

Notebook Assignment:

Literary Perspective: Deuteronomy as a covenant

Due 9/29

The basic parts of an Ancient Near Eastern covenant document (suzerain-vassal treaty) are:

- 1. Preamble-** identity of the great king (suzerain)
- 2. Past Acts-** identify all the great things the suzerain has done for the vassal
- 3. Rules-** how to live under this binding contract
- 4. Rewards-** blessings for obedience, curses for disobedience
- 5. Future Acts-** how this relationship will be carried forward (will it be read out loud, who will be counted as leading this document, how to renew this relationship, etc.)

The book of Deuteronomy roughly follows this pattern. *It describes the events in the time of Moses to guide the nation of Israel in covenant renewal under Joshua.*

1. Preamble- vv.1:1-4

Who is the Suzerain? Who is able to speak authoritatively on His behalf?

2. Past Acts- vv. 1:5-4:43

What are some of the great things the Suzerain has done for the vassal?

3. Rules- vv. 4:44-26:19

Chapter 5 has something familiar to us, what is it and why is it listed again here? (hint: look at vv. 1:34-46 for help) What are some of the rules of this Suzerain-vassal relationship? Can any vassal act as they want under this relationship?

4. Rewards- vv. 27:1-30:20

What are some blessings? Curses? Can someone obey 60% of the time and still get blessings? 90%? 99.9999%?

5. Future Acts- vv.31:1-34:12

Who will lead Israel into the promised land, and assume leadership of the people under this renewed covenant?

Look at vv. 31:24-29.

What does Moses write down?

Where does he put this document?

What was in the ark to begin with? (hint: Ex. 25:21)

Is Moses optimistic or not? Why?

Read Numbers 14:11-12, 14:26-35, 25:1-5. What conclusions related to the covenant in Deuteronomy can you draw from this?