

LESSON TWENTY-TWO 29:1—30:20

E. REMINDER OF GOD'S BLESSINGS 29:1-13

1. THE PRESENT LAW TO BE ENFORCED (29:1)

These are the words of the covenant which Jehovah commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 29:1

510. Why another covenant with Israel? Or is this the thought here?
511. Consider the circumstances of this text. What particular need was there for a renewal of God's covenant?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 29:1

These are the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the Israelites in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

COMMENT 29:1

Note that the covenant made here on the plains of Moab is distinguished from the covenant previously made at Sinai.*

The Pulpit commentary remarks, "This was not a new covenant in addition to that made at Sinai, but simply a renewal and reaffirmation of that covenant. At Sinai, the covenant was, properly speaking, *made*; sacrifices were then offered, and the people were sprinkled with the sacrificial blood, whereby the covenant was ratified (Exod. xxiv; Cf. Ps. L. 5); but on the occasion here referred to no sacrifices were offered, for this was merely the covenant formerly made as still subsisting." Thus in future writings, "the law of Moses" includes both those given at Sinai and on these plains of Moab. Compare 5:2, 3, notes.

2. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD (29:2-9)

And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that Jehovah did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; 3 the great trials which thine eyes saw, the signs, and those great wonders: 4 but Jehovah hath not given you a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto

*In the Hebrew text this verse is included with ch. 28. But of course Moses made no divisions of chapters and verses in his original autograph.

this day, 5 And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxed old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxed old upon thy foot. 6 Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink; that ye may know that I am Jehovah your God, 7 And when ye came unto this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we smote them: 8 and we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half-tribe of the Manassites. 9 Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 29:2-9

512. If Jehovah did not give them a heart to know or eyes to see, how could Israel be held responsible?
513. Read the comments on 8:3, 4 to review what is meant by the preservation of clothes and shoes.
514. How would the lack of bread and wine establish their trust in Jehovah?
515. Why the review of God's acts of power and conquest?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 29:2-9

2 Moses called to all Israel, and said to them, You have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, to all his servants, and to all his land;

3 The great trials which your eyes saw, the signs, and those great wonders;

4 Yet the Lord has not given you a [mind and] heart to understand, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, to this day.

5 I have led you forty years in the wilderness; your clothes have not worn out upon you, and your sandals have not worn off your feet.

6 You have not eaten [grain] bread, nor have you drunk wine or strong drink, that you might recognize and know [your dependence on Him Who is saying], I am the Lord your God.

7 And when you came to this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon and Og the king of Bashan came out against us to battle, but we defeated them;

8 We took their land, and gave it for an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites.

9 Therefore keep the words of this covenant, and do them, that you may deal wisely and prosper in all that you do.

COMMENT 29:2-9

BUT JEHOVAH HATH NOT GIVEN YOU A HEART TO KNOW . . . UNTO THIS DAY (v. 4)—This was partly their own fault, partly the working of God. Truthfully Moses could say they had been rebellious "from the day that thou wentest forth out of the land of Egypt" and "from the day that I knew you" (9:7, 24). Persons with such dispositions are not capable of perceiving and appreciating the will of God. Thus this passage is similar to those above, and should also have served as a rebuke: God has not seen fit to open up your eyes *even yet*—"unto this day". The essence of the rebuke seems to be, "Will you now *wake up*?" Stubbornness and rebellion invariably clog the channels of one's spiritual perception—and God withholds understanding (Isa. 6:9, 10, Matt. 11:25, 26, Rom. 11:7-10).

Yet, Israel had every opportunity *to* understand and appreciate God's ways. These are enumerated in vv. 5-8, with the conclusion, "Keep therefore the words . . . that ye may prosper . . ." (v. 9).

YOUR CLOTHES ARE NOT WAXED OLD (v. 5)—See 8:4, note.

YE HAVE NOT EATEN BREAD, NEITHER HAVE YE DRUNK WINE OR STRONG DRINK; THAT YE MAY KNOW THAT I AM JEHOVAH YOUR GOD (v. 6)—Basically the same thought is expressed in 8:3. They had been living all these years, not by harvesting wheat and baking bread, or by harvesting grapes and making wine. In short, they had not been sustained by their own labor, "but by every thing that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (8:3). It was *God* who directed their route for forty years, who kept their clothes from becoming old and ragged, who kept their shoes from wearing out, and who daily supplied their manna for food. The response *should* have been heartfelt obedience and praise to their Sustainer and Giver of life! Their recent victories in battle (vv. 7, 8) described earlier (chapters 2 & 3) were also the result of God's direct blessing and goodness, and provided yet *another* reason for their cheerful obedience.

REUBENITES . . . GADITES . . . MANASSITES (v. 8)—Note their boundaries in 3:12-17.

3. THE PURPOSE OF GOD (29:10-13)

10 Ye stand this day all of you before Jehovah your God; your heads, your tribes, your elders, and your officers, even all the men of Israel, 11 your little ones, your wives, and thy sojourner that is in the

midst of thy camps, unto the drawer of thy water; 12 that thou mayest enter into the covenant of Jehovah thy God, and into his oath, which Jehovah thy God maketh with thee this day; 13 that he may establish thee this day unto himself for a people, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he spake unto thee, and as he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 29:10-13

516. Please notice how God expected everyone to enter into His covenant on a personal basis. Has His interest in individual participation changed?
517. What was God's purpose in establishing His covenant with Israel?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 29:10-13

10 All of you stand before the Lord your God; your heads, your tribes, your elders, and your officers, even all the men of Israel.

11 Your little ones, your wives, and the stranger and sojourner in your camp, from the hewer of your wood to the drawer of your water;

12 That you may enter into the covenant of the Lord your God, and into His oath, which He makes with you today;

13 That He may establish you this day as a people for Himself, and that He may be to you a God, as He said to you and as He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

COMMENT 29:10-13

AS HE SWARE UNTO THY FATHERS (v. 13)—Israel, about to become a great nation, was the chief participant in the covenant God made with Abraham (Gen. 17:7), Isaac (Gen. 26:4), and Jacob (Gen. 28:14). Cf. 8:1, etc. The promises of God were not being kept because of Israel's goodness (7:6-8, 9:4, 5) but because of God's eternal purpose to bring the Messiah into the world through a nation he loved.

F. SOLEMN WARNINGS AND REMINDERS

(29:14—30:20)

1. COVENANT ALL-INCLUSIVE (29:14-21)

14 Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath, 15 but with him that standeth here with us this day before Jehovah our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day; 16 (for ye

know how we dwelt in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations through which ye passed; 17 and ye have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which were among them;) 18 lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from Jehovah our God, to go to serve the gods of those nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; 19 and it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart, to destroy the moist with the dry. 20 Jehovah will not pardon him, but then the anger of Jehovah and his jealousy will smoke against that man, and all the curse that is written in this book shall lie upon him, and Jehovah will blot out his name from under heaven. 21 And Jehovah will set him apart unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that is written in this book of the law.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 29:14-21

518. Who could be identified under the phrase "with him that is not here with us this day"?
519. Jehovah's wrath is especially kindled against some people. Who are they?
520. Give three characteristics of the person of question 519.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 29:14-21

14 It is not with you only that I make this sworn covenant,

15 But with future Israelites who do not stand here with us today before the Lord our God, as well as with those who are here with us this day.

16 You know how we lived in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations you crossed;

17 And you have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which were among them.

18 Beware lest there should be among you a man or woman or family or tribe, whose [mind and] heart turns away this day from the Lord our God to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a [poisonous] root that bears gall and wormwood;

19 and lest, when he hears the words of this curse and oath, he flatter and congratulate himself in his [mind and] heart, saying, I shall

have peace and safety, *though I walk in the stubbornness of my [mind and] heart [bringing down a hurricane of destruction] and sweep away the watered land with the dry.

20 The Lord will not pardon him, but then the anger of the Lord and His jealousy will smoke against that man, and all the curse that is written in this book shall settle on him; the Lord will blot out his very name from under the heavens;

21 And the Lord will single him out for ruin and destruction from all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law.

COMMENT 29:14-21

NEITHER WITH YOU ONLY DO I MAKE THIS COVENANT (v. 14)—The covenant extended to all who were within the country of Israel as a nation—or who *would be* (v. 15, 22). Thus strangers and sojourners who made Israel their home were also included, Lev. 24:22, Num. 9:14, 15:14-16, 29.

Israel was to be a land within whose confines *God* was to be worshipped according to His word—regardless of the nationality of the resident. So it was with such well-known sojourners as Rahab and Ruth (Ruth 1:16).

LEST THERE SHOULD BE AMONG YOU MAN . . . TO GO TO SERVE THE GODS OF THOSE NATIONS (v. 18)—referring back to the neighboring nations of v. 16, a fact that lends weight to the argument of modern translators that the parentheses enclosing verses 16 and 17 should be omitted.

LEST THERE SHOULD BE AMONG YOU A ROOT THAT BEARETH GALL AND WORMWOOD (v. 18)—descriptive terms of one who was rebellious, stubborn, and disobedient towards God and his word, as the following verses show. And the factor of *others being defiled by this man's influence* may well be implied here, as in Heb. 12:14, 15.

*It is on the strength of the Lord's oath to be Israel's God and also to protect them, that this Israelite flatters himself he is secure, no matter how he may behave. In the history of religion such a delusion has been lamentably frequent, and persons depending upon the unlimited protection of election have presumed on this and recklessly indulged in evil (*Cambridge Bible*, condensed). The Bible emphasizes the "security of the saints," but it is equally emphatic concerning the insecurity of those in conscious and continued indifference to God. [Ezek. 3:29; 18:24,26; Rev. 22:14; James 1:21; Gal. 6:8; 2 Pet. 1:10,11.]

GALL (Heb. *rosb*) is the name of a poisonous plant or herb. It grows quickly and luxuriantly (Hos. 10:14, "hemlock"), but is of bitter taste (Ps. 69:21, Lam 3:5) and on this account is, as here and in Lam. 3:19, connected with wormwood.

On the other hand, "What the Heb. *laanab* [wormwood] may have been is obscure; it is clear it was a bitter substance and it is usually associated with 'gall' . . . The genus *Artemisis* . . . has five species of shrubs or herbs found in Palestine, any one of which may furnish a bitter taste" (I.S.B.E.). Thus this man's influence would be poisonous, hurtful, and distasteful both to God and his people.

TO DESTROY THE MOIST WITH THE DRY (v. 19)—The margin reads "to add drunkenness to thirst."

Note that in the former part of the verse this man is blessing himself in his heart—i.e., congratulating or complimenting himself, saying "I shall have peace"—i.e. "all shall be well with me, everything is fine." And this, though he realizes he is stubborn of heart, and intends "To destroy the well-watered [land] with the dry" (Pulpit). His hardness of heart would influence him to destroy *one and all*. His very nature is destructive and ruinous. This interpretation suits the context, describing one whose influence is pernicious and devastating to God's people. Such a person imprecates the wrath of God (vv. 20, 21).

2. ISRAEL'S COMING WICKEDNESS: THE JUDGMENT OF FUTURE GENERATIONS AND FOREIGNERS (29:22-29)

22 And the generation to come, your children that shall rise up after you, and the foreigner that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sickness wherewith Jehovah hath made it sick; 23 *and that* the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, *and* a burning, *that* it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which Jehovah overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath: 24 even all the nations shall say, Wherefore hath Jehovah done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? 25 Then men shall say, Because they forsook the covenant of Jehovah, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, 26 and went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods that they knew not, and that he had not given unto them: 27 therefore the anger of Jehovah was kindled against this

land, to bring upon it all the curse that is written in this book; 28 and Jehovah rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as this day. 29 The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 29:22-29

521. From reading this text there seems to be but little question that Israel will be tragically disobedient. Could they help it if God thus predicted it?
522. State three descriptive phrases used here to describe God's punishment of His disobedient children.
523. There seems to be a balance between the natural results of disobedience and the punishment of God. Are these two sides of the same coin?
524. Read verse 29 very carefully. Why does it appear in this context?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 29:22-29

22 So that the next generation, your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who shall come from a distant land, shall say, when they see the plagues of this land, and the diseases with which the Lord has made it sick—

23 The whole land is brimstone and salt, and a burned waste, not sown or bearing anything, where not grass can take root, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah with Admah and Zeboiim, which the Lord overthrew in His anger and wrath—

24 Even all the nations shall say, Why has the Lord done thus to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?

25 Then men shall say, Because they forsook the covenant of the Lord, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them forth out of the land of Egypt,

26 For they went and served other gods, and worshiped them, gods they knew not, and that He had not given to them;

27 So the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, bringing upon it all the curses that are written in this book;

28 And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger and in wrath and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as this day.

29 The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but the things which are revealed belong to us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

COMMENT 29:22-29

AND THE GENERATION TO COME, etc. (v. 22)—Better, "And later generations will ask—the children who succeed you . . ." (The Torah).

Both the generations future to those Moses was addressing and foreigners would speak of Israel's decline and degeneration in terms of reproach and disdain.

AND THAT WHOLE LAND THEREOF IS BRIMSTONE, AND SALT, AND A BURNING (v. 23)—Obviously figurative language to describe a sterile, desolate unproductive land. Perhaps also *punishment* and *destruction*, which *brought* such barrenness. See Job 18:15, Ps. 11:6, Isa. 30:33. But these minerals would, in truth, be physically present, and burning. See below.

BRIMSTONE (v. 23)—Heb. *gophriṭh* (as in Gen. 19:24), signifies "brimstone, sulfur" (Baumgartner). Gesenius agrees, believing the word originally meant *pitch*, "the name of which was afterwards transferred to other inflammable materials; especially *sulphur*." The I.S.B.E. is helpful here: "Sulphur existed in Palestine in early times and was known by most of the ancient nations as a combustible substance that the inhabitants of the land had experienced the terrors of burning sulphur is very probable. Once one of these deposits took fire it would melt and run in burning streams down the ravines spreading everywhere suffocating fumes such as come from the ordinary brimstone [sulphur] match. No more realistic figure could be chosen to depict terrible suffering and destruction. It is not at all unlikely that during some of the disastrous earthquakes which took place in this part of the world, the hot lava sent forth ignited not only the sulphur, but also the bitumen, and added to the horrors of the earthquake the destruction caused by burning pitch and brimstone."

SALT (v. 23)—also associated with destruction, ruin, and desolation, Job 39:6, Jud. 9:45, Jer. 17:6, Zeph. 2:9.

A BURNING (v. 23)—Again, a phenomenon especially associated with devastation and destruction, especially by a foreign power, Isa. 1:7, 64:11, II K. 25:9, Ps. 74:7, 8, etc.*

Such land as described above is worthless for agriculture, so THAT IT IS NOT SOWN, NOR BEARETH, NOR ANY GRASS GROWETH THEREIN (v. 23). Rather, it is LIKE THE OVERTHROW OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH, ADMAH AND ZEBOIIM [Gen. 19:23-28, Admah and Zeboiim are associated with Sodom and Gomorrah in Gen. 10:19, 14:2, and thus are included in "the cities of the plain" destroyed with Sodom] WHICH JEHOVAH OVERTHREW IN HIS ANGER, AND HIS WRATH (v. 23)—and this is the *very point* of Moses' words. Their wickedness would result in their overthrow. Note vv. 25, 26.

ALL THE CURSE THAT IS WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK (v. 27)—The reference seems especially to refer to those just uttered, beginning in Ch. 27. But many others may well be included, not only in Deuteronomy (as in 4:25-27), but in other passages of the Pentateuch, such as Lev. 26:14 ff.

ROOTED THEM OUT . . . CAST THEM INTO ANOTHER LAND (v. 28)—See 28:36 ff, notes. This is not foreign domination or servitude to another power, but *captivity*.

THE SECRET THINGS BELONG UNTO JEHOVAH (v. 29)—The reference may be especially to *future* matters: "The hidden issues of the future . . ." (Moffatt), but "secret" (Heb. *sather*) of itself simply means hidden, secret, or concealed. ". . . things in God's purpose known only to himself: these things, it is affirmed, belong to him, are his affair, and may be left with him" (Pulpit). On the other hand,

THE THINGS THAT ARE REVEALED BELONG TO US AND OUR CHILDREN FOR EVER, THAT WE MAY DO ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LAW (v. 29)—What God *has* revealed he expects his children to study, meditate upon, and obey. Cf. 30:11-14. His people are responsible to him for responding to what he has made known. Thus, as it is wrong to subtract from what *is* written, so it is wrong to *add* to God's will where he, in his infinite wisdom, has seen fit to say nothing. His word is sacred—and so is his silence. (Cf. 4:2, 12:32). See also Ps. 119:160, Jn. 17:17, II Tim. 3:16, 17, Rev. 28:18, 19.

*Fires also raged in Jerusalem's destruction. See Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book VI. Ch. IV, #8; Ch. V, #1; Ch. IV, #5.

This passage is not intended to discourage honest scientific investigation. It simply states that there *are*, indeed, many "secret" things in life—and ever *shall* be, no matter how much knowledge accumulates. There are secrets among the minute (a *few* more of which have recently been probed by the electron microscope and other scientific instruments). There are secrets in the vastness of space—What is beyond the farthest observable star? And who can tell *all* about a blade of grass or a stone—let alone the human body! In short, the religion of God demands that a man admit certain limitations within *himself* and the omniscience of God. He who contains all knowledge and wisdom has revealed *what we need* for life everlasting. And he has granted unto *us* "all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and virtue" (II Pet. 1:3). The truths of the universe known or knowable only to himself will not form the criterion for our judgment in the final day.

This passage also forms, indirectly, an exhortation for studying. If we are responsible for revealed truth, effort must be exerted that we might *know* what is revealed. And it also comprises a *rebuke* to those who believe *spiritual* truth is found outside God and his word. Cf. Prov. 3:5, 6, Isa. 8:19, 20, I Cor. 1:18-25, I Tim. 6:3-5, II Tim. 1:13.

It was, in fact, the very essence of this scripture that was being repeated by Thomas Campbell's famous phrase, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent."

Opinions, conjectures, "educated guesses," theories on any of thousands of subjects *not* discussed in God's word—what do we do with them? As far as God is concerned, this word is open for exploration and investigation. But when we profess to know more than our maker and transgress *revealed* truth, we have, indeed, degenerated. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct him?" (I Cor. 2:16a).

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

A recapitulation of God's gracious dealings with Israel, 1-8. An exhortation to obedience, and to enter into covenant with their God, that they and their posterity may be established in the good land, 9-15. They are to remember the abominations of Egypt, and to avoid them, 16, 17. He who hardens his heart, when he hears these curses, shall be utterly consumed, 18-21. Their posterity shall be astonished at the desolation that shall fall upon them, 22, 23; shall inquire the reason, and shall be informed that the Lord has done thus to them because of

their disobedience and idolatry, 24-28. A caution against prying too curiously into the secrets of the Divine providence, and to be contented with what God has revealed, 29.

3. JEHOVAH'S BLESSINGS ASSURED WHENEVER ISRAEL REPENTS (30:1-10)

And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee, 2 and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul; 3 that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee. 4 If any of thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will Jehovah thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: 5 and Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. 6 And Jehovah thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. 7 And Jehovah thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, that persecuted thee. 8 And thou shalt return and obey the voice of Jehovah, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. 9 And Jehovah thy God will make thee plenteous in all the work of thy hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, for good: for Jehovah will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers; 10 If thou shalt obey the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law; if thou turn unto Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 30:1-10

525. Read Neh. 1:4-9; Psa. 85; 126 and 137 for a fulfillment of the promise made in 30:1-3.
526. Just how did God accomplish the task of circumcising the heart of Israel?
527. Specify at least three benefits promised to those who obey Jehovah?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 30:1-10

And when all these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you shall call them to mind among all the nations, where the Lord your God has driven you,

2 And shall return to the Lord your God and obey His voice according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your [mind and] heart, and with all your being;

3 Then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes, and have compassion upon you, and will gather you again from all the nations, where He has scattered you.

4 Even if any of your dispersed are in the uttermost parts of the heavens, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there will He bring you.

5 And the Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will do you good, and multiply you above your fathers.

6 And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart, and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your [mind and] heart, and with all your being, that you may live.

7 And the Lord your God will put all these curses upon your enemies, and on those who hate you, who persecute you.

8 And you shall return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do all His commandments which I command you today.

9 And the Lord your God will make you abundantly prosperous in every work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, of your cattle, of your land, for good; for the Lord will again delight in prospering you, as He took delight in your fathers.

10 If you obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if you turn to the Lord your God with all your [mind and] heart, and with all your being.

COMMENT 30:1-10

JEHOVAH . . . WILL TURN THY CAPTIVITY, AND HAVE COMPASSION UPON THEE, AND WILL RETURN AND GATHER THEE FROM ALL THE PEOPLES (v. 3)—a particularly graphic fulfillment is found in the Babylonian captivity, Neh. 1:4-9, Ps. 85, 126, and especially 137. And as v. 6 indicates a heart-circumcision, note the revival after the return in

Ezra and Nehemiah—foreign wives, for example were put away. Also, we have no record of idolatry after the captivity—a sin that continually plagued them before.

JEHOVAH THY GOD WILL CIRCUMCISE THY HEART (v. 6)—See 10:16. As physical circumcision changed the outward man, circumcision of the heart (the mind, the whole inner person, the "self") would change the whole disposition and way of life. Its result would be TO LOVE JEHOVAH . . . WITH ALL THY HEART AND ALL THY SOUL, THAT THOU MAYEST LIVE (v. 6)—They weren't "living" as far as God was concerned, unless their hearts were totally given to Him. Nor would Israel long *physically* remain alive without such devotion. Cf. 6:4, 5.

GOD WILL PUT ALL THESE CURSES UPON THINE ENEMIES (v. 7)—See also 7:15, Ex. 15:26.

4. OBEDIENCE NOT IMPOSSIBLE (30:11-14)

11 For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? 13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? 14 But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 30:11-14

528. It is such an encouragement to know that God has never given a command man could not obey. Read Rom. 10:6-10 for a present day application of this text.
529. In what sense did Israel feel the word of God was far away from them?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 30:11-14

11 For this commandment which I command you this day, is not too difficult for you, nor is it far off.

12 It is not [a secret laid up] in Heaven, that you should say, Who shall go up for us to Heaven, and bring it to us, that we may hear and do it?

13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it to us, that we may hear and do it?

14 But the word is very near you, in your mouth, and in your mind and in your heart, so that you can do it.

COMMENT 30:11-14

IT IS NOT TOO HARD FOR THEE, NEITHER IS IT FAR OFF, etc.—Literally, *is not too wonderful for you*, i.e., not too hard to be understood or perform. Nor was it far off—though heavenly in its source (v. 12), it did not *remain* there, but was *revealed*. Cf. 29:29. In short, God had made his plan simple enough and easy enough for the *sincere* and *devoted* to observe it. It was not mysterious, ethereal, or occult. Rather, “the word is very nigh unto thee . . . etc.” (v. 14). And if such words describe the Mosaic law, how much *more* our relationship to Christ, Matt. 11:28-30, I Jn. 5:2, 3, Rom. 10:6-10.

