

Deut. 1:1

These are the words that Moses addressed to all Israel on the other side of the Jordan.—  
 “Through the wilderness, in the Arabah near Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazereth, and Di-zahab, 2 it is eleven days from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea by the Mount Seir route.— 3 It was in the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, that Moses addressed the Israelites in accordance with the instructions that the Lord had given him for them, 4 after he had defeated Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and King Og of Bashan, who dwelt at Ashtaroth [and] Edrei. 5 On the other side of the Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses undertook to **expound** this Teaching. He said: ¶ 6 The Lord our God spoke to us at Horeb, saying: You have stayed long enough at this mountain ...

הוֹאִיל מִנְשֵׁה בְּאֵר אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה תִּזְאָת לְאַמֹּר

**RASHI:** To expound this Teaching. He explained it to them in all 70 languages.

**IBN EZRA:** Moses undertook to expound. That is, he began to explain to the Israelites' children, who had been born in the wilderness, what had happened to their parents. He also repeated to them all the laws, including the Ten Commandments. Their parents had heard these directly from the mouth of the Lord, and now they too must hear them, from “a trusty messenger” (Prov. 25:13).

**NAHMANIDES:** Moses undertook to expound this Teaching. This implies that he was also repeating the commandments already given and adding certain details.

Bernard Levinson, “Deuteronomy,” *Jewish Study Bible*

*Expound* seems intentionally ambiguous about whether Moses here proclaims new religious teachings, not previously heard, or simply explicates material already proclaimed.

Jeffrey Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, JPS Torah Commentary

**expound** This translation preserves the ambiguity of the Hebrew *be'er*. “Expound” means both “set forth or state in detail” and “explain,” just as *be'er* may mean either “state clearly” or “clarify.”<sup>17</sup> The meaning “set forth” agrees with the fact that this verse introduces the addresses of Deuteronomy, which were not previously delivered. On the other hand, “clarity” agrees with verses 1–2, which imply that these addresses recapitulate and clarify earlier teachings (see Comment to 1:18). The ancient translations understood the verse in the latter sense.

<sup>17</sup> *Be'er* also means “clarify” in rabbinic Hebrew and Aramaic. Some commentators infer from 27:8 and Hab. 2:2 that *be'er* means “write,” and that our verse means that Moses wrote down the Torah at this time. But in the other verses the act of writing is expressed by *katav*; in Hab. 2:2, *be'er* indicates that the writing is to be clear (“so that it can be read easily”), and that is probably what the verb adds in Deut. 27:8 as well.

Deut. 27:8 And on those stones you shall inscribe every word of this Teaching most **distinctly**.

Hab. 2:2 The Lord answered me and said: Write the prophecy down,

**Inscribe it clearly** on tablets, So that it can be read easily.

[“so that he who runs may read”]

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18. ... The practice of teaching the laws to the entire citizenry is virtually unparalleled. This was recognized by Josephus in his proud description of Judaism: “Most men, far from living in accordance with their own laws, hardly know what they are, . . . But, should anyone of our nation be questioned about the laws, he would repeat them all the more readily than his own name. The result, then, of our thorough grounding in the laws, . . . is that we have them, as it were, engraven on our souls. A transgressor is a rarity; evasion of punishment by excuses an impossibility.”

**HALOT:** **בָּאֵר**: to explain, to elucidate (a law) Dt 1<sup>5</sup>, **בָּאֵר** ... וְכָתְבָהָּ to write down clearly 27<sup>8</sup>, Hab 2<sub>2</sub>. †

**בֵּר**: ברר;— pure

I **בֵּר**: cleanliness

II **בֵּר**: potash, lye (alkali obtained from the ash of wood and plants, chemically K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>)

III **בָּרָא**: to cut down, to clear Jos 17<sub>15</sub> (abs.).<sup>18</sup> (יָעַר)

