Deuteronomy 26 – Confirming the Covenant

* Chapter 26 is the closing out of an extended section of direct discourse from God through Moses to the people, beginning back in 5:1. God gives specific commands for the people as to how they should worship once they have received the land. It is presented in the form of a dialogue between the people, the High Priest and God. Through this, the people recount God’s redemption and love for them in bringing them from slavery to the Promised Land. Their response is to bring God their first fruits and participate in joyful worship, with everyone who is in the land, including those who do not hold land titles. Tied to this is the reminder to observe the third-year tithe. Its position following firstfruits serves, “to reinforce the idea that the benevolence of God’s people was to operate in two dimensions, the vertical and the horizontal. Thus the offering of firstfruits to the Lord (26:1–11) could not be separated from the beneficence to be shown to fellow kingdom citizens (vv. 12–15).”[[1]](#footnote-2)
* The chapter closes with a charge to covenant commitment. The people must obey not only because God has commanded them, and they have declared their allegiance to Him, but because God has loved them and made them His own. An understanding of His heart and plans for them ought to motivate their obedience. Therefore, this section not only functions to conclude the detailed explanation of the law begun in chapter 12, but also acts as a transition into the coming discourse on blessings and curses in the following two chapters.[[2]](#footnote-3)

## Deut. 26:1-15 ~ Laws of Covenant Celebration and Confirmation[[3]](#footnote-4)

1. **Firstfruits, vv. 1-11**:

*1 “Then it shall be, when you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance, and you possess it and live in it, 2 that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground which you bring in from your land that the Lord your God gives you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place where the Lord your God chooses to establish His name. 3 “You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him, ‘I declare this day to the Lord my God that I have entered the land which the Lord swore to our fathers to give us.’ 4 “Then the priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of the Lord your God. 5 “You shall answer and say before the Lord your God, ‘My father was a wandering Aramean, and he went down to Egypt and sojourned there, few in number; but there he became a great, mighty and populous nation. 6 ‘And the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, and imposed hard labor on us. 7 ‘Then we cried to the Lord, the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction and our toil and our oppression; 8 and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm and with great terror and with signs and wonders; 9 and He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. 10 ‘Now behold, I have brought the first of the produce of the ground which You, O Lord have given me.’ And you shall set it down before the Lord your God, and worship before the Lord your God; 11 and you and the Levite and the alien who is among you shall rejoice in all the good which the Lord your God has given you and your household.”*