The idea of keeping the Mosaic law perfectly, in every iota, and without ever failing, is not before Moses' eye here. On this side of the cross, we know that only our Savior did so, Rom. 3:9-12, 23-25, as one who was sinless, I Pet. 2:21, 22, II Cor. 5:21, Isa. 53:9.

5. FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT TO CHOOSE THE PATH OF BLESSING RATHER THAN THE CURSE (30:15-20)

15 See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; 16 in that I command thee this day to love Jehovah thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his ordinances, that thou mayest live and multiply, and that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in the land whither thou goest in to possess it. 17 But if thy heart turn away, and thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; 18 I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish; ye shall not prolong your days in the land, whither thou passest over the Jordan to go in to possess it. 19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed; 20 to love Jehovah thy God, to obey his voice, and to cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the land which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 30:15-20

530. It hardly seems possible that anyone would knowingly choose death and evil. There must be another factor. What is it?
531. How much of life is suspended on the one word "obedience." And yet another factor must be present before we are willing to obey. What is it?
532. Could the Israelites have said, "for me to live is Jehovah"? Specifically how was this true?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 30:15-20

15 See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil.

16 [If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God which] I command you today, to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances, then you shall live and multiply and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.

17 But if your [mind and] heart turn away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them,

18 I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish, and you shall not live long in the land which you pass over the Jordan to enter and possess.

19 I call Heaven and earth to witness this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live;

20 To love the Lord your God, to obey His voice, and to cling to Him; for He is your life, and the length of your days, that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to give to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

COMMENT 30:15-20

Do not these verses practically summarize the whole story of Deuteronomy? Again and again Moses has made these points: Blessings when you love, obey and observe—innumerable, excruciating hardships and curses if you do not. And as we have seen in exhortation after exhortation, this "life" meant their very *existence* as a nation. Prosperity, strength, health, hope—all gained or lost depending on their obedience or disobedience.

Very literally for them and for us "God . . . is thy life"—the source of *all* life, physical and spiritual. If, then *they* would have life, the Lifesource must be heeded, v. 19. And so it is with *our* Lifesource, Jn. 1:4, 11:25, 26; 14:6, I Jn. 5:20.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THIRTY

Gracious promises are given to the penitent, 1-6. The Lord will circumcise their heart, and put all these curses on their enemies, if they hearken to his voice and keep his testimonies, 7-10. The word is near to them, and easy to be understood, 11-14. Life and death, a blessing and a curse, are set before them; and they are exhorted to love the Lord, obey his voice, and cleave unto him, that they may inherit the land promised to Abraham, 15-20.

QUESTIONS, LESSON TWENTY-TWO (29:1—30:20)

CHAPTER 29

1. This chapter begins, "These are the words of the covenant . . ." Should the covenant made *here* be considered separate from the one made at Sinai?
2. Why had Jehovah not given them knowing hearts and seeing eyes (v. 4)?
3. What convincing evidences had God given of his love and power?
4. What promise, made to the patriarchs, were they now fulfilling?
5. Mention two groups of people, not now present, that must also keep this covenant.
6. Who or what is meant by "a root that beareth gall and wormwood"?
7. What would a person be doing if he "destroyed the moist with the dry"?
8. What two groups would denounce Israel's wickedness in this chapter? (Hint: Same answer as No. 5).
9. Israel's desolation and barrenness is described by the terms _____, _____, and a _____. (finish)
10. To what cities is this destruction likened?
11. What is brimstone?
12. To what factor(s) would other nations attribute Israel's failure?
13. Thoroughly memorize 29:29.

CHAPTER 30

14. How is Israel's condition pictured after *returning* from captivity?
15. What captivity especially fits the prophecy?
16. Of what does Moses remind them concerning their capability of keeping the law?
17. Now re-read vv. 11-14. Make a present day New Testament application of these words.
18. In what *very literal* way could Moses say, "I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil" (v. 15), and "therefore choose life that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed" (v. 19)?

LESSON TWENTY-THREE 31:1—32:47

IV. MOSES' LAST DAYS

31:1—34:12

A. CHARGE TO JOSHUA (31:1-23)

1. JOSHUA PRESENTED TO THE PEOPLE (31:1-8)

And Moses went and spake these words unto all Israel. 2 And he said unto them, I am a hundred and twenty years old this day; I can no more go out and come in: and Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan. 3 Jehovah thy God, he will go over before thee; he will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt dispossess them: *and* Joshua, he shall go over before thee, as Jehovah hath spoken. 4 And Jehovah will do unto them as he did to Sihon and to Og, the kings of the Amorites, and unto their land; whom he destroyed. 5 And Jehovah will deliver them up before you, and ye shall do unto them according unto all the commandment which I have commanded you. 6 Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be affrighted at them: for Jehovah thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. 7 And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of good courage: for thou shalt go with this people into the land which Jehovah hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it. 8 And Jehovah, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 31:1-8

533. Moses cannot go over Jordan to possess the land, but someone can and will. Who was it? (We are not thinking of Joshua.)
534. For what reason should Israel and Joshua "be strong and of good courage"?
535. Beyond the bare word of Moses, how would Israel *know* Jehovah was with them?
536. What one quality has Moses exemplified for our emulation?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 31:1-8

And Moses went on speaking these words to all Israel.

2 And he said to them, I am 120 years old this day; I can no more go out and come in; and the Lord has said to me, You shall not go over this Jordan.

3 The Lord your God will Himself go over before you, and He will destroy these nations from before you, and you shall dispossess them; and Joshua shall go over before you, as the Lord has said.

4 And the Lord will do to them as He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when He destroyed them.

5 And the Lord will give them over to you, and you shall do to them according to all the commandments which I have commanded you.

6 Be strong, courageous and firm, fear not, nor be in terror before them; for it is the Lord your God Who goes with you; He will not fail you or forsake you.

7 And Moses called to Joshua, and said to him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong, courageous and firm; for you shall go with this people into the land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them; and you shall cause them to possess it.

8 It is the Lord Who goes before you; He will [march] with you; He will not fail you or let you go, or forsake you; [let there be no cowardice or flinching, but] fear not, neither become broken [in spirit] (depressed, dismayed and unnerved with alarm).

COMMENT 31:1-8

One cannot help but be struck with the solemnity of these words, and those to follow. They remind us of Paul's touching farewell to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:18 ff.) Both these esteemed and beloved servants realized the seriousness of their position and that of the persons they were addressing. Thus the urgent, sincere, solemn heart-to-heart appeal. The application Mackintosh makes is good: "All who really enter into the situation and destiny of the people of God in a world like this *must* be serious. The true sense of things, the apprehension of them in the divine presence, must, of necessity, impart a holy gravity to the character, and a special pungency and power to the testimony."

I AM A HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS OLD THIS DAY (v. 2)—Not that the very day of this announcement was necessarily his "birth-day." "This day" usually means "now," "at this time" in Deuteronomy, as we just saw in 30:15, 18, 19.

THOU SHALT NOT GO OVER (v. 2)—See 1:37, 38, note, and 32:51, 52.

JOSHUA, HE SHALL GO BEFORE THEE (v. 3)—This man was no newcomer to the role of a leader in Israel. Forty years before, as military leader and captain of Israel's hosts, he had defeated Amelek

(Ex. 17:8-14). As Moses' minister and attendant he accompanied him unto Mount Sinai (Ex. 24:13; 32:17). He also accompanied Moses during those times in which God spoke to him "face to face," apparently acting as his special minister in "the tent of meeting" (Ex. 33:11) before the tabernacle was erected. He and Caleb were the only ones among the twelve spies sent into Canaan who brought back an encouraging report (Num. 14:6-10, Deut. 1:35-38), and as a result were the only Israelites *among those numbered* who were not recipients of God's curse (Num. 14:28-34, 26:65). Thus he was "a man in whom is the Spirit." He and Eleazer the priest were instructed to oversee the proper division of the land, Num. 34:17, and he had just finished leading Israel in victorious battles on the east-side, Deut. 3:21.

Concerning the present charge, see also Num. 27:15-23. His further history is found in the book bearing his name, and one cannot but stand in awe and admiration of this "war horse" for God, whose farewell to Israel was, ". . . choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah" (Josh. 24:15). And to the credit of this man's character, the sacred historian could write as his epitaph, "And Israel served Jehovah all the days of Joshua . . ." (Josh. 24:31).

Joshua is now about 78, as he died 32 years later at age 110 (Josh. 24:29).

AS HE DID TO SIHON AND OG (v. 4)—Recorded in 2:26—3:11.

BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE, etc. (v. 6)—A verse that provides encouragement and challenge to every soul in the Lord's "armed forces." Here (as in 1:29, 30, etc.) all Israel is being addressed. But such words of encouragement are elsewhere given to Joshua alone—v. 7, 23, 3:21, 22, Josh. 1:5-9. His was a very grave and sobering responsibility—especially that of exterminating the Canaanite tribes and settling Israel in their divinely given land. The sequel in the book of Joshua reveals that the leadership of Israel was in able hands.

HE IT IS THAT DOTH GO WITH THEE; HE WILL NOT FAIL THEE, NOR FORSAKE THEE (v. 6, Josh. 1:5)—What man who is truly fighting the Lord's battles is not heartened and emboldened with these words? *Because* of God's nearness and presence, we need not fear his (our) enemies. And the Hebrew writers rightly used the same principle to teach us we ought to be "free from the love of money; content with

such things as ye have" (See Heb. 13:5). Who is not helped and spurred on in the Lord's service by the assurance that Christ himself is *near*, with his strength (Matt. 18:20, 28:20, Acts 18:9, 10).

2. LAW DELIVERED TO THE PRIESTS; COMMANDED TO BE READ BEFORE ALL ISREAL EVERY SEVEN YEARS (31:9-13)

And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and unto all the elders of Israel. 10 And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of *every* seven years, in the set time of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, 11 when all Israel is come to appear before Jehovah thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. 12 Assemble the people, the men and the women and the little ones, and thy sojourner that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear Jehovah your God, and observe to do all the words of this law; 13 and that their children, who have not known, may hear, and learn to fear Jehovah your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over the Jordan to possess it.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 31:9-13

537. This is the first reference to Moses as the one who "wrote" this book, Read Num. 33:2; Ex. 24:4 for comparative references.
538. The priests had a two-fold responsibility to the law of Jehovah; they were not only to protect it, but to _____.
539. How often was this command of Moses fulfilled?
540. There is strong prophetic reference in this passage. To what future place is reference made?
541. For what purpose is the law of Jehovah to be read?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 31:9-13

9 And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it to the Levitical priests, who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel.

10 And Moses commanded them, At the end of every seven years, at the set time of the year of release [of debtors from their debts], at the feast of booths,

11 When all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses [for His sanctuary], you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

12 Assemble the people, men, women, and children, and the stranger and the sojourner within your towns, that they may hear and learn (reverently) to fear the Lord your God, and be watchful to do all the words of this law,

13 And that their children, who have not known it, may hear, and learn (reverently) to fear the Lord your God, as long as you live in the land which you go over Jordan to possess.

COMMENT 31:9-13

AND MOSES WROTE THIS LAW (v. 9)—The first time Moses' *writing* is mentioned in this book. See also vv. 22, 24. But Moses had written much before this time (Ex. 24:4, Num. 33:2, etc.) See the Introduction, III, (The Writer), and the special works by Rotherham and McGarvey included in this volume.

AND DELIVERED IT UNTO THE PRIESTS . . . AND UNTO ALL THE ELDERS (v. 9)—A formal presentation, committing the keeping of the law into their hands. It was put by the side of the ark (v. 25), *inside* of which the tables of stone were kept. See 10:1-5, Heb. 9:1-5.

AT THE END OF EVERY SEVEN YEARS (v. 10)—See 15:1, 2, 9. The law which had been written was to be read to the people at the end of every seven years, during the festival of the year of release, that is, at the Feast of Tabernacles, Lev. 23:34, Deut. 16:13-16.

Adam Clarke comments: "It is strange that this commandment, relative to a *public* reading of the law every seven years, should have been rarely attended to. It does not appear that from the time mentioned, Josh. viii. 30, at which time this public reading took place, till the reign of *Jehosphaphat*, 2 Chron. xvii. 7 [See also v. 9] there was any public seventh year reading—a period of 530 years. The next seventh year reading was not till the eighteenth year of the reign of *Josiah*, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30, a space of *two hundred and eighty-two* years. Nor do we find any other publicly mentioned from this time till the return from the Babylonish captivity, Neh. viii. 2. Nor is there any other record from that time to the destruction of Jerusalem."

The law was delivered to the priests and elders *not merely* for safe-keeping. It was to be *read* and enforced (vv. 12, 13). During the

centuries of the Dark Ages the Roman Church kept the Bible "safely"—safely locked to the walls and pulpits of monasteries and cathedrals! Throughout Europe the word of God was preserved in Greek, Hebrew and Latin. The latter language, understood only by the learned, was again used in the sacred services. Thus the ignorance of the common man was perpetuated; for Latin was not understood by the common man.

ASSEMBLE THE PEOPLE, etc. (vv. 12, 13)—Nehemiah, chapter 8, provides an illustration of this passage. The law was to be read so all Israel could "hear . . . learn . . . fear . . . observe." Thus when Ezra read, he did so "distinctly; and gave the sense, so that they understood the reading" (Neh. 8:8). God wants his message *communicated* to his people! Reading, with understanding, is good; a mere rattling of words, a matter of mechanics, is not enough! "Till I arrive, go ahead with the public reading, the preaching and the teaching" (I Tim. 4:13, Berkeley).

3. JOSHUA COMMISSIONED (31:14-23)

a. GOD CONFERS WITH MOSES AND JOSHUA (31:14, 15)

14 And Jehovah said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die: call Joshua, and present yourself in the tent of meeting, that I may give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tent of meeting. 15 And Jehovah appeared in the Tent in a pillar of cloud: and the pillar of cloud stood over the door of the Tent.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 31:14, 15

542. What tent is "the tent of meeting"? Cf. Ex. 40:7, Num. 11:16; 12:4.
543. Do we have a "tent of meeting" today? i.e., a place where Jehovah has promised to meet us?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 31:14, 15

14 And the Lord said to Moses, Behold, your days are nearing when you must die. Call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tent of meeting, that I may give him his charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tent of meeting.

15 And the Lord appeared in the tent in a pillar of cloud; and the pillar of cloud stood over the door of the tent.

COMMENT 31:14, 15

The "tent of meeting" is not to be confused with the tabernacle. Compare Ex. 33:7-11, and note that Joshua is involved in that conference also. The "tent of meeting" (Heb. *eth haahel*) is there referred to before the Tabernacle (Heb. *eth hammishcan*) was erected (Ex. 40:17). Nor should it be confused with Moses' own abode. Moses went to it without the camp, and returned again. Rather, it was a simple place of revelation and of the meeting of the people with Jehovah. See also Num. 11:16, 12:4.

Usually, the distinction between the two tents is quite apparent from the context. It should be noted, however, that both are referred to as "the tent of meeting" or "the Tent": with reference to the tabernacle in such passages as Ex. 39:32, 33; The "field office" of Moses in such scriptures as Ex. 33:7.

Many commentators hold, however, that the phrase "tent of meeting" consistently refers only to the tabernacle proper after that structure was erected—that is, it superseded or replaced it, and took on its predecessor's name. It could be so in the present case; but normally none but the priests were privileged to enter the sanctuary, and Moses and Joshua presented themselves "in" the tent (v. 14).

b. MOSES COMMANDED TO WRITE A SONG AS A
WITNESS AGAINST ISRAEL (31:16-22)

16 And Jehovah said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and play the harlot after the strange gods of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. 17 Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall come upon them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us? 18 And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evil which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods. 19 Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach thou it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel. 20 For when I shall have brought them into the land which I swore unto their fathers, flowing with milk and honey, and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxed fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and

despise me, and break my covenant. 21 And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are come upon them, that this song shall testify before them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed; for I know their imagination which they frame this day, before I have brought them into the land which I swear. 22 So Moses write this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 31:16-22

544. Please remember that the constant reference to death as a sleep has no reference to the spirit of man, but only to his body. What comfort is there in the adding of our decayed body to those of "our fathers"?
545. God *is* concerned with the actions and thoughts of His people. Has He changed?
546. Advertising by song is not new. We can remember more what is sung and what we sing. Who knew this before Madison Avenue?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 31:16-22

16 And the Lord said to Moses, Behold, you shall sleep with your fathers; and this people will rise up, and play the harlot after the strange gods of the land where they go to be among them, and they will forsake Me, and break My covenant which I have made with them.

17 Then My anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?

18 And I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they have done in turning to other gods.

19 And now write this song for you, and teach it to the Israelites; put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for Me against the Israelites.

20 For when I have brought them into the land which I swore to their fathers, that flows with milk and honey, and they have eaten and filled themselves, and become fat; then they will turn to other gods, and serve them, and despise and scorn Me, and break My covenant.

21 And when many evils and troubles have befallen them, this [sacred] song will confront them as a witness, for it will never be

forgotten from the mouths of their descendants; for I know their strong desire and the purposes which they are forming even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swore to give them.

22 Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it to the Israelites. [See 32:1-43.]

COMMENT 31:16-22

The song of Moses follows in chapter 32. The essence of vv. 16-18 we have seen repeated again and again in Deuteronomy: The forsaking of God and his commandments will have devastating consequences.

THEY SHALL HAVE EATEN AND FILLED THEMSELVES, AND WAXED FAT . . . AND BREAK MY COVENANT (v. 20)—See 6:10-12, 8:7-20, 11:10-16, etc.

THIS SONG SHALL TESTIFY BEFORE THEM AS A WITNESS (v. 20)—The word of God stands as our guide, lamp, and source of life. But if we depart from it, it can only act as a witness and judge against us. *The same words* condemn or justify, depending on the lives of those who receive them. In the present case, God, in his foreknowledge, knew (as we have seen so many times) that Israel would rebel and disobey: FOR I KNOW THEIR IMAGINATION WHICH THEY FRAME THIS DAY, BEFORE I HAVE BROUGHT THEM INTO THE LAND (v. 21)—As we have attempted to explain elsewhere, the fact that God *knows in advance* that a person or persons will commit sin does not *compel* the individual to commit it. In the present case, it should be observed that Israel was already notoriously rebellious against God and his law—and the Lord knew this rebellion would persist. They were already making plans for various wicked practices in which they could participate as soon as they crossed over the Jordan. And nearly the entire book of Judges chronicles the historical accuracy of this prediction.

The above phrase brings to the memory such passages as Gen. 6:5 and 8:21. Baumgartner would define *yetsar* ("imagination") in *all* these passages as "form, purpose"—that is, of the mind. What powers has the mind! Powers to conceive, imagine, visualize, conceptualize, arrange, design. But conceive or design *what*? That is the greatest question of the ages! And that is why *all* are in need of a *renewed* mind (Rom. 12:2, Eph. 4:22-24). Then the mind can imagine and scheme for *Christ* and the advancement of his kingdom!

c. JOSHUA CHARGED AND ENCOURAGED (31:23)

23 And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge, and said, Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swore unto them: and I will be with thee.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 31:23

547. In face of the promises of defection, how could Joshua be "strong and of good courage"? There is a lesson in this for us. For which generation is each man responsible?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 31:23

23 And [the Lord] charged Joshua son of Nun, Be strong and courageous and firm; for you shall bring the Israelites into the land which I swore to give them; and I will be with you.

COMMENT 31:23

See also vv. 7, 8, and God's words to Moses' successor in Josh. 1:5-9. Surely the new leader needed this encouragement, for he had witnessed the ups and downs of Israel during the entire journey from Egypt. But what leader in the Lord's work does not thrill to the encouragement given to Joshua? And what leader does not need such words of assurance? Surely *part* of Joshua's success in the years that followed are attributable to the encouragement of his predecessor!

B. THE PRESERVATION OF THE BOOK
(31:24-29)

24 And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, 25 that Moses commanded the Levites, that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, saying, 26 Take this book of the law, and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of Jehovah your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee. 27 For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against Jehovah; and how much more after my death? 28 Assemble unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to witness against them. 29 For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you;

and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 31:24-29

548. What is included in "this law" of verse 24?
 549. What is in the ark? Was there a receptacle along side of the ark?
 550. Wouldn't the strong words of verse 29 offend the elders? Discuss.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 31:24-29

24 And when Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book to the very end,

25 He commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord,

26 Take this book of the law, and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against you.

27 For I know your rebellion and stubbornness; behold, while I am yet alive with you, today you have been rebellious against the Lord; and how much more after my death!

28 Gather to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears and call Heaven and earth to witness against them.

29 For I know that after my death you will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because you will do what is evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands.

COMMENT 31:24-29

It will be noticed that we have here

1. The words of the law finished (v. 24)
2. The words of the law preserved (vv. 25, 26)
3. The words of the law as a witness to Israel (vv. 27-29)

MOSES . . . MADE AN END OF WRITING THE WORDS OF THE LAW IN A BOOK (v. 24)—See also v. 9. Whether this passage refers to more than Deuteronomy has been long debated. (Compare our discussion under 27:3). But it is well to notice there is no limiting of the size of the

book; nor are we told if other materials were included in it. The phrasing of vv. 24-25 would lead us to believe all of Deuteronomy, at least, was included in Moses' book. Very likely more is meant:

"The 'book' here spoken of would contain the whole of the Pentateuch up to this verse, and be 'the book of Moses,' called generally by the Jews 'the Law' (Cp. St. Matt. xxii, 40; Gal. iv, 21)." (F. C. Cook)

By comparing v. 9 it appears two copies were made, J. F. B., commenting on vv. 9-13 as well as v. 26, states,

"It was usual in cases of public or private contract for two copies of the engagement to be made—one to be deposited in the national archives, or some secure place for reference, should occasion require; the other to remain in the hands of the contracting parties (Jeremiah 32:12-14). The same course was followed on this renewal of the covenant between God and Israel. Two written copies were prepared, the one of which was delivered to the public representatives of Israel, viz., the priests and the elders . . . The second copy of the law . . . was deposited for greater security and reference in a little chest *beside* the ark of the covenant . . ."

THE LEVITES THAT BARE THE ARK OF THE COVENANT (v. 25)—As in v. 9, "the priests the sons of Levi, that bare the ark . . ." According to Num. 4:4 ff. this was the job of the Kohathites, who, though of the priestly tribe, were not priests. It was they who carried the ark on their journey through the wilderness. But it was only the priests who could touch the ark, and the Kohathites carried the ark only after it was carefully wrapped and prepared by the priests. On special occasions, however, the priests themselves *did* carry the ark: Josh. 3:3, 4:9, 10; 6:6, 12; 8:33, I K. 8:3.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

Moses, being one hundred and twenty years old and about to die, calls the people together, and exhorts them to courage and obedience, 1-6. Delivers a charge to Joshua, 7, 8. Delivers the law which he had written to the priests, with a solemn charge that they should read it every seventh year, publicly to all the people, 9-13. The Lord calls Moses and Joshua to the tabernacle, 14. He appears to them, informs Moses of his approaching death, and delivers to him a prophetic and historical song, or poem, which he is to leave with Israel, for their instruction and reproof, 15-21. Moses writes the song the same day, and teaches it to the Israelites, 22; gives Joshua a charge, 23; finishes writ-

ing the book of the law, 24. Commands the Levites to lay it up in the side of the ark, 25, 26. Predicts their rebellions, 27. Orders the elders to be gathered together, and shows them what evils would befall the people in the latter days, 28, 29, and repeats the song to them, 30.

