

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_expository-times\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php)

pdfs are named: [Volume]\_[Issue]\_[1<sup>st</sup> page of article].pdf

into the background. Our creative instincts and desires are subject to fluctuation, and the light of pure romance NEVER burns steadily throughout life. It is in such periods that husbands and wives have to learn to fall back on community of interest, and must develop that solid friendship which has to be the backbone of any lasting marriage. Good lovers have to learn to be good friends. Those who have had intense joy in each other have to learn also to give much to each other, and at times to serve rather than merely enjoy. What was at first a fellowship of a very sacred, private, and exclusive kind must broaden till it becomes a fellowship in facing the whole of life. Otherwise marriage would be a poor and narrowing affair.

And then for those who have been learning loyalty and sympathy in a cooler atmosphere romance will return. The delusion that it belongs only to the first few years of marriage is perhaps the most mischievous one now abroad in the world. It is no such fleeting and capricious power. It returns; and it returns with new power. There is, in fact, an intimacy of communion and a deep joy in the union which marriage means which is possible only to those who are far on in their journey.

To-day a very great many couples miss that consummation in marriage; and they miss it because having entered on marriage either in ignorance or with false anticipations, they allow themselves to be defeated by the problems and strains which are really inherent in the married state.

It may well be said that no amount of mere talking or writing can give people the moral purpose and the constancy of will which alone will carry them through. But though that is true, it is also true that people who know beforehand what they must expect, and who therefore have a chance to prepare themselves for the future, have at least a greatly heightened chance of attaining to success.

The knowledge on which success in marriage may

be based is in the possession of the human race. But we have done sadly little in making it available in time for each generation as it presses on into life.

The Divine intention for men and women is NOT beyond realization by quite ordinary people, but it is essential that life in this respect should be based on knowledge and not on sentimental delusions.

There is a final word which Christ would assuredly have to say to all who enter on marriage. He would say to them that without Divine help in this, as in every other department of life, we 'can do nothing.' He would insist that life on a godless foundation is always life tending towards ruin. He would say that to look to God for His blessing and His guidance is the first essential of all real success in life's greater ventures. Experience constantly endorses this word. The people who fail in marriage are very often just people who are failing in life; and they are failing in life because their spiritual natures are starved. Having found nothing great enough in life to satisfy their Divine natures—having, that is to say, turned from the only communion which could possibly fill them with deep content—they are profoundly unhappy. They may turn to their wives or their husbands, hoping to have their malady cured. But that malady no one can cure for another. Two godless, and therefore unhappy people in one house cannot save each other. Rather because each is inwardly starved and restless they are likely to 'get on each other's nerves' and to blame each other for a weariness which is, in truth, only the result of neglecting God.

The deepest, truest thing which can be said about the secret of success in marriage, is the same thing that has to be said about the secret of success in life. And that secret is that only those who by contact with God have been delivered from self, and released from the small and stuffy house of self-centred living, are able to find life in any great and truly happy sense.

---

## The Purpose of Deuteronomy, Chapter 2.

BY PROFESSOR ADAM C. WELCH, D.D., NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

MODERN commentators, such as Hempel and Steuernagel, differ greatly in their treatment of this chapter. But they all agree in denying its unity and in questioning whether the Decalogue formed an original part of it. Their decision as to

the verses which they refer to the original, and those which they count secondary, is largely determined by their respective theories on the function these early chapters were intended to fulfil in connexion with the Code of chs. 12-26 to which they have been

prefaced. I suggest that there is need to try a new method of approach to the whole question. And that is to take a section like ch. 5 by itself, and seek to discover whether it shows any purpose in its author. Studied in isolation, it may show itself to be a unity, and to reveal a definite aim.

Only after such careful examination of each section will it be possible to arrive at any clear idea of their relation to each other and to the Code, before which they have been placed.

