hany Dawood**

Queen Mary & Prince Tadros  
Goptic Orthodox church

*Christ, the LORD, in the  
Book of Deuteronomy*

*Our Christ Wants To Renew  
The Covenant With Him*

**FR. TADROS Y. MALATY**

Translated by  
**Mary Hany Dawood**

*Edited by  
Salwa Wahba*

**St. George Church - Sporting**

## Introduction

<b>Genesis</b>	God is my Creator	He created me as a live king; and willingly I became a dead slave!
<b>Exodus</b>	God is my Deliverer through the blood of His Christ	He carried me from the land of slavery to heaven, offering His own blood as a price for my freedom
<b>Leviticus</b>	The Holy God is my Sanctifier	He sanctified me with His blood, for He is holy, with His priestly work, purifying words, and joyful heavenly life
<b>Numbers</b>	God is my Leader	He led me from the land of slavery to the heavenly Kennan; He gave me leaders to guide me, and He covered me with His arms, walked in front of me as a Light to my life; He gave me food from heaven and live water.
<b>Deuteronomy</b>	God is my Friend that wishes to renew the covenant with Him	He made a unique and wondrous covenant with me; He lovingly gave me His commandment that I would obey it; He wishes to meet with me as if on the mountain of Sinai; He opens my mouth with praises, and lets my life be a source of blessing for the others.

Ever since His creating man and until the day of His last coming, God made covenants with the people:

- ❖ With Adam: to enjoy the voice of God walking through the Garden of Eden.
- ❖ With Noah: never again to destroy the world with flood, but to remember His mercies
- ❖ With Abraham: to make him a loving father, a blessing to the nations and his seed like the stars of the sky.
- ❖ With the people: to become their Father, and for them to become His people
- ❖ With David: to keep His kingdom forever.
- ❖ With Solomon: to incline His ears and to hear the voices of His people.
- ❖ In Christ: so that the believers would become children of God through adoption, and partners of Christ in His glory.

## **Why, the Book of Deuteronomy?**

1. It is a second law besides what came in the Books of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. However, what came here cannot be considered a replication, but rather it is a permanent reminder of God's Law: "And you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them upon the posts of your house, and on your gates" [Deuteronomy 6:8-9]. It is an explanation of the Law in the light of what happened during the forty years in the desert so that everyone would be prepared with faith-binding obedience and with the practical divine love.

2. It is not a judicial book, for the law was put for salvation purposes [Deuteronomy 30:11-14]. The law is the sign of the divine presence in the hearts of God's people.

3. The curse of the crucifixion on a piece of wood [21:22-23] and awaiting the coming of Christ [18:15-19].

4. The book of the church: original (the past 1-4); present [4:24-Chap. 26]; eternal [27-30]; renewed, rejoicing and blessed [31-34]. The New Testament quoted this book about 83 times. It contains 4 homilies: the first [1-4], the second [5-28], the third [29-30], and the fourth [31-34] which came as an appendix to the other three.

## **Three Farewell Homilies:**

that Moses presented to his people, and that carried God's commandments and a reminder of God's work in them. In those homilies, we find Moses:

- (a) who was slow of speech and of a slow tongue [Exodus 4:10], becoming a live tool uttering the words of God. Nothing occupied him more than presenting the word of God so that we could enjoy a blessed life [Deuteronomy 27].
- (b) declaring that he did not forget his personal memories regarding the exodus from the land of slavery and his meeting with God on the mountain of Sinai in the midst of glory. What was always occupying him was the freedom and the glory in Jesus Christ.
- (c) presenting a farewell hymn to declare that his life was a life of joy, thanksgiving and praising unto God.
- (d) Presenting the words of blessing to his people and declaring that despite the people's hard hearts, they occupied the heart of

Moses who was willing to give himself for the people of God. Moses became a blessing for all his people!

- (e) handing over the leadership to Joshua, declaring that, as a representative of the Law, he is completely unable to enter with the people into the Promised Land. "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" [John 1:17].