C. THE SONG OF MOSES (31:30—32:47)

The song is difficult to outline, but the main contents may be grouped as follows:

INTRODUCTION 31:30—32:1, 2

1. The greatness and faithfulness of *God*, in contrast with the faithlessness of Israel (32:3-18)
2. The chastisement and the need of its infliction by God (32:19-33).
3. God's compassion upon his people in their low and humbled state (32:34-42).

30 And Moses spake in the ears of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were finished.

1 Give ear, ye heavens, and I will speak;
And let the earth hear the words of my mouth.

2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain,
My speech shall distil as the dew;
As the small rain upon the tender grass,
And as the showers upon the herb:

GIVE EAR YE HEAVENS . . . LET THE EARTH HEAR (v. 1)—another way of appealing to the witness of God. "I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall utterly perish from off the land . . ." (4:26). The whole universe is called to witness the procedure. Let all eyes and ears testify to the reading.

3 For I will proclaim the name of Jehovah;
Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

4 The Rock, his work is perfect;
For all his ways are justice:
A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,
Just and right is he.

5 They have dealt corruptly with him, *they are* not his children,
it is their blemish;
They are a perverse and crooked generation.

- 6 Do ye thus requite Jehovah,
O foolish people and unwise?
Is not he thy father that hath brought thee?
He hath made thee, and established thee.
- 7 Remember the days of old,
Consider the years of many generations:
Ask thy father, and he will show thee;
Thine elders, and they will tell thee.
- 8 When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance,
When he separated the children of men,
He set the bounds of the peoples
According to the number of the children of Israel.
- 9 For Jehovah's portion is his people;
Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.
- 10 He found him in a desert land,
And in the waste howling wilderness;
He compassed him about, he cared for him,
He kept him as the apple of his eye.
- 11 As an eagle that stirreth up her nest,
That fluttereth over her young,
He spread abroad his wings, he took them,
He bare them on his pinions.
- 12 Jehovah alone did lead him,
And there was no foreign god with him.
- 13 He made him ride on the high places of the earth,
And he did eat the increase of the field;
And he made him to suck honey out of the rock,
And oil out of the flinty rock;
- 14 Butter of the herd, and milk of the flock,
With fat of lambs,
And rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats,
With the finest of the wheat;
And of the blood of the grape thou drankest wine.
- 15 But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked:
Thou art waxed fat, thou art grown thick, thou art become sleek;
Then he forsook God who made him,
And lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.
- 16 They moved him to jealousy with strange *gods*;
With abominations provoked they him to anger.
- 17 They sacrificed unto demons, *which were no God*,

To gods that they knew not,
 To new *gods that* came up of late,
 Which your fathers dreaded not.
 18 Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful,
 And hast forgotten God that gave thee birth.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 31:30—32:18

551. Who is "The Rock" of verse 4? Why use this name?
552. There are some very strong comparisons and contrasts between Jehovah and Israel. List three of them.
553. Israel has endearing names. List three of them.
554. There are several figurative descriptions of Israel that will describe the "Israel of God" today. Mention two.
555. Sin, Servitude, Sorrow, Salvation; this is the vicious circle of Israel's history. How can this circle be broken?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 31:30—32:18

30 And Moses spoke in the hearing of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended.

CHAPTER 32

Give ear, O heavens, and I [Moses] will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth.

2 My message shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the light rain upon the tender grass, and as the showers upon the herb.

3 For I will proclaim the name [and presence] of the Lord. Concede and ascribe greatness to our God.

4 He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are law and justice, a God of faithfulness, without breach or deviation, just and right is He.

5 They [Israel] have spoiled themselves. They are not sons to Him, that is their blemish. A perverse and crooked generation!

6 Do you thus repay the Lord, you foolish and senseless people? Is not He your father Who acquired you for His own? Who made and established you [as a nation]?

7 Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you.

8 When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the children of men, He set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the Israelites.

9 For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob [Israel] is the lot of His inheritance.

10 He found him in a desert land, in the howling void of the wilderness; He kept circling around him, He scanned him (penetratingly), He kept him as the pupil of His eye.

11 As an eagle that stirs up her nest, that flutters over her young, He spread abroad His wings; He took them, He bore them on His pinions. [Luke 13:34.]

12 So the Lord alone led him; there was no foreign god with Him.

13 He made Israel ride on the high places of the earth, and he ate the increase of the field; and He made him to suck honey out of the rock and oil out of the flinty rock;

14 Butter and curds of the herd and milk of the flock, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan and he-goats, with the finest of the wheat; and you drank wine of the blood of the grape.

15 But Jeshurun [Israel] grew fat and kicked. You became fat, you grew thick, you were gorged and sleek! Then he forsook God Who made him, and forsook and despised the Rock of his salvation.

16 They provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations they provoked Him to anger.

17 They sacrificed to demons, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods lately come up, whom your fathers never knew or feared.

18 Of the Rock that bore you you were unmindful; you forgot the God Who travailed in your birth.

COMMENT 31:30—32:18

THE ROCK (v. 4)—A central figure of God in the song (vv. 13, 15, 18, 30, 31). And note in vv. 37-38 Israel is rebuked for placing their confidence not in the Rock but in the "rock" of their own making—an idol. God is the essence of immutable and impregnable strength—traits this figure of speech depicts. Cf. Gen. 49:24, I Sam. 2:2, Ps. 18:2, Matt. 16:18, Jn. 1:42, etc.

THY FATHER THAT BROUGHT THEE (v. 6)—Thus, they were a redeemed people (Ex. 6:6). HE HATH MADE THEE, AND ESTABLISHED THEE (v. 6)—As David could say

He brought me up also out of a horrible pit,
 out of the miry clay;
 And he set my feet upon a rock,
 and established my goings.

—Ps. 40:2

JEHOVAH ALONE DID LEAD HIM, AND THERE WAS NO FOREIGN GOD WITH HIM (v. 12)—A verse that at once sets forth the strength and independence of God's power. HE it was that led Israel, supplied Israel, preserved Israel, protected Israel—*HE* and no other! It was not a multitude of heathen gods that did it, it was *THE ALMIGHTY* God! *And he depends upon no other source of power.* Note 8:3 and notes, 4:35-39. Yet there was ever the tendency to attribute God's power to heathen deities: "These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (Ex. 32:4, I K. 12:28, 29). And throughout much of Israel's history Jehovah-worship and idolatry were mixed together in a confusing and contradictory hodge-podge! Note, for example, the story of Micah and his house of idols (Judges, Ch. 17). It was not a matter of totally leaving God—or totally leaving Jehovah-worship. Rather, "They feared Jehovah, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away" (II K. 17:33). It should hardly need saying that such luke warm dedication to God and his word is a stench in the nostrils of the Almighty.

AND HE MADE HIM TO SUCK HONEY OUT OF THE ROCK (v. 13)—This phrase, along with v. 14, has a parallel in Ps. 81:16, "He would feed them also with the finest of the wheat; And with the honey out of the rock would I satisfy thee." Rocks or ledges, of course, are places for bees to construct their honeycombs and deposit honey—especially *under* them, or in the crevices *between* them. And it was this metaphor of prosperity and God's goodness that led the song writer F. A. Graves to pen the words of his well-known hymn:

Have you "tasted that the Lord is gracious?"
 Do you walk in the way that's new?
 Have you drunk from the living fountain?
 There's Honey in the Rock for you.

Oh, there's Honey in the Rock, my brother, . . .
 There's Honey in the Rock for you.
 Leave your sins for the blood to cover,
 There's Honey in the Rock for you.

OIL OUT OF THE FLINTY ROCK (v. 13)—That is, olive oil would be plentiful in this new land, and olive trees, because of God's blessing, would grow even in the most obstinate soil. It would be "a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive trees and honey" (8:8). Olive oil was (and is) used widely for food in the near east.

BUT JESHURUN WAXED FAT AND KICKED (v. 15)—Jeshurun is a symbolical or poetical name of endearment for Israel. Gesenius says it is "a tender and loving appellation of the people of Israel." At the same time, he believes there is an allusion to the idea of rectitude or uprightness. He mentions the possibility of it being a diminutive form of *Israel* and meaning something like "the righteous little people." Whatever its precise meaning, it is always used in place of Israel. It occurs only here, 33:5, 26, and Isa. 44:2.

THEN HE FORSOOK GOD (v. 15)—i.e., the prosperity of Israel (though given by God) became their undoing. Cf. the warning of 8:11 ff.

19 And Jehovah saw *it*, and abhorred *them*,
Because of the provocation of his sons and his daughters.
20 And he said, I will hide my face from *them*,
I will see what their end shall be:
For they are a very perverse generation,
Children in whom is no faithfulness.
21 They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God;
They have provoked me to anger with their vanities:
And I will move them to jealousy with those that are not a people;
I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.
22 For a fire is kindled in mine anger,
And burneth unto the lowest Sheol,
And devoureth the earth with its increase,
And setteth on fire the foundations of the mountains.
23 I will heap evils upon them;
I will spend mine arrows upon them:
24 *They shall be* wasted with hunger, and devoured with burning heat
And bitter destruction;
And the teeth of beasts will I send upon them,
With the poison of crawling things of the dust.
25 Without shall the sword bereave,
And in the chambers terror;

It shall destroy both young man and virgin,

The suckling with the man of gray hairs.

26 I said, I would scatter them afar,

I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men;

27 Were it not that I feared the provocation of the enemy,

Lest their adversaries should judge amiss,

Lest they should say, Our hand is exalted,

And Jehovah hath not done all this.

28 For they are a nation void of counsel,

And there is no understanding in them.

29 Oh that they were wise, that they understood this,

That they would consider their latter end!

30 How should one chase a thousand

And two put ten thousand to flight,

Except their Rock had sold them,

And Jehovah had delivered them up?

31 For their rock is not as our Rock,

Even our enemies themselves being judges.

32 For their vine is of the vine of Sodom,

And of the fields of Gomorrah:

Their grapes are grapes of gall,

Their clusters are bitter:

33 Their wine is the poison of serpents,

And the cruel venom of asps.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 32:19-33

556. What is meant by the use of the word "provocation"?

557. What foreign people are meant in verse 21?

558. Where is "Sheol"? Explain the use of this term here.

559. Something will restrain God's wrath as mentioned in verses 26 and 27. What is it?

560. Itemize what Israel was as contrasted with what they should have been.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 32:19-33

19 And the Lord saw it, He spurned and rejected them, from indignation with His sons and His daughters.

20 And He said, I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end will be. For they are a perverse generation, children in whom is no faithfulness.

21 They have moved Me to jealousy with what is not God; they have angered Me with their idols; so I will move them to jealousy with those not a people; I will anger them with a foolish nation.

22 For a fire is kindled by My anger, and it burns to the depths of Sheol, devours the earth with its increase, and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains.

23 And I will heap evils upon them; I will spend My arrows upon them.

24 They shall be wasted with hunger, and devoured with burning heat and poisonous pestilence; and the teeth of beasts will I send against them, with the poison of crawling things of the dust.

25 From without the sword shall bereave, and in the chambers shall be terror, destroying both young man and virgin, the sucking child with the man of gray hairs.

26 I said, I would scatter them afar, and I would have made the remembrance of them to cease from among men,

27 Had I not feared the provocation of the foe, lest their enemies misconstrue it, and lest they should say, Our own hand has prevailed; all this was not the work of the Lord.

28 For they are a nation void of counsel, and there is no understanding in them.

29 O that they were wise, and would see through this [present triumph] to their ultimate fate!

30 How could one have chased 1,000 and two put 10,000 to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had delivered them up?

31 For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

32 For their vine comes from the vine of Sodom, and from the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of (poisonous) gall, their clusters are bitter;

33 Their wine is the (furious) venom of serpents, and the pitiless poison of vipers;

COMMENT 32:19-33

AND I WILL MOVE THEM TO JEALOUSY WITH THOSE THAT ARE NOT A PEOPLE . . . A FOOLISH NATION (v. 21)—See also Rom. 10:16-19. Those not in God's service are important as eternal souls, but if they are not in fact his children, they are "a foolish nation"—even as we were "no people" (I Pet. 2:10) before coming to Christ. They are those "having no hope and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12).

What nation is referred to here? It is hard to say which of the many invaders of Israel (if a *specific* one is indeed being referred to) the Holy Spirit intends. Both Assyria and Babylon attacked while Israel was filled with idolatry (note vv. 16, 17).

... FIRE ... BURNETH UNTO THE LOWEST SHEOL (v. 22)—The A. V. has "unto the lowest hell," but in either case the reader might be misled. the word *sheol* literally signifies the unseen state, or the unseen *place*. Baumgartner defines it here, "waste, no-country, underworld." The present passage *could* be a *general* description of God as a consuming fire. But it seems better to apply it to the immediate case: God's wrath would be upon their *whole land* when they were disobedient: Their crops, fields, houses, grain-storage bins—all would be destroyed; Clarke remarks on this phrase, "... the very deepest destruction; a total extermination, so that *the earth*—their land and *its increase*, and all their property should be seized; and the *foundations of their mountains* [v. 22]—their strongest fortresses, should be razed to the ground. All this was fulfilled in a most remarkable manner in the last destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, so that of the fortifications of that city not one stone was left on another."

AND THE TEETH OF BEASTS WILL I SEND UPON THEM (v. 24)—See also Lev. 26:22. In 7:22 we saw the strategy of defeating Israel's enemies was to be little by little "lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee." But disobedience would also bring them. We do not have a *recorded* instance of this as far as the Israelites themselves are concerned. But in II K. 17:24-26 we have such an act of God toward the foreign occupants of Samaria brought in by the Assyrians.

I SAID, I WOULD SCATTER THEM AFAR, I WOULD MAKE THE REMEMBRANCE OF THEM TO CEASE (v. 26)—See Ex. 32:9-14, Deut. 9:13, 14; 25-29. The wrath of God was stayed, not because of a deserving Israel, but "Lest their adversaries should judge amiss," etc. (v. 27). "... lest their enemies misconstrue it" (Amplified).

The translation of The Torah is helpful from vv. 26-30:

- 26 I might have reduced them to naught,
 Made their memory cease among men,
 27 But for fear of the taunts of the foe,
 Their enemies who might misjudge
 And say, "Our own hand has prevailed;
 None of this was wrought by the Lord!"

- 28 For they [the heathen nations] are a folk
 void of sense,
 Lacking in all discernment.
 29 Were they wise, they would think upon this,
 Gain insight into their future:
 30 How could one have routed a thousand,
 Or two put ten thousand to flight,
 Unless their rock had sold them,
 The Lord had given them up?"

Verse 30 shows the weakness of Israel *without Jehovah*. No foe can stand before him, but enemies can overrun his own people if he has abandoned them.

Oh! how would one have chased a thousand,
 And two put ten thousand to flight,—
 Were it not that their Rock had sold them,
 And Yahweh had abandoned them;

(Rotherham)

The idea, of course, is that Israel's defeat at the hand of their enemies would have been impossible unless God had abandoned his people.

FOR THEIR ROCK IS NOT AS OUR ROCK (v. 31)—a statement equivalent of saying, For their god(s) are not as our God." To foreign nations, whose god (rock) was powerless and dead, his physical presence or non-presence made no *actual* difference in the outcome of battles—or any other event for that matter. But Israel lost no battles "unless their Rock had sold them." The powerless rock of the heathen "is not as our Rock," who is omnipotent.

EVEN OUR ENEMIES THEMSELVES BEING JUDGES (v. 31)—i.e., Israel's enemies can testify to the above truth. The Egyptians, for example, were helpless before Israel's God, shouting, "Let us flee from the face of Israel; for Jehovah fighteth for them against the Egyptians" (Ex. 14:25). See also Ex. 15:14-16, Deut. 2:25.

VINE OF SODOM . . . FIELDS OF GOMORRAH (v. 32)—To become like these became (Gen. 19:23-28) would be to become a desolate waste, unproductive and sterile. See 29:22-28, notes. Whatever would be produced in Israel, as in vv. 32-33 would be of the poorest quality. But it is possible that this picturesque phrase means more. "Sodom and Go-

morrah are here advanced as types of what is depraved, and to the moral taste nauseous (cf. Isa. i. 10; Jer. xxiii. 14)." (Pulpit)

GRAPES OF GALL (v. 32)—See 29:18-20, notes. Vv. 32-33 could be taken to describe a degenerate *people* as well as a degenerate *land*.

34 Is not this laid up in store with me,
Sealed up among my treasures?
35 Vengeance is mine, and recompense,
At the time when their foot shall slide:
For the day of their calamity is at hand,
And the things that are to come upon them shall make haste.
36 For Jehovah will judge his people,
And repent himself for his servants;
When he seeth that *their* power is gone,
And there is none *remaining*, shut up or left at large.
37 And he will say, Where are their gods,
The rock in which they took refuge;
38 Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices,
And drank the wine of their drink-offering?
Let them rise up and help you,
Let them be your protection.
39 See now that I, even I, am he,
And there is no god with me:
I kill, and I make alive;
I wound, and I heal;
And there is none that can deliver out of my hand.
40 For I lift up my hand to heaven,
And say, As I live for ever,
41 If I whet my glittering sword,
And my hand take hold on judgment;
I will render vengeance to mine adversaries,
And will recompense them that hate me.
52 I will make mine arrows drunk with blood,
And my sword shall devour flesh;
With the blood of the slain and the captives,
From the head of the leaders of the enemy.
43 Rejoice, O ye nations, *with* his people:
For he will avenge the blood of his servants,
And will render vengeance to his adversaries,
And will make expiation for his land, for his people.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 32:34-43

561. What does God have laid up in His treasury?
562. How is it possible to say of God that He repents?
563. Are we to believe God takes some type of delight in bloodshed?
Cf. Verses 41-32.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 32:34-43

34 Is not this laid up in store with Me, sealed up in My treasures?
35 Vengeance is Mine, and recompense, for the time when their foot shall slide; for the day of their disaster is at hand, and their doom comes speedily.

36 For the Lord will pass sentence for His people, and relent for His servants' sake, when He sees that their power is gone, and none remain, whether bond or free.

37 And He will say, Where are their gods, the rock in which they took refuge.

38 Who ate the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offering? Let them rise up and help you, let them be your protection.

39 See now that I, I am He, and there is no god beside Me; I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; and there is none who can deliver out of My hand.

40 For I lift up My hand to Heaven, and swear, As I live for ever,

41 If I whet My lightning sword, and My hand takes hold on judgment, I will wreak vengeance on My foes, and recompense those who hate Me.

42 I will make My arrows drunk with blood, and My sword shall devour flesh with the blood of the slain and the captives, from the long-haired heads of the foe.

43 Rejoice with His people, O you nations, for He avenges the blood of His servants, and vengeance He inflicts on His foes, and clears guilt from the land of His people.

COMMENT 32:34-43

MY TREASURES (v. 34)—The Hebrew word *otsar*, according to Tregelles, means properly, what is laid up, a store, stock. Thus God has reserved in his "treasure" such items as vengeance (v. 35) and judgment (v. 36).

FOR JEHOVAH WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE . . . AND REPENT HIMSELF (v. 36)—Better, as in the R.S.V. and others, "For the Lord will vindicate his people and have compassion on his servants, when he sees that their power is gone," etc.

Ferrar Fenton has,

Then the LORD will redress His
People;—
For His servants He deeply grieves,
When he sees their power departing,
And fail, and fade, and decay.
Then He asks, "Where now are
their godlings?
The power upon whom they
trust—

In Israel's despair and desperation, they would come to realize the uselessness and worthlessness of their heathen gods. Finally, the living God would rescue his chosen nation (vv. 39-43). Again and again this is Israel's history, especially in the period of the Judges, between the death of Joshua and the anointing of Saul.

44 And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he and Hoshea the son of Nun. 45 And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel; 46 and he said unto them, Set your heart unto all the words which I testify unto you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, *even* all the words of this law. 47 For it is no vain thing for you; because it is your life, and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over the Jordan to possess it.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 32:44-47

564. Who is Hoshea? Cf. Num. 13:16.
565. What is involved in fulfilling the injunction to "set your heart"?
566. Hearing, heeding, living, the word of God will give us _____?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 31:44-47

44 And Moses came and spoke all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he and Hoshea (Joshua) son of Nun.

45 And when Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel,

46 He said to them, Set your [minds and] hearts on all the words which I command you this day, that you may command them to your children, that they may be watchful to do all the words of this law.

47 For it is not an empty and worthless trifle for you; it is your very life; by it you shall live long in the land which you are going over the Jordan to possess.

COMMENT 32:44-47

HOSHEA (v. 44)—that is, Joshua. Num. 13:16 informs us that "Moses called Hoshea ['Jehovah is help'] the son of Nun Joshua ['Jehovah saves']." Depending on the version used, Hoshea may be rendered "Oshea," and Joshua "Jehoshua."

SET YOUR HEART UNTO ALL THE WORDS (v. 46)—Give heed to them and carefully abide by them BECAUSE IT IS YOUR LIFE (v. 47)—a phrase reminiscent of 4:1, 8:3, 30:19-20. Heeding God's word, in whatever dispensation it might be given, has always meant *life*! See Jn. 6:63, 68. In Israel's case, as Moses emphasized again and again, this meant not only life eternal, but THROUGH THIS THING YE SHALL PROLONG YOUR DAYS IN THE LAND (v. 47).

QUESTIONS, LESSON TWENTY-THREE

(31:1—32:47)

OVER CHAPTER 31

1. How old is Moses now?
2. Who is appointed as his successor, and who appoints him?
3. List at least three factors (or incidents) in this man's life that show he possessed the qualities needed as Israel's leader.
4. Show that he was a *spiritual* man, as well as one with good military leadership. (Overlaps with 3.)
5. Do you remember the words of encouragement Moses gave to Israel (also found in the book of Hebrews)?
6. To whom was the law delivered?
7. How often was it to be read before all Israel- How often was it *actually* read?
8. The "tent of meeting" is a name for _____, and also for _____.
9. What is said about Israel's *imagination*? What *could* and should have been said about it?
10. Where was the "book of the law" kept?

OVER CHAPTER 32

11. What material object, more than any other, is the central figure for *God* in this chapter?
12. What traits does it bring to mind?
13. Do you recall any phrases that show how *much* God cared for Israel in the wilderness?
14. Explain: "honey out of the rock . . . oil out of the flinty rock" (v. 13).
15. How would Israel's new found prosperity effect them?
16. Who or what is Jeshurun?
17. Distinguish between "Rock" and "rock" in this chapter.
18. Who are "those that are not a people" (v. 21)?
19. God's fire would be kindled because of Israel's wickedness. How extensively would it destroy?
20. What (in this chapter) restrained God from completely obliterating Israel from the face of the earth?
21. Would Israel ever be vindicated and restored?
22. Whose help did (does) God *not* need to deliver Israel?
23. Why should Israel set their hearts to these words?

