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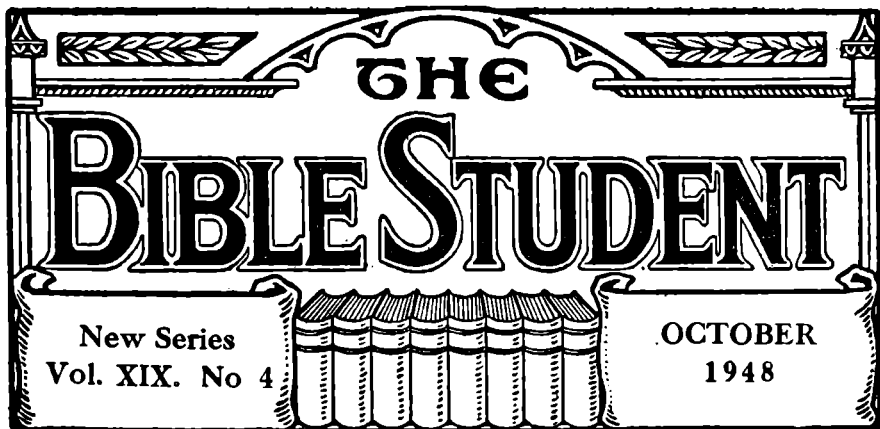
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"The Entrance of THY WORDS Giveth Light"

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Editor: A. McDONALD REDWOOD

also, what Moses never was, or could be, "the High Priest of our Confession." He combined in Himself and superseded the offices of both Moses and Aaron. How futile and ignorant for the Jews to say "We are Moses' disciples," when God had provided One who had come to act for them in a way impossible to Moses and Aaron! The confessors of Moses who governed the nation had decided to excommunicate from the synagogue all who confessed Jesus, yet He was now the Apostle and High Priest of their confession.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PENTATEUCH

BY A. McDONALD REDWOOD

This legislation*, commencing at Exodus ch. 20, falls into three divisions, corresponding to the three periods of varying length into which the wilderness experiences are divisible by their association with the three important localities successively occupied by the people in their journeys.

(a) *Mount Sinai*, where the Law was first given, during the year of their encampment there. (Exod. 20 to Numb. 10:10).

(b) *The Wilderness of Paran*, where their wanderings lasted almost 40 years (Numb. 10:11 to ch. 36).

(c) *The Plains of Moab*, on the east of Jordan, when they were about to enter Canaan (Deut. 1 to 30). (Refer to the scheme in last issue, on p. 117).

The three sub-sections of section (3) are devoted to the education and preparation of the tribes prior to their establishment as a theocratic nation. The first opens with the giving of the Law, or Ten Commandments, followed by a series of ordinances applicable to the *social* life of the people (Ex. 21-23), all of which form the basis of God's covenant with them (Ex. 24)—referred to as the Mosaic Covenant. In chs. 25 to 31 there follows a further grouping of ordinances and directions relating to the *religious* life of Israel. The way is now prepared for God to take up His abode in the midst of His people, and directions are given for the

* See end of last article in July issue.

setting up of the Tabernacle. The actual work was postponed because of the breach of the covenant by the sin of the golden calf (chs. 32-34), but subsequently resumed and consummated (chs. 35-40).

The second sub-section (3)b, takes in the whole book of Leviticus. God now speaks not from Mount Sinai but from within the Tabernacle (ch. 1:1), whence He instructs Moses as to the kind and manner of the worship He requires as a God of infinite holiness. This book is a remarkable exposition of how God approaches man and how man may approach God acceptably. The whole is concluded by the blessings pronounced on obedience and the curses that would follow disobedience.

Sub-section 3(c) introduces the book of Numbers, which takes up the history where Exodus left it off, and opens with directions and preparations for the long march to Kadesh through the wilderness (ch. 1 to 10:10). Then comes the actual march from Sinai, with all the events of the journey, which had such a disastrous ending and the consequent wanderings in the wilderness of Zin for nigh 40 years. Very little indeed of the actual details of this part of the history are recorded (chs. 15-19). The subsequent journey to the plains of Moab is related in the closing chapters.

The last book, Deuteronomy, is devoted to the addresses of Moses spoken just prior to the entrance into Canaan.

This brief survey of the plan governing these five books reveals their *unity* in intention and subject-matter. Each book different in itself, yet forming together an unbroken history from the Creation to the death of Moses. Such 'chams' as undoubtedly exist, as judged from a purely literary standpoint, are part of the plan and purpose of the writer. As Prof. W. H. Green says, "they grow out of the nature of the theme and the rigor with which it is adhered to." There is much left out which we should like to know, but the divine guidance of the writer is discernable even in the omissions. Obviously he does not intend to give a continuous history of the long period covered, which, after all, would have only tended to obscure the real theme itself. What is far more essential to the high religious purpose and plan of the whole five books is the authentic record of a divinely originated and miraculously developed movement *within the history*, for the redemption of mankind.

