

the content of the two stone tablets of 24:12? It could be argued that Exod 21-23 could have been included, written on a fair-sized slab, when one considers how much was included on Hammurapi's stela. This would then reflect what follows in Exod 24:1-8, "Moses recounted all the words (*dibrê*) of Yahweh and all the ordinances (*mitspatîm*)... And Moses wrote down all the words of Yahweh" (vv3 and 4). This written document is called "The Book of the Covenant" in v7 which he read to the people. This would imply that at least all of Exod 20-23 was included in the Book of the Covenant. If we accept the *waw* as introducing an apposition, then it might be possible that the two tablets of stone included Exod 21-23, the whole being called the Book of the Covenant.

The next use of *tôrâ* in a covenant context²⁷ is Deut 1:5, and indeed, throughout the book it is used some 22 times altogether. It goes without saying that we understand the book of Deuteronomy as a covenant renewal document.²⁸ With perhaps one or two exceptions, *tôrâ* is used of a corpus of material given by Moses on the plains of Moab. The corpus is referred to as "this *tôrâ*," "a copy of this *tôrâ*" (in 17: 18), "all the words of this *tôrâ*,"²⁹ and "the book of this *tôrâ*."³⁰ In the context of Deuteronomy as a covenant renewal document, several observations need to be made. First, one must not lose sight of the hortatory and didactic nature of this document. Moses is giving his last series of sermons with the express purpose of persuading God's people to obey willingly, not grudgingly, and certainly not half-heartedly. The approach is didactic as evidenced by Deut 1:5, where "to explain this law" sets the tone for the rest of the book.³¹ Lindars concludes that *tôrâ* is the word in Deuteronomy which conveys "a complete expression of the will of God, having the same binding force as the Decalogue, recorded especially for the welfare of the people, to be learnt and pondered by them. The term retains its didactic overtones, and to say 'the book of the divine instruction' might represent the real meaning better than the usual translation 'the book of the law'."³²

Another observation must be made. The use of the singular in "this *tôrâ*," "this book of the *tôrâ*," etc. must lead us to understand the solidarity of the complete document. The central concern of the whole book is expressed in Deut 6:4-6. The basic theology is expressed in the great confession of faith, i.e., the covenant "Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one." Then, and only then, is the great principle of heart consecration expressed as an imperative: "You shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." Christ quoted this as the great and foremost commandment. He coupled it with the second which is similar, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev 19:18) and made a most startling explanatory statement, "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (Matt 22:40). The point often missed is precisely what needs to be emphasized -- all of the rest of Scripture hangs on, or depends on, these two commandments. This means that no law, statute, command or judgment may be taken out of the context of these two great commands and the great confession. To interpret a chapter, or paragraph, or a verse without relating it to the God of the covenant, is to miss the point. This, we submit, is the all-important "theological interpretation" of Scripture.³³ The first questions for