* This section progresses away from what has been previously spoken, to set specific commands that ought to be carried out after Israel has settled into the Promised Land. In verse 1 God reminds the people that the land he is providing them is a gift, referring to it as an inheritance. God has not mandated the conquest for it to fail, but for the people to succeed in taking the land that they may live in it.
  + “Israel’s entrance into the land was commanded (1:8; 4:1), performed by God himself (4:38; 8:7; 9:28; 31:21), and presented as an outcome of covenantal obedience (6:18; 8:1; 10:11; 11:8, 31), and it will be brought to completion in the near future (26:3).”[[4]](#footnote-5)
* Verse 2 and 3 provide the preparatory acts of firstfruits. They will gather the firstfruits and then gather themselves together at the central location of worship so that they might bring what has been gathered to the priest. Elsewhere in the Pentateuch, God has already provided this command to His people to perform this worship ceremony (Exod. 23:19; 34:26; Lev. 23:10; Num. 28:26).
  + “The intention of the instruction is to provide for a regular act of worship, that is, not a single occasion as soon as the people arrive in the land (*pace* Craigie 1976a: 319). This is clear from the phrase ‘the priest in office at the time.’”[[5]](#footnote-6)
  + “Unlike Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the offering of firstfruits was a new religious institution in ancient Israel, for before taking possession of the land, they were not an agricultural people.”[[6]](#footnote-7)
* By bringing the people together immediately after settling into the land, God not only provides the people an opportunity to worship Him for what He has done (as will be expressed in the coming verses), but also protects them from the mistake of attributing it to the work of another deity (as they did after the Exodus with the golden calf cf. Exodus 32).
* Further specification for how the people are to worship after gathering is delineated in verses 3-11. The commands are presented in the form of making two declarations. The people are first to speak to the “priest who is in office at that time.” This is therefore not a reference to any priest, but to whoever is presently serving as the High Priest over Israel.
* The opening statement of verse 3 is to be a confirmation that God’s promise has come to pass. The people are told to recognize that their reception of the land is the result of God’s faithfulness to the promises which He made previously to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The people cannot claim their own faithfulness or righteousness as the premise upon which they now dwell in the land.
  + “The confession is further remarkable in that it focuses the response required of Israel on to the individual worshipper, who says, ‘*I* have come …’ The ceremony pictured therefore realizes the response expected of all Israelites to the command of Yahweh concerning their life before him in the land. The required confession, that is, of what Israel *shall* say, may be contrasted with what it expressly must *not* say, namely, ‘It is because of my innocence that the Lord has brought me here to possess this land’ (9:4).”[[7]](#footnote-8)
  + “The close relationship between ‘land’ and ‘place’ of worship is heightened by the use of *māqôm*, ‘place’, to mean ‘land’ in v. 9. This echoes the use of the word several times in chs. 1–11 to mean the place at which Israel then stood (Moab; 1:31; 9:7; 11:5). The designation of the land (of Canaan) as the ‘place’ to which Yahweh has brought the people thus marks the progression from Moab into the promised land.”[[8]](#footnote-9)
* In verse 4 that which was gathered is then to be delivered to the priest and brought before the altar of the Lord as an offering. Rather than simply stating that the basket is brought before the altar, which could easily be abused by a wandering heart, the altar is specified as “of the Lord your God.”
* V. 5 begins the second affirmation. After addressing the priest, the people are to address God. “The worshiper’s second affirmation provides a more detailed review of Israel’s past experience.”[[9]](#footnote-10) They are to recount God’s mercy and power in bringing Israel out of slavery in Egypt. This entire speech serves to bring God glory and put His might on display. In every instance, the people are seen as the beneficiaries of God’s work, not as the ones who have accomplished anything.
  + “My father” refers to Jacob and he is described as a “wandering Aramean.” “The meaning of the Hebrew phrase “'arammiy 'oved” is not certain…The translation “wandering Aramean” retains the alliterative quality of the original Hebrew expression and can be understood in poetic fashion to include all of the above options. Buber interprets the word “gone astray” as pastoral language (*On the Bible,* 127), “used when a sheep has lost the flock to which it belongs (Jer. 50:6; Ezek. 34:4, 16; Psalm 119:176).”[[10]](#footnote-11)
* The idea, however, seems pretty straightforward. The description here portrays Jacob as a nobody from nowhere. God did not take a person of prominent position, but one of lowly status (This point was made at length in chapter 8). The contrast between the wandering beginnings and now confession of the possession of the Promise Land provides a stark contrast.