## **What are the Clauses of the Covenant between God and His People in the Book of Deuteronomy?**

God knew that His people will one day ask for have a king; and thus He came to make a covenant with them as a unique King with His people.

### **The Two Parties of the Covenant [1:1-4]:**

Moses stood before all the people declaring God's (the King of kings) willingness to renew the covenant with them. He was not a party in this covenant, but merely the spokesperson of God, his King, before them all: the priests and the people, the chiefs and the subordinates, the men and the women, the children and the elders.

### **A Historical Background [1:5-Chap. 4]:**

The kings were used to point out their general accomplishments before they were crowned. What did God offer? "In the wilderness, where you have seen how that the LORD your God bare you, as a man bears his son, in all the way that you went, until you came into this place" [Deuteronomy 1:31].

Moses spoke to the new generation that was born in the wilderness just before they entered the Promised Land to remind them with God's works with their fathers, not with the aim of presenting the historical events that occurred from Horeb till they arrived in the land of Moab [Deuteronomy 1-3], but rather to ensure:

1. repeating the term "all Israel" [1:1] was to ensure God's dealings with them as one people, for they are bound together in a unity in the covenant with God, through which every believer can enjoy a personal relationship with God. He built His

- church as one bride, and gave us to become members in the one bride that is united with its Groom.
2. God's care for man, especially in the wilderness of this world [1:13; 2:7].
  3. Israel lived for nearly 40 years lost in the wilderness, but the key behind their delay was the lingering and disobeying man. God nearly holds our hands and drags us to set forth with Him towards the Promised Land and urges us, saying: "You have dwelt long enough in this mount. Turn you, and take your journey... go in and possess the land" [1:6-8]. He wishes to carry us like a son in his father's embrace and set forth with us [1:31] so that we can possess and rule [1:21].
  4. The road is tough, for it is the path of God's ongoing war with the enemy of goodness. He walks before us to face the battle and to fight for us [1:30].
  5. Disobedience was their fathers' obstacle to enjoy the Promised Land; thus he urges them to obey God.
  6. Offering thanksgiving unto God for His gifts and care instead of their whining and ingratitude.
  7. Through the commandment and the worshipping we can enjoy life and enter into the Promised Land and possess it [4:1].

## **The Clauses of the Covenant: The Second Homily:**

### ***First: The Commandments [Deuteronomy 5-11]:***

We are committed to obey them in order to live and to enter the heavenly Kennan.

1. God is the Legislator of the Old Testament and its Completer in the New Testament, for both testaments are the word of God.
2. The Christian can understand their deep spiritual meanings through the cross.
3. The commandments of the New Testament reveal the depths of the commandments of the Old Testament, while the latter strongly reveals the concept of salvation and the cross.
4. In their depths, the commandments are a "covenant" between God and His present church, a covenant that never ages.
5. The Ten Commandments are divided into 3 complementary parts: commandments related to our relationship with God [1-4]; commandments related to our relationship with our relatives, like honoring the parents [5]; and commandments related to our relationship with the community [6-10].
6. **Why did God allow the people to destroy the surrounding nations without mercy?**

- a- It was not possible for the people in the beginning of their spiritual life to differentiate between the sinner and the sin itself, as killing the sinner meant destroying the sin.
- b- The corruption that spread amongst these nations was intolerable, for, as a worshipping of the Baal, the mothers used to offer their children to be burned in the fire between the sounds of the drums so that they would not hear the children's crying; in addition to the women and girls dedicating themselves to adultery in order to collect money for the temples. The destruction of the nations through their vicious and corrupt lives was much more dangerous than killing the body.
- c- Despite the existence of strict divine orders to destroy these nations, the Jewish people fell several times in participating with the nations in their heathen worshipping, their adultery, and their brutality of offering human sacrifices; thus, what would have been the condition if these orders were not issued to them? God wanted to purify them and to prepare them to be His divine, pure people to serve the nations afterwards.
- d- These strict orders have their spiritual symbols in our lives.

