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*“The Entrance of THY WORDS Giveth Light”*

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*Editor: A. McDONALD REDWOOD*

to good advantage. To many young people and new Christians unfamiliar with the archaic style of the King James Version, modern translations will be of decided value. Then, of course, every minister should have several at his disposal as an aid to his Bible study and preparation of sermons.

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## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PENTATEUCH

BY A. McDONALD REDWOOD

The next part of the evidence for the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is—

(3) *The Testimony of the New Testament*: We may divide the subject into (a) the testimony of Christ; (b) the testimony of the other writers.

(a) Note first that the Septuagint Version of the O.T. (dating 250–150 B.C.) was in use amongst the learned Rabbis in the time of Christ, and both He and they, also all the writers of the N.T. (specially the apostle Paul), reveal complete familiarity with it. It was not, therefore, an unknown book to those whose business it was to read it in public in the Synagogues on the Sabbath Day.

On many occasions Christ Himself in his addresses referred to the Pentateuch, though not under that name but merely as “Moses”. “Offer the gift that Moses commanded” (Matt. 8:4; cf. Mark 1:44; Luke 5:14 with *Leviticus* 14:4, 10). “Moses because of the hardness of your hearts. . .” (Matt. 19:8; Mark 10:5 Cf. *Deuteronomy* 24:1). “For Moses said. . .” (Mark 7:10. Cf. *Exodus* 20:12; 21:17). In Mark 12:26 Christ refers to “*the book of Moses*” (with which cf. Luke 20:37) in quoting from *Exodus* 3:6.

Then again, He recognises the clear distinction between the three divisions of the O.T. as the Jews classified the books in that day, and when referring to these divisions the first five books He always designated simply as “Moses”. Turn to these references, viz., Luke 16:29, 31; 24:27, where “Moses” is distinct from

“the Prophets” (i.e. the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, together with the twelve Minor Prophets, as *we* term them). In Luke 24:44 Christ refers to the *third* large division, “the Psalms”, which included *all* the remaining books not mentioned already above.

The inference is clear, that both the Lord and His Jewish hearers, preserved the first five books of the O.T. under the one title—“Moses”, and had no doubts about their Mosaic authorship. Had it been otherwise, the Jews themselves would have been the first to raise the point, anxious as they ever were to find fault with His every word. In fact, the Jews themselves when engaged in argument with Christ on two occasions at least allude to the book of Deuteronomy as “Moses” (Matt. 19:7; 22:24. See parallel refs in Mark and Luke). On the other hand, Christ makes His own belief perfectly clear by establishing a profound connection between the *writings of Moses* and *His own words*, as recorded in John 5:46, 47; addressing Himself to the Jews, He says: “Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not *his writings*, how shall ye believe my words?”. Here credibility, authority, and *authorship* seem to be bound together in such a way that they either stand or fall together. As Havernick remarks: “If a belief in Christ really stands in such a close connection with a belief in Moses (and by “Moses” there can be no other meaning than his writings—the Five Books—Ed.), as the Saviour here testifies, then the consequence follows, to which the criticism (of the critics) is necessarily driven—viz., the rejection of the authority of Christ.” It seems impossible to escape that conclusion.

(b) The testimony of the writers of the New Testament is less numerous, but none the less conclusive as far as it goes. “Moses” is quoted in Acts 3:22; 6:11, 14; Rom. 10:5, 19—the first reference is to Deuteronomy, the last to Leviticus 18:5; also to Deuteronomy. “The law of Moses” occurs in Acts 13:39; 15:5; 1 Cor. 9:9; Heb. 10:28, all quoting from Deuteronomy; and the Law is coupled with “the prophets” (in the manner described above) in Acts 24:14; 26:22; and 28:17. That the writers intended this to refer only to the book of Deuteronomy is lacking of any substantial evidence; the whole tenor of the contexts is against

such an assumption. Finally, the phrases "Moses is preached" and "Moses is read" in Acts 15:21; 2 Cor. 3:15,—respectively, cannot but include the whole Pentateuch.

We may summarise briefly the arguments for the Mosaic authorship:—

1. In speaking of the Pentateuch as "the work of Moses", it is not implied that Moses wrote every word with his own hand, but rather that his was the controlling mind and authority in its composition, under the guidance (though not dictation) of the Holy Spirit, Who gave the necessary wisdom and insight to select from earlier records, to edit, or to directly write, or cause others to write under his immediate direction.

2. The testimony of the Pentateuch itself supports the Mosaic authorship, as we have seen. "The last four books of the Pentateuch contain an implicit claim to be from the pen of Moses; and no one has yet maintained that Genesis does not form a unity with the other four books. Commentators of every school agree that the same authorship may be traced in Genesis as in the other four. Hence, if Moses is accepted as the author of the legal sections he may safely be accepted as the author of Genesis" (*The New Bible Handbook*, p. 116).