* The transformation of the nation from small to great also highlights God’s power. Israel and his small family of 70 (Gen 49:8-27) had to move to Egypt to escape starvation in the midst of famine. Nevertheless, though they came to Egypt, “few in number,” God multiples them their according to His promises (Gen 15:5).
* V. 6 shows that things in Egypt took Israel from a state of bad to worse. The threefold description “treated us harshly and afflicted us, and imposed hard labor on us” “emphasize[s] the burdensome nature of Israel’s suffering in Egypt.”[[11]](#footnote-12)Yet, at the same time, this creates the black backdrop upon which God unfolds his beautiful plan of redemption. God will always keep His promises and so as verse 7 recollects, the people cry out to Him, He hears their cries and sees their affliction. In response, God redeems His people.
* The description of the Exodus in verse 8 highlights the way in which God accomplished the redemption of His nation.
  + “Yahweh delivered his people “with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm” (cf. 4:34; 11:2; see comment on 5:15 and 7:17–19). The word pair, “signs and wonders,” occurs in five other passages in Deuteronomy to describe Yahweh’s miraculous intervention (4:34; 6:22; 7:19; 29:2; 34:11; paralleled with môrāʾ, “terror,” in 4:34 and 34:12.”[[12]](#footnote-13)
* By rehearsing God’s power in the Exodus, the people would likely have remembered the miracles through which God rescues His people. Therefore, as much as this is certainly a reminder of God’s infinite power, it should also help prevent the nation’s heart from turning back to Egypt and their gods, YHWH has already demonstrated His power over the Egyptian pantheon (see comments on 4:20).
* V. 9 concludes the synthesis of the history of God’s redemption of His people, speaking of the land which God has given to Israel. If God is to fulfill His promise to Abraham Isaac and Jacob, He cannot simply bring the people out of Egypt. Rather, He must bring them back into the Canaan. The final clause of verse 9 describes the land. God has not given the people a mediocre gift, but a land characterized by abundance. This will be a fulfillment of what He promised the nation upon hearing their cries in Egypt (cf. Ex 3:8, 17).
  + “Buber notes that no peasant farmer would describe the land of his desire in this way. When the peasant praises his land, he says: “A land of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates” (8:8). The difference in these statements highlights the provision of God in the land apart from the Israelite’s labors. Buber notes, “The saying refers to representative products that the land offers to the newcomer without the need of any effort on his part: milk, into which the energy of the rich pastures, as it were of one tremendous oasis, is converted and honey for the refreshment of passers-by” (*On the Bible,* 125–26).”[[13]](#footnote-14)
* V. 10 concludes the recitation by stating why the gathering has happened in the first place. The recognition of God’s provision is made explicit. Since He is the one who has given the people the land, He is also the one who gives the people the produce of the land. This confession, then (vv. 3-10), serves as the basis for the celebration of first fruits, in which the people have come to joyfully offer up the first yield of what God has provided, in faith that God will now provide the rest of the harvest.
  + “The force of the confession, therefore, is that the worshipper, bringing produce of the land, acknowledges that it is all due to Yahweh’s gift of land to Israel in the events that formed the people. The act of worship is essentially agricultural, but, as with the major feasts (16:1–17), it is understood in terms of Yahweh’s historical saving acts on the people’s behalf.”[[14]](#footnote-15)
* At this point (verse 11), there is an interesting shift in the text, yet one that has been consistent in the instructions for feasts throughout the book (14:29; 16:11, 14). This celebration is not to be done by only those who are landowners in Israel. Everyone who is in the land is to partake of God’s blessing upon the nation. Each household who comes bearing the first fruits of the land is to share with the Levites and aliens, who do not own land. Therefore, all who reside in Israel are to rejoice together in God’s goodness to the nation. “The particular focus on Levites and strangers is consistent with the concern for those who have no intrinsic right to land, and thus answers to the landlessness of Israel’s forebears (5).”[[15]](#footnote-16)
  + “Because the Levites and aliens (non-Israelites living among God’s people; see Note on 1:16) lack an allotment in the land (12:12; 14:27, 29), they will join with the worshiper in rejoicing (16:11) in God’s abundant provision (for all three groups through various means).”[[16]](#footnote-17)
  + In summary, “The basket of firstfruits was a token payment of the tithe, which was presented when the harvest was completed. The firstfruits of summer and fall produce were presented in like manner at the Festival of Booths (Sukkoth) in the fall. The presentation of firstfruits was a thanksgiving offering that the worshiper brought to the central sanctuary to ‘celebrate all the bounty that YHWH your God has given to you…’ which included the worshiper’s entire household, along with ‘the Levite and the sojourner.’”