***Second: The Constitution of the Law [Deuteronomy 12-28]:***

The law is considered the core of the entire book, as it presents laws that touch the worshipping and daily life of the people and of every member living in the cities or the villages. It is considered the thread that links the age of the fathers (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) to the New Testament, as it paves the way through the prophecies and the law. Thus, in its spiritual conception, it is considered the base of our Christian belief.

God reveals Himself as being the Holy One that does not stand sin and at the same time as the Merciful One.

They are laws that relate to the believer's relationship with all the people around him and under every circumstance, even when torturing the outlaws, as the number of whips did not exceed 40 lashes [Deuteronomy 25]. They concerned the women's and slaves' rights [Deuteronomy 21], not rushing into judging the creation, the necessity for the believer to care even for the animals (the rest of the Sabbath), the birds and the trees [Deuteronomy 20, 22].

### *1. The Worshipping Laws [12-16]:*

He makes a link between destroying everything belonging to the nations, especially their heathen worshipping, and building a house for the Lord in their midst [12:5-7]. The land that was once used for adultery will be sanctified to become a place for God's dwelling. God does not want to destroy but to build, transforming our powers from evil to goodness.

After focusing on the sacred sacrifice in the one temple of the Lord, He warns us from 3 sources of deviation:

The Wrongful Prophecy [13:1-3]: there are always wrongful prophets in every age who deceive the simple people with signs and wonders, as did the sorcerers in the days of Moses [see 2 Thessalonians 2:9; Matthew 24:23-25; Revelation 13:13-14].

The Blood Relationships [13:6-11]: as happened with the wise Solomon who went after strange gods due to his foreign women.

The Commune Deviation [13:12-18]: many people deviate from the commune pressure so as not to become a typical. St. Athanasios, the Apostle, believed that he was doing the work of God, and thus strongly said "I am against the world". We shall love the people in the world and have mercy with everyone, but we shall not cope with the flood, rather stick to the behavior prescribed to us by our mission!

As the sacred life is not just about performing specific exercises, but rather touches our relationships with ourselves, with God, and with the people, God gave us the Law of the "Release Year" [Deuteronomy 15]. It reveals God's -and accordingly his children's- care for the indebted people, who are unable to pay their debts, by releasing them for God's sake; and also the poor and the slaves, who have no one to care for them.

He directs His talk with the people to the joy of the three grand feasts, so that worshipping would become a joyful life [Deuteronomy 16]: The Passover feast, which refers to the salvation in which the humanity rejoices its victory over Satan; the feast of the weeks, which refers to our joy for the dwelling of the Holy Spirit upon us (the Pentecost); and the feast of tabernacles, in which we dwell here as if in tabernacles awaiting the complete glory in Christ.

### *2. The Functionalities Laws [16-18] (the judge - the king - the priest - the prophet):*

Everyone submits to the law, but honor is given to the honored persons without partiality or bribes. No distinction was made between the laws governing the believers and those related to worshipping.



This can be noticed across the entire book, for there can be no love or justice without pure worshipping, and the worshipping cannot be accepted without justice and mercy towards the brethren. In this way worshipping is combined with behavior and both work together as one inseparable sacred life.

### *3. The Criminal Law [19, 21]:*

So that no innocent blood would be spilled, one man cannot rise up for testifying but at the mouth of two or three witnesses shall the matter be established [19:15-17]. If a witness was proved to lie and to testify falsely against his brother, then it shall be done unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother so that those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil [19:18-21].

The Moses' Law demanded "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot". By that it ascended with man in the beginning of his spiritual life from the spirit of revenging with more harm than what was done upon him, as man's nature tends to fight evil with greater evil. In this way the Law ascended with him to prepare him step by step for love and to exercise the divine grace to love his enemies and to fight evil with goodness. It gradually trains man on self-control to teach him love and forgiveness.

### *4. The Military Law [20]:*

The first principle in the spiritual struggle is "not to be afraid" [20:1-9]: "What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart" [20:8].