LESSON TWENTY-FOUR 32:48—34:12

D. MOSES COMMANDED TO ASCEND MOUNT NEBO (32:48-52)

48 And Jehovah spake unto Moses that selfsame day, saying, 49 Get thee up into this mountain of Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession; 50 and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people: 51 because ye trespassed against me in the midst of the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah of Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel. 52 For thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither into the land which I gave the children of Israel.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 32:48-52

567. What day is meant by the expression "that selfsame day"?
568. There are three names used: Abarim, Nebo, and Pisgah, are these all names of the same place?
569. In death Moses was "to be gathered unto thy people"—just where are his people that death would unite the two?
570. Please notice carefully the sin of Moses at Kadesh—there is something far more serious than speaking or striking the rock—what is it?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 32:48-52

48 And the Lord said to Moses that same day,

49 Get up into this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, opposite Jericho; and look at the land of Canaan, which I give to the Israelites for a possession;

50 And die on the mountain which you ascend, and be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his people;

51 Because you broke faith with Me in the midst of the Israelites at the waters of Meribah of Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because you did not set Me apart as holy in the midst of the Israelites.

52 For you shall see the land over opposite you, but you shall not go there, into the land which I give the Israelites.

COMMENT 32:48-52

GET THEE UP INTO THIS MOUNTAIN (v. 49)—See also 3:23-28, 34:1 ff. There is no practical purpose for distinguishing between Pisgah and Nebo, the former the name of Nebo in 3:27.

Because of Moses' transgression at the waters of Meribah (Num. 20:2-13), neither Moses nor Aaron were allowed to enter the Promised Land proper. We find no indication on their part of bitterness or inner rebellion against God because of this prohibition—in fact, all scripture with reference to their death leads us to believe they had long since quietly acquiesced to the will of God in this matter. Yet, what deep and overwhelming emotion must have engulfed Moses' soul as he ascended that mountain! Surely from this distance it is impossible to imagine it! See further on this under 34:1.

AS AARON . . . DIED IN MOUNT HOR (v. 50)—See Num. 20:22-29, and note that, as in the case of Moses, Aaron could not enter Canaan "because ye rebelled against my word at the waters of Meribah" (Num. 20:24. Compare v. 51 of this chapter). Aaron had died on the first day of the fifth month of this year (Num. 33:38). Moses' death was not too much later, for even after the events of Deuteronomy, Moses' death, the thirty days of mourning, and Joshua's leading of Israel across Jordan, we are only in the tenth day of the first month of the next year (Josh. 4:19).

BECAUSE YE SANCTIFIED ME NOT (v. 51)—See notes under 1:37. There is much misunderstanding concerning the nature of Moses' (and Aaron's) sin—sin so great in *God's* eyes to keep this great man of faith from taking part in the final victory and entering Canaan with Israel. It is frequently explained that God condemned him because of his disobedience in striking the rock (an act which *had* been commanded of him in a previous instance, Ex. 17:6), instead of merely speaking to it as instructed. And though this may be part of Moses' violation, it is not mentioned as a reason for preventing his entrance into Canaan. See Numbers 20, especially v. 12. Moses did not *sanctify* God in the eyes of the people, "Because ye believed not in me . . ." In whom or what, then, *did* Moses have faith? It seems to have been *himself*, along with Aaron. And perhaps, too, (though it is hard to believe!) in the powers of his rod—the rod he had previously used to perform such feats as splitting the waters of the Red Sea or bringing forth water at Rephidim. Had Moses come to think of his rod as a "magic stick"? We do not know. At any rate, as he and Aaron stood before Israel, the shout of Moses

was, "Hear now, ye rebels; shall we bring you forth water out of this rock?" The name of God was not mentioned. The people only saw Moses and Aaron.

If ever there is a reminder of God's demand for his own glory to be reflected in our words and lives, it is illustrated here. His words must be followed, and the credit for his power (no matter who he works *through*) must be given to HIM!

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

The prophetic and historical song of Moses, showing forth the nature of God's doctrine, 1-3. The character of God, 4. The corruption of the people, 5, 6. They are called to remember God's kindness, 7, and his dealings with them during their travels in the wilderness, 8-14. Their ingratitude and iniquity, 15-18. They are threatened with his judgments, 19-28. A pathetic lamentation over them because of their sins, 29-35. Gracious purposes in their behalf, mixed with reproaches for their manifold idolatries, and threatenings against his enemies, 36-42. A promise of salvation to the Gentiles, 43. Moses, having finished the song, warmly exhorts the people to obedience, 44-47. God calls him up to the mount, that he may see the good land and then die, 48-52.

E. THE BLESSING OF MOSES (33:1-29)

Having spoken his song in the previous chapter, Moses now pronounces his blessing upon the people. Both were probably spoken on the same day, just prior to his ascension into mount Nebo and his death. In both he is bidding farewell to Israel; both are poetic in nature, and both look to the future of God's chosen people. The one may be regarded as the counterpart of the other. In his song, however, Moses has dwelt especially on the *calamities* and *chastizements* that shall come upon Israel; in his blessing, he reveals the blessings of the future through the favor, generosity, and love of God. "The tone of the one is sombre and minatory; the tone of the other is serene and cheering. The one presents the darker side, the other the brighter side, of Israel's fortunes." (Pulpit)

This chapter falls into a rather natural three-fold division: (1) An introduction (vv. 1-5), (2) a series of benedictions on the twelve tribes (vv. 6-25), and (3) a conclusion (vv. 26-29).

1. INTRODUCTION (33:1-5)

And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. 2 And he said,

Jehovah came from Sinai,

He rose from Seir unto them;

He shined forth from mount Paran,

And he came from the ten thousands of holy ones:

At his right hand was a fiery law for them.

3 Yea, he loved the people;

All his saints are in thy hand:

And they sat down at thy feet;

Every one shall receive of thy words.

4 Moses commanded us a law,

An inheritance for the assembly of Jacob.

5 And he was king in Jeshurun,

When the heads of the people were gathered,

All the tribes of Israel together.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:1-5

571. Compare and contrast chapters 32 and 33.

572. In what sense was it true that "Jehovah came from Sinai?"

573. Jehovah came to them from Mt. Sinai but in a greater sense—"he came from ten thousand of holy ones!"—who were the "holy ones"? Where were they?

574. Compare John 10:27-30 with verse 3.

575. Who is the "King" of verse 5?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:1-5

This is the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed the Israelites before his death.

2 He said, The Lord came from Sinai and beamed upon us from Seir; He flashed forth from Mount Paran, from among ten thousands of holy ones, a flaming fire, a law, at His right hand.

3 Yes, He loves [the tribes] His people; all those consecrated to Him are in Your Hand. They followed in Your steps; they [accepted Your word and] received direction from You,

4 When Moses commanded us a law, as a possession for the assembly of Jacob.

5 [The Lord] was King in Jeshurun (Israel) when the heads of the people were gathered, all the tribes of Israel together.

COMMENT 33:1-5

Some of the outstanding manifestations of God's power or goodness toward Israel are reviewed here, as a proper introduction to the blessings to be described in the immediate verses following. It is poetry appropriate for the past forty years of Jehovah's guardianship!

JEHOVAH CAME FROM SINAI (v. 2)—See also Ps. 68:8. "And mount Sinai, the whole of it, smoked, because Jehovah descended upon it in fire . . . And Jehovah came down upon mount Sinai, to the top of the mount: and Jehovah called Moses to the top of the mount" (Ex. 19:18, 20) all, of course, in preparation for the giving of the law (v. 4). This was well known, but its mention emphasized at once the *power* of God, and his desire to use his power *for Israel's good*. The next phrase again demonstrates these characteristics of the Father.

AND ROSE FROM SEIR UNTO THEM (v. 2)—"Mount Seir," "the land of Seir," and "the field of Edom," are, for most practical purposes, synonymous. This is the mountainous tract which runs along the eastern side of the Arabah, and was occupied by the descendants of Esau. It was through the divine intervention of God that Israel was enabled to pass through their land. See 2:1-8, especially the comments on v. 4.

HE SHINED FORTH FROM MOUNT PARAN (v. 2)—perhaps a peak in the wilderness of Paran (Jebel Makrah?). If so, it is most likely used here by metonymy for that high limestone plateau containing the very important station of Kadesh Barnea. As in 1:1, it is difficult to restrict Paran to a small area. But as we saw in chapters one and two, Kadesh, more than any other place, was the hub of Israel's activity in the wilderness.

HE CAME FROM THE TEN THOUSANDS OF HOLY ONES (v. 2)—Translators have had great difficulty with the last half of this verse. Perhaps no other passage in Deuteronomy has been so variously rendered. Rotherham has:

He shone forth out of Mount Paran,
Yea he came out of holy myriads,—
Out of his right hand [proceeded] fire to guide them.

What fire? At the hazard of being very obvious, could this refer to the pillar of fire that (along with the cloud by day) "abode in the wilderness of Paran" (Num. 10:12)? Israel, after all, "abode in Kadesh many days" (1:46), which necessarily meant a prolonged stay by night of the pillar of fire—a token both of God's nearness and leading. See Ex. 13:21, 22.

Whatever the interpretation of the above phrase, the *purpose* of all these acts of God is made clear in the next verse:

YEA, HE LOVETH THE PEOPLE; ALL HIS SAINTS ARE IN THY HAND (v. 3)—And this is why he has protected and cared for Israel—and why he *will* do so. He loves his children, and he could say with his son, "no one shall snatch them out of my hand" (See Jn. 10:27-30).

MOSES COMMANDED US A LAW, etc. (vv. 4, 5)—Ferrar Fenton renders these verses (beginning with v. 3),

On your hand let them trust,
At your word rise and march,
Let Moses give them Laws
As Prince of Jacob's Host
And be Yeshurun's Leader
Controlling the Nation's Chiefs,
Uniting Israel's Tribes.

But the overwhelming majority of translators (as well as the lexicons of Baumgartner and Gesenius), refer this kingship to *God*. Compare Ps. 84:3, 149:2, etc. "Thus the Lord became king in Jeshurun . . ." (R.S.V.).

2. BLESSINGS PRONOUNCED UPON THE TWELVE TRIBES (33:6-25)

It will be noticed that the tribe of Simeon is not mentioned in this list. This was because of their father's anger, cruelty, and disobedience (see especially Gen. 34:24-31). Referring to both Simeon and Levi, Jacob said,

I will divide them in Jacob,
And scatter them in Israel.

—Gen. 49:7

In the case of Simeon, this meant being absorbed in the tribe of Judah (Josh. 19:1, Jud. 1:3). In the case of Levi, it meant no in-

heritance in Israel as a tribe—only scattered cities. Thus, although there are a few exceptions, we can usually say that the history of Judah is the history of Simeon.

a. REUBEN (v. 6)

- 6 Let Reuben live, and not die;
Nor let his men be few.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:6

576. Read the Amplified Translation and notice the difference in this verse—why is there such a difference?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:6

6 Let [the tribe of] Reuben live, and not die out, but *let his men be few.

COMMENT 33:6

Compare the pronouncement of Gen. 49:3, 4. Though he would "not have the preeminence," his numbers or power would not be lost.

NOR LET HIS MEN BE FEW—Or, *But* let etc. The latter rendering is preferred by many modern translators.

May Reuben live and not die,
Though few be his number.

—The Torah.

The latter rendering is more in accord with history. There is only a slight decline in Reuben's population between the first and second numberings—46,500 to 43,730 (Num. 1:21, 26:7). But Reuben's later history is a tragic one. His numbers did indeed become few. The Amplified Bible states:

*The earlier Bible translators could not believe that Moses meant to say of Reuben, "let his men be few," so they put "not" in it in italics: "let *not* his men be few." But Reuben had committed a grave offense (Gen. 49:3,4), which canceled his birthright, and God meant exactly what He directed Moses to say, as continuous fulfillment of the prophecy proves. "In Judg. 5:16 the tribe [of Reuben] is scorned for its failure to join the others against the Canaanites, and except for 1 Chron. 5:3-20 it does not again appear in Israel's history. Nor does Misha of Moab, ninth century, B.C. name it" (*Cambridge Bible*). Furthermore, by 1951 A.D. no Jew was permitted to enter the territory once allotted to the tribe of Reuben. "The whole territory, which is . . . quite capable of cultivation, is now deserted by its settled inhabitants" (*Davis' Bible Dictionary*). It was then being restored, not by Israelites, but by Arabs.

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b. JUDAH (v. 7)

- 7 And this *the blessing* of Judah: and he said,
Hear, Jehovah, the voice of Judah,
And bring him in unto his people:
With his hands he contended for himself;
And thou shalt be a help against his adversaries.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:7

577. Why is the tribe of Judah considered especially worthy? Cf. Gen. 49:8-12. When was this prophecy fulfilled?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:7

7 And this [Moses] said to Judah: Hear, O Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him to his people! With his hands he contended for himself, but You be a help to him against his enemies.

COMMENT 33:7

WITH HIS HANDS HE CONTENDED FOR HIMSELF—

Or, Though his own hands strive for him, etc.

Or, Make his hands strong for him . . .

Or, With thy hands contend for him . . .

God promises his aid to this worthy tribe. Compare Gen. 49:8-12. And, as in that passage, one can point to relatively immediate fulfillments in Israel's history. The glorious reigns of Solomon and David are obvious literal fulfillments. Surely at that time God was a help against Judah's adversaries. But the prophecies are more completely fulfilled in the Messiah—"the Lion of the tribe of Judah." In all things he will become the preeminent One.

c. LEVI (vv. 8-11)

- 8 And of Levi he said,
 Thy Thummim and thy Urim are with thy godly one,
 Whom thou didst prove at Massah,
 With whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;
 9 Who said of his father, and of his mother, I have not
 seen him;
 Neither did he acknowledge his brethren,
 Nor knew he his own children:
 For they have observed thy word,
 And keep thy covenant.
 10 They shall teach Jacob thine ordinances,
 And Israel thy law:
 They shall put incense before thee,
 And whole burnt-offering upon thine altar.
 11 Bless, Jehovah, his substance,
 And accept the work of his hands:
 Smite through the loins of them that rise up against him,
 And of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:8-11

578. What were the Thummim and the Urim? Where were they? For what purposes were they used? Cf. Ex. 28:30, Lev. 8:8.
 579. Read Ex. 17:3-7 and the twentieth chapter of Numbers for and understanding of 8b.
 580. When was verse nine fulfilled? Read Ex. 32 for an answer.
 581. Levi had no tribal allotment—his privileges were greater—in what way?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:8-11

8 And of Levi he said, Your Thummim and Your Urim [by which the priest sought God's will for the nation] are for your pious one

[Aaron for the tribe], whom You tried and proved at Massah, with whom You contended at the waters of Meribah; [Num. 20:1-13.]

9 [Aaron], who *said of his father and mother, I do not regard them, nor did he acknowledge his brothers, or openly recognize his own children. For the priests observed Your word and kept Your covenant [as to their limitations].

10 [The priests] shall teach Jacob Your ordinances, and Israel Your law; they shall put incense before You, and whole burnt offering upon Your altar.

11 Bless, O Lord, [Levi's] substance, and accept the work of his hands; crush the loins of his adversaries, and of those who hate him, that they arise no more.

COMMENT 33:8-11

THUMMIM AND URIM (v. 8)—These words mean literally *perfection and light*, "indicating the clearness with which God would impart to the High Priest the knowledge of his will, when that knowledge was sought by means which He had appointed" (Nichols). These were items (never exactly described in scripture) placed on (or in) the breastplate of the high priest—the "breastplate of judgment" (Ex. 28:30, Lev. 8:8).

The priests, who so often act as God's mouthpiece, consulted the Urim and Thummim on matters that were otherwise obscure or unknown, and especially on matters of national import, or a national crisis. See Num. 27:18-21, I Sam. 28:5, 6, Ezra 2:63. Obviously, the possession of the Urim and Thummim was a great privilege and honor for the priestly tribe. It was an honor for "thy godly one" (or as others have it) "him whom thou lovest" (v. 8).

WHOM THOU DIDST PROVE AT MASSAH (vv. 8, 6:16, 9:22)—The reference is to that *tempting*, or *proving* (the meaning of *massah*) recorded in Ex. 17:3-7.

STRIVE AT MERIBAH (v. 8)—Another play on words (*meribah* means *strife*). Both the above event and perhaps also that recorded in Num. ch. 20 may be referred to.

*The law required that the high priest act as impartially when one of his immediate family died as if the departed were no kin to him (Lev. 21:10-12). This throws light on Christ's attitude toward His mother and brethren in Matt. 12:46-50. Cp. Heb. 8:1-6; 3:1-3.

Did the tribe of Levi, in some special way, precipitate the strife and turmoil at Massah and/or Meribah? We have no record of such beyond what is said here, except, of course, the well-known part of Moses and Aaron (Levites). See 1:37, notes. In these trials, even though Moses and Aaron stumbled, the tribe proved itself faithful and godly, rising up in defence and honor of Jehovah and in support of the covenant. Note the next verse.

WHO SAID OF HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, etc. (v. 9)—An obvious reference to the events of Ex. Ch. 32 at the foot of Sinai. When Moses asked "Whoso is on Jehovah's side, let him come unto me," we are told "all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him." And at Moses' request they did not hesitate to take up the sword against their own fellows who, in their revelry, were flagrantly flaunting their allegiance to the Lord. How the disobedient ones were related to them was not a consideration as to who should or should not be slain. Their allegiance had been to God, and now Moses could say "they have observed thy word." It would appear from the Exodus account that most of the tribe was, in fact, faithful; and few Levites had to turn upon members of their own tribe to put down the revolt. But in the zeal for God and the cause of *right*, the Levites absolutely disregarded blood relationship.

The ramifications of the principle endorsed by the Levites are infinite. What comes first, *principle* or personal friendship considerations? The Levites decided quickly and decisively on the side of God—then proceeded to take appropriate action. Compare the teaching of Jesus, Matt. 10:34-39.

d. BENJAMIN (v. 12)

- 12 Of Benjamin he said,
The beloved of Jehovah shall dwell in safety by him;
He covereth him all the day long,
And he dwelleth between his shoulders.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:12

582. There is some difference in the prediction here of Benjamin and that given in Gen. 49:27. Why?
583. Just what specific promise did God make to the tribe of Benjamin?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:12

12 Of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall *dwell in safety by Him; He covers him all the day long, and makes His dwelling between his shoulders.

COMMENT 33:12

This is a kindlier prediction than Jacob's (Gen. 49:27)—at least the stigma of having a wolf-like character is not depicted here. The word *Benjamin* means literally "son of my right hand" and he who was so beloved of his father (see Gen. 42:36-38) was also beloved of God.

The relatively small area occupied by Benjamin north of the tribe of Judah included the plains of Jericho that Lot found so attractive (Gen. 13:10). Josephus, in fact, says that Benjamin's allotment was small owing to "the goodness of the land"*** And though the upland regions are mountainous and stony and have little water, there is much good land on the western slopes. We remember this tribe especially for the two Sauls—the first king of Israel and the Apostle Paul from Tarsus.

As is shown particularly in the book of Judges, the tribe became an efficient war machine—particularly as archers and slingers. This ability is a partial fulfillment of God's promise that Benjamin shall "dwell in safety by him".

e. JOSEPH—EPHRIAM AND MANASSEH (vv. 13-17)

- 13 And of Joseph he said,
Blessed of Jehovah be his land,
For the precious things of heaven, for the dew,
And for the deep that coucheth beneath.
- 14 And for the precious things of the fruits of the sun,
And for the precious things of the growth of the moons,
- 15 And for the chief things of the ancient mountains,
And for the precious things of the everlasting hills,
- 16 And for the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof,

*The temple in Jerusalem was located almost between the ridges of the territory of Benjamin, suggesting "between his shoulders" (cp. Josh. 15:8). Moses sees it as a symbol of the Lord's presence covering Benjamin continually.

***Antiquities of the Jews*, V, i. 22.

And the good will of him that dwelt in the bush:
 Let *the blessing* come upon the head of Joseph,
 And upon the crown of the head of him that was separate
 from his brethren.

- 17 The firstling of his herd, majesty is his;
 And his horns are the horns of the wild-ox:
 With them he shall push the peoples all of them,
even the ends of the earth:
 And they are the ten thousands of Ephraim,
 And they are the thousands of Manasseh.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:13-17

584. By reading verses 13 thru 16 what particular benefits are promised by God to the sons of Joseph?
 585. Read Gen. 49:22-26 and mark the parallels to this passage.
 586. Manasseh was the eldest but Ephraim is treated as the "first-born"—explain Cf. Gen. 48:8.
 587. In what respect was Ephraim and Manasseh like oxen?
 588. The name Ephraim took on larger meaning than one tribe. Read Ps. 78:67, 68. What was the larger meaning?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:13-17

13 And of Joseph he said, Blessed by the Lord be his hand, with the precious gifts of Heaven, from the dew, and from the deep that couches beneath, .

14 From the precious things of the fruits of the sun, and from the precious yield of the months,

15 From the chief products of the ancient mountains, and from the precious things of the everlasting hills,

16 With the precious things of the earth and its fullness, and the favor and good will of Him Who dwelt in the bush. Let these blessings come upon the head of Joseph, upon the crown of the head of him who was separate and prince among his brothers. [Exod. 3:4.]

17 Like a firstling young bull his majesty is, and his horns like the horns of the wild ox; with them he shall push the peoples, all of them, to the end of the earth; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

COMMENT 33:13-17

Joseph's name, of course, is not left on the land of his posterity, but that of his sons—Ephraim and Manasseh.

Vv. 13-16 depicts the general prosperity and blessings to come upon Joseph's offspring. As we saw in 3:12-17 (notes), Manasseh inherited a much larger total land mass than his brother. Yet prosperity and increase were especially to attend Ephraim ("fruitful"). See Gen. 48:17-20. And the blessing on all of Joseph, Gen. 49:22-26, has some striking parallels in the present passage. "Jacob described the growth of Joseph under the figure of a luxuriant branch of a fruit tree planted by the water; whilst Moses fixes his eye primarily upon the land of Joseph, and desires for him the richest productions" (Keil).

The I.S.B.E. states of Ephraim's land, "It is torn by many gorges, and is rocky and unfruitful. The long slopes to the westward, however, furnish much of the finest land in Palestine. Well watered as it is, the valleys are beautiful in season with cornfields, vineyards, olives and other fruit trees."

THE GOOD WILL OF HIM THAT DWELT IN THE BUSH (v. 16)—i.e. God, who spoke from the burning bush, Ex. 3:4. Our omnipresent God is not limited by space or time.

V. 17 depicts more specific blessings to be conferred upon Joseph.

Like a firstling bull in his majesty,
He has horns like the horns of the wild-ox;
With them he gores the people
The ends of the earth one and all.
These are the myriads of Ephraim,
Those are the thousands of Manasseh.

—The Torah

"The oxen are Joseph's sons, all of whom were strong, but the firstborn excelled the rest, and was endowed with majesty. It is Ephraim that is referred to, whom Jacob raised to the position of the firstborn (Gen. 48:8, etc.)."—Pulpit. With his great power and might he would gore even distant peoples. (Horns depict strength, might, power).