2. **Tithes, vv. 12-15**:

*12 “When you have finished paying all the tithe of your increase in the third year, the year of tithing, then you shall give it to the Levite, to the stranger, to the orphan and to the widow, that they may eat in your towns and be satisfied. 13 “You shall say before the Lord your God, ‘I have removed the sacred portion from my house, and also have given it to the Levite and the alien, the orphan and the widow, according to all Your commandments which You have commanded me; I have not transgressed or forgotten any of Your commandments. 14 ‘I have not eaten of it while mourning, nor have I removed any of it while I was unclean, nor offered any of it to the dead. I have listened to the voice of the Lord my God; I have done according to all that You have commanded me. 15 ‘Look down from Your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel, and the ground which You have given us, a land flowing with milk and honey, as You swore to our fathers.’”*

* In verse 12 Moses now transitions into teaching about the third-year tithe which must be performed every three years in the land. This would have taken place at “a later time of year, after the various crops had been harvested, perhaps at the feast of Booths. While the tithe was an annual offering (14:22), the interest in this passage is on the tithe of the third year, which was reserved especially for the disadvantaged (12; cf. 14:28–29).”[[17]](#footnote-18)
  + “Whereas the preceding section concerned the vertical dimension of Israel’s relationship with Yahweh, these verses address the horizontal dimension of Yahweh’s expectations of his covenantal nation.”[[18]](#footnote-19)
  + “According to the law of the tithe in 14:22–27, “the tithe of your produce” was presented annually at the central sanctuary, where it was consumed by the worshiper and his household during the three pilgrimage festivals. At the end of every three years, the tithe was presented in the local towns to provide for needs of the “Levite,” the “alien,” the “orphan,” and the “widow” (see 14:28–29). The phrase “in the third year, the year of the tithe,” refers to the three-year cycle, which was repeated and then followed by the sabbatical year, when no tithe was given because no crops were planted.”[[19]](#footnote-20)
  + “It is worth noting that most of the offerings mentioned in the deuteronomic law are not supplied with a confession like this one; the firstfruits and the tithe of the third year are the only ones... In the religious life that the law code reflects, the need for the present confession arose because the tithed materials were not being brought to the sanctuary, but rather were being stored up in the cities of Israel (14:28). The confession is therefore a solemn declaration that in a sense substitutes for the act of bringing the goods to the sanctuary.”[[20]](#footnote-21)
* There is a noticeable expansion here from only Levites and aliens in firstfruits to also include widows and orphans. This tithe is not only a celebration of God’s goodness but also a means of taking care of the poor in the land. The ones who are not able to reap the produce of the land must always be taken care of. Clearly, the repetition of these details shows both God’s care for those who are less privileged and the propensity of the hardness of the Israelites hearts to not care for them.
* V. 13 records the affirmation the people are to make after they have shared with the Levite, alien, orphan and widow. They must declare their fulfillment of God’s command before Him. This functions as built-in accountability.
  + “As with the offering of the firstfruits (26:1–11), the setting aside of the tithe is to be accompanied by an affirmation from the worshiper, who first testifies to his own obedience and then asks Yahweh to continue blessing him. His testimony involves a positive and a negative statement, both of which are followed by a “global” affirmation of obedience. The giver begins by declaring that he has, in fact, “removed” this tithe from his home and turned it over to the needy people for whom it was intended.”[[21]](#footnote-22)
  + “The tithe itself is referred to as ‘the holy portion’, or strictly ‘the holy (thing)’. This word is used only three times in Deuteronomy, though it is frequent in other contexts for the sanctuary, or for the abstract idea of holiness. The occurrences in Deuteronomy are all in chs. 12 and 26: in 12:26 it refers to offerings in general, and in 26:15 it is used in the sense of ‘sanctuary’ (cf. Exod. 26:33), in this case meaning Yahweh’s dwelling-place in heaven. Only in v. 13 is it used of a particular offering.”[[22]](#footnote-23)
  + To refer to the tithe as a “sacred portion” “indicates a rigorous separation (McConville, 381) to emphasize that the worshiper has kept absolutely none of the tithe for personal consumption.”[[23]](#footnote-24)
