

DESERT

and clays with some alluvial loess, supports many perennial water sources and some year-round vegetation on both wadi bottoms and some north-facing slopes. It was survivable by shepherds grazing goats but supported no reliable dry farming.

Associated with Zin was the oasis region of Kadesh-barnea, portrayed as an important Israelite stopping place and central meeting point. It was apparently located in a border region between Paran and Zin, for it was linked to both (Paran: Num. 13:26; Zin: 20:1; 27:14; 33:36). and may have included all the oases of the modern 'Ain el-Qudeirat region. Stories about Moses sending the 12 scouts (Num. 13) and striking water from the rock (ch. 20) and the Israelites attempting to enter the Promised Land prematurely (14:39-45) occurred there during a lengthy stay (14:33, 35; Deut. 1:46).

Conditions and Lessons

Life in the desert teaches important lessons about faith and ethics. Surviving in this unforgiving environment requires both specialized knowledge and the discipline to apply it. Yet no amount of skill and discipline will guarantee survival, so desert life requires that people help each other, and it also generates more direct trust in God. The desert seems to facilitate revelation. People hear the voice of God more clearly, unimpeded by civilization or their own rationalizations.

Biblical Accounts

Desert played a major role in the accounts of the patriarchs (Gen. 12-50). As a whole, this cycle created a symbolic salvation geography in which the desert fringes of the Promised Land rather than the great civilizations of the day (Mesopotamia and Egypt) functioned as the chosen place for training the nascent chosen people.

The most important desert stories relate to the Exodus (Exod. 15:22; 16:1; 17:1), Sinai (18:5; 19:1-2), and 40-year sojourn (Num. 14:33; 32:13; Deut. 2:7).

The desert functioned as a place of refuge from oppression, e.g., for Hagar from Sarai (Gen. 16:7), Moses from the pharaoh (Exod. 2:15-3:1), Benjaminites from Israelites (Judg. 20:47), David from Saul (1 Sam. 23-26) and later from Absalom (2 Sam. 15-17), and Elijah from Jezebel (1 Kgs. 19:1-4).

Desert themes are similar in the NT. John the Baptist trained for his ministry and carried it out in the desert, preaching a message of repentance and justice characteristic of desert values (Matt. 3:1-12; 11:7-10; Mark 1:3-4; Luke 1:80; 3:1-20; John 1:23). There Jesus made his final preparation before embarking on his public ministry (Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13) and retreated to desert places for renewal or revelation (Matt. 14:13; Mark 6:30-32; Luke 4:42; 5:16; 6:12; John 6:15; 11:54).

Bibliography. G. Brubacher, "City and Civilization Ideology in the Book of Genesis," in *Within the Perfection of Christ*, ed. T. L. Brensinger and E. M. Sider (Napanea, Ind.), 33-46; A. Danin, *Desert Vegetation of Israel and Sinai* (Jerusalem, 1983); E. Orni and E. Elisha, *Geography of Israel*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem, 1980); S. Talmon, "midbār, 'ārābā," *TDOT* 8:87-118.

DESTROYER

rusalem, 1983); E. Orni and E. Elisha, *Geography of Israel*, 4th ed. (Jerusalem, 1980); S. Talmon, "midbār, 'ārābā," *TDOT* 8:87-118.

GORDON BRUBACHER

DESOLATING SACRILEGE

The usurping of God's prerogative of worship by a pagan political power (Heb. *šiqqūs šōmēm*; Gk. *bdelygma tēs erēmōseōs*); also called the abomination of desolation. A part of the Jewish and early Christian apocalyptic traditions, the desolating sacrilege occurred in 167 B.C.E. with the desecration of the Jerusalem temple by the Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; 1 Macc. 1:54, 59). Antiochus forcibly ended Jewish worship and introduced the worship of Zeus Olympios (2 Macc. 6:1), placing an altar to Zeus upon the altar of burnt offerings (Josephus *Ant.* 12.253). In Daniel the phrase "desolating sacrilege" is perhaps a mocking distortion of "Lord of Heaven" (*ba'al šāmēn*), the Greek Zeus Olympios.

Subsequent Jewish tradition and the NT regarded this desolating sacrilege as a prophetic paradigm for analogous idolatrous attacks on the people of God by pagans. Jesus prophesied that a desolating sacrilege would occur in Judea (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14), but the referent is uncertain. Proposals include Caligula's attempt to erect his statue in the temple in 39-40 C.E.; events leading to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. (Luke 21:20), especially the activity of the Zealots in the temple (Josephus *BJ* 4.196-207); and the coming of the antichrist. Paul's man of lawlessness (2 Thess. 2:1-12) and the beast of Revelation (Rev. 13, 17) are other versions of the desolating sacrilege tradition.