My contention is that 5<sup>2-33</sup> (possibly also 6<sup>1</sup>) is a unity, written to convey a clear judgment on a large issue in Hebrew religion.<sup>1</sup> The writer cast his teaching into the form of a record of certain events which took place at Horeb at the time of the giving of the Law. When he says in v.<sup>3</sup> that Yahweh made a covenant there, not with the fathers, but with us, even all of us, here, alive this day, he is emphasizing that he wishes to refer to an earlier time than that in which the Deuteronomic law was delivered, and to a different place from the east of Jordan. He is not merely differing from 2<sup>14f.</sup>, but he is deliberately differing. He wishes it to be recognized that what he has to say deals with the time when Israel received the first revelation of its law. The way in which he differs points to the chapter having been written after the Code was collected, and even after it had been provided with some introduction.

He declares then that at Horeb Yahweh, speaking from the midst of the fire, revealed the Decalogue directly to the people. The terms of the Decalogue are the *d'bhārīm* or 'words,' not 'statutes' and 'judgments': they are final in their content—Yahweh added no more; they are also immutable—Yahweh wrote them on two tables of stone (v.<sup>22</sup>). They are also intended for Israel in all conditions and at all periods. If the people observe them faithfully, it will be well with them and with their children for ever (v.<sup>20</sup>). In connexion with these

<sup>1</sup> The one exception is v.<sup>5</sup>. As it stands, this forms a long parenthesis, and the Hebrew never liked parentheses. Some one, rather pedantically, took offence at the statement in v.<sup>4</sup> that Yahweh spoke 'face to face' to the nation, a privilege which he found elsewhere reserved to Moses. He therefore thrust in a verse which anticipates what follows in v.<sup>27</sup>. It agrees with that verse in making Moses the intermediary between Yahweh and the people; but, by introducing the statement here, misses the point which the original writer desired to make, viz., that Moses only became such an intermediary because the people were unable to bear the direct revelation from Yahweh.

laws, there is no reference to the land which the people are about to enter.

If Yahweh confined Himself to the Decalogue in His revelation of His will to the people, it was because they were unable to bear more. They begged for one who should stand between them and their God, because they could not bear the strain which such a revelation implied. And it is significant that, so far from any blame being attached to them for their attitude, they are commended for the request, and are bidden see in Moses the divinely appointed intermediary between them and their God. The passage has an obvious connexion with 18<sup>9ff.</sup>, where the nation is forbidden to have anything to do with soothsayers of all kinds, because Yahweh has sent and will send continually men belonging to its own faith who will meet this need. The revelation which began at Horeb will never cease. For the prophet (*'ish Elohīm*, 'the man of God') will never fail in Israel. And his task is to continue the revelation which thus came to the people, to see that it is preserved in its original purity, and to decide upon its application. But Israel, which was chosen to become the recipient of a Divine revelation, shall never fail to receive it.

Yet the Decalogue, which had been thus solemnly commanded, was obviously quite unfitted to form the basis of a positive religion. Its purely negative character was enough to make this clear. In it the people were ordered jealously to reserve their worship to Yahweh alone, and in connexion with this worship were forbidden to employ any graven image. But they were not told how they ought to worship Him. The Sabbath law stopped short at forbidding all work on that day, but did not say how men must fill its empty hours. The moral laws concerned themselves merely with the vices which must be avoided. Even the most positive of these laws, which commanded honour to parents, did no more than preserve the family life. In preserving this, it formed the basis on which all further co-operation of a larger kind could be based. But it also needed supplement for a religion which was to guide a nation.