3. The remainder of the Old Testament bears witness to the same, sufficiently to show that the "Book of the Law" was the foundation of the Jewish economy, and accepted as the work of Moses.

4. Our Lord quotes from it in such phraseology as would naturally imply that Moses was the author.

5. The N.T. writers refer to it under the same understanding.

**PURPOSE.**—A threefold intention is obviously in the mind of the author: (1) To describe the beginnings of the material creation, including plant and animal life, and specially of man, who is given a special place of supremacy over all. This describes the *sphere* in which God is to reveal Himself, and therefore is foundational.

(2) To describe the manner of the relationship which God intended should exist between Himself and man. This involves the revelation of God Himself, of His will, His purposes and

feelings towards His creatures, created in His image. It is not complete and final as in the N.T., but sufficient for the immediate purpose, to show the beginnings and stages of that revelation as it progresses.

(3) To describe the rise and development of the particular nation God chose to be the repository of His revelation through succeeding generations. The nation failed in its trust except in a small section, but the writer is careful to indicate how God overruled at every stage and perpetuated in the faithful minority the undying hope of the ultimate fulfilment of His promises.

Whatever form the narrative assumes according to the period dealt with, or the changing conditions arising in successive periods, the writer is governed all through by his theme.

THEME.—The general theme of the Pentateuch is best viewed as twofold: (1) *The Primary Theme*; (2) *The Ultimate Theme*.

The Primary Theme concerns the nation of Israel, its rise, progress and vocation as the *medium* of God's revelation of Himself to mankind. The Ultimate Theme refers to the revelation itself, the central idea of which is the realization of God's great *purpose of redemption* for all men through Christ. Strictly, these are organically interrelated and intersect but must be distinguished as separate subjects.

(1) *The Primary Theme*, is the Theocracy in Israel, or the national establishment of Israel to be the people of God. The Theocracy represented the direct government of God Himself in every part of the national life. This unique economy was to feature as a divine testimony to the surrounding nations. It was to express through Law, Tabernacle and Sacrifices, the character of God and His claim to be the Supreme Object of man's worship, devotion and service. And although the surrounding nations as such were debarred from affiliation with Israel because of their gross idolatry, yet provision was made for "the stranger within the gates" who personally desired to conform to the divine requirements in ritual and sacrifice. God thus revealed His utter repudiation of all idolatry and of all nations who practiced it, but His love for every soul who sought Him in sincerity and truth.

In dealing with his theme the writer first describes the rise

of the nation and its subsequent historical development. Its history is traced right up to the point where the people are ready to enter the land of Canaan assigned to them by God as their permanent dwelling. It is also of interest to note here that the nation and the land *together* form the inalienable possession of God, never the one without the other. And the unfolding of the prophetic word as to the *future* of both people and land maintains this feature all through—the land and the people are as *one* in the counsels of God.

(2) *The Ultimate Theme* concerns particularly the *Divine purpose* of Redemption. Moses could not understand Redemption as now revealed to us in the Person of Christ and in the New Testament. But what he describes and records under the guidance of the Spirit spoke of Redemption. At the moment sin entered into human experience, God spoke the first word to the Adversary himself: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15). This is the *protevangelium*, the beginning of that mighty stream of prophecy which finds its culmination in the coming of Christ Himself.

It is exhibited in the many and varied types, in the sacrifices of Tabernacle and Temple, in the great annual Feasts, in priestly ceremony and ritual, in numerous outstanding or smaller events, in the prominent actors of the narratives, and finally in direct promises and statements, though these are fewer than what we get in the prophetic literature of the O.T. Very impressive and distinctive is this *teleological* feature in these books.

Yet, to this feature the critical school seem very largely blind. But there it lies, as Orr says, "in the facts themselves, and reveals itself with increasing clearness as the history proceeds." Our study will enable us to endorse wholeheartedly the truth (expressed in the words of Kautzsch, quoted by Orr): "The abiding value of the O.T. lies above all in this, that it guarantees to us with absolute certainty the fact and the process of a divine plan and way of salvation, which found its conclusion and fulfilment in the new covenant, in the Person and work of Jesus Christ."

PLAN.—The plan adopted by the writer is governed by and related to his theme and purpose—already dealt with, and develops along two main lines also indicated above:

- (1) The Historical: Genesis 1 to Exodus 19.
- (2) The Legislative: Exodus 20 to Deuteronomy 34.

Of these two main divisions, the first is not only precedent to, but preparatory for, the second, or Legislative portion; for it is the record of the divine selection and preparation of the people of Israel with a view to being organized as a nation: Not an ordinary nation amongst other nations, but a *Theocracy*. Yet even in the second division will be found parts of the history detailing the circumstances or occasions on which the laws were given from time to time.