Bibliography. D. Ford, *The Abomination of Desolation in Biblical Eschatology* (Washington, 1979).

DUANE F. WATSON

DESTROYER

The manifestation of Yahweh's power as the angel of death. For the final plague upon Egypt, Yahweh promises to slay the firstborn sons of the Egyptians (Exod. 11:4-8). As the agent of divine destruction passes through the land (Exod. 12:29), the Israelites avoid calamity by following Yahweh's command to smear lamb's blood on their door lintels (vv. 21-23). A destroying angel performs other acts of punishment following David's census (2 Sam. 24:16-17) and among the Assyrian camp during the siege of Jerusalem in Hezekiah's reign (Isa. 37:36). In the OT the destroyer (Heb. *mašhit, šōdēd*) also refers to human agents employed as instruments of Yahweh's power (Job 15:21; Isa. 21:2; Jer. 4:7; 48:8, 15, 18).

In the NT, Paul commands the Corinthians not to complain as the Israelites did in the wilderness when Yahweh loosed the destroyer (Gk. *olothreutēs*) upon them (1 Cor. 10:10; cf. Num. 16:13-14, 41-50). It is not clear whether Paul identifies the destroyer as Satan or as a specific angel. The latter identification represents the view in rabbinic literature.

WILLIAM D. MATHERLY

DEUEL

DEUEL (Heb. *dē'ū'ēl*)

A representative of the tribe of Gad in the wilderness and the father of Eliasaph (Num. 1:14; 7:42, 47). At Num. 2:14 he is called Reuel (4), probably resulting from a confusion of the Hebrew consonants *daleth* and *resh*.

DEUTERO-ISAIAH

See ISAIAH, BOOK OF.

DEUTERO-ZECHARIAH

See ZECHARIAH, BOOK OF.

DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS

An alternate name ("second canon") which the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches apply to those books found in the LXX and Vulgate but not in the Hebrew text of the OT. According to the decision of the Council of Trent (1548) and the First Vatican Council (1870) these books, like those of the Hebrew canon, are regarded as possessing divine and canonical authority.

See APOCRYPHA.

DEUTERONOMISTIC HISTORY

The Deuteronomistic (or Deuteronomic) history (DH) is a theoretical construct used by modern scholars to comprehend the unity exhibited by the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. This scholarly consensus owes much to Martin Noth's classic study, which emphasized that the books of Deuteronomy through Kings constitute a continuous history characterized by a basic homogeneity in language, style, and content. In Noth's reconstruction, the Deuteronomist incorporated the Deuteronomic law into the beginning of his work, framing it with speeches by Moses, and then added other sources — tales of conquest and settlement, prophetic narratives and speeches, official annals and records. The Deuteronomist ordered and shaped these sources, introduced his own distinctive chronology, and inserted his own comments and speeches (often in the mouths of major characters) at critical junctures in his history. Because the Deuteronomist's compositional technique included selection, editing, and creation of new material, the resulting work was not merely a compilation of tales, annals, and sagas, but a unified work manifesting a deliberate design and a uniformity of purpose. Noth's study provided a cogent alternative both to those earlier scholars who concentrated solely upon isolated historical books without recognizing their relationship to others within the DH and to those who attempted to identify strands within the DH continuous with or analogous to pentateuchal sources.

Thematically, Noth viewed the DH as a pessimistic work that chronicled and censured the record of Israel's existence in the land. To be sure, there were high points in Israel's history, such as the dedication of the temple (1 Kgs. 8), but such positive events could neither prevent the monarchy's eventual downfall nor provide a basis for future hope. The history of Israel is thus a record of "ever-

DEUTERONOMISTIC HISTORY

intensifying decline" that ends in disaster — the Babylonian Exile. Noth's views have been developed and refined in recent scholarship. John Van Seters defends the essential unity of the DH through a comparison with ancient Near Eastern and Greek historiography. New literary critics emphasize its unity as a carefully crafted work of art.