The key to courage is trusting the LORD, the Leader of the spiritual battle: "For the LORD your God is he that goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you" [20:4]; while the key to fear is the heart's attachment to the timely matters. Thus, He demands the one who has just built a new house, planted a vineyard on which he has not yet paid its first-fruit in the fourth year, or got engaged to a woman and didn't marry her yet to return to his house. It is a symbolic picture of the weak souls that are attached to the world and are not capable of spiritual giving, for they are a block to others.

### *5. Miscellaneous Laws [21-25]:*

For example, if someone was murdered and the murderer is unknown, his innocent blood shall be put away by the elders and the judges of the nearest city [21:1-9]. Who is this murdered person but the humanity that was destroyed by sin? Who can put off its sins but the sacrifice of the righteous Jesus Christ?!

- He, who took a captivated woman to be his wife [21:10-14]: shall appreciate her human feelings; thus, he shall not marry her until she goes through her deprivation phase from her family.
- Giving the firstborn son his firstborn right even if his mother was disliked! Sentencing the stubborn, rebellious son to be stoned to death [21:18-21].
- Caring for the lost [22:3]: and for the animal that fell down by the way [22:4]; even caring for the bird on the road [22:6-7], as the believer shall let the mother go and take the youngsters for himself.
- Caring for the farming [22:9-11]: No man shall plant a field with two kinds of seeds together, so as to facilitate the harvesting of each kind separately; and no man shall use a bull and an ass together on the same plough for they are not equal in power; no man shall mix wool with linen in one garment. All these are symbols for the obligation not to mix what is right with the void worldly philosophy [Leviticus 19:19]. He wants His people to be special in their straightness and purity.
- Having pride in one's gender: so that he would not desire to be of another one [22:5].
- The divorce [24:1-4]: If a man divorced his wife and she came to marry another, the first cannot re-marry her even if her second husband dies. The purpose of this commandment is not to rush into a divorce and to realize the sacredness of marriage.
- One shall not steal any of his brethren of the children of Israel and sell him as a slave [24:7].
- The law of marrying the woman of one's dead brother who did not have children and bringing seed bearing his name [25:5-10]; refers to the story of Ruth [Ruth 4:1-8]. Ruth, a woman of the nations, married the old Boaz as the governor refused to marry her and bring seed to her dead husband; Boaz represents Jesus Christ who has taken the church of the nations to be His bride.

## *6. The Laws of the First-Fruits and the Tithes [26]:*

The Law of the First-Fruit of the New Land (The Law of the First Year [26:1-11]): Giving the first-fruits as a thanksgiving to the LORD, who has granted them the Promised Land after the bitterness of slavery in Egypt. [Christ is our First-Born, through Whom we came to enjoy the eternal life and to belong to God]. As the believer offers the first-fruit from the very best of the harvest, he reveals that the people, who were sanctified to God from amongst all the people in the world, should be a mature first-born, so that we wouldn't hear what came in Micah: "Woe is me! For I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage; there is no cluster to eat; my soul desired the firstripe fruit. The good man is perished out of the earth and there is none upright among men" [Micah 7:1-2].

Giving the Tithes: unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow [26:12-15] under all circumstances. The offering should be accompanied by the feelings of joy in the entire house. "And you shall rejoice in every good thing which the LORD your God has given unto you, and unto your house, you, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you" [26:11].

Keeping the Covenant [10:1-5; 31:24-26]: The two tables of the Law are to be kept inside the Ark of the Testimony.

Fulfilling the Covenant: the blessings of obeying and the curses of disobeying [27-28].

## **The Renewal of the Covenant: The Third Homily [Deuteronomy 29-30]:**

So that the people would keep the covenant that God has made with them in the land of Moab and in Horeb, Moses called unto the people to celebrate it [29:1-15], and he gave them this homily as a renewal of the covenant, which included:

**1. A Reminder of God's Blessings unto them [29:1-17]:** for He has freed them from the slavery of the Pharaoh, cared for them in the wilderness, granted them victory over the kings, and gave them the Promised Land so that the people would serve them. The purpose of all this was to enter into a covenant with God as His own sanctified people, for they are His and He is theirs [29:13]; a covenant with everyone, the leaders and the people, the women and children... [29:10].