By such representatives as Joshua and Samuel, this tribe became, in many ways, the leading tribe in the early days of Israel in Canaan. Shechem and Shiloh were early centers of worship. Later, after the separation of the ten northern tribes, "Ephraim" was often used by

metonymy for Israel (Isa. 7:2, 5, 17). Thus the northern tribes are depicted by their most powerful element. Indeed, it may be said that the tribes of Ephraim and Judah played the most important part in the history of the whole nation, and there was a constant duel for political power (hegemony) between the two.

Note how v. 17 corresponds to the prophecy of Jacob (Gen. 48:19). Ephraim (the younger) is to have his ten thousands (Heb. *rebabah*, myriads, a large unlimited number) while Manasseh was to have his thousands (though possessing more territory).

At the time Moses wrote these lines Manasseh, however, far outnumbered Ephraim. Ephraim lost great numbers in the wilderness trek.

	Num. 1:32-35	Num. 26:28-37
Ephraim	40,500	32,500
Manasseh	32,200	52,700

Thus Moses' words surely were not based on recent history!

Later, we have the population of Joseph growing (as shown in the book of Joshua), but we have no statistics on the numerical dominance of Ephraim.

For many years the descendants of Joseph played a leading role in Israel's history. But with their corruption went the corruption of the ten northern tribes. Thus their fate is bewailed in the Psalms:

Moreover he [God] refused the tent of Joseph,
And chose not the tribe of Ephraim,
But chose the tribe of Judah,
The mount Zion which he loved.

—Ps. 78:67, 68

f. ZEBULUN AND ISSACHAR (vv. 18, 19)

- 18 And of Zebulun he said,
Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out;
And, Issachar, in thy tents.
- 19 They shall call the peoples unto the mountain;
There shall they offer sacrifices of righteousness:
For they shall suck the abundance of the seas,
And the hidden treasures of the sand.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:18, 19

589. In what sense would Zebulun be "going out"?
590. What "mountain" is meant in verse 19?

591. What is involved in the phrase "they shall suck the abundance of the seas?"

592. What are "the hidden treasures of the sand"?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:18, 19

18 And of Zebulun he said, *Rejoice, Zebulun, in your interests abroad; and you, Issachar, in your tents [at home].

19 They shall call the people unto Mount [Carmel]; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness for **they shall suck the abundance of the seas, and the treasures hid in the sand.

COMMENT 33:18, 19

As adjacent tribes(whose founders were both sons of Leah) soon to occupy the corridor running Northwest and southwest and including the Kishon river, the Great Plain of Esdraelon and the Valley of Jezreel, these tribes are treated together. And historically, many of their activities were jointly accomplished.

IN THY GOING OUT (v. 18)—A phrase usually depicting commerce, trade, business.

THEY SHALL CALL THE PEOPLES UNTO THE MOUNTAIN; THERE SHALL THEY OFFER SACRIFICES (v. 19)—What mountain? Or is a specific one meant? Some would refer us to Mount Carmel, that prominent mountain of Elijah's contest and sacrifice (I K. 18). But there is no evidence that it became a specific mountain designated for sacrifices, though it lies on the southwest border of Zebulun. In Ex. 15:17 the land of Israel is termed "the mountain of thine inheritance . . . The sanctuary . . ." It seems that this general sense is retained here (though we *may* have a specific reference to Zion, where the temple was later erected). The mountain-country of Canaan would be the place of Jehovah's worship and praise, thus his sanctuary. In that worship Zebulun and Issachar would wholeheartedly join.

*Not until 1934 was this prophecy notably in process of fulfillment, when Haifa's bay became one of the great harbors of the Mediterranean, with commerce affecting the whole world.

**The great oil pipeline path across Palestine was first opened in 1935. Until then this prophecy fell far short of fulfillment. But 3400 years before, Moses sent out the inspired headlines, "Zebulun . . . Issachar . . . shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sand." Our omnipotent God was "declaring the end *and* the result from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand" (Isa. 46:10).

THE ABUNDANCE OF THE SEAS (v. 19)—Zebulun, bordering the Mediterranean, would utilize her resources. The boundaries (Josh. 19:10-16) are difficult to exactly define. But that she would make use of her seashore position is also foretold in Jacob's prophecy (Gen. 49:13). Her position not only enabled her to carry on fishing, but she was literally able to "suck the abundance of the seas" by means of her strategic position for maritime trade. The great caravan route, *via maris*, passed directly through this territory. In modern times, Haifa, with its beautiful harbor, has become a world port.

THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF THE SAND (v. 19)—"The riches of the sea in general. It is however noteworthy that the sand of these coasts was especially valuable in the manufacture of glass; and glass was a precious thing in ancient times (cp. Job xxviii. 17). The mure from which the highly-prized purple dye was extracted, was also found here." (F. C. Cook)

g. GAD (vv. 20, 21)

- 20 And of Gad he said,
 Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad:
 He dwelleth as a lioness,
 And teareth the arm, yea, the crown of the head.
- 21 And he provided the first part for himself,
 For there was the lawgiver's portion reserved;
 And he came *with* the heads of the people;
 He executed the righteousness of Jehovah,
 And his ordinances with Israel.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:20, 21

593. Gad had a reputation—for what?
594. Reuben, Gad and the half of Manasseh had some priority—why?
 Does verse 21 have reference to this priority?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:20, 21

20 And of Gad he said, Blessed be He Who enlarges Gad! Gad lurks like a lioness, and tears the arm, yes, the crown of the head.

21 He selected the best land for himself, for there was the leader's portion reserved; yet he came with the chiefs of the nation, and the righteous will of the Lord he performed, and His ordinances with Israel. [Num. 32:29-33.]

COMMENT 33:20, 21

BLESSED BE HE THAT ENLARGETH GAD (v. 20)—Gad was strong in war and gave great help to the other tribes, particularly in the conquest of Canaan. In return, he would receive God's blessing. See Gen. 49:19. His area, (nearly synonymous with Gilead) to the east of the Jordan, became the chief theater of war in the long struggle between Israel and the Syrians (I K. ch. 22). These verses appear to anticipate this and other struggles in the territory—and the fierce way in which God would fight to protect it.

THE LAWGIVER'S PORTION RESERVED (v. 21)—"for that was the commander's portion" (Berkeley. Similarly, R.S.V., Rotherham). i.e., Gad, as a leader and aggressive fighter for Israel, was given an appropriate "first part for himself." Gad chose for himself a tract of land east of the Jordan, and the portion he had chosen was sacredly kept for him, though he also went with his brethren in the conquest of Canaan proper.

h. DAN (v. 22)

- 22 And of Dan he said,
Dan is a lion's whelp,
That leapeth forth from Bashan.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:22

595. The territory of Dan is not in Bashan—how then could this prophesy be fulfilled? Cf. Judges 18.
596. Samson was a Danite—how does he relate to this verse?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:22

22 Of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp that leaps forth from Bashan.

COMMENT 33:22

This passage appears to look ahead to that time when Dan would conquer Laish (Judges 18) in northern Bashan near mount Herman, and from there "leap forth" in other exploits.

Perhaps no one so embodied the tribal characteristics as well as Samson. They were to be unsteady, unscrupulous, violent, possessed of a certain grim humor, and stealthy in tactics ("a serpent in the way," Gen. 49:17). Dan is "a lion's whelp," a phrase describing one who was swift and strong in striking.

i. NAPHTALI (v. 23)

- 23 And of Naphtali he said,
 O Naphtali, satisfied with favor,
 And full with the blessing of Jehovah,
 Possess thou the west and the south.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:23

597. The physical, geographical location of Naphtali made the words of this verse easy of fulfillment—why?
 598. Just how was Naphtali to “possess . . . the west and the south”—read the Amplified Translation for one answer.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:23

23 Of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, *satisfied with favor, and full of the blessing of the Lord, possess the sea [of Galilee] and [its warm, sunny climate like] the south.

COMMENT 33:23

Both Moses' and Jacob's prophecies (Cf. Gen. 49:21) are very favorable toward this tribe. Occupying the territory to the west and north of the Sea of Galilee and the upper Jordan, Naphtali enjoyed a free life in his spacious uplands.

POSSESS THOU THE WEST AND THE SOUTH (v. 23)—This phrase has been variously translated and interpreted. As it stands it would appear to describe what their position was to be *in relation to the sea of Galilee* (Chinnereth). Their territory spread to the west and around to the north and south to the Jordan river. “Take possession on the west and south” (R.S.V.). The conjecture of the Amplified Bible is a little ingenious: “Possess the sea [of Galilee] and [its warm, sunny climate like] the south.”

j. ASHER (vv. 24, 25)

- 24 And of Asher he said,
 Blessed be Asher with children;

*For many centuries much of the territory of upper Naphtali was little more than a miasmatic swamp, unfit for man or beast. But when the Jews last returned to Palestine they drained and redeemed the area, and by 1940 it was dotted over with thriving colonies, as Moses had foretold, “satisfied with favor, and full of the blessing of the Lord.”

Let him be acceptable unto his brethren,
And let him dip his foot in oil.

- 25 Thy bars shall be iron and brass;
And as thy days, so shall thy strength be.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:24, 25

599. The expression "let him dip his foot in oil" is interpreted in two ways. Read the Comment and the Amplified Translation—what is your opinion?
600. Asher was promised great prosperity—but was this fulfilled? How? Cf. Judges 5:17.

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:24, 25

24 Of Asher he said, Blessed above sons be Asher; let him be acceptable to his brothers, and *let him dip his foot in oil.

25 Your castles and strongholds shall have bars of iron and bronze; and as your day so shall your strength, your rest and security, be.

COMMENT 33:24, 25

LET HIM DIP HIS FOOT IN OIL (v. 24)—The tribe of Asher was not a warlike tribe, and raised no military hero in all of Israel's history. But it was a different matter in the case of agriculture and the commerce connected with it.

Asher received the strip of coastland north of mount Carmel (Joshua 19:24-31). Much of her commerce and business is blended with that of her neighbors, the Phoenicians. Indeed, such a town as Tyre, though within her borders, ever remained in Phoenician hands. And Asher may have blended his business enterprise with those of Phoenicia, Compare Judges 1:31-32. "But the valleys breaking down westward and opening on the plains have always yielded fine crops of grain. Remains of an ancient oak forest still stand to the N. of Carmel. The vine, the fig, the lemon and the orange flourish. Olive trees abound, and the supplies of olive oil which to this day are exported from the district recall the word of the old-time blessing, 'Let him dip his foot in oil.'" (I.S.B.E.). Compare the prophecy of Jacob, Gen. 49:20.

*The maps of the territory of Asher suggest sometimes the sole of a foot, sometimes the shape of a leg and foot; but in either case the Great International Iraq-Petroleum Enterprise, opened in 1935, crossed the area just at the toe of Asher's "foot." Oil brought nearly 1,000 miles across the sands from Mesopotamia began pouring through pipes into the Haifa harbor a million gallons of oil a day. Jacob had said, "In the latter days . . . Asher, his bread shall be fat" (Gen. 49:1,20), and here Moses says of Asher, "Let him dip his foot in oil"!

THY BARS SHALL BE IRON AND BRASS (v. 25)—"May your doorbolts be iron and copper, And your security last all your days" (The Torah). "*Iron and brass shall be thy fortress*; i.e. his dwelling should be strong and impregnable" (Pulpit). Asher would fulfill his name, *happy*.

AS THY DAYS, SO SHALL THY STRENGTH [or *security*, or *rest*] BE (v. 25)—"May . . . your strength be equal to your days" (Berkeley). The whole tenor of Asher's blessing points toward a peaceful, prosperous, and secure situation. But from all we can learn about this tribe, it was a peace bought at the price of blending, accommodating, and adjusting with his heathen neighbors. When he should have joined his brethren to throw off the yoke of Sisera,

Asher sat still at the haven of the sea,
And abode by his creeks.

—Judges 5:17

k. BLESSINGS UPON ALL ISRAEL (vv. 26-29)

- 26 There is none like unto God, I Jeshurun
Who rideth upon the heavens for thy help,
And in his excellency on the skies.
- 27 The eternal God is *thy* dwelling-place,
And underneath are the everlasting arms:
And he thrust out the enemy from before thee,
And said, Destroy.
- 28 And Israel dwelleth in safety
The fountain of Jacob alone,
In a land of grain and new wine;
Yea, his heavens drop down dew.
- 29 Happy art thou, O Israel:
Who is like unto thee, a people saved by Jehovah,
The shield of thy help,
And the sword of thy excellency!
And thine enemies shall submit themselves unto thee;
And thou shalt tread upon their high places.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 33:26-29

601. What a promise of assurance and protection!: "The eternal God is *thy* dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms:"—why was Israel ever defeated with such a One for their God?
602. From victory to victory God promised to lead Israel—how sad that it was not true—is there meaning in this for us?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 33:26-29

26 There is none like God, O Jeshurun [Israel], Who rides through the heavens to your help, and in His majestic glory through the sky.

27 The eternal God is your refuge and dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms; He drove the enemy before you and thrust them out, saying, Destroy!

28 And Israel dwells in safety, the fountain of Jacob alone in a land of grain and new wine; yest His heavens drop dew.

29 Happy are you, O Israel, and blessing is yours! Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of your help, the sword that exalts you! Your enemies shall come fawning and cringing, and submit feigned obedience to you, and you shall march on their high places.

COMMENT 33:26-29

This passage comprises a beautiful song of *praise to God* as well as the assurance of his blessing. As we have seen again and again in Deuteronomy, the *continuence* of such promises are contingent upon Israel's *faithfulness*. We see no reason to discard this principle in the present instance.

JESHURUN (v. 26)—Israel. See 32:15, note.

THE FOUNTAIN OF JACOB ALONE (v. 28)—That is, the issue or offspring of Jacob (Israel), as the special recipient of God's favor, rested solely upon his might. He would fight for them (1:30) and he would not fail them or forsake them (31:6-8, Josh. 1:5-9). They were therefore in a happy and blessed condition (v. 29), "saved by Jehovah," their shield.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

Moses delivers a prophetic blessing to the children of Israel, 1. The introduction, 2-5. Prophetic declarations concerning Reuben, 6; concerning Judah, 7; concerning Levi, 8-11; concerning Benjamin, 12; concerning Joseph, 13-17; concerning Zebulun, 18, 19; concerning Gad, 20, 21; concerning Dan, 22; concerning Naphtali, 23; concerning Asher, 23, 35. The glory of the God of Jeshurun, and the glorious privileges of his true followers, 26-29.

F. THE DEATH OF MOSES (34:1-12)

1. MOSES SHOWN THE PROMISED LAND FROM
MOUNT NEBO; DIES AND IS BURIED (34:1-8)

And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And Jehovah showed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, 2 and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the hinder sea, 3 and the South, and the Plain of the valley of Jericho the city of palm-trees, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. 5 So Moses the servant of Jehovah died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of Jehovah. 6 And he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab over against Bethpeor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. 7 And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. 8 And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping in the mourning for Moses were ended.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 34:1-8

603. Locate on a map the following places: (1) Gilead, (2) Dan, (3) Naphtali, (4) Ephraim and Manasseh, (5) Judah, (6) the hinder sea, (7) the South, (8) the Plain of the Valley of Jericho.
604. How was Moses buried? Why?
605. What do you imagine was the predominant thought of Moses on this occasion?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 34:1-8

And Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is opposite Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land, Gilead to Dan,

2 And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, to the western [Mediterranean] sea.

3 And the South (the Negeb) and the Plain, that is, the valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar.

4 And the Lord said to him, This is the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, I will give it to your descendants. I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there.

5 So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord,

6 And He buried him in the valley of the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor; but no man knows where his tomb is to this day.

7 Moses was 120 years old when he died; his eye was not dim, nor his natural forces abated. [But cf. 31:2]

8 And the Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

COMMENT 34:1-8

MOUNT NEBO, TO THE TOP OF PISGAH (v. 1)—See 3:27, (notes), 32:49. Pisgah and Nebo are usually synonymously, though we understand Pisgah to be the peak or summit. Much of the land, of course, was only seen as mountain tops from this point. He could also see:

THE HINDER SEA (v. 2)—that is, the Mediterranean, doubtless seen as only a shroud of glimmering blue in the distant west.

AND JEHOVAH SHOWED HIM ALL THE LAND (v. 1)—One can only begin to imagine the emotion and feeling that must have seized the very soul of Moses at this hour. He had himself many times written of this land of milk and honey. Yet, so far as we know, this was his only view of it. He was still well enough to take in all the view, for "his eye was not dim" (v. 7).

Moses has taken this journey up the mountain knowing just when and where he should die. His death, as his life, was in obedience to God's word and will. It is not easy for us to enter into his feelings then. "God called him up to a mountain top, and rolled away all the mists that might have covered that fair land, and there it all lay outspread. He saw its smiling green meadows at his feet, between which the Jordan swiftly flowed, and to the right his eye glanced along the valleys and woods, and bright waving corn [grain] fields that stretched away into the dim distance, where rose the purple, snow-crowned hills of Lebanon. To his left he saw the mountains swelling, like mighty billows of the sea, all struck into stillness . . ." (Gray and Adams). How much of the future did God reveal to Moses now? We can only imagine. This great nation was soon to cover the land he viewed. Across the Dead Sea and high on the distant Judean hills was the great city of David to be established—and become Jerusalem, the site of the temple and the center of Jehovah worship for a thousand years. Someday out-

side its walls on a nearby hill, a mere speck on the landscape, a cross shall one day stand, and the Son of God shall die to save the world.

But the mind of Moses must surely have gone back for a moment, too. His entire life had, in a definite sense, led to this very point. His mission was not complete—a mission that had really begun with his birth.

His life in Pharaoh's palace, the forty years in Midian, the contest with Pharaoh, the crossing of the Red Sea, the defeat of the Amalakites, the giving of the Law, rebellion of Israel, and setting up of the tabernacle at Sinai, the ill-fated report of the spies and consequent years of wandering, the endless, continual, incessant murmurings of his own countrymen—then the victories over the Sihon, Og, and the east side tribes. And now, what would become of this vast people encamped below him? Like Daniel (Dan. 7:15, 28), his own inspired prophecies doubtless troubled his own mind. He had been "moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:21) as he spoke, but what did these words *mean*? What would the future of this people be? What would happen to them? Surely Moses must have passed from this life with such questions still lingering in his mind.

THOU SHALT NOT GO OVER THITHER (v. 4)—It was to be the job of Joshua, a type of the risen Savior, to lead Israel to the Promised Land—not him who represented the law. God had forbidden Moses' entrance into that land because His servant had failed to sanctify Him in the eyes of the children of Israel (See Num. 20:12, Cf. Deut. 1:37 [notes] 3:23-29, 32:50, 51).

AND HE BURIED HIM IN THE VALLEY (v. 6)—In 32:50 Moses is commanded to go up into the mount, die, "and be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people". The latter phrase normally infers a burial (Gen. 35:29, 49:29, 33). But the translators, (whether the A.V. of 1611 or the modern versions) uniformly translate the passage "and he [that is, God] buried him in the valley." The marginal reading, "he was buried" seems highly improbable not only from a standpoint of linguistic scholarship, but also from the additional statement of fact: the whereabouts of his burying place was not known. Surely it *would* have been known had Moses been buried by the Israelites! A monument or memorial of permanence would most certainly have been erected at his grave! We suspect it might have been a sore temptation as a shrine or object

of worship. So God himself took care of Moses, and the temptation to defy their leader was averted.

HIS EYE WAS NOT DIM, NOR HIS NATURAL FORCE ABATED (v. 7)
—The phrase "I can no more go out and come in" of 31:2 should, in view of this statement, be understood in the light of Moses' realization that God was now about to take him. He was not yet spent, physically, but his time was up, for his service as leader of Israel through the wilderness and to the promised land was completed. But how often we have seen men taken in death "before their time." Someone has said "Death cannot come to him untimely who is fit to die", and so it was with Moses. His work was done, he had fought the good fight, and the crown of life awaited him.

2. JOSHUA ASSUMES LEADERSHIP; A FINAL TRIBUTE TO MOSES (34:9-12)

9 And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as Jehovah commanded Moses. 10 And there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom Jehovah knew face to face, 11 in all the signs and the wonders, which Jehovah sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, 12 and in all the great terror, which Moses wrought in the sight of all Israel.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS 34:9-12

606. How could we compare and contrast Moses and Joshua?
607. We can say that: "God came into closer fellowship with Moses than with any man since the fall of Adam"—in what sense was this true?
608. What is meant by the expression: "whom Jehovah knew face to face"?

AMPLIFIED TRANSLATION 34:9-12

9 And Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him; so the Israelites listened to him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses.

10 And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face,

11 [None equal to him] in all the signs and wonders, which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land,

12 And in all the mighty power and all the great and terrible deeds which Moses wrought in the sight of all Israel.

COMMENT 34:9-12

Joshua had again and again demonstrated the qualities of leadership in the wilderness wanderings. See 31:3, notes, and Num. 27:15-23. Now, himself no youngster and certainly no novice, he is to lead Israel across the Jordan. While Moses had served as lawgiver, prophet, judge, and exhorter, Joshua is to serve primarily as a military general—though a very godly one.

God spoke with Moses face to face (v. 10 Cf. Num. 12:5-8). That will ever be his highest distinction. God came into closer fellowship with Moses than with any man since the fall of Adam. His fellowship with Jehovah was real, personal, intimate, genuine. Thus though he was the meekest man in all Israel, he was also the strongest, for the closer one gets to *God*, the greater his inner power and personal courage. Moses, like Paul, found strength in his weakness and power in his helplessness. (No one sees the form of God, who is spirit and invisible. In the form of Jesus, he is declared or manifested in human flesh. See Jn. 1:18; compare Col. 1:15, I Tim. 1:17, 6:16, Heb. 11:27, I Jn. 4:12). The fact that Moses spoke with God "face to face" is descriptive of the *closest fellowship*; there was no mediator used between Moses and God; he was his own mediator.

In 18:5 ff. we saw Moses described as a type of Christ, the Prophet. As we see him passing from the scene, we are reminded of a few parallels: Both were preserved miraculously as infants; both had mighty contests with the power of Satan; both controlled the seas; both fasted forty days and nights; both endured great murmurings and persecutions from their own people; both miraculously fed the multitudes, both pled in intercessory prayer for their people; and both reappeared after death. But for all this, Moses most resembles the Savior in *character and life*, for both men were readily responsive to the will and teachings of the Father. Deuteronomy is an unmatched and peerless document; and Moses was the pure vessel through which it flowed from God to man.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

Moses goes up to Mount Nebo to the top of Pisgah, and God shows him the whole extent of the land which he promised to give to the descendants of Abraham, 1-4. There Moses died, and was so privately buried by the Lord that his sepulchre was never discovered, 5, 6. His age and strength of constitution, 7. The people weep for him thirty days, 8. Joshua being filled with the spirit of wisdom, the Israelites hearken to him, as the Lord commanded them, 9. The character of Moses as a prophet, and as a worker of the most extraordinary miracles, both in the sight of the Egyptians, and the people of Israel; conclusion of the Pentateuch, 10-12.

QUESTIONS, LESSON TWENTY-FOUR

(32:48—34:12)

(32:44-52)

1. From what vantage point is Moses told to view the Promised Land? How much of it could he see?
2. What reason is given *in this lesson* for Moses not entering into Canaan? How does this correspond to previous statements about this matter (as in Numbers 20, Deut. 1:37, 3:23 ff.)?