Many other scholars have sought to modify Noth's views. Both Gerhard von Rad and Hans Walter Wolff challenge Noth's conclusions about purpose and theme. Von Rad points to an alternation between themes of "gospel" and "law" in Samuel-Kings. The Davidic promises delay the Exile (e.g., 1 Kgs. 11:11-13, 31-35), while Jehoiachin's release from prison (2 Kgs. 25:27-30) adumbrates the ultimate revival of David's line, signalling that the DH ends with a messianic promise and not a final judgment. Wolff cites the importance of turning (*šûb*) to Yahweh in Deuteronomy, Judges, and Kings to argue that the DH advances an element of hope. Divine judgment does not entail Israel's doom but calls the exiles to repentance, because the people's return (*šûb*) to God can elicit God's compassionate return to them (1 Kgs. 8:46-53).

Frank M. Cross and Rudolf Smend challenge Noth's notion that the DH was the product of one exilic author. These scholars, and the schools of thought they have come to represent, posit a series of editions. Cross argues that the main edition of the DH was composed during the reign of Josiah as a programmatic document promoting Josiah's revival of the Davidic state. This primary edition of the DH (Dtr¹) was retouched and revised in a much less extensive edition (2 Kgs. 23:25-25:30) in the Exile (Dtr²). Cross bases his argument on the interplay between two main themes running through most of Kings: "the sin of Jeroboam," which reverberates throughout the narration of the northern kingdom, and the promises to David, which restrain divine wrath in the history of Judah. The exilic editor (Dtr²) retouched the earlier work, introduced the sub-theme of Manasseh's apostasy, attributing the destruction of Judah to his perfidy, and recorded Judah's exile. Adherents of Cross's theory have debated whether Dtr²'s contribution was more substantial (e.g., Brian Peckham) or less so (e.g., Steven L. McKenzie). Others have focused on the work of Dtr¹. Gary N. Knoppers, e.g., argues that the attention given to the history of the northern monarchy, the fall of Israel, and the reign of Josiah, can only be understood in the context of Dtr¹'s treatment of the United Monarchy and the causes he imputes to the creation of the Divided Monarchy.

Smend construes these successive editions as present throughout much of Joshua-2 Kings, and adds a second nomistically oriented Deuteronomist (Dtr^N) to the historically oriented Deuteronomist posited by Noth (Dtr^H). To these exilic editions Walter Dietrich adds a third prophetically-oriented edition (Dtr^P), written after Dtr^H but prior to Dtr^N. Whereas Dtr^H, much like Noth's DH, functions as an etiology for the nadir of Judah, Dtr^P assails the political and cultic apostasy of

DEUTERONOMY, BOOK OF

northern royalty. The third redactor (DtrN) purportedly added assorted legal sayings, the law code itself, and the royal traditions of Jerusalem. Although Dietrich contends that all three redactions were completed by 560 B.C.E., Smend believes that DtrN stems from the early postexilic period. Other followers of Smend argue for a succession of DtrN editions. Yet others disagree with Dietrich about the nature and purpose of the major redactions — DtrH, DtrP, and DtrN.

Some recent scholars have developed new theories of multiple redactions, citing variations in the regnal formulae of northern and southern kings. Their arguments do not fall easily into any one particular pattern, but in many cases they incorporate features of the Cross or Smend hypotheses. All of these scholars (e.g., Manfred Weippert, André Lemaire, Mark A. O'Brien, Iain Provan, Baruch Halpern, and David S. Vanderhooft) speak of one or more substantial preexilic editions of the DH and of at least one exilic edition. In spite of the proliferation of different redactional hypotheses, most commentators still speak of a Deuteronomistic history, thus testifying to the profound influence of Noth's theory.

Bibliography. F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973); B. Halpern and D. S. Vanderhooft, "The Editions of Kings in the 7th-6th Centuries B.C.E.," *HUCA* 62 (1991): 179-244; G. N. Knoppers, *Two Nations Under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies*, 2 vols. HSM 52-53 (Atlanta, 1993-94); S. L. McKenzie, *The Trouble with Kings: The Composition of the Book of Kings in the Deuteronomistic History*. VTSup 42 (Leiden, 1991); M. Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History*. JSOTSup 15 (1943; Eng. trans. Sheffield, 1991); M. A. O'Brien, *The Deuteronomistic History Hypothesis*. OBO 92 (Göttingen, 1989); B. Peckham, *History and Prophecy* (New York: Doubleday, 1993); I. Provan, *Hezekiah and the Book of Kings*. BZAW 172 (Berlin, 1988); G. von Rad, *Studies in Deuteronomy*. SBT 9 (Chicago, 1953); J. Van Seters, *In Search of History* (New Haven, 1983); H. W. Wolff, "The Kerygma of the Deuteronomistic Historical Work," in *The Vitality of Old Testament Traditions*, ed. W. Brueggemann and Wolff (1961; Eng. trans. Atlanta, 1975), 83-100.