This constitutes the unique value of the Pentateuch. Without such a record almost all else would be lacking in adequate background or setting. As it stands, however, it supplies that essential introduction for the subsequent O.T. history of the chosen nation right on to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. (See below, "Position".)

SYNOPSIS.—Having traced the Theme and the Plan, it is necessary to view briefly the Five Books as a single Volume made up of five separate "chapters". This synoptical presentation is shown on p. 169, and should be carefully studied.

It attempts to reveal "at a glance" the character of the content and theme of the whole Volume in its separate "chapters". Every "chapter" is different from each of the others, yet each contributes to the one broad stream of history running through the whole. The unique people of which the history treats are divinely chosen in Genesis, redeemed in Exodus, instructed in Leviticus, disciplined in Numbers, and confirmed in their predestined calling in Deuteronomy. The whole story bears the stamp of Divine sovereignty operating in a variety of ways towards a single purpose.

To see this, however, requires the exercise of a true spiritual discernment to look beyond the mere externals of the story. A twofold meaning is attached to these events. The first has to do with the Divine Purpose in the choice of Israel (as already dealt with under "Purpose", "Theme", and "Plan"—q.v.). The second is indicated in the accompanying diagram (see "Teaching", last line but one), and has to do with the *spiritual application*, or teaching, which underlies the history. God's dealings with, and choice of, Israel under Moses are illustrations of a higher set of truths relative to the Christian life we live today.

The same Divine Sovereignty which chose Israel has been exercised in *this* dispensation of the Grace of God in the case of every true believer and member of Christ's Church. We may discern, if we have vision, the work of God's Spirit moulding *us* into a company of "fellow citizens" in a "spiritual household", Jesus Christ being the "Chief Corner-stone" of the whole building (Eph. 3:1-22). The lessons of these books are applicable in both the individual experience of believers, and in the whole Church of God.

This spiritual application is largely overlooked or even repudiated by many commentators of the "critical school", past and present, but that is merely symptomatic of a certain spiritual myopia, and need not worry us.

Finally, take a look at the number of the years indicated along the second line in each column, though they only call for passing comment. The story of nearly twenty-one centuries (after the account of the creation of man) is compressed into nine chapters. As already stated, the chief reason for inserting those brief chapters at all is merely to lay the foundation necessary for a better understanding of the main story to follow. They tell of the expansion of the nations, but the point of vital concern lies in the development of sin and the refusal of God, except on the part of a very small family.

A proportionately greater space is taken up with the 430 years expansion of the one family of Abraham, and the events which lead to its sojourn in Egypt, up to the date of its deliverance out of Egypt. In the Divine reckoning that period is of far greater importance to God's purposes of blessing for humanity. God takes less account of the centuries of mere human development than of the days spent by the lowliest saint in obedience to *His* will.

Then follows the year at Sinai, as recorded in the latter part of Exodus, followed by the eventful thirty-nine years of the subsequent history.

The student should study the Plan (given in last issue of B.S.) and the Synopsis together, and note the points at which they make contact.

RELATIONSHIP.—The relation of the Pentateuch to the rest of the O.T. is deserving of brief comment. When the general structure and broad divisions of the O.T. are considered it is obvious that the Pentateuch is rightly placed first because of the character of its contents. It is significant that the Jews from very earliest times, and later the Apostles and the Christian Church, have always agreed to its present position. But it is worth while to look for some deeper reason than that of ancient tradition merely, however well founded, for placing it first. It is significant that the Higher Critical school have pronounced these Mosaic records to be far later than Moses, almost within 700 to 800 years B.C.

So age alone cannot be the sole determining reason for their position in the canon, for had the critics proved correct (which is far from being the case) the chronological order would be wrong, and this in turn would have upset other aspects of the history contained in the O.T.

Now keeping before us what has already been said regarding the several other features of the Pentateuch, we may take a broad view of the whole O.T. structure and note how organically it is related to all the other parts.

To begin with, the whole O.T. is very largely devoted to the history of the one nation, Israel. It is the record of the rise, development, and varying fortunes of that nation from Abraham to the Restoration from the Captivity. The nation is shown as undergoing a special divine *course of training*, through successive periods, with a specific objective in view. In this story, the Pentateuch presents the *first* steps towards that objective by the choice of a family, and then of the nation arising from it, with whom God entered subsequently into covenant relation at Sinai.

The next step is recorded in the historical books from Joshua to Kings, where the nation is seen developing a monarchical system like other nations, but still held together by the Mosaic ordinances and Law of God constitutionally if not always spiritually.

The Poetical books, specially the Psalms, reveal the Law of God working out in the individual lives and mental convictions of those who loyally accepted the divine disciplining.