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

3. Jehovah's presence is said to have been seen in Sinai, Seir, and Paran (v. 2). Give at least one incident in each area which would show this.
4. Where are all his saints (v. 3)? What did Jesus teach about this?
5. Who or what is Jeshurun? Who is his (its) king?
6. What was to happen to Reuben's population? Any reason for this?
7. How would Judah rank as a political and military power in Israel?
8. What tribe had the Thummim and Urim? What purpose did it serve?
9. How is this tribe's fidelity toward God described and what incident is alluded to in the description?
10. Joseph (Manasseh and Ephraim) are likened to what animal's horns? What is he doing with them?
11. Population-wise, Manasseh was to have _____, while Ephraim was to have _____.

12. What does Zebulun's "going out" indicate? How is this confirmed by geography and history?
13. Seas and sand would be valuable to Zebulun and Issachar. How?
14. (Give one possible answer) On what mountain were they to call the people to sacrifice?
15. How did Gad provide (choose) "the first part for himself"?
16. From where would Dan (the lion's whelp) leap forth? How is this to be understood?
17. How would Naphtali possess "the west and the south"?
18. Asher would dip his foot in oil, and have doorbolts of iron and brass. Explain the implications of this prophecy.
19. Upon what other nation(s) would an obedient Israel be dependent?

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

20. In view of the fact that no one can see God, who is invisible, how do you explain the declaration that Moses spoke with God "face to face"? What does this phrase mean?

THE AUTHORSHIP OF DEUTERONOMY*

by

Joseph Bryant Rotherham

At first sight it might seem as though the translator of THE EMPHASIZED BIBLE had no need to trouble himself about the authorship of the Book of Deuteronomy. There it is: simply translate it, and leave all such questions to commentators and the higher critics. Even had this self-excusing policy prevailed, however, that would not have obliterated the impression naturally received in the process of rendering the book. It is true that the remanding of that impression into silence might have entailed no loss to the world. But there was another reason for offering an opinion, which was this. The design of this Bible—to give effect, among other things, to the interesting distinction between “narrative and speech”—made it imperative to take a definite attitude as to the literary question involved in this discussion. That is to say, it demanded of the translator not only an exercise of his own judgment as to what portions of the book of Deuteronomy were probably editorial, so that he might differentiate them in the margin, setting fully out to the left hand of the column portions that were *not* “speech”; but the very fact of doing this was sure to draw the inquisitive reader into the problem, by provoking the obvious question why some parts of Deuteronomy are marginally distinguished from other parts; why, for example, chaps. i. 1-5; ii. 10-12, 20-23; iii. 11, 13-14; iv. 41-43, 44-49, are thus separated from their contexts. It seemed better, therefore, to take the reader into confidence; and, first, by a few notes subjoined to the book itself, as at chaps. iv. 13; vi. 5; vii. 17; viii. 2 &c., and then by the present connected statement, to employ the book of Deuteronomy as a very elementary object-lesson, offered once for all, in that legitimate higher criticism which no honest man of reverent judgment needs fear to study.

The purpose thus defined may perhaps be most effectively attained by first presenting, substantially as it was written, a paper which appeared in a weekly magazine two years ago, and by then submitting such further observations as may appear to be called for.

In this book we hear the voice of “the old man eloquent.” As an author, there may be more or less of Moses the man of God in the books

*The article appears between the testaments in *The Emphasized Bible*.

of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers; but here we come within the sound of his living voice, and listen to his impassioned pleadings with Israel. No later writer could have so completely entered into the situation. Moses himself, as revealed in the foregoing history, now stands before us. We perceive in the Speaker, the teachings of the past, the realisation of the present, the fears for the future—revealing themselves in a manner perfectly inimitable. Such, at least, was the impression made on the mind of the translator when some years ago he wrote out his rendering of the book.

This impression was decidedly deepened when, later on, he carefully revised his translation. It is true that his previous conviction became slightly qualified, yet only in such wise as to strengthen the conclusion to which he had previously come. The more one became familiar with the mannerisms of the speaker's living voice, the more evident it was that here and there editorial annotations had been subsequently added. The rush and passion and vehement urgency that we feel as we hearken to Moses' voice are not easily to be reconciled with the deliberate presentation of antiquarian notes, as to the former dwellers in Edom and the other lands through which Israel had passed; far less with the measurements and present location of the bedstead of Og, king of Bashan. Granted here and there an editorial addition, and these things easily fall into their place. They do but momentarily interrupt the flowing periods of the living Moses; but assuredly they formed no part of the original spoken discourse. They enrich the book as we have it, but they would have marred the discourses as actually delivered by a man shortly to die.—This then is the modification to which the translator's first persuasion readily submitted itself.

But now, after a third survey of the book of Deuteronomy, how does the question of Authorship present itself? Briefly, as follows: That a little further extension of the supposed editorship goes a long way towards placing the first main impression upon an immovable basis. Not antiquarian notes alone betray editorship; but historical introductions, and at least one historical appendix. The historical appendix is, of course, seen and known of all men. Moses certainly did not record his own death and burial; and only a considerably later hand could have finally told how much greater Moses was than any who came after him. The historical introductions—of which there are principally two—are worthy of further attention. There is nothing to show that those introductions may not have been written by Joshua, Eleazar or Phineas, or some other contemporary of the great Prophet, within a few years of his

death. The introductions referred to are, first, a general one to the whole book (chap. i. 1-5); and second, an introduction to Moses' account of the "ten words: given on Horeb (chap. iv. 41-v.1). In both of these are found tokens of editorship which challenge our confidence, inasmuch as, in them, two distinct lines of evidence are seen converging to the conclusion that these portions are editorial. The first line consists in this—that, when the *Editor* writes, he refers to Moses in the third person: "Moses" said or did this or that; whereas when *Moses himself speaks*, he naturally alludes to himself as "I" or "me"; to Israel, including himself, as "we" or "us"; directly addressing his hearers as "ye" or "you". This of itself is clear enough as marking a distinction between the principal spoken addresses and any editorial supplements. Singularly enough, the line thus drawn is confirmed by the simple word "over" in relation to the river Jordan. Moses we know did not enter "the good land": Joshua and others did. To him, "over the Jordan" meant to the west: to them, after they had entered, "over the Jordan" meant to east, or, as the Editor of Moses is accustomed to add, "towards the rising of the sun." Now the persuasive coincidence is just this: That in those portions where we presume the Editor is writing because he refers to Moses in the third person,—in them we find that "over the Jordan" means to the east: on the other hand, where we feel sure that Moses himself is speaking, by the clear sign that he says "I", "we", "ye", "you",—in those very portions "over the Jordan" means to the west. There is but one exception, and that occurs in chap. iii. 8 in the midst of a sentence which by the usual token was spoken by Moses; whereas the phrase 'over the Jordan' which occurs in that sentence must mean eastward, as the locality spoken of conclusively shows. The difficulty is at once removed by the very easy hypothesis that that particular clause in the sentence was added as an editorial explanation. Then all is plain, and the exception proves the rule; which rule being a second one, and coinciding with a first entirely independent of it, generates an amount of confidence not easily shaken.

But the evidence of the Mosaic authorship of the speeches—of which, be it noted, the book of Deuteronomy is mainly composed—springs from something more subtle and more conclusive than the afore-said converging lines of evidence, however satisfactory in themselves those lines may be. It springs from the manner in which the speaker enters into the entire situation, leading us to exclaim, None but Moses could have *done* it! Coupled with this, and constituting an especial form of it, is the profound emotionalism—in a word, the psychology which per-

vades the book, prompting us to say, None but Moses could have *felt* all this!

What, then, was the *situation* into which the speaker so completely enters? It was a situation created by time, place, event, and personality; and, naturally, owing to the concurrence of these causes, a situation that had never existed before and could never exist again. The *time* was after the forty years' wanderings, after the conquest of Sihon, king of Heshbon, and Og, king of Bashan; and just before the passage of the Jordan into Canaan: a momentous time, crowded with memories, throbbing with exciting expectations. The *place* was the Arabah of Moab, near the Jordan, over against Jericho, the centre of the whole east of Canaan, along which the people had skirted or into which they had penetrated—a place, therefore, which invited them to cross, to enter, to possess, without more delay. And what unique *events* had already happened: the sullen acquiescence in Israel's transit by Edom, Moab and Ammon, at the terrible cost of the slain over the matter of Baal-peor with which the names of Balak and Balaam are dishonourably associated; the unexpected conquest of the magnificent lands of Gilead and Bashan, with all the stir of war whetting the swords of Israel's warriors with keen eagerness for the great invasion. Then, finally, look at the *personalities* which enter into the situation: Caleb is there, and Joshua, both of whom knew personally something, still vivid in their memories, which, as spies, they had seen—of the inhabitants and cities and products of the land; and there are Eleazar and Phineas, son and grandson of Aaron, Moses' brother; there, also, the generation whose memories, many of them, reached back to the early days of the wanderings, who had seen that great and terrible desert, who had skirted Edom and Moab and Ammon, and penetrated Gilead and Bashan, many of whom had lost near relatives in the fearful revolt of Baal-peor; and towering above them all was the commanding personality of Moses himself. Now the contention here submitted is, that the speaker of those discourses, which constitute the chief portion of the book of Deuteronomy, so completely enters into the situation created by the time, the place, the events, and the personalities, that he could be no other than Moses himself. Only the man who lived then, and stood there, who had passed through those stirring events, who knew and confronted that generation, could possibly speak in the strain that here greets our eyes.

For note, finally, the marked psychology of this book. What a profound emotionalism the speaker displays! All the forms of speech that betoken depth of feeling are present here—repetitions, as if the

speaker could not make sure enough of having effected his purpose; digressions, caused by vivid memories crowding in upon him while he was speaking; appeals, remonstrances, recriminations, which none but Moses could have dared; and, especially confessions of disappointment and regret—so keen, so bitter, as if his heart would break—that he might not himself enter into the good land. Note well, also, the extremes that meet, and are melted into a living whole, by the intense feeling with which the speaker is borne along: "What nation so great!!" . . . "Oh foolish people and unwise!" Note also the labour—the travail—for the people's well-being into which his passionate love urges him. He speaks, and speaks; he must surely have spoken from day to day! When he has done speaking, then he writes, and writes on: adding perhaps a little, towards the end, which he had not actually spoken, but in penning which he feels as if he were still speaking. And when he has written all—all the law, all his repetition of the law, all his own recollections about the giving of the law, including perhaps variations (most natural in one who spoke and wrote from memory, but very unlikely to have been indulged in by anyone else), when he has done all this, then, Is there anything else he can do, any further stone he can turn, to stem and stay his people's apostasy? Yes, there is one thing he can do. He can resolve his passion into song—a song for the tongue, for the ear, for the memory; a song to live among the people, to be recited in their gatherings, to be accompanied by the harp. He has harangued them, he has warned them; now he will bewitch them. Thus is born his Witnessing Song (chap. xxxii.) This is not the place to analyze that marvellous composition. Read it; get into sympathy with it. Against the doubt whether Moses could have composed it, let it be enough to say, Could anyone else have composed it? With regard to the Song of "Blessing" which stands in the next chapter (chap. xxxiii.), the case in many ways is very different. Instead of seeming to grow out of the speeches which have gone before, it is couched in a totally opposite strain. It is blessing only—admiration only—felicitation only. What then? Shall we contradict Moses' editor, who records that "This is the blessing wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the sons of Israel before his death"? There is no need! One of two suppositions is open to us, both of which are perfectly rational, either of which would naturally account for the altered mood of the prophet-poet. We may conceive of the "Blessing" as now publicly produced. Or we may form another hypothesis: we may conclude that the mind of Moses passed into a serener atmosphere after the excitement and strain of the admonitory

speeches and song were over—in the consciousness that he had done his duty; knowing, moreover, that after all, there was hope in the end for Israel, how many soever her sins would be, how terrible soever the sufferings must be which should follow those sins (chap. xxxii. 43),—knowing this, his profound love for his people, his unshaken confidence in their destiny, stirred and guided by divine afflatus, now moved him to excogitate his most glowing idealisations of Israel's unique position, and to cast his thoughts into the form of a most lovely and loving song. And so, having prepared and pronounced his "Paradise Regained," he is parted from the beloved tribes—almost literally—with a "blessing" on his lips.

We have assumed that Moses was a poet. Why not? He was an Oriental—he was an educated man—he had been in love—he had enjoyed forty years of learned leisure in Midian. What wonder if the soul of a poet had been awakened within him, and the stylus of a poet had been trained to commit to papyrus or to parchment the musical numbers with which he had beguiled many a waiting hour during his banishment from his land and his people!

And even in this second song there are, if we mistake not, internal evidences of no small force that no one was ever so fitted to write it as Moses himself. If we wished to cite an example, we would say: The opening lines (chap. xxxiii. 2) descriptive of the Divine Appearing, when Yahweh came forth to meet Israel; Moses going forth at the head of his people, Yahweh advancing to meet them in a pillar of light and fire. Can we think of any human imagination so likely to have been profoundly and permanently impressed by that Theophany as that of Moses himself? What surprise if, before he died, he perpetuated his recollections in one of the most magnificent poems ever written?

In fine: the book of Deuteronomy must have had an author. Making reasonable allowances for editorial preservation and annotation, no man comes before us out of all the centuries of Hebrew history so fitted to be, so likely to have been, that author as Moses, the man of God, the leader of Israel out of Egypt to the confines of the promised land.

Such is the paper as it originally appeared in print. There is little to add. Since it was written some attention has been given to what the critics who treat of the Literature of the Old Testament have to say,—without changing the general persuasion of the present writer. It is still conceived that, full allowance being made for the necessary editing

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of the Sacred Books, it is needless to disturb the internal claim to Authorship where, as in this case, it is plainly made in the writing itself, and where that claim is seen to rest on broad and general grounds of inherent probability. It is, of course, undesirable to get involved in technicalities. It matters little whether the term "author" is applied to Moses or to his Editors, provided it is well understood what is intended. The one weighty question is whether the great Lawgiver did actually deliver the substance of what is here put into his mouth, and whether his speeches have been honestly and competently edited for the purpose, and during the process, of being handed down to us.

THE AUTHORSHIP OF DEUTERONOMY

The Testimony of Jesus*

by

J. W. McGarvey

1. The Positions of the Parties. We now come to testimony which, if explicit and unambiguous, should settle this controversy finally and forever. But at the threshold we encounter from both extremes of the new criticism objections to the introduction of it. Kuenen expresses the objection of the radical wing in words so striking and emphatic that they have been quoted often as the keynote of opposition from that quarter. He says:

We must either cast aside as worthless our dearly bought scientific method, or must forever cease to acknowledge the authority of the New Testament in the domain of the exegesis of the Old (*Prophets and Prophecy* in Israel, 486).

Shocking as this statement must ever be to a believer in Christ, it presents the necessary position of unbelievers; for if Jesus Christ possessed no supernatural intelligence, he was incapable of giving competent testimony in regard to the authorship of Old Testament books. As a witness he must be ruled out, and ruled out he is, directly or indirectly, by all the analytical critics. On the contrary, to all believers in him his testimony settles all questions on which he has designed to speak.

Kuenen, in the remark just quoted, betrays the unexpressed conviction that his "dearly bought scientific method" must be pronounced worthless, and must be cast aside as such, if the authority of the New Testament is acknowledged. In this he proves himself more candid and more logical than are many of his half-way pupils who profess faith in Christ. And let it not slip from our memory that the most radical of

*The following pages appear in *The Authorship of Deuteronomy*, published by Standard Publishing Co., Cincinnati, Ohio, but long out of print. This volume was printed while McGarvey was president of the College of the Bible, Lexington, Ky., and copyright in 1902. It was the author's final book, published when he was 73 years of age, and at once recognized both in this country and Great Britain as a work that had to be faced up to by the "higher critics" it assailed. We have included its final pages. It seems quite obvious that McGarvey was saving his strongest argument for the last.

destructive critics recognize and frankly admit an irreconcilable antagonism between their theories respecting the Old Testament, and the statements on the subject in the New Testament.

On the other hand, Prof. C. A. Briggs expresses the view of the "evangelical critics," in the following paragraph:

Those who still insist upon opposing higher criticism with traditional views, and with the supposed authority of Jesus Christ and his apostles, do not realize the perils of the situation. Are they ready to risk the divinity of Christ, the authority of the Bible, and the existence of the church, upon their interpretation of the words of Jesus and his apostles? Do they not see that they throw up a wall that will prevent any critic, who is an unbeliever, from ever becoming a believer in Christ and the Bible? They would force evangelical critics to choose between truth and scholarly research on the one side, and Christ and tradition on the other (*Bib. Study*, 196).

This author is equally opposed with Kuenen to the introduction of the testimony of the New Testament on this subject, but on opposite grounds. He has such confidence in the "dearly bought scientific method," that the thought of its being proved worthless does not excite his fears, but he sees in it great peril to "the divinity of Christ, the authority of the Bible, and the existence of the church." He sees in it the likelihood that no critic who is an unbeliever will ever become a believer, a change highly improbable under any circumstances; and he sees in it the dire necessity that such men as himself shall be forced to choose between the new criticism and Christ—a plain intimation that they would choose the new criticism.

And yet, this author, in another place, takes the highest ground in favor of submitting to the authority of Jesus and his apostles. He says:

The authority of Jesus Christ, to all who know him to be their divine Saviour, outweighs all other authority whatever. A Christian must follow his teachings in all things as the guide into all truth. The authority of Jesus Christ is involved in that of his apostles (*ib.*, 186).

Nothing could be better, or better said, than this. We should cast aside, then, all fear of consequences, and investigate with perfect candor the sayings of Jesus and the apostles on this subject. Whatever our conclusions derived from the study of the Old Testament may be, we

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must cast them aside as worthless, as Kuenen says, if we find them in conflict with the testimony of the New Testament; and whatever the result as respects critics who are now unbelievers, we must let Christ be true if it makes every man a liar.

In order that our investigation of this most important question may be thorough, taking nothing for granted, we shall inquire first, Did Jesus *know* the facts involved in the Old Testament criticism? If he did not, then any affirmation by him on the subject proves nothing. Second, Did he *affirm* anything on this subject? If he both knew and affirmed, it follows that what he affirmed must be received with implicit faith by those who believe in him. Had our investigation of the Old Testament, which we have just now concluded, led us to accept the conclusions of the adverse critics, a contrary affirmation on the part of Jesus would be sufficient ground for reversing the decision, supposing that we had been misled by ingenious sophistry; but as the matter stands, this new testimony is not really needed except for the purpose of finding more solid ground for our final convictions, that human judgment at its best can afford.

2. Did Jesus Know? To the question, Did Jesus know who wrote the books of the Old Testament, the great lights of modern criticism, such as Wellhausen and Kuenen, together with all the lesser lights of the radical school, answer with an emphatic "No." Denying, as they do, his miraculous power, they also deny his miraculous knowledge, and claim that he knew, on such subjects, only what he learned from his teachers. They limit the knowledge of the apostles in the same way. As a necessary consequence, the testimony of Jesus on such subjects, no matter how explicit and positive it may be, has, with them, no weight whatever.

When believing scholars began to favor the Old Testament criticism of these unbelievers, they soon perceived that the testimony of Jesus and the apostles would have to be reckoned with, and so they put their ingenuity to work in the search for some method of evading the apparent force of this testimony. The first effort in this direction that came under my own observation was an essay in the *Expositor* for July, 1891, from the pen of Dr. Alfred Plummer, under the heading, "The Advance of Christ in Sophia." Starting from the statement of Luke, that Jesus, when a child, "increased in stature and in wisdom" (*sophia* in the Greek), he argued that this increase in wisdom may have continued throughout the life of Jesus, and that, consequently, at every period of his life, even to the last, there may have been some

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things which he did not yet know, and among these the matters involved in Old Testament criticism. Add to the conclusion thus reached the fact that, according to his own statement, he did not know the day or the hour of his own second coming, and there remains but a short step to the conclusion that he may have been as yet ignorant of the authorship of the so-called book of Moses, and the reality of the facts recorded in it. A little later, Canon Gore introduced us to the doctrine of the *Kenosis*, as it is called, arguing the probability of our Lord's ignorance on critical subjects from the statement of Paul that though he was in the form of God, and thought it not a prize to be equal with God, he emptied himself, and took the form of a servant (Phil. ii. 6-8). This emptying included the laying aside of divine knowledge, so that he did not possess the latter while he was in the flesh. By this ingenious method of reasoning these gentlemen thought themselves justifiable in laying aside the testimony of him who had previously been regarded by all believers as the most important witness who could testify in the case. This they do "very reverently," and not with the irreverence with which infidel critics had already reached the same result. The accepted title of this process is "reverent criticism." Reverent it is in manner and tone, but not more so than the approach of Judas in the garden to kiss his Lord; and we are to see whether it is less deceptive.

I suppose that there is no intelligent person who now doubts that the knowledge of Jesus, during his infancy and his boyhood, was limited. But, after he received, at his baptism, the Holy Spirit without measure (John iii. 34), that Spirit which, in the words of Paul, knoweth all things, even the deep things of God (I Cor. ii. 10), who shall dare to assign any limit to his knowledge additional to that which he has himself assigned? Who but himself can now, or could then, have knowledge of even this limitation? He often displayed miraculous knowledge, as when he detected the unexpressed thoughts of men, when he gave directions to Peter with reference to the fish which he would catch with a starer in its mouth, and when he directed him and John about preparing the paschal supper. He also showed a conscious knowledge of his own pre-existence when he said to the Jews, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad. Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii. 56, 58); and when he prayed to his Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory that I had with thee before the world

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was" (John xvii. 4, 5). If he had miraculous knowledge, as these facts demonstrate, who shall dare to set a limit to his exercise of it? Can a "reverent" critic do so?

Our Lord's own statement that he knew not the day or the hour of his second coming is one of the most astonishing utterances that ever fell from his lips. Its singularity is not realized until it is considered in its connection with the other things belonging to his second coming, which he did know. He knew that it would occur after the destruction of Jerusalem, and after Jerusalem shall cease to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles; he knew by whom he will be accompanied—by all the angels of God; he knew what men will be doing when he comes—that they will be engaged in all the avocations of life, as when the flood came upon the world, and as when fire came down upon Sodom; he knew what he will do when he comes—that he will awake all the dead, sit on a throne of glory, assemble all the descendants of Adam before him, dividing them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; he knew that he will call those on his right hand into his eternal kingdom, and expel those on his left into eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. He even knew that two men would be in the same bed, that two women would be grinding at the same handmill, and that in each instance one would be taken and the other left. If he knew all this respecting his second coming, how is it possible that he did not know the precise time of it? This question no man on earth can answer; and I presume that the same is true of the angels in heaven. It would be an absolutely incredible statement, had it not come from lips that can not speak falsely. And are we not here justifiable in saying that he who assigns any other limit to the knowledge of Jesus is guilty of a presumption that is near akin to blasphemy? I think so. And I think that the soul of every man who worships Jesus as Lord must shudder at the thought of charging him with ignorance respecting the Holy Scriptures, which were written by holy men guided by his own Holy Spirit.