## **2. A Warning from Deviating after Strange Gods [29:18]:**

Turning away from God, the Granter of life, towards the lifeless matters, whether on a personal level or for all tribes. St. Paul warns us saying: "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled" [Hebrews 12:15]. The fraudsters are like tares that creep into the field and damage the wheat. They are like roots that bear gall and wormwood [29:18].

**3. The Fruit of the Disobedience is the Curses:** which came in Deuteronomy 28, so that they would become an example unto all generations [28:22-29]. In order to encourage them to obey the commandments, he clarified that:

(a) *The Doors of Repentance are always open:* We shall not despair, because as long as we are in the world God awaits our repentance to return us back to Him [30:1-10]. He is able to sanctify us by circumcising our hearts [30:6] so that they would inflame with love towards Him. God rejoices over our goodness, and He rejoices over us [30:9] if we return to Him devotedly with all our hearts and souls [30:10].

(b) *The Commandment is not difficult:* neither is it outside us (as a symbol of Christ that dwells inside us); "But the word is very nigh unto you, in your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it" [30:14; Revelation 10:6-8].

(c) *Our Will is Free:* "See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil" [30:15]. Thus, we are without justification as long as God has sanctified the freedom of our will so that we can choose our way without obligation or oppression.

## **A Bright Image of the Keeper of the Covenant:**

As Moses was faithful in executing the covenant, he became a bright image even in his last days:

1. He found his pleasure in the continual of the work through his student [31]. The successful leader is the one that takes care of the second-in-command so that the work would not stop. Moses supported the people so that Joshua would be able to fulfill his mission. He also supported Joshua himself and declared: "And the LORD, he it is that does go before you; he will be with you, he will

not fail you, neither forsake you; fear not, neither be dismayed" [31:8].

2. The commitment of reading the Law publicly before all the people, even the children, in the feast of the tabernacles in the seventh year; in addition to the commitment of the Levites to write the Law and to put it beside the Ark of the Testimony.
3. He ended his life with praises even while still teaching [the final hymn in Deuteronomy 32]. Even the imagination of the greatest writers and poets is short of uttering anything like it.
4. He blessed the people, forgetting all their opposition against him [33]. The blessing of Jacob [Genesis 49] demonstrated the work of his children, which contained several shameful things, while the blessing of Moses demonstrated the working of the divine grace as they were bound through a covenant with God. The blessings unto all the tribes (except Simeon) were filled with words of consolation that reveal God's thoughts and grace which He bestows unto His people.
5. He enjoyed a unique death, as nobody attended his funeral except God and His angels, while God Himself buried Him [34:6]. Since Moses was used to meeting with God on the mountain to receive the Law, even his death occurred on Mount "Nebo"; i.e. on a high hill, to behold with faith what God has promised his fathers and which would come true with his people. He cheered and rejoiced as if he has received the fulfillment of the promise himself.

God feared that the people would worship Moses, and thus He hid his sepulture from all men [34:6]. Moses lived for 120 years, but his eyes never wearied neither did he lose his vividness. This conveys how the believer enjoys eternal enlightenment and youth, without having his inner soul being stroked with blindness or old age [Psalms 103:5].

The Book testified that: "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face" [34:10]; as if they key to his strength was meeting with God and talking to Him.

### **Our Place in the LORD:**

The Book of Deuteronomy is the book of the "Divine Covenant" and of "Love", in which God revealed His love unto man and assured me that I have a special place in the LORD:

- I walk behind Him [1:30, 33; 9:3] so that He would defend me and become my Leader.
- I'm held in His arms [1:31]. Tender fatherhood!
- He draws unto me and me unto Him [10:15, 20]. He is the Granter of life.
- In His hands [33:3; John 10:28-29; Isaiah 41:10] I find care!
- At His feet [33:3; Luke 10:39] I learn!
- By His side [33:12; Songs 8:5]; in friendship as He has His own attraction!
- Between His shoulders [33:12; Luke 15:5] I find fullness and saturation!