The ten words supply the framework or the necessary conditions within which a positive religion can develop: they do not supply the content of such a religion. They warn men against such things as would make impossible an ethical religion like that of Mosaism, and would prevent it from finding foothold and continuance in the nation. But, having done this, they do no more. For all the positive content of Israel's

religion Moses must still provide. Accordingly (v.<sup>31</sup>), he receives from Yahweh full instruction on the Law, the statutes and the judgments.<sup>1</sup> This law contains what is wanting in the ten words, the positive elements which make up the religion of the nation. These appear in their two leading forms, the *huggim* or 'statutes,' which guide its cult, and the *mishpātim* or 'judgments,' which determine its social conduct. And these together adequately describe the contents of the Code (chs. 12-16), in which the life of old Israel is regulated according to the principles of its religion. There the people's worship, in sacrifice and festival, in the place where it is offered and the forms by which it is conducted, as well as their social life in its organization under judge and king, in its attitude towards the poor and in its marriage customs, is all to be their own. And it is to be their own, because it is all fulfilled with the peculiar character of their religion.

Here, accordingly, there is mention of the land to which the people are going (vv.<sup>31, 33</sup>). Previously there was nothing said about the land, because the Decalogue was valid for all time and every condition. But the statutes and judgments are designed for Palestine, and are framed to meet the needs and the dangers of the new conditions on which the people are entering. The distinctive life which characterizes Israel has come to them through no mere accident of their history, but is the embodiment of the Divine will to them. And on their loyal maintenance of it depends their future as a people.

The chapter is a unity, and the historical form into which it has been cast is no more than a form. In reality it is an effort to answer certain large questions about the national religion. Did the revelation at Horeb cease then, or does Israel live under a continuous revelation from its God? If the revelation is constant, and if it comes through prophets, are there any limits set to the change these prophets are at liberty to make? And is there a norm which can determine the legitimacy of any such changes? The actual religion practised in Canaan is not the religion practised by the fathers at Horeb. If this had been the case, there would have been no reason for Moses issuing a new law before the entry into the land. The writer is thinking out for his people the relation between

these two situations. The religion may not depart from its basis, as an ethical religion, in the ten words.

Clearly, then, the author had the two documents before him, the Code with its statutes and judgments and the Decalogue, for he was seeking to define the relation between them. That makes the chapter comparatively late. But it also shows that the document did not originally stand in the connexion in which it now appears. V.<sup>1</sup>, which reads: 'Moses called unto all Israel and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day,' plainly forms an unsuitable preliminary to this far-reaching discussion of the relation between Code and Decalogue. The verse is an effort to fit the chapter into a new connexion. It is possible, on the other hand, that 6<sup>1</sup> was the original conclusion. For the discussion of the relation between Code and Decalogue might naturally end with the statement: 'This then is the commandment, viz. the statutes and judgements which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it.' In that case ch. 5 may have once formed an introduction to the Code which followed on here. On the other hand, the similarity of 6<sup>1</sup> to 5<sup>1</sup> raises the suspicion that it also is an addition of the editor who was finding a place for a very significant discussion. Then the chapter may once have been an independent document. And the fact that its writer speaks of Code and Decalogue as well-known and recognized guides for his people's religion, and speaks of their relation to one another, suggests at least that he was dealing with something other than an introduction. To determine the question, or at least to hope for an answer, it would be necessary to go wider, to examine other similar chapters and discover their character, and not to decide from one document alone. The difficult question of these preliminary chapters is far too involved and interlocked to admit of a ready answer on a narrow basis. It must remain open whether we have not before us a quantity of religious material, which gathered round the central Code and from which the men to whom we owe the Book in its present form made a selection and preserved it in the shape of introduction. Certainly some of the material which is added at the close points in this direction.