3. Did Jesus affirm? We now ask, Did Jesus make any explicit affirmations in respect to the authorship of Old Testament books, or to the reality of events recorded in them? Before producing any instances of the kind, I will first quote some of the utterances of scholars who deny that he did, and try to test the grounds of their denial; and, as Professor Briggs has elaborated the argument on the negative side more extensively than any other recent writer of my acquaintance, he shall be heard first.

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Before I come to closer issues, it may benefit some readers to see how this professor deals with a sweeping remark by which it has become common to wave aside the whole discussion on which we are entering. Quoting this remark from its originator, the professor says:

Clericus went too far when he said that Jesus Christ and his apostles did not come into the world to teach criticism to the Jews. Then he adds: "The response of Herman Witsius, that Jesus came to teach the truth, and could not be imposed upon by common ignorance, or be induced to favor vulgar errors, is just" (*Bib. Study*, P. 184).

This answer must be approved by every one who has faith in Jesus as a teacher sent from God.

Immediately after pronouncing this just judgment, our professor proceeds to say: "And yet we can not altogether deny the principle of accommodation in the life and teachings of Jesus." He supports this assertion by referring to what Jesus says of the permission of divorce under Moses, saying that "Moses, because of the hardness of their hearts, suffered ancient Israel to divorce their wives for reasons which the higher dispensation will not admit as valid." This proves that God, under the former dispensation, gave Israel a law which he would not have given had the state of their hearts been different; but how does this show that the principle of accommodation is found "in the *life and teachings of Jesus*"? The proof and the proposition to be proved are as far apart as Moses and Jesus. Moreover, it is not correct to say that the reasons for this law were such as "the higher dispensation will not admit as valid;" for, in presenting them to his hearers, Jesus did admit that they were valid at the time in which they were acted upon. Moses did right in granting the privilege of divorce at will, although it was not permitted in the beginning, and was not to be permitted under the new dispensation.

In pursuance of this same line of thought, Professor Briggs quotes from Dr. S. H. Turner the following sentence:

It is not required in a religious or inspired teacher, nor, indeed, would it be prudent or right, to shock the prejudices of his uninformed hearers, by inculcating truths which they are unprepared to receive (*ib.*, p. 185).

So far as this is intended to apply to the question in hand, truths about the authorship and credibility of Old Testament books, it is wide of the mark; for no one claims that Jesus should have corrected pre-

vailing beliefs on critical questions. The only question is, Did he *affirm* the *correctness* of those beliefs? But, apart from this, the principle here laid down is untrue to the facts in the life of Jesus; for he was constantly shocking the prejudices of his hearers by inculcating truths which they were unprepared to receive; and it was on account of his persistence in inculcating such truths that they hated him and crucified him. The same is true of the apostles, and of all the prophets of Israel. The same is true also of Professor Briggs himself; for it was because of his inculcating, what he regards as just such truths on higher criticism, in the presence of a people not prepared to receive them on account of their alleged ignorance, that he was tried as a heretic and dismissed from the ministry of the Presbyterian Church. This experience, which has come upon him since he wrote the book from which I quote, ought to convince him, if it has not, that the statement in question is erroneous.

On the next page (186) Professor Briggs repeats, in a slightly different form, but in closer connection with the question at issue, the remark just disposed of. He says: "There were no sufficient reasons why he should correct the prevailing views as to Old Testament books, and by his authority determine these literary questions." Of course, there were not; especially if those "prevailing views" were correct, as we believe. But no one claims that he should have corrected those views, even if they were incorrect. We claim only that, if they were incorrect, he could not have endorsed them; and the only question is, Did he, or did he not, endorse them?

Another evasive remark follows on the same page:

If they [Jesus and the apostles] used the language of the day in speaking of the Old Testament books, it does not follow that they adopted any of the views of authorship and editorship that went with these terms in the Talmud, or in Josephus, or in the apocalypse of Ezra; for we are not to interpret their words on this or any other subject by Josephus, or the Mishna, or the apocalypse of Ezra, or by any other external authorities, but by the plain grammatical and contextual sense of their words themselves.

All this is strictly true, but it amounts to nothing in this discussion. No one contends that the inspired utterances about Old Testament books involve an adoption of the views of any of the authors mentioned. Everybody agrees that these utterances are to be interpreted "by the

plain grammatical and contextual sense of their words;" but in this interpretation reference must invariably be had to the sense in which his hearers understood the words employed. Jesus could not, in addressing certain hearers, employ the deceptive trick of using "the language of the day" in a sense quite different from what was customary, without an intimation that he was doing so. When, then, he used "the language of the day" in speaking of Old Testament books, he used it as his hearers understood it, and his exact meaning is to be gathered from "the plain grammatical and contextual sense of the words themselves." I suppose that Professor Briggs would accept this modification of his remark.

After dealing with these general remarks of Professor Briggs intended to break in advance the force of any testimony of Jesus on critical questions, I now come to something more specific—his application of critical principles to the Book of Psalms. Here he does a gratuitous work by laboring to refute the idea that David wrote all of the psalms in this book. I think it impossible for any one who has ever read the Psalms to conclude that David wrote all of them, unless he should come to the question with a foregone conclusion, and employ the same kind of special pleading common with the destructive critics. A sample of this kind of sophistry, covering a whole page in fine type, is copied by the professor from an old Puritan commentary on Hebrews; and on reading it one is strikingly reminded of some later pages from the professor's own pen. Such is the New Testament evidence, however, in favor of the Davidic authorship of six of the Psalms, that on this evidence he admits them to be David's. This is an admission that the testimony of Jesus or an apostle on the question of authorship, when specific, is conclusive. Among the six is Psalm cx., and of this I wish to speak particularly, because it serves better than any other the purpose of determining whether the testimony of Jesus on the question of authorship is conclusive. Professor Briggs concedes that it is, at least in this instance, and yet he does not give the evidence its full force. His quotation of the words of Jesus is incomplete, and his argument based on them is weaker than the text justifies. But of this, more hereafter. (See *Bib. Study*, 187-190.)

Notwithstanding this decisive judgment expressed in *Biblical Study* in the year 1883, it is by no means certain that Professor Briggs is still of the same opinion. The critics of his school are progressive; and the conclusion of to-day may not be those of tomorrow. Six years later Professor Driver published his *Introduction to the Literature of the Old*

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Testament, and he, though considered a conservative, takes the opposite ground. He says:

This Psalm the 110th, though it may be ancient, can hardly have been composed by David (*Int.*, 384, note).

In support of this conclusion he indulges in some very singular reasoning. He first says: "If read without *prejudicium*, it produces the irresistible impression of having been written, not by a king with reference to an invisible spiritual being standing above him as his superior, but by a prophet *with reference to the theocratic king*." Just so. This is precisely the way in which Jesus interprets it. He claims that it was written with reference to the theocratic king; that is, with reference to himself after he entered upon his mediatorial reign. It was not written by a king with reference to "an invisible spiritual being standing above him," but a prophet, who was also a king, with reference to a glorified being in human form, yet destined to be far above every earthly king. The author goes on to give three reasons in support of this undisputed proposition; but as the proposition is admitted, it is not necessary to consider the reasons.

Not satisfied with this effort, the author, in the same paragraph, makes another and distinct attempt to get rid of the Lord's testimony. He says:

In the question addressed by our Lord to the Jews (Matt. xxii. 41-46; Mark xii. 35-37; Luke xx. 41-44) his object, it is evident, is not to instruct them on the *authorship* of the Psalm, but to argue from its *contents*; and though he assumes the Davidic authorship, accepted generally at the time, yet the cogency of his argument is unimpaired, so long as it is recognized that the Psalm is a Messianic one, and that the august language used in it of the Messiah is not compatible with the position of one who was a mere human son of David (*ib.*, 384, 385, note).

These remarks could be regarded as mere trifling were they not found in a volume written with the most serious purpose by a "reverent" author. They seem to have been written with only a vague remembrance of the words of Jesus to which they refer, and certainly without a close examination of them. Let us see what Jesus actually says:

"Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying What think ye of the Christ?

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whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith to them, How then doth David in the spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord saith to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I put thine enemies under thy feet? If David then calleth him Lord, how is he his son?"

It is as clear as day that the argument of Jesus depends for its validity on the fact that David is the author. True, as Professor Driver says, his object was not to "instruct them on the authorship;" for that they perfectly understood; yet his argument is worthless if David was not the author. If the author was some other prophet that David, what would be the sense of demanding, "If David calleth him Lord, how is he his son?" That he was the son of the man who called him Lord, is *the essential fact* in the argument; and any attempt to eliminate or to obscure this fact, is a bad case of wresting the Scriptures.

Professor Cheyne, the most radical of English critics, unites with the German radicals in denying the Davidic authorship of this Psalm, but, unlike Professor Driver and other conservatives, he saves himself the hopeless task of trying to reconcile this denial with the words of Jesus. (See his *Commentary on the Psalms*, xvi. 301.) In thus ruling Jesus out of court as a witness in the case, he plays a daring game, but he saves himself the necessity of wresting away from the words of Jesus the only meaning which they can convey. It is not easy to decide which is the preferable alternative. The man who takes either alternative antagonizes Jesus gratuitously, and he does so at his peril.

I now come to the testimonies of Jesus respecting the authorship of the Pentateuch. But, before considering particular instances of this testimony, it may be well to quote what Professor Driver says on the general question of such testimony:

There is no record of the question, whether a particular portion of the Old Testament was written by Moses, or David, or Isaiah, having ever been submitted to him; and had it been so submitted, we have no means of knowing what his answer would have been (*Int.*, xii., xiii.).

This first statement is true; and it is equally true that no advocate of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch has ever claimed that such a question was submitted to Jesus. But Professor Driver knows, as well as he knows his own name, that a man may say who wrote a certain book, or part of a book, without having been questioned on the subject. I wonder if, in lecturing before his classes in the university, he never

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names the authors of books which he quotes till some student calls for the names. What kind of teacher would Jesus have been had he never given his hearers a piece of information till they called for it? And what would have been thought of him, if, in quoting books to his hearers, he had never given the names of the authors quoted till they were called for? How could this ingenious writer have penned the sentence just quoted without being conscious that he was evading the question which he was professing to discuss? If this is throwing doubt on his perfect candor, respect for his good sense forces me to it.

True, we have no record of the question being submitted, Did Moses or David or Isaiah write this or that? but what does this amount to if we find Jesus, at his own initiative, affirming that Moses or David or Isaiah wrote this or that? Is his voluntary affirmation to be called in question or explained away because no one had called for it? I think not. Turn, then, to what I shall style one of his indirect affirmations, and let us come to closer quarters in the argument. In his disputation with the Sadducees, Jesus demanded: "Have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake to him, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" (Mark xii. 26).

Now, it is admitted by all scholars that there was in the hands of the Jews at that period a book, always written as a single book, and known by them as "The Book of Moses." It is admitted that that book is the one known to us at the Pentateuch, now divided into five books. It is admitted that the Jews universally believed that this book was written by Moses, and that for this reason they called it "The Book of Moses." When, then, addressing men who thus believed, Jesus calls it "The Book of Moses," did he confirm their belief that Moses was its author, or did he not? To test this, we need only to suppose that, after the conversation, some one had said to the Sadducee who had been the spokesman of his party, "That man Jesus does not believe that Moses wrote the book from which you and he quoted;" what would the Sadducee have answered? Would he not have said, "You are mistaken; he called it 'The Book of Moses,' just as we do; and if he did not mean what he said, he talks deceitfully."

Here we are met by an argument which Professor Briggs has stated with as much force as can be given it, and it is endorsed by all the "critics," whether "radicals" or "evangelicals." Quoting and endorsing the words of Professor Brown, his colleague, he says:

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The use of a current pseudonym to designate the author no more committed Jesus to the declaration that that was the author's real name, than our use of the expression, "Junius says," would commit us to a declaration that the "Letters of Junius" were composed by a person of that name (*Bib. Study*, 189, 190, note).

This argument has more plausibility than the one quoted above from Professor Driver; but it is equally fallacious. To a class of students correctly informed as to the letters of Junius, Professor Briggs or Professor Brown could use the expression, "Junius says," without misleading them; but suppose either of them was addressing a class of students who were so ill-informed that they supposed a man whose real name was Junius to have been the author of these letters; and suppose that the professor, in addressing them, knew that they so thought; would he then feel at liberty to quote the letters again and again, saying, "Thus saith Junius"? Neither of them would think of doing it. They would be ashamed to do it. They would feel bound in honor to either inform the students, or quote the words as those of a distinguished writer without naming him. They would feel conscientiously bound to avoid committing themselves before that class to its own ignorant conception. Yet they openly charge on Jesus our Lord a practice in which they would themselves disdain to indulge.

We may try this argument by another example. Neither of the three professors, Driver, Briggs nor Brown, believes that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews; does any of them ever quote that document as an epistle of Paul? Does any of them ever say, "Thus saith the apostle Paul," and follow this with a quotation from Hebrews? They would consider it unmanly and deceptive to do so. Why, then, will they charge Jesus with quoting a book which he knew Moses did not write, and styling it "The Book of Moses"? How easily he could have avoided committing himself thus, by saying to the Sadducees, "Have ye not read in the book of your law?"

Such scholars as these would not thus wrest the words of Jesus, and do him this dishonor, were they not impelled by a false theory.

The testimony of Jesus respecting the authorship of Old Testament books has been passed over in a very cursory manner by most of the destructive critics. They have had little to say about it, because they have found little that they could say with profit to their own cause. Any position taken by respectable scholars which affects in the slightest degree the absolute authority belonging to all utterances of Jesus our

Lord, or the absolute sanctity of his character, demands our profoundest consideration before we can consider it with favor. If he made any affirmation which was not true, his authority as a teacher is invalidated; and he affirmed anything which he did not *know* to be true, he fell short of absolute truthfulness. Perfect veracity demands that a man shall not only avoid affirmations which he knows to be false, but all that he does not know to be true.

We ask, then, most solemnly, and with a view to the most candid answer, Did Jesus, on any occasion, affirm unequivocally the Mosaic authorship of the writings commonly ascribed to Moses? Let us try his words addressed to the Jews at the feast of tabernacles, and recorded in John vii. 19: Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you doeth the law?

That the Jews had at that time a book which they knew as the law of Moses, and which we know as the Pentateuch, is unquestioned and unquestionable. It is equally unquestionable that by "the law" Jesus here meant that book; for on any other hypothesis, we should have to suppose that he dealt uncandidly with his hearers. He could not have meant by "the law" some *nucleus* of the law which came from Moses, while the main body of it was an accumulation growing out of the experience of ages, as some critics have conjectured; for candor required him to use the expression as his hearers understood it. Neither could he have referred to any particular statute of the law which may have come from Moses, while the rest had some other origin; for his demand had reference to the law as a whole, of which he denied that any of them had kept it. They had all observed some parts of it, but none had kept it as a whole. There is no uncertainty, then, as to what he meant by "the law." What did he mean by the demand, "Did not Moses give you the law?" In this question he employs the rhetorical figure of *erotesis*, which is the most emphatic form of making an assertion. It assumes that neither with the speaker nor with his hearers is any other answer possible but the one implied. Another example is the demand, "Did I not choose you, the twelve?" (John vi. 70). Another, the well-known words of Paul, "Was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized into the name of Paul?" (I. Cor. i. 13). His demand, then, is the most emphatic assertion possible that neither with himself nor with his hearers could there be any doubt that Moses gave them the law. Affirmation of the Mosaic authorship of the law more emphatic or more explicit there could not be. But Jesus could not thus affirm that which he did not know to be true; and it follows as an irresistible conclusion

that Jesus knew Moses to be the author of the law which the Jews connected with his name.

There is not room here for any of the evasive remarks employed by destructive critics to obscure the Lord's testimony. The illustration of the letters of Junius can not be applied; for, to make it applicable, both the speaker and the hearer should believe that the author of the letters was a man named Junius, and both would be deceived. Professor Briggs' remark that when Jesus ascribes a certain law to Moses, he does not assume that Moses wrote the book in which that law is now found, can not apply; for it is of the law as a whole, and not of any particular statute, that the demand is made. Neither can Professor Driver's assertion, that no question raised by modern criticism was presented to Jesus for an answer, apply in this case; for, while it is true that no such question was propounded, Jesus did, without a question, make the demand of his own accord, and use the unquestioned fact of the Mosaic authorship to condemn his enemies. If any other than Moses had given the law, his argument would have been fallacious.

Finally, we must not fail to observe that, if Jesus had not desired to commit himself on the authorship of the law, it would have been the easiest thing in the world for him to have avoided it without weakening the rebuke which he administered. He could have said, as even radical critics are now willing to say, "Did not God give you the law?" meaning that God gave it, not by inspiration, but in a providential way. Or he could have said, "Do you not *believe* that Moses gave you the law? and yet none of you doeth it."

The fact that he chose neither of these, nor any other form of speech which would have been non-committal on the question of authorship, and that instead thereof he chose to commit himself in the most emphatic manner that human speech without an oath would permit, proves that it was his deliberate intention to do so, and to thus leave on record his positive testimony on this important question. If he had known—and who may say that he did not?—that this question would arise in the coming ages, he could not have anticipated it with a more decisive answer. How vain the remark, then, which we have quoted from Professor Driver, that if critical questions had been propounded to Jesus, we have no means of knowing how he would have answered them!

The most specific affirmation by Jesus of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is found in the fifth chapter of John, and it reads thus: "Think not that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that

accuseth you, *even* Moses, on whom ye have set your hope. For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" In this passage three facts receive emphasis, and they are emphasized as the grounds on which the unbelievers addressed are condemned. The first is that Moses, the Moses on whom they "set their hope," is their accuser. Second, the ground on which Moses accuses them is, that they did not believe what he wrote of Jesus: "If ye believe Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me." A more explicit statement that Moses wrote of Jesus could not be framed in human speech. Third, the ground on which Moses accuses them is stated in another form, by the assertion that they believed not certain writings which are called his: "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

Now, it is a historical fact, unquestioned and unquestionable, as we have said before, that the Jews addressed by Jesus had certain writings which they knew as the writings of Moses. Jesus here distinctly recognizes them as such. Not only so, but by placing these writings of Moses in antithesis with his own words, he leaves as little room to doubt that these writings came from Moses as that his own words came from himself. Furthermore, he affirms, and makes it the basis of his argument, that in those writings Moses wrote of Jesus—in what passage or in what words, it is not needful that we now inquire—and he declares that Moses is the accuser of the unbelievers because they believed not what Moses thus wrote. If it was not Moses himself who thus wrote, and if the writings referred to as his were not his, then the argument of Jesus falls to the ground, and this whole passage from his lips is meaningless. And if here we have not an unequivocal and unmistakable affirmation of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, I defy any man to frame such an affirmation.

Perhaps some of my readers are ready to ask, What answer do the destructive critics give to this presentation? The question is pertinent. If they have no answer to give, they should hold their peace forever on the main issue. The radicals see the difficulty very clearly, and they answer, with all candor, that Jesus was mistaken. They make no effort to explain away his words. The Evangelicals, as Professor Briggs calls them, have seen the difficulty; it would be disparaging to them to hint that they have not; but, so far as my reading has extended, they have not grappled with it. This we shall now show as to Professors Driver and Briggs, by quoting all that they say on the subject.

4. The New Critics on This Testimony. Professor Driver formally introduces the issue on page xii. of the preface to his *Introduction*, and he states it thus:

It is objected, however, that some of the conclusions of critics respecting the Old Testament are incompatible with the authority of our blessed Lord, and that in loyalty to him we are precluded from accepting them.

After this very fair statement of the issue, he proceeds with a series of statements intended to show that the objection is not well taken. The first is a cautious approach to the discussion, and is stated in these words:

That our Lord appealed to the Old Testament as the record of a revelation in the past, and as pointing forward to himself, is undoubted; but these aspects of the Old Testament are perfectly consistent with a critical view of its structure and growth.

This remark is non-committal. Of course, these aspects of the Old Testament are consistent with a critical view of its structure and growth; for instance, with the critical view taken in Horne's *Introduction*, or in Bissell's *Origin and Structure of the Pentateuch*—the critical view which Driver and others now denounce as traditional. But the question is, Are they consistent with the critical view taken by Professor Driver? They are certainly not consistent with that taken by Kuenen and Wellhausen; for they both deny "a revelation" in the proper sense of the word, and they deny the "pointing forward" to Jesus of which Driver speaks. On the real issue, whether they are consistent with the critical views of Driver and those who stand with him, he thus far gives only his affirmation.

His next remark is this:

That our Lord, in so appealing to it, designed to pronounce a verdict on the authority and age of its different parts, and to foreclose all future inquiry into these subjects, is an assumption for which no sufficient ground can be alleged.

This remark is totally irrelevant. The expression, "in so appealing to it," means, in the connection, appealing to it as "the record of a revelation in the past, and pointing forward to himself." As a matter of course, in so alluding to it he pronounced no verdict on the authorship

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and age of its different parts; neither has anybody ever said that he did. Why answer objections that have never been made? Why not answer the objections which have been made, instead of thus setting up and assailing men of straw? This is the common resort of sophists when they are conscious of inability to answer the real objections of their opponents.

But our critic continues in the same strain by adding:

Had such been his aim, it would have been out of harmony with the entire method and tenor of his teaching.

Had what been his aim? The reference is to pronouncing a verdict on the authority and age of the different parts of the Old Testament. But nobody pretends that such was his aim. We are inquiring whether he affirmed that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. We have never affirmed, and have never believed, that Jesus said anything about its age and its structure beyond what is involved in its authorship. Again we ask, why does so acute an author as Professor Driver continually evade the issue which he himself so clearly stated at the outset?

His next remark is this:

In no single instance, so far as we are aware, did he anticipate the results of scientific inquiry or historical research.

Perhaps he did not, when scientific inquiry and historical research are properly conducted; but what has this remark to do with the question at issue? Why did not Professor Driver say, In no single instance, so far as we are aware, did Jesus say who gave the law to Israel? This would have been in point; but this he could not say.

Again our author says:

The aim of His teaching was a religious one; it was to set before men the pattern of a perfect life, to move them to imitate it, to bring them to himself.

Very good; but did he not, in doing this, rebuke men for not keeping the law which he said Moses gave them, and for not believing the writings of Moses in whom they put their trust? Why continue thus to evade the issue by irrelevant remarks?

In the next sentence we find an indirect admission of the truth, with an attempt to break its force:

He accepted, as the basis of his teaching, the opinions of the Old Testament current around him. He assumed, in his allusions to it, the premises which his opponents recognized,

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and which could not have been questioned (even had it been necessary to question them) without raising issues for which the time was not yet ripe, and which, had they been raised, would have interfered seriously with the paramount purpose of his life.

Strip this sentence of its ambiguity, and what does it mean? It means that Jesus accepted as the basis of his teaching the opinion, among others, that Moses was the author of the law. Did he accept as the basis of his teaching an opinion which he knew to be false? He certainly did if Moses was *not* the author of the law. It means that "he assumed," in his allusions to the law, "the premises which his opponents recognized." Did he assume premises which he knew to be false? So Professor Driver must think; for he thinks that the assumption of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is a false assumption, yet he holds Jesus guilty of that assumption.