GARY N. KNOPPERS

DEUTERONOMY, BOOK OF

The fifth and final book of the Pentateuch. From both a literary and theological perspective, it is hard to overestimate the importance of the book of Deuteronomy. While it may not be a literary masterpiece itself, its direct literary influence is diffused through a good portion of the OT. For example, the writer responsible for telling the story of ancient Israel in its land found in Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings was a Deuteronomist. Other writers using Deuteronomistic language and thought edited several prophetic books, in particular, Hosea and Jeremiah. Deuteronomy, which presents itself as a written authoritative law for Israel in its land is the first book to see itself as "Scripture" (Deut.

DEUTERONOMY, BOOK OF

17:19-20; 28:58; 29:19; 31:11). Deuteronomy, which sees Israel's future as determined by its observance of the Law, shaped the development of early Judaism. This book, more than any other, enabled ancient Israel to survive the loss of its religious and cultural institutions during the Babylonian crisis. It made the Law the preeminent and life-giving religious institution for Israel.

Deuteronomy presents itself as Moses' testament to Israel, which he delivers as a farewell speech to the tribes just before his death in Transjordan and their entrance into Canaan. The "testament" was a common form used in the ancient world to diffuse moral teaching. Despite this formal unity, the book of Deuteronomy as we have it is not a unified literary work. For example, it has two introductions (1:1-4:40; 4:44-11:32). There are several appendices attached to the book, e.g., the Song of Moses (32:1-43) and the Blessing of Moses (33:2-29). There is general agreement that 4:44-28:68 forms the core of the book. Still, this core is also not a homogeneous work. The law code, which is to guide Israel's life in the land, makes up chs. 11-26. Chs. 5-11 provide a homiletic introduction to the law code. Part of Deuteronomy's genius is that it consistently tries to motivate Israel to obedience so the thrust of chs. 5-11 focuses on motivation. Chs. 27 and 28 reflect a ritual by which Israel accepts the obligations of the code.

Despite the attention Deuteronomy has received from interpreters because of its importance, consensus has not been reached about several fundamental issues. For example, what circles in ancient Israel's religious leadership groups were responsible for Deuteronomy? While most interpreters recognize that ascribing the book to Moses is a theological device to legitimate its content, they have reached no consensus about the question of authorship. Priests, prophets, sages, and elders have all been suggested. Similarly, the question of the book's date is still subject to discussion. Interpreters have supported preexilic, exilic, and postexilic dates for its composition. Many favor a date in the 7th century B.C., in part because they identify the "law book" of 2 Kgs. 23:1-3 with some form of Deuteronomy.

One of the book's most significant literary issues is not obvious to those who read the book only in English translation. There are texts in the book that address their readers in the 2nd person singular and others that use the 2nd person plural. For example, 6:7-9; 11:18-20 are nearly identical in content, but the former uses the 2nd person singular while the latter uses the 2nd person plural. Does the change in person point to two sources? Is it a didactic device to address first the individual and then the group? Is it simply a matter of literary variation? This phenomenon has attracted significant attention from interpreters. Most agree that each instance of a change in person has to be examined on its own. There does not appear to be a single explanation for the changes.

While many literary issues must yet be resolved, the importance of Deuteronomy for the develop-

DEUTERONOMY, BOOK OF

ment of ancient Israel's religious thought is clear. First, Deuteronomy introduces a new understanding of the Divine. The expression "the place that the Lord your God chooses as the dwelling for his name" (12:11) is a constant refrain in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic history. It nuances the belief of ancient peoples that their gods actually dwelt in their temples. Deuteronomy never says that God dwelt in the temple or that the temple is the "house of God." The temple is where God's *name* dwells and was built for God's *name*. God dwells in the heavens (26:15). Similarly, when speaking of the theophany on Sinai, Exod. 19:21 notes that *seeing* God posed a danger to the Israelites. For Deuteronomy, seeing God was not even an issue. It was *hearing* God that was the danger (4:32). The God that Deuteronomy describes is transcendent. This God is revealed through the Law. Obedience to that Law makes it possible for Israel to live (30:15-16).