At least it seems certain that, for whatever purpose the chapter was written or whatever place it was intended to occupy, it was composed after the Code had become the recognized guide for the

<sup>1</sup> Here, with Steuernagel, I follow the LXX and Sam. and omit the 'and' before the Statutes (cf. 6<sup>1</sup>). We have not to deal with three magnitudes, law, statutes, judgments; we have only one, a law which consists of statutes and judgments.

nation's life. The questions with which it deals are such as spring up later in every faith. But further it reveals interesting points of contact with the prophetic teaching. The place the writer gives to prophecy and the way in which he regards it as inevitable in Israel, because Israel is in intimate relation to a self-revealing God, are the convictions of Amos. He could say that Yahweh was not content to give Israel a country: He gave it also prophets to let them know their task there (2<sup>9th</sup>). In his judgment the prophet could no more hold his peace when Yahweh had spoken than a man could keep his nerves from twittering at a lion's roar (3<sup>8</sup>). And he bade the priest at Bethel recognize that it was hopeless to stop prophecy in Israel by police regulations. For, when Yahweh had a message for Israel, he would find a man to utter it. When He had no one else to send, He sent me. And every one knows where I spring from (7<sup>14</sup>).

Again, it was Amos who first made the distinction between the religion or morality which makes civilization possible, and the specific religion which Israel practised because it was chosen by Yahweh, and who made both the expression of the revealed will of God. For he saw Yahweh about to judge the nations as well as Israel, and having the right to call both to account. There was a relation of Yahweh to His world which was antecedent to the relation of Israel to Him. It was a relation which involved revelation and therefore judgment. To the writer of this chapter there is a Decalogue which is for all time and all conditions, and there is a religion which makes Israel's glory and life.

To find the author making such use of Amos' ideas on religion naturally raises the question whether there is any other evidence of the source from which the chapter has come. And the first is supplied by the language and by the historical material which has been drawn upon. Here one cannot do better than quote the judgment of Steuernagel in the second edition of his commentary, p. 72; 'In his representation of the situation D<sup>2b</sup> (the author to whom Steuernagel ascribes the framework of the Decalogue) depends on the Elohist account in Ex 19; 20<sup>18-21</sup>; 24<sup>1</sup>, though he leaves certain unessential features aside, while on the other hand he develops in his parenthetic interest the ideas brought forward by E.' The writer uses historical material from N. Israelite sources, and has been profoundly influenced by a N. Israelite prophet.

The document also contains a version of the Decalogue, which, while it agrees in essentials with

that in Exodus, differs in several minor details. The two derive from a common original, but have been modified somewhere by men who worked independently. Now it is impossible to enter fully here into the debate about the date of the source of the Ten Commandments. But one broad fact stares every student in the face, and demands explanation. How did the Hebrew law come to contain two separate and different versions of one of the fundamental documents of its religion? The natural explanation is that which has accounted for the duplicate narratives in Genesis, which in spite of their difference show evidence of being derived from a common tradition. The narratives of J and E were blended into a single history: the early laws of Judah and Israel were left here in their original integrity.

The gravest difficulty which stands in the way of accepting the Deuteronomic Decalogue as the N. Israelite version is that it contains a law which forbids the use of images. Those who relegate this Decalogue to a post-Exilic date can point to the fact that the Northern kingdom was identified from its beginning with the worship of Jeroboam's golden calves. They ignore, however, that the only voice in the nation, which was raised against this form of worship, was that of Hosea, the leading prophet of the North. It is acknowledged that the same prophet objected to the use of the name Baal for Yahweh, and that his protest was so successful as to lead to the disappearance of names like Ishbaal. His vigorous polemic against the calf-worship is the evidence of a deep-rooted objection to the practice, which found its clearest expression in him. The original form of the first law in the Decalogue may have been content to demand that Israel must reserve its entire allegiance to Yahweh—that is the primary demand in the Code. The law against the use of images will then be an addition directed against this special abuse. For such a development to be made in the original command at the bidding of the prophets will obviously be in entire agreement with the function and authority this chapter gives to the prophets.