* The contents of this statement (13-14) articulate that the manner in which the tithe was given was exactly according to God’s instructions. God is not only particular about how He is worshiped, but this specificity prevents syncretistic worship. The different details provided in verse 14 (mourning, being unclean, and offering to the dead) allude to various practices of the pagan worship of the surrounding nations.
  + “The noun translated “mourning” (*ʾōneh*) is derived not from the verb *ʾāwan* (“be strong, mighty”) but from *ʾānâ* (“mourn”). It occurs only one other time in Hos 9:4 in the context of pagan rituals in which grain and wine were consumed and offered as sacrifices (Hos 9:1–5). Israelite mourning, to the contrary, was to include fasting as Ezek 24:15–24 makes clear. Ordinary mourning occasioned by death was not in view here, however, for the offerer was to disclaim having made any offering to the dead. This no doubt is to be understood in terms of Canaanite ritual in which deities such as Baal who had been consigned to the Netherworld were sustained by food offerings until they could revive and return to their procreative function on the earth.”[[24]](#footnote-25)
  + “The affirmation that the worshipper has not removed the tithe ‘while in mourning’ can be explained by the fact that he would or might have been ritually unclean because of contact with a corpse… This best explains the second disclaimer, ‘I have not … removed it while ritually unclean’, which proceeds to a comprehensive statement that the offerer was in a ritually ‘clean’ state. The language of cleanness and uncleanness belongs to the ‘holiness sphere’, that is, the organization of the world according to categories of holiness, regular cleanness and uncleanness or contamination. Just as the offerer could not make offerings in the sanctuary while ‘unclean’, neither could he handle the third-year tithe in such a condition, even though it never came to the sanctuary.”[[25]](#footnote-26)
  + “The statement “I have not given any of it to the dead” refers to the common practice in antiquity of providing food and drink for the dead in Sheol. “In some graves excavated at Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, holes were found in the floors, similar to holes found in tombs at Ugarit, which served as receptacles for food and drink offerings to the dead. The Torah does not forbid this practice, but because contact with the dead is ritually defiling, it prohibits the use of the tithe for it” (Tigay [1996] 244; Lewis, *Cults of the Dead,* 97, 102–3).”[[26]](#footnote-27)
* The final affirmation of verse 14 emphasizes the true obedience of the giver. “I have listened to the voice of the Lord my God; I have done according to all that You have commanded me.” The Israelite first listens, then he proceeds to do. There is no aspect in which he has fallen short of what God commands, rather he has “done according to all that you have commanded.” Obedience is also never partial.
* The closing details of verse 15 are a request to God. The Israelites are to ask the Lord to fulfill that which He said He would do (cf. 7:13; 28:4, 11). This is fascinating, as God has made it clear that he will provide the very things they are to request. “The worshipper, having declared his faithfulness in responding to all Yahweh’s commands, now claims his promises.”[[27]](#footnote-28)
  + “Contrary to the frail, ineffectual gods of the nations who could even die and lie beneath the earth, Israel’s God reigned from heaven above. But his transcendence did not nullify his interest in and involvement with his covenant nation. He had made solemn promises to their fathers to give them the land of Canaan, one that flowed with milk and honey, not because of fructifying forces attributed to nature gods but because of his providential grace (cf. Deut 11:8–12).”[[28]](#footnote-29)
  + “God’s blessings on Israel are not something they deserve in the light of their obedience in this area; their covenantal Lord has simply determined to bless them. The worshiper is asking Yahweh to continue blessing them. These blessings (being in the land God promises and enjoying abundance of agriculture and livestock) are a fulfillment of the oath Yahweh made to the patriarchs."[[29]](#footnote-30)
* Both the celebration of first fruits and giving the third-year tithe have been presented as carried by individuals. Yet, with the nation of Israel, it is impossible to separate the individual from the whole. This can even be seen in the request made after completing the tithe. “As Tigay notes, the prayer that God would “bless your people Israel” “is typical of prescribed prayers in Judaism: the individual does not pray on his own behalf but on behalf of the entire Jewish people or the whole human race” ([1996] 244).”[[30]](#footnote-31)