Finally, the powerful ministry of the prophets from Isaiah to Malachi is raised up by God to recall the people to their holy obligations, and to bring before their vision the glorious future which their covenant relation with Jehovah contained.

In this view, simple and straightforward as it is, of the structure and scheme of the O.T., the Pentateuch forms the substantial basis of the whole, not merely chronologically but logically and organically. To vary the figure, it is the tap-root of the historical tree of the O.T.

In further confirmation of this fact we can investigate the setting of the Pentateuch from another standpoint, namely, by considering the *end in view*, or purpose, of the providential training of Israel as a nation. That end is expressed in the one word—

CHRIST! Apart from Him the status and story of the nation is comparatively insignificant among all the other great and ancient nations and civilizations. We may enquire, therefore, how this theme is presented in the successive divisions of the O.T.

Without going into details (which would carry us beyond our immediate subject) we divide the whole history into three periods, as determined by the obvious characteristics shown in the records of each period:

- (a) From the Call of Abraham to the death of Joshua.
- (b) From the death of Joshua to the death of Solomon.
- (c) The remaining books of the O.T.

This triple division, though based upon an entirely different principle to the former method of division, is not arbitrary, but governed by the progress of the one theme running through all. The presentation of the theme is very largely through types and prophecies, the actual history of events and circumstances of the nation's life serves as a background, reflecting its reactions to the disciplining hand of God.

In the *first* division, comprising the Mosaic books and that of Joshua (often referred to collectively as the Hexateuch), the types are abundant and expressive; the actual prophecies but few though definite. In the *second* division both types and prophecies are found, the former more numerous though not so expressive as those of the first division. On the other hand the prophecies and references to Messiah and His reign in the Psalms are far more distinctive and frequent. In the *third* division, as might be expected, the prophecies are very full; the types are almost absent.

These facts again demonstrate the organic unity existing between the Pentateuch and the other books of the O.T., as already indicated above. This being so, it is understandable that the attempts to undermine the Mosaic authorship is really an attempt to discredit the true value, meaning and motive of not only the Pentateuch but the whole O.T. The specious plea that these books are now better understood and possessed of a richer value as a result of the High Critical theories has no solid foundation in actuality.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PENTATEUCH

- (i) Author: Moses principally, and others associated with him. See Notes.
 (ii) Scope: A Record of the Redeeming Activities of God from Adam to Moses. Covers a period of about 2,553 years from ADAM.
 (iii) Purpose: To reveal the Will and Purpose of God in Redemption, from the Protevangelium to Blessing of Moses.
 (iv) Keywords: "Seed"; "Promise"; "Covenant"; "Law".

	GENESIS		EXODUS		LEVITICUS	NUMBERS	DEUTERONOMY	
CONTENT	Creation Adam The Fall Noah The Flood	Abraham Isaac Jacob Joseph	Egypt-Plagues Red Sea-Exodus Sinai-Law Tabernacle Built		Offerings Priesthood Holiness The Feasts Sanctions	At Sinai Si.-Kadesh Wanderings in Zin Kadesh-Moab	Past Reviewed Law Restated Covenant Moses' Song "Blessing"	Moses' Death
CHARACTER	Gen. 2: 7 —12: 1 2,083 years	Gen. 12: 1 —Ex. 1: 6 215 years	Ex. 1: 7 —12: 41 215 years	1 year	1 month	38 years 10 mos.	1 month	1 mo
	HISTORY	BIOGRAPHY	NARRATIVE	LEGISLATIVE	LEGISLATIVE	NARR. AND LEGIS.	LEGISLATIVE	Nar
	PROMISES TO THE PATRIARCHS		LAW CODIFIED FOR THE JUDGES		LAW CODIFIED FOR THE PRIESTS	LAW CODIFIED FOR THE LEVITES	LAW RECAPITULATED TO THE PEOPLE	
THEME	Creation Beginnings The Ten 'Generations'		Deliverance from Egypt Theocracy Established		Jehovah's Holy Requirements in Approach to God	Trials in the Wilderness. Rebellious People	Retrospects of mercy Prospects of Blessing in Obedience	
TEACHING	God's Sovereignty in Election		Redemption by Blood and by Power		Worship acceptable to a Holy God	Discipline in Christian Walk	Jehovah's Love triumphant over failure	
	Chosen in Christ (Eph. 1: 4ff. 1 Pet. 1: 1-2)		Redeemed and Sanctified in Christ (Eph. 1: 7. Rom. 3: 24)		Access in Christ (Heb. 7: 25; 10-22)	Walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5: 16, 25; Rom 6: 4)	The Life of Faith and Victory (Rom. 8: 12-17.)	
	INCEPTION of the Divine PURPOSE		INAUGURATION of the Divine PLANS		INDICATION of the Divine PREREQUISITES	ILLUSTRATIONS of the Divine PRINCIPLES	ITERATION of the Divine PROMISES	