These scraps of history however (in this second main division) are comparatively subordinate to the legislative, which is predominant. The latter consists of a variety of divine enactments pertaining to the ritual of worship connected with the Tabernacle and the priestly administration of the same. It was this feature which helped to maintain that separation from all the other nations which the holiness of God demanded of those who would worship Him acceptably.

“Though we can distinguish these two elements running like two streams through these books, yet they combine to form one river; for there is unity and plan in the whole. The history is not intelligible without the laws, nor the laws apart from the history; for there is one aim kept steadily in view throughout, as we can see from the manner in which each succeeding book takes up the narrative of the preceding” (Robertson). Both were directed to the great purpose of training Israel for their divine vocation as God’s chosen people, through whom ultimately the nations of the world should be blessed, from whom Christ the Redeemer should arise.

#### NOTES

Study the details of the Plan (page 117), but do not hesitate to make an analysis of your own if you can—and it is always good to *adapt* as a result of your own study whatever you may *adopt* from others!



1. *Division I. Gen. 1 to Exod. 19.*

(a) The Call of Abraham is a pivotal point at which to divide the historical section (Gen. 1-11), for it was in that event the purpose of God was revealed first. The record in the first eleven chapters is purely introductory, its intention being to show the necessity of the divine selection from amongst all the families of the earth because of the prevailing sinfulness of mankind.

Chs. 1-11 are divided by the story of the Flood into two parts viz., chs. 1-5, and 6-11. In the first part Adam, in the second Noah, are each presented successively as a head and progenitor of the human race; and with each God confirms a universal covenant. Both the Adamic and the Noachic periods ended in divine judgment, the Flood and Babel. This reveals the necessity of a new beginning and a new method of God's dealing with man.

(b) Gen. 12-Exod. 19, we have called the Preparatory Period, as it opens with the new development of the divine plan in the call of Abraham, and goes on to trace the events which lead to the establishment of the nation descended from him. This preparation is in two stages: first, that of the Families of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This culminates with Jacob and his family going down into Egypt.

The 2nd stage opens in Exod. 1, where the transition to national status is described (ch. 1:1-7). Then the writer proceeds to describe the human and divine necessity of deliverance from Egypt and the events which lead to the Exodus (chs. 1-8 ch. 13).

Then follows the Exodus and the march to Sinai (chs. 14 to 19). Israel is now ready for the necessary training and disciplining for their divinely ordained vocation; accordingly the historical is succeeded or augmented by the legislation characteristic of the second main division of these books.

*(To be continued)*

# PLAN OF THE PENTATEUCH

HISTORY		LEGISLATION		
Genesis 1 to Exodus 19		Exodus 20 to Deuteronomy 34 (Israel in the Wilderness)		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<p><i>Preliminary</i> (Genesis 1 to 11)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Antidiluvian (chs. 1-5)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Noachic (chs. 6-11)</p>	<p><i>Preparatory</i> (Genesis 12 to Exodus 19)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>The Family (Gen. 12-50)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>The Nation (Exodus 1-19)</p>	<p><i>At Sinai</i> (Exodus 20 to Numbers 10: 10)</p> <p>↓</p>	<p><i>In Paran</i> (Numbers 10: 11 to chap. 36)</p> <p>↓</p>	<p><i>In Plains of Moab</i> (Deut. 1 to 34)</p> <p>↓</p>
	<p>(a) Transition from Family (Exod. 1: 1-7)</p> <p>(b) Threefold Preparation for the Exodus: (Ex. 1: 8 to ch. 13)</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(i) The Oppression (Ex. 1 8: 22)</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(ii) The Instrument-Moses (Ex. 2 to 6)</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(iii) The Plagues (Ex. 7 to 13)</p> <p>(c) The Exodus and March to Sinai (Exod. 14 to 19)</p>	<p>(a) From giving of LAW to setting up Tabernacle. (Exod. 20 to 40)</p> <p>(b) Ordinances at Sinai (Lev. 1 to 27)</p> <p>(c) Preparations for departure (Num. 1: 1 to 10: 10)</p>	<p>(a) From Sinai to Kadesh (Num. 10: 11-14)</p> <p>(b) Forty Years' Wanderings (Num. 15 to 19)</p> <p>(c) Kadesh to Plains of Moab (Num. 20-36)</p>	<p>(a) Moses' First Address (History) (Deut. 1-4)</p> <p>(b) Moses' Second Address (Law) (General: chs. 5-11 Special: chs. 12-26)</p> <p>(c) Moses' Third Address (chs. 27 to 30)</p>
			<p>(Conclusion (Deut. 31 to 34))</p>	