## Deut. 26:16-19 ~ Repetition of Covenant Commitments

*16 “This day the Lord your God commands you to do these statutes and ordinances. You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul. 17 “You have today declared the Lord to be your God, and that you would walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments and His ordinances, and listen to His voice. 18 “The Lord has today declared you to be His people, a treasured possession, as He promised you, and that you should keep all His commandments; 19 and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, for praise, fame, and honor; and that you shall be a consecrated people to the Lord your God, as He has spoken.”*

* Before Israel can get too far ahead of themselves, the focus shifts away from the future and back to the present. “The phrase ‘this day’, in the emphatic initial position in the clause, draws attention to the return to the Mosaic present. There is a return, too, to the Deuteronomic main theme, the need to keep the ‘laws and statutes’, which have now been fully rehearsed. Deut. 26:16 thus echoes 12:1, which marked the beginning of the law code, and announces its closure.”[[31]](#footnote-32)
  + “The recitation of the laws that God revealed to Moses is now complete, and attention shifts to the covenant relationship between God and his chosen people. The people solemnly declare that YHWH is their God and that they will obey him (v 17); and God, on his part, affirms that he will set them “high above all the nations … for praise and for fame and for honor” and that Israel shall be a holy people (vv 18–19).”[[32]](#footnote-33)
* Verses 16-19 contain a reciprocal affirmation of God’s covenant with Israel. “In this ratification of the covenant, Israel declares their allegiance to the Lord (26:17), and God declares his faithfulness to his promises (26:18–19). Both affirmations are to serve as a motivation for Israel’s obedience to the covenantal stipulations.”[[33]](#footnote-34)
  + **“**The recapitulative nature of this passage is clear from the repeated use of the technical covenant terms “decrees” (*ḥuqqîm*, vv. 16–17), “laws” (*mišpāṭîm*, vv. 16–17), and “commands” (*miṣwôt*, vv. 17–18) and the reference to Israel as a “holy people” (v. 19), the Lord’s “treasured possession” (*ʿam sĕgullâ*, v. 18). The stipulation section had begun with an appeal to obey the “decrees and laws” that were about to be promulgated (Deut 5:1); and in declaring the heart of the covenant revelation, Moses had, in the Shema, commanded the people to love the Lord “with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deut 6:5), the very words of our text (v. 16).”[[34]](#footnote-35)
* V. 16 is the command of God for the people's complete obedience to the laws set before them. The repetition of the language of the Shema “with all your heart and with all your soul” puts faith and love (see comments on 6:5) front and center in true obedience and consequently the keeping of the covenant. The people will never truly keep the commandments of God if it is merely an external act.
* In verse 17 Israel professes their obedience to the laws which God has laid out before them. In Israel’s affirmation, once again, obedience is not disconnected from listening. It is always when the people stop listening to the voice of God that their hearts wander from keeping His commandments.
* The opening statements of verses 17 and 18 are a mirror image of each other, “You have today declared the Lord to be your God… The Lord has today declared you to be His people”, showing both parties as participants in this affirmation of covenant commitment. It thus elaborates the basic covenantal formula, ‘I will be your God, and you shall be my people.’[[35]](#footnote-36)
* God’s declaration in verse 18 is the grounds upon which the covenant has come to the nation, God’s sovereign choice has established a relationship with the people. He has set His love upon the nation of Israel. He heard their cries in Egypt. In His grace, he has redeemed them from slavery and brought them into a good land. The nation is described as “His people, a treasured possession” (see comments on 4:20 and 7:6).
* The logical outcome of all this is that Israel would be a nation obedient to their God. They respond to His great love for them in kind. Israel’s obedience is grounded in God’s love and choice of them.
  + “Though Israel, as the people of God, were commanded to observe the laws as delineated in Deut 12–26, the matter of greatest importance is their attitude. That they were chosen as YHWH’s “treasured people” is not a basis for pride. The privilege carries a heavy responsibility. If their obedience to God’s laws comes from the heart, then God will exalt them in such a manner that they become a source of praise and honor among the nations.”[[36]](#footnote-37)
* Where verse 18 spoke of a past promise, verse 19 speaks of a future promise. If Israel is obedient to the Law, God will make them into a beacon of His glory. “This is in line with the perspective of Deuteronomy that Israel is to be a kind of demonstration to the world of what Yahweh has done for his people.”[[37]](#footnote-38)
  + “The words of ratification of the Moab covenant (16–19) round off the legal section of Deuteronomy on a high note, returning to the theology of Israel’s election. They reach back past ch. 12 to the primary exposition of election in 7:6–11. Israel is Yahweh’s ‘treasured possession’ (cf. 7:6). But there is enhancement here, for now they are not merely chosen ‘out of all the people on earth’, but they are to be set ‘high above all nations that he has made, for praise and fame and honour’ (cf. 28:1). In 10:21 it was said that ‘Yahweh is your praise’, meaning that it was he who made Israel worthy of praise among the nations (cf. the thought in 4:6–8). The reversal here has the same effect: Israel will be honoured among the nations. The same threefold expression (‘praise and fame and honour’) is found also in Jer. 13:11; 33:9 (cf. Zeph. 3:19–20), where it means that Israel should bring honour to Yahweh among the nations.”[[38]](#footnote-39)
  + “The object of that praise is not the people of Israel; it is God himself…It is not our honor that is spoken of here, but his… God chose Israel to be a special people on the basis of his own lovingkindness—it is a matter of God’s grace, and God’s grace alone. It is our heartfelt response to God’s love and commitment to us as his “treasured possession” that he desires of us by means of obedience to his commands. That is what will bring forth his praise and honor among the nations.”[[39]](#footnote-40)
* This has been the mission of the nation from when it was first given the law at Sinai (Ex 19:6). It is through obedience to the covenants that the nations will come to know God. God’s glory is spread through His people's law keeping, for as the world sees the people of God live in obedience, they see God, whom the people obey (cf. Deut 4:6-8).

1. Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, vol. 4, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 335. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. J. G. McConville, *Deuteronomy*, ed. David W. Baker and Gordon J. Wenham, vol. 5, Apollos Old Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 376. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, vol. 4, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 331. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Michael A. Grisanti, *Deuteronomy*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, Kindle ed., The Expositor’s Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), Loc 8538. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. J. G. McConville, *Deuteronomy*, ed. David W. Baker and Gordon J. Wenham, vol. 5, Apollos Old Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Apollos; InterVarsity Press, 2002), 377. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12*, vol. 6B, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 636. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. J. G. McConville, *Deuteronomy*, ed. David W. Baker and Gordon J. Wenham, vol. 5, Apollos Old Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Apollos; InterVarsity Press, 2002), 378. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. J. G. McConville, *Deuteronomy*, ed. David W. Baker and Gordon J. Wenham, vol. 5, Apollos Old Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Apollos; InterVarsity Press, 2002), 378. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Grisanti, *Deuteronomy*, Loc 8549. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
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