Deuteronomy, then, is above all a law book. Still, it is not simply a repository for ancient laws. For Deuteronomy law is a living reality. The book's great achievement is how it adapts ancient legal tradition to new situations. For example, in the ancient Near East and ancient Israel sacrifices made in temples were consumed by the gods and their priests (e.g., Exod. 22:29-30 [MT 28-29]; Num. 18:15-21). In Deuteronomy it is the donor of the sacrifices who consumes them. In addition, Deuteronomy instructs the donor to invite the poor to share in the sacrificial meal (14:22-29; 15:19-23). The result of Deuteronomy's reinterpretation of ancient legal tradition is often the humanization of ancient laws. Early Judaism followed the pattern set by Deuteronomy in the production of the Mishnah and Talmud, which are new adaptations of ancient Israel's legal traditions.

Deuteronomy offers a utopian vision of Israel's life, not because it presents an unworkable plan for Israel's life in the land, but because it presents Israel with ideals rather than with laws alone. For example, the law of the king (17:14-20) is unrealistic. No ancient Near Eastern monarch would ever agree to limit his prerogatives as Deuteronomy suggests. What this law emphasizes is the equality of all Israelites under the Law. In the eyes of the Law, there are no subjects nor king but only "brothers." Similarly, Deuteronomy consistently requires people of means to remember the poor. "The widow, orphan, alien, and Levite," whom Deuteronomy never forgets (10:8; 16:11; 24:19-21; 26:12-13; 27:19), were people who had no access to land and wealth. They could not support themselves and were dependent on their fellow Israelites. Deuteronomy sides strongly with the disadvantaged.

The purpose of the Law is not simply to provide order and organization to the life of ancient Israel. For Deuteronomy, it describes a way of life that is congruent with Israel's status as the people of God (cf. 4:32-40). The idea of Israel's election stands behind the book of Deuteronomy. This election grants a status that Deuteronomy identifies when it calls Israel "a holy people" (7:6; 14:2, 21). In other ancient Israelite codes, Israel's holiness is a consequence of its observance (e.g., Exod. 22:31 [30]).

DEVIL

For Deuteronomy, holiness is a fundamental characteristic of God's people and must be the motive behind their moral choices.

Another important theological idea for Deuteronomy is the land. Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic literature have as a principal theme the fate of Israel in its land. God gave Israel the Law to observe in its land (12:1), and Israel's continued existence in the land is dependent on the quality of its observance (4:26; 11:17; 28:63; 30:19). For Deuteronomy, the land of Israel is not simply the setting for the story of Israel's life nor the basis for its economy. The land is the means by which Israel can have an authentic encounter with the Divine through the experience of God's providential care — especially through the gift of rain and fertility. Israel's infidelity can have only one consequence: the loss of its land and its communion with God. The importance of Deuteronomy in the development of Judaism has sealed Israel's relationship with its land.

Finally, Deuteronomy presents covenant as a basic metaphor for Israel's relationship with God. Some suggest that the book itself follows the structure of an ancient Near Eastern covenant. While that view may be hard to sustain, covenant is a fundamental Deuteronomistic idea. Deuteronomy sees the covenant it envisions between God and Israel as flowing from the covenant at Horeb (Sinai; cf. esp. chs. 1-3). Still, the covenant in Deuteronomy is a new covenant that responds to a new situation (29:1 [28:69]). Deuteronomy presents its readers with a notion of Israel's relationship with God that is both constant and evolving. In living out this relationship, it is important to remember the past, but it is also important to look to the changing circumstances that the people of God face. Still, the one response which must characterize Israel's reaction to these new circumstances is fidelity to its God.

Deuteronomy is the most theological book in the OT. It helped Israel survive the loss of its sacred institutions following the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians. It shaped the reconstitution of Judah following the restoration made possible by the Persians. Judaism, as it exists today, is a product of the book of Deuteronomy. Christianity developed its self-understanding in conversation with the theological perspectives that are at the heart of this book. From a theological perspective, it is hard to overestimate the value of the book of Deuteronomy.

Bibliography. G. Braulik, *The Theology of Deuteronomy* (North Richland Hills, Tex., 1994); D. L. Christensen, *A Song of Power and the Power of Song* (Winona Lake, 1993); F. García Martínez, ed., *Studies in Deuteronomy*. VTSup 3 (Leiden, 1994); E. W. Nicholson, *Deuteronomy and Tradition* (Philadelphia, 1967); M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (1972; repr. Winona Lake, 1992).

LESLIE J. HOPPE, O.F.M.

DEVIL

English translation of Gk. *diábolos*, which in both Hellenistic and Classical Greek signified an evil (human) adversary, false accuser, slanderer, calumniator.