Another evidence of the same successful protest is to be found in the story of the erection of the golden calf at Horeb. There the use of such emblems for worship is condemned from the very beginning, precisely as the practice of human sacrifice is repudiated in the great account of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. To me it is merely impossible to believe that an account which made Aaron the aider and abettor of the nation in such a deed could ever have been written in Jerusalem

after the Exile, or, if it had been written, would ever have been admitted into the sacred literature. The temple authorities, who proudly boasted of a priesthood which derived from Aaron, would no more have written such an account than the Roman Catholic hierarchy, who derived their primacy from St. Peter, would have written an account which related the apostle's apostasy after his ordination. The story of the golden calf must date earlier than the Exile. It must even have been admitted into the combined records of the origins of Israel, J E, before the Return. It is a product of the same protest against the use of images, and its literary affinities are all with E.

The chapter has preserved for us the thought of a man who believed that his religion took its

origin in a direct revelation from God at Horeb, but who also knew that it had actually received the positive content of its sacrifices and all its institutions on its settlement in Palestine. He believed that the broad lines of this positive religion, by which he and his people lived, were laid down by Moses on the east of Jordan. When he tried to define the relation between these two events, he was inevitably driven to recognize that the revelation to Israel was progressive. And he believed that the medium of this continuous revelation was the prophetic succession. His doctrine of prophecy has thus certain affinities with the Christian doctrine of the Spirit in the Church. And, as the Code about which he wrote derives from N. Israel, so he belongs to the same kingdom.

---

## Literature.

### JEREMIAH.

MR. RAYMOND CALKINS has furnished us with what he believes, rightly enough, to be a desideratum by presenting an exposition of the Book of *Jeremiah the Prophet*, arranged, so far as possible, in chronological order (Macmillan; 10s. 6d. net). His further aim is to rescue the personality and work of Jeremiah from the obscurity in which the confusion of the traditional order of the book has unfortunately buried them. Though frankly admitting that 'chronology is difficult and always problematical in following the course of Jeremiah's career' (p. 122), he can fairly claim to have succeeded in both the tasks he set himself. He gives us a vivid picture of the man, his times, his struggles with himself, his people, and his God, his seeming failure, and his triumphant vindication at the bar of history. His debt to Peake, Skinner, and George Adam Smith, which is obvious throughout the discussion and which he fully acknowledges, in no way lessens the value of his book, as he has made the material his own; and his discussions of the Confessions of Jeremiah, of his attitude to the Deuteronomic Reform, and of the quality of his patriotism, are not only full of good sense and good judgment, but have their value—especially the discussion of patriotism—for the problems which confront us to-day. Only a sympathetic student of Jeremiah could have given us this book.

It is the more to be regretted that the book is

marred by occasional blemishes. Apart from six or seven slips in a page of bibliography, Gillies (on Jeremiah) is spelt throughout the book as Gilles, Qina appears twice as Quina (pp. 36, 70), Gedaliah as Gedeliah (p. 334), Pashhur as Pashhuh (p. 279), A. B. Davidson is twice referred to as A. B. Bruce (pp. 43, 46), and twice the fall of Nineveh is assigned to 607 B.C., instead of, as we now know, 612 (pp. 22, 166). On p. 27 we read, 'Zedekiah was made king after the brief interregnum of Jehoiakim who, after being king for three months, had his eyes put out by the Babylonians, etc.; but it was Jehoiachin, not Jehoiakim (as Mr. Calkins correctly notes elsewhere, p. 365), who reigned for three months, and it was Zedekiah and not Jehoiachin who was blinded by the Babylonians. In certain places Mr. Calkins is too positive, as when he tells us that Jeremiah, 'like Jesus, was thirty years old' when he began his ministry (p. 75), and more particularly, when he tells us twice (pp. 8, 87 f.) that the prophetic party purposely hid Deuteronomy in the Temple, 'so as to give it added authority.' Many scholars would demur to this statement, and Mr. Calkins would have been better advised to adopt Skinner's view to which he alludes, and which, while offending no prejudice, is intrinsically more reasonable. In the bibliography we miss a reference to Professor Welch's fine study of Jeremiah, from which Mr. Calkin's own study would have profited. But, apart from these strictures, it may justly be said that Mr. Calkins has given us a thoroughly