

The restatement of the Law of Moses in the book of Deuteronomy is a second focus on the things that really matter in the formation of the nation of Israel as God's representatives on earth. It is part of the inspired Word of God and therefore should not be added to nor taken away from, as is explicitly taught in verse 2 "*Ye shall not add unto the word that I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you*". Moses is set out as the divine representative or angel through whom God had chosen to speak to His people at this time in His unfolding purpose.

This precept is found elsewhere in the scriptures as we would expect. Revelation 22v18,19 is one such passage

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book."

Another similar passage is Proverbs 30v5,6

"Every Word of God is pure He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. Add thou not unto His words lest He reprove thee and thou be found a liar."

Also, in Deuteronomy 12v32 "*What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it.*"

The Jews of Jewish day did not seem to have understood this concept as they negated the divine requirements of the Law by their traditions. Matthew 15v1-9. Any interpretations of the Bible must be consistent with God's revealed priorities and stated intentions.

The Ten commandments are also described as being the Covenant God made with the people of Israel. The ten commandments are not a worldwide set of rules for all people in every age. Verse 13 "*And He declared unto you **His covenant** which He commanded you to perform **even ten commandments** and Hew wrote them upon two tables of stone.*" This is particularly evident with regard to the commandment of the Sabbath. Verse 5 also points to this issue. "*Even as the LORD my God commanded me that ye should do so **in the land** whither ye go to possess it.*"

This was a witness to others. "*For this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations which shall hear all these statutes.*" Israel was to be a template which if successful could be replicated in others also and in the adoption of the Judeo-Christian western world we see this mirrored in a limited way. It can be argued that any of the successes of the European civilisation was due to this acceptance.

The setting up of cities of refuge in the east of Jordan was a fore runner of admittance that the forthcoming society was far from perfect and must have coping mechanisms for failure and sin.

God removed *“from before thee greater and mightier”* nations than Israel itself. This was not so much a genocide but a cultural eradication of the system of behaviour and not the actual people because they were born to certain parents. God did this through several methods *“by temptations by signs and by wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm and by great terrors”*. Using these which are evil in effect if not evil morally, demonstrates that as God says that *“there is none else”*. There is no concentration of evil distinct from God and men, there is God the author of all including evil and man the sinner who often delights in doing evil for his own purposes and self-gratification.

There are several other verses in the book of Deuteronomy which mention the stretched-out arm 5v15 7v19 9v29 11v2 this includes chastisement as well as deliverance. Like other areas God manifests both sides of His divine character. His arm is not literal here but a metaphorical aspect of His projected influence and power. God is not limited by any physical body as mortal are.

Romans 10v21 has *“All day long have I **stretched out my hands** unto a disobedient and gainsaying people”*. God has been active in seeking the welfare of His people Israel despite their own rejection of Him and His Law and His Son.