

DEUTERONOMY 26  
GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY REGARDING ISRAEL  
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**The Word of God is The Epic Narrative**

The word epic is derived from the Ancient Greek adjective, *epikos*, which means a poetic story. In literature, an epic is a long narrative poem, which is usually related to heroic deeds of a person of an unusual courage and unparalleled bravery. In order to depict this bravery and courage, the epic uses grandiose style. The hero is usually the representative of the values of a certain culture, race, nation or a religious group on whose victor or failure the destiny of the whole nation or group depends. Therefore, certain supernatural forces, help the hero, who comes out victor at the end. An epic usually starts with an invocation to muse (A person or personified force who is the source of inspiration for a creative artist.), but then picks up the threads of the story from the middle and moves on to the end.

One of the expectations by great Kings of the near east world was that his vessels with whom he had entered into a covenant relationship acknowledge his sovereignty by paying him homage. Failure to do so was to violate the covenant terms and thus to invite the god's displeasure. Chapter 16 is all about Israel paying homage to their God. This particular homage has the ritual of the first fruit as its basis. This First Fruit, also known as First Harvest, was something of a tithe offering of produce from the ground and was to be paid every 3rd year after entering the land and establishing the house of God; in this case the Tabernacle in Shiloh. This location was the center of worship and sacrificial offering for some 200 years.

**I. Offerings of First Fruits and Tithes - The First Harvest. Vv. 1-16**

1. The character of the Deuteronomy covenant is again underscored by the fact that the ritual outlined here was to be undertaken not in the present but only after the promise land had been appropriated and settled. Vv. 1-5a
2. The confession begins with Jacob, the “wandering Aramean”, so-named because his mother was an Aramean (Gen 24:10; 25:20, 26) and he himself spent at least 20 years in Aram Gen 31:41-42) Vv. 5b-10
3. The result of faithful obedience to this right would be untold blessing. V11

### **Presentation of the Third-year Tithe. Vv. 12-15**

4. The setting aside of that of the tithe of the harvest of every third year for the purpose of meeting the material needs of the dependent of Israel including the Levite, the alien, the orphan and the widow. Vv. 12-14

5. Having completed his twofold confession, the positive and the negative, the worshipper at the time of the third-year tithe would invoke the blessing of the Lord on the people and the land. V. 15

### **II. A Special People of God. Vv. 16-19**

6. The God of the universe is now about to exercise His absolute sovereignty, His absolute prerogative and His absolute right to pronounce a special blessing on the people of Israel over against all other nation and Peoples. Vv. 16-19

### **III. Conclusion**