The additional assertion in the last quotation, that these opinions which he accepted could not have been questioned without rising issues for which the time was not ripe, is of no force whatever; for, as I have said before, Jesus did raise issues for which the time was not ripe, for some of which he was persecuted, and for one of which he was crucified. He knew nothing of that time-serving policy which accepts false opinions and makes false assumptions to avoid conflict which the fearless utterance of the truth would involve. Moreover, our contention is not that he should have corrected the opinion, supposing it to be false, that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, but that he would not and could not affirm the truth of that opinion, knowing it to be false. That he did affirm it, I have abundantly proved.

In order to fully represent Professor Driver's discussion of this issue, I must make one more quotation which I have already made use of in a former connection. He says:

There is no record of the question, whether a particular portion of the Old Testament was written by Moses or David or Isaiah, having ever been submitted to him, and, had it been submitted, we have no means of knowing what his answer would have been.

As we have said before, the first of these two assertions is true; but it makes all the more significant the fact that, without a question being submitted, he volunteered to affirm that David wrote the 110th Psalm, and that Moses gave the law. As to his last assertion, nothing

that Professor Driver says in this whole discussion is wilder. When Jesus said, "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you has kept it?" does not this indicate what his answer would have been if one of his hearers had asked him, "Did Moses give us the law?"? And when he said to another company of Jews, "If you do not believe Moses' writings, how can ye believe my words?" does this give no indication of what answer he would have given had one asked him, "Do you then believe that these writings came from Moses?"?

In conclusion, I ask the reader, how can you account for this evasive and irrelevant method, on the part of so learned and logical an author as Professor Driver, in discussing so simple a question? When he has an open path before him his reasoning is clear and cogent. He walks with a steady step, like a strong man on solid ground. Why, then, this faltering and wandering when he comes to discussing the affirmations of Jesus respecting the Old Testament? Why does the strong man here betray such weakness? Why, but because he here felt conscious of the weakness of his cause?

In *Biblical Study*, the most elaborate work written by Prof. Charles A. Briggs, a whole chapter is devoted to "The New Testament View of Old Testament Literature," and we shall now see more fully how he deals with the utterances of Jesus on the subject.

On page 192 he says: "Jesus speaks of the law of Moses (John vii. 23) and the book of Moses (Mark xii. 26)." He cites several other passages from Luke and Paul, and then adds:

These are all cases of *naming* books cited. They have as their parallel David as the name of the Psalter in Heb. iv. 7 and Acts iv. 25; Samuel, also of the Book of Samuel, Acts iii. 24. It is certainly reasonable to interpret Moses in these passages in the same way as the name of the work containing his legislation and the history in which he is the central figure.

We can judge of the correctness of these remarks only by seeing what is said in the passages cited. The first reads thus: "If a man receiveth circumcision on the sabbath, that the law of Moses be not broken, are ye wroth with me because I made a man every whit whole on the sabbath?" Is this a mere case of "naming" a book? There is nothing said of the book except by implication; but there is something said of a law, and it is called "the law of Moses." If Jesus did not mean to commit himself to the fact that this law was given by Moses, how easily he could have avoided doing so by saying that the *law* might not

be broken. In the next preceding verse Jesus makes a statement preparatory to this, in which he recognizes as real the exact relation of this law to circumcision which is set forth in the Pentateuch. He says: "For this cause hath Moses given you circumcision (not that it is of Moses, but of the fathers); and on the sabbath ye circumcise a man." Here the fact that circumcision was first ordained in the time of the fathers, and not originated in the legislation of Moses, is set forth precisely as in our Pentateuch, and Moses is again credited with the legislation. It would be interesting to hear from Professor Briggs the reason why he deals thus with this passage. Had he quoted it, instead of merely citing it, he would scarcely have impugned the intelligence of his readers by using it as he does.

The second passage reads thus: "As touching the dead, that they are raised, have ye not read in the book of Moses, in the place concerning the bush, how God spake to him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" This is the naming of a book, or, more properly speaking, it is calling a book by its name; but it is more: it is the recognition of that name as a proper one; for if Jesus had not known that Moses was the author of the book, we can not believe that he would have confirmed the mistaken belief of his hearers by so styling it. How easily he could have avoided this, and still made his reference explicit, by saying, "The book of the law." These two passages confirm the testimony which they are employed to invalidate, by showing that Jesus indorsed the belief that Moses was the author of the book ascribed to him by the Jews.

But Professor Briggs tries still further to escape from this conclusion by citing alleged parallels in the use of the names of David and Samuel. As to David, the language of the text is this: "Saying in David, after so long a time, To-day, as it hath been before said, To-day if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts." What right has Professor Briggs to say that the name "David" is here used "as the name of the Psalter"? The writer quotes from David, but not from the book of David, as Jesus quotes from "the book of Moses." The Jews knew no book of David. Their book of Psalms, like our own, contained some compositions ascribed to David, some to other writers, and many to no particular author. No Jew who had ever read the book through could have supposed that David wrote them all. When they quoted David, then, they quoted some Psalm which they supposed to have been written by David; and this passage in Hebrews assumes only that David wrote the Psalm from which the quotation is made.

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The professor's remark about Samuel, just quoted above, has reference to an argument advanced by him on a previous page, and one which I believe to be original with him. He makes much use of it, and it is worthy, on this account, of particular notice. On page 190 the author quotes the words of Peter, "All the prophets, from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days;" and he adds:

The reference here is to the Book of Samuel, for the reason that there is no Messianic prophecy ascribed to Samuel in the Old Testament. The context forces us to think of such an one. We find it in the prophecy of Nathan in the Book of Samuel. These historical books then bore the name of Samuel, and their contents are referred to as Samuel's.

This is an ingenious piece of argumentation; but it is marked by two fatal defects. First, it assumes as a fact that "these historical books then bore the name of Samuel," whereas they bore no name in the Hebrew text; they were styled the first and second books of Kingdoms in the Septuagint; and they were never called the first and second books of Samuel till A.D. 1488, when they were so styled in Bomberg's printed Hebrew Bible. Such a blunder is a severe satire on an expert in historical criticism, and to base a boasted original argument on it is not a brilliant illustration of the "scientific method." This fact demolishes the foundation of the argument. Furthermore, if it is true that no Messianic prophecy is ascribed to Samuel in the Old Testament, the fact that one is ascribed to him in the New Testament ought to satisfy a man who believes in Christ and in the inspiration of his apostles. When Peter said that Samuel prophesied of the days of Christ, we ought to presume that Peter knew what he was talking about.

The second argument by Professor Briggs is expressed in the following paragraph:

Jesus represents Moses as a lawgiver, giving the Ten Commandments (Mark vii. 10), the law of the leper's offering (Mark i. 44, etc.), the law of divorce (Matt. xix. 7), the law in general (John vii. 19). The Epistle to the Hebrews represents Moses as giving the law of priesthood (Heb. vii. 14), and as a lawgiver whose law, when issued at the time, could not be disobeyed with impunity (Heb. x. 28). These passages all represent Moses to be the lawgiver that he appears to be in the narratives of the Pentateuch, but do not by any means

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imply the authorship of the narratives that contain these laws, any more than the reference in I. Cor. ix. 14 to the command of Jesus in Luke x. 7, and the institution of the Lord's Supper by Jesus (I. Cor. xi. 23), imply that he was the author of the Gospels containing his words (*Bib. Study*, p. 193).

Here, again, in the citations from Jesus, he hides among a number of sayings of the Master, which taken apart from others, are not specific affirmations of the authorship in question, one that is; viz.: the interrogation in John vii. 19, "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you doeth the law?" Why did not the professor single out this passage, as his opponents have done, and show that it does not affirm the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch? If he could show that in the minds and speech of the Jews addressed by Jesus there was a distinction between the "law" and what we call the Pentateuch, he would have met the argument in part. But even then he would have had to show that Christ meant not the law as a whole, but only that nucleus of the law which critics ascribe to Moses, as distinguished from the civil law in Deuteronomy, and the Levitical law, both of which, as he himself affirms, were given by unknown persons many centuries after the death of Moses. Even what he does make out of the passage, that Moses gave "the law in general," contradicts his own conclusions and those of all critics with whom he stands.

There is another anomaly in these citations from Jesus. Because Jesus says, in Mark vii. 10, "Moses said, Honor thy father and mother," the professor says that Jesus, in these words, represents Moses as giving the Ten Commandments. Why this conclusion? Why not reason as he does about other remarks of the same kind, and say, This does not represent Moses as giving the whole of the Ten Commandments, "not by any means;" it shows only that he gave the one about honoring father and mother. Well, it suits the theory to admit that Moses gave the Decalogue, and so the mode of reasoning which in scientific and conclusive in analogous cases is tossed aside in this.

If Heb. vii. 14, as is asserted above, represents Moses as giving the law of priesthood, this contradicts the accepted critical theory of the priesthood; for it is claimed that there was no law of the priesthood till long after Moses; that Ezekial foreshadowed it, and that it was first made a law in the time of Ezra, or a short time previous. The passage reads thus: "For it is evident that our Lord hath sprung out of Judah; as to which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priests." The writer's argument assumes that if Moses spake nothing as respects priesthood in

a certain tribe, then a man of that tribe could not be a priest. What more positive implication could we have that the law of the priesthood was all given by Moses, and not by an unknown priestly writer (P) a thousand years after the death of Moses?

The passage cited from Heb. x 28 reads: "A man that hath set at nought Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses." This shows that all the statutes with the death penalty attached came from Moses. But these are scattered all through the Pentateuch, intermingled with the others too closely to be separated. Immediately after these citations the professor inadvertently gives his whole cause away, by saying: "These passages all represent Moses to be the lawgiver that he appears to be in the narratives of the Pentateuch." But in the narratives of the Pentateuch Moses is represented as receiving from God and giving to the people every single statute of the law, both civil and religious. These passages, then, either misrepresent Moses, or the critical theory of the origin of the law is false, according to Professor Briggs' own representation.

But the professor, not perceiving how completely he had given away his cause, makes the argument that while these passages prove Moses to be the lawgiver that he appears to be in the Pentateuch, they do not imply his authorship of the narratives that contain these laws, any more than Paul's allusions to teachings of Christ found in Luke's Gospel prove that Jesus wrote this Gospel. The conclusion does not follow, because the cases are not parallel. The author of this Gospel starts out with an explicit statement of his reason for writing in which he distinguishes between himself and Jesus. Secondly, no man among those to whom Paul wrote was laboring under the impression that Jesus wrote that Gospel, but all the readers to whom he and the other apostles wrote believed that Moses wrote the law, and they necessarily understood allusions to its authorship accordingly. Finally, when Paul wrote First Corinthians, Luke's Gospel was not yet in existence, and it is absurd to speak of Paul's making allusions to it. It was written several years later, and some of the professor's fellow critics place it at least twenty years later. He knows this perfectly well; but in his eagerness to make a point he ignored it and committed this absurdity. This is more inexcusable than the mistake about Samuel.

I now take up his third argument on these testimonies. He says:

Jesus represents Moses as a prophet who wrote of him (John v. 6); so Philip (John i. 45); Peter (Acts iii. 22-24); Stephen (Acts vii. 37); Paul (Acts xxvi. 22); and in Rom.

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x. 5-19 the apostle refers to the address in Deuteronomy xxx. and the song in Deuteronomy xxxii. These passages maintain that certain *prophecies* came from Moses, but do not maintain that the Pentateuch, as a whole, or the narratives in which these prophecies occur, were written by Moses.

Here, again, the professor takes one of the most explicit of the testimonies of Jesus, and instead of attempting, in a direct manner, to refute the argument that is based upon it, mixes it up with a number of less explicit passages, and tosses them all aside as ascribing only certain *prophecies* to Moses. The passage thus treated can be styled a mere ascription of a certain prophecy to Moses only by ignoring an essential part of it. It reads thus: "For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" "His writings!" What were meant by these? What writings did his hearers necessarily understand him to mean? There is no answer but one; he meant those writings known to his hearers and to us as the writings of Moses. He meant the Pentateuch; and I venture to say that Professor Briggs can not squarely face these words and deny it. He was not ignorant of these words when he wrote his book; why did he not face them squarely, and show, if he could, that they have a meaning consistent with his theory? I should be glad to see him or some of his friends undertake the task even now. I invite them to it.

The true method of treating all the sayings of Jesus and the apostles on this subject is to ascertain from some unambiguous utterances precisely what they taught, and then to interpret their other utterances in harmony with these. This I have endeavored to do; and by this process it is made clear that, when they speak of any law, statute, prediction, or other sayings, of Moses, they contemplate it as a part of the writing then and since ascribed to Moses; i.e., the Pentateuch.

Ten years later than the publication of *Biblical Study*, the work from which I have copied Professor Briggs' arguments thus far, he published a smaller book entitled *Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch*, in which he goes over the same ground again. In it he reproduces, word for word, the three arguments on which I have commented; but he has some additional matter to which, in justice to him, I should perhaps pay attention.

But some one will say, was it not the common opinion in the days of our Lord that Moses wrote the Pentateuch? We answer that, so far as we know, it was the common opinion

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that David wrote the Psalter. As to the Pentateuch, opinion was divided whether it was lost when the temple was destroyed by the king of Babylon, and restored or recast by Ezra or not (p. 28).

What kind of reasoning is this? He answers the question whether the Jews thought that Moses wrote the Pentateuch by stating that, "so far as we know, they thought that David wrote the Psalter." If I were asked, Has it not been the common opinion that Professor Briggs wrote *Biblical Study*, and were to answer, So far as we know, it was once the common opinion that Shakespeare wrote *Mother Goose's Melodies*, the answer would be equally relevant. "So far as we know" is well put in. It means that we know nothing about it. But we do know that no Jew of common sense who ever read the Psalter could have thought that David wrote the whole of it. And we do know, and Professor Briggs knows we know, that the Jews of our Lord's Day believed Moses to be the author of the Pentateuch. Even those who thought that the law was lost for a time and then restored by Ezra, if any of them lived this early, believed that it was originally written by Moses.

Following this on the same page, the professor demands, "Why should we interpret Jesus and his apostles by the opinions of the Jews of his time?" This question is easily answered. If I should step into the professor's classroom some day, and find him quoting to a class the Epistle to the Hebrews, and constantly saying with every quotation, Paul says this, and Paul says that, I might demand of him "Professor, do you not know that all the members of this class have fallen into the mistake that Paul wrote this epistle? And are you not confirming them in this false opinion by quoting it as Paul's?" I suppose he would turn upon me with indignation, and demand, "Why should I be interpreted by the opinions of this class?" Were I bold enough, my reply would be, "Why are you deceiving this class by propagating an opinion that you hold to be false?" This is the attitude in which his argument places Jesus.

He says on the same page:

If we should say that Jesus did not know whether Moses wrote the Pentateuch or not, we would not go beyond his own saying that he knew not the time of his own advent.

This is as much as to say, that because Jesus says of himself that he did not know a certain thing, we may say of him that he did not know another and very different thing. Because Professor Briggs says that he does not know the day and hour when he will die, I may say of

him that he does not know who his grandmother was. I rather think that he did not know anything about logic when he was writing this sentence. All that he ever knew of logic, like Nebuchadnezzar's dream, has passed from him for the time being.

One more quotation, taken from page 29, will bring us to the end of the professor's strange series of arguments, or, rather, of statements:

If, on the other hand, any one should say, Jesus must have known all things, and he ought not to have used language that might deceive men, we respond, that his language does not deceive men. Literally usage in all ages and in the Bible itself shows that it is equally truth and good language for the critics and the anti-critics. The question is, Shall we interpret the language of Jesus by the opinions of his contemporaries? This we deny. Jesus was not obliged to correct all the errors of his contemporaries. He did not correct their false views of science. He was the great Physician, but he did not teach medicine. He was greater than Solomon, and yet he declined to decide questions of civil law and politics. He never rebuked slavery. Is he responsible for slavery on that account? The Southern slaveholders used to say so. But even they are now convinced of their error.

Let us take up this string of assertions, and see what is in them. First, "His language does not deceive men." True, if Moses "gave the law," and if the books of the Pentateuch were "his writings," as Jesus positively affirms; but false if these writings, as Professor Briggs teaches, were written several centuries after Moses died. Second, "Jesus was not obliged to correct all the errors of his contemporaries." But nobody ever said that he was. We only say that he did not and would not affirm as truths any of their errors. Third, "He did not correct any of their false views of science." Of course not; but if he had affirmed any of them, as he affirmed their view of the authorship of the Pentateuch, we should never have heard the last of it from the lips of infidels; and Professor Briggs would have been unable to defend him. Fourth, "He was a great Physician, but he did not teach medicine." True; but suppose he had taught the false medical notions of his day, what would all of our M. D.'s of the present day have to say? Suppose he had taught what some people now call Christian Science! Fifth, "He declined to decide questions of civil law and politics." Yes; but suppose he had decided them. Suppose he had decided in favor of free silver at the ratio of

16 to 1; what would the gold-bugs have to say? And what a plank his decision would have been in the Democratic platform! Sixth, "He never rebuked slavery. Is he responsible for slavery on that account?" Of course not; and the Southern slaveholders never said he was. They only said what Professor Briggs says, that he never rebuked it. But suppose he had said that slavery was right, just as he said that Moses gave the law; what then? How then could Professor Briggs have said that slavery was wrong? And how can he now say that Moses did not give the law? He could have said the former only by denying the authority of Jesus, and this is the only way in which he can say the latter.

5. Did the Apostles Affirm? We have seen, in the preceding section, that Jesus our Lord most positively and explicitly affirmed the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. For proof of the fact that Moses was its author we need to go no further, for with believers in Christ no other proof can make stronger an explicit assertion by him. But lest, in the mind of some reader, the explicitness of his affirmations has not been made perfectly clear, we proceed to show how his apostles expressed themselves, and to show in this way both what they were led by the Holy Spirit to say, and how they understood the utterances on this subject of their divine Master. I am aware that with some persons who claim to attach full credit to the utterances of Christ, the testimony on such a question given by the apostles has little or no weight. The cry "Back to Christ," which has been of late shouted so vociferously, is by some, who shout it the loudest, meant not only for the disregard of all authority this side of the New Testament, but of apostolic authority as well. It means that nothing in the New Testament is to be regarded by them as authoritative except the personal utterances of Jesus himself. It means that even these are not to be regarded as authority until the reports of them in our Gospels pass through the crucible of "modern criticism," to determine whether they have been faithfully delivered. But this professed exaltation of Christ is in reality a disparagement of him; for it is his own authority which affirms the authority of his apostles, promising them infallible guidance, and saying to them, "He that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." On this point I am glad to quote again an utterance by Professor Briggs, who says: "The authority of Jesus Christ to all who know him to be their divine Saviour, outweighs all other authority whatever. A Christian man must follow his teachings in all things as the guide into all truth. The authority of Jesus Christ is involved in that of the apostles." No man who accepts this dictum can think of making the distinction of which we speak; and no

man who credits what Jesus says about the inspiration of the apostles, or regards what they say of their own inspiration as anything more than idle boasting, can call this dictum in question. We proceed, then, to cite the testimony of the apostles with full confidence that it will be implicitly credited by all but rationalists.

The apostle Peter shall be our first witness. In his second recorded sermon, he says: "Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul, which shall not hearken to that Prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people." This is a free extract from Deuteronomy (xviii. 15-19); and Peter testifies that it was spoken by Moses. It is part of one of the speeches ascribed to Moses in that book. It is conceded that Peter's hearers credited the whole speech and the whole Book of Deuteronomy as having come from Moses; and as Peter uses the passage to show them that Moses predicted the coming of Jesus, his argument was both fallacious in itself, and deceptive to his hearers, if the book had any other origin. No ingenuity can set aside this conclusion or destroy the force of it.

Our next witness is the apostle John. In the first chapter of his Gospel, after setting forth the pre-existence and the advent of Jesus, and quoting a brief testimonial from John the Baptist, he says: "The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Here is the same testimony given by Jesus himself in a slightly different form. It is a positive affirmation that the law was given by Moses; and the person of Moses as the giver of the law is put in antithesis with the person of Christ as the bestower of grace and truth. Notice, further, it is not some particular law or statute that is spoken of, but "the law"—an expression which always in the speech of the Jews meant the work which we call the Pentateuch. John, then, was mistaken, and he misleads the readers of his Gospel, whether Jews or Gentiles, if the Pentateuch did not come from the hand of Moses.

The testimony of Paul is equally explicit. I shall use only one testimonial from him. In contrasting the righteousness of the law with that obtained through faith in Christ, he says: "For Moses writeth that the man that doeth the righteousness which is of the law shall live thereby." Here Moses is represented as the writer; and what he is said to have written is not some particular sentence; for the words Paul uses are not found in the Pentateuch, but they set forth the substance of what Moses taught in reference to righteousness and the life which it

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secures. It is, then, an assertion that the law in general was written by Moses, and, in arguing thus to Jewish readers whom he had especially in mind, Paul must be understood as using the term in the sense ascribed to it by the Jews. It is an assertion that Moses was the writer of the law, as explicit as the assertion by John that Moses gave the law.

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who, I confidently believe, after having studied all the arguments to the contrary, was Paul, makes a greater number of assertions of the Mosaic authorship than any other New Testament writer, and with those who believe that this epistle had an inspired source, the authority of its author is not inferior to that of Peter and John. But if any question can be settled by the authority of inspired apostles, this one is already settled by the statements of Peter, John and Paul.

CONCLUSION

In drawing this discussion to a close, it seems proper to state, in a summary form, what the author seems to himself to have accomplished.

After stating in the introduction the position of the parties to the discussion, and the exact issue between them, we have taken up, one by one, all of the evidences, from whatever source derived, which have been relied upon by the friends of the analytical theory as decisive proof of the late date which they assign to the Book of Deuteronomy, and have carefully considered their merits. We have presented these evidences in the words of such scholars as have set them forth in their most convincing forms. We have not knowingly failed to present the arguments by which these evidences are enforced, in their full strength. We have aimed to look at them from every point of view. We have dealt with them as an antagonist, but not, as the author knows himself, with the desire or the willingness to take any unfair advantage of them. The subject has been on the author's mind as a subject of serious thought, and during long periods a subject of absorbing thought, for more than forty years. Nothing of special importance that has been written on either side in that time has escaped his notice. He considers himself, therefore, competent to express a judgment on the course of the argumentation, and he can not feel that he is egotistic in expressing the conviction that he has refuted in Part First of this work all of the arguments supposed to be decisive in support of the so-called critical theory of Deuteronomy. That the final decision of believing scholars will be against that theory he can not doubt.

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On the other hand, while the array of evidence in proof of the Mosaic authorship which has been presented, is not exhaustive, the author feels thoroughly convinced of its conclusiveness; and he will hereafter, as heretofore, implicitly trust the representation which the book makes of itself, and which is made of it by our Lord and his inspired apostles. I can afford to believe what the apostles believed, what Jesus believed, and be satisfied. Humbly trusting that this product of my profoundest study and my maturest years may be blessed of God to help my readers into the same satisfaction, I now, with a sigh of relief from a severe and long-continued mental strain, commit my work to the fate which the Disposer of all things has prepared for it.

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