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## The Purpose of Deuteronomy, Chapter vi.

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

APART from two minor additions, this chapter is a unity, dealing with a single theme. The two additions are v.<sup>14</sup> and vv.<sup>16f.</sup>, both of which rouse suspicion through using the 2nd plur. form of address in a 2nd sing. section. In each case the contents confirm the suspicion. Thus, while v.<sup>13</sup> bids the people fear and serve Yahweh and use no other name in their solemn oaths, v.<sup>14</sup> forbids them to follow strange gods borrowed from their heathen neighbours. It is, of course, true that this forms a just conclusion from the previous command, and one which refers it to their situation. But it is also true that, by selecting one specific duty, and especially by turning it into a negative form, the verse unduly limits the scope of the original precept. The command to love and serve Yahweh sounds the large, positive note which is heard in v.<sup>7</sup>, where the people are reminded that their whole life must be informed with a reverent love to their God. Both emphasize that the Jewish faith concerns the whole of conduct: v.<sup>14</sup> merely forbids apostasy.

Vv.<sup>16f.</sup>, again, warn the people against tempting Yahweh as they had done at Massah, and so introduce a reference to the incident mentioned at Ex 17<sup>2-7</sup>. But not only do the verses interrupt the connexion by using this reference: the illustration to which they refer is not appropriate to the situation. For the preceding vv.<sup>10-12</sup> have been warning the people against the dangers which attend sudden success. They must be on their guard lest, through inheriting the built towns and dug wells, the planted vineyards and olive groves of Canaan, they be tempted into forgetfulness of the faith which gave the vigour and the unity which were essential for that victory. Now the fretfulness, by which the men tried their God at Massah, was due, not to success or abundance, but to sheer need. What drove men there to complain, so far from being ready-dug wells, was the want of water.

After removing these three verses, however, there is no sufficient reason for regarding vv.<sup>2-26</sup> as anything except the work of one mind. Yet again Steuernagel and Hempel, who have divided chapter 5, divide this also, assigning vv.<sup>20-26</sup> to a later date and a different author.<sup>1</sup> Their chief reason is that these verses imply the existence of the Code, while the earlier verses make no reference

<sup>1</sup> This is apart from some minor sentences which may here be ignored.

to it as already in existence. So far as concerns vv.<sup>20-26</sup>, the statement is obviously true. The little section speaks about *hūqqim* and *mishpatim*, which are the terms used to describe the Code in chapter 5. Besides, the direction given is only conceivable if such a Code existed. It would not be possible for fathers to instruct their children in the meaning of certain practices of the common faith, unless the boys were witnessing the acts and the rituals, in the meaning of which they were to be instructed. One may even go further and say that the section implies not merely the existence of a series of regulations, but the existence of the actual institutions and rituals which the Code was framed to set up and to regulate. The boys are to be instructed in the purpose of certain practices which they were witnessing.

But, while the existence of the Code is not so definitely stated in the earlier sections of the chapter, it is quite as clearly implied there. Thus in vv.<sup>10f.</sup> the writer warns his people against the dangers which attend success and which arise from the intoxication of the possession of the good things which are to become theirs. That warning was plainly addressed to a later generation. The man was speaking to men of a later time who had inherited the advantages which had come from their fathers' devotion to the national cause through the inspiration of their religion. He knew how easy it is to inherit the outward benefits and to let slip the fine qualities which won these outward goods. The situation he envisages is a familiar phenomenon in connexion with every strong ethical impulse or religious movement which has laid hold on a community. Indeed, it is not confined to the case of religion. Is there not a Yorkshire proverb which allows three or four generations from clogs to clogs, and so grimly acknowledges the ease with which men inherit a good business and a new status, but fail to inherit the enterprise and the industry which went to the winning of these? The writer has seen the danger which has threatened the distinctive character of his own people through this constant factor in life. But to a man who wrote thus the faith, which gave the people this distinctive character and which had been the nerve of the first generation's success, was already known. It already existed, and he was jealously insisting that it must not