I **בָּרַר**:—1. to purge out: to keep clean: to sift, to sort out: to cleanse

**בְּרִית**: alkaline salt, extracted from soap-plants, *Mesembrianthemum cristallinum*: Jr 2<sub>22</sub> Mal 3<sub>2</sub>. †

Jastrow

**בָּאֵר** (√ בא, v. בוא) 1) to break forth, come to light. Denom. **בְּאֵר**; cmp. **בִּיָּה**.—2) to be open, clear.—Pi. **בָּאֵר** (b.h.) to proclaim (cmp. Deut. I, 5), to explain; to make clear (to one's self), to understand clearly. Y. M. Kat. III, 83<sup>b</sup> top **לְבַאֵר מִשְׁנֵתוֹ** to explain (argue on) what he has learned. Koh. R. to VI, 9 better is he **שֶׁהוּא מְבַאֵר** שהוא מבאר who dwells on his studies to make them clear to himself, than he who learns to recite fluently.—Part. pass. **מְבַאֵר** proven, clear. Yed. III, 1 מ' הרבר (Talm. ed. (מ' את הדי' from this fact it is proven.

**בָּאֵר** ch., Pa. **בְּאֵר** same. Y. M. Kat. III, 83<sup>b</sup> top **לֹא חָכְמִין מְבַאֵרָה** לא חכמין מבארה know not how to make clear (argue).

On next page: see 2<sup>nd</sup> line from the bottom.

**THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS TRANSLATED: THE QUMRAN TEXTS IN ENGLISH**  
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1QWords of Moses (1Q22 [1QDM])

Col. 1 1 [And God spoke] to Moses in the year [forty] of the departure of the children of Israel from [the land of] Egypt, in the eleventh month, 2 the first day of the month, saying: [Muster] all the congregation, climb [Mount Nebo] and stay there, you 3 and Eleazar, Aaron's son. *Blank* Interpret [for the heads of] families of the levites and for all the [priests] and decree to the sons of 4 Israel the words of the Law which I commanded [you] on Mount Sinai to decree to them. [Proclaim] in their ears everything 5 accurately, for [I will require] it from them. [Take] the heavens and the [earth as witnesses] for they will not love 6 what I have commanded them, they and their so[ns, all the] days [they live upon the ea]rth. [However] I announce 7 that they will desert me and ch[oose the sins of the na]tions, their abominations and their disreputable acts [and will serve] 8 their gods, who for them will be a trap and a snare. They will [violate all the] holy [assemblies], the sabbath of the covenant, [the festivals] which today I command [to be kept. This is why] I will strike them with a great [blow] in the midst of the land for 10 the conquest of which they are going to cross the Jordan there. And when all the curses happen to them and strike them until they die and until 11 they are destroyed, then they will know that the truth has been carried out on them. *Blank* And Moses turned towards Eleazar, son of 12 [Aaron] and to Joshua [son of Nun, saying] to them: Speak [all the words of the Law, without leaving any out. Be silent,]

Col. 11 1 Israel, and listen! On this day [you are going to become the peo]ple of God, your G[od. Ke]ep [my rules], my stipulations, [my commandments] which 2 today [I] am commanding you [to carry out. And when you cross the Jordan] for me to give you large [and good] cities, 3 houses full of every [wealth, vineyards and olive groves] which you [did not plant, wel]ls bored which you did not 4 dig, and you eat and become replete, [bew]are of raising your heart and fo[rgetting what] I command you today; 5 [for] it is your life and your old age. *Blank* [And] Moses [spoke] and [said to the sons of Is]rael: Forty 6 [years] have passed [from the] day of our departure from the land [of Egypt, and] today God, our G[od has caused these wo]rds [to issue] from his mouth 7 [all his pre]cepts {and all his precepts} How [shall I alone carry] your burden, [your weight, your qua]rrels? 8 [When] the covenant [has been estab]lished and the path [on which you must] walk has been decreed, [choose for yourselves wise men who] will explain 9 [to you and your so]ns all the words of this Law. [Be] very [careful,] for your lives, [to keep them, lest] the wrath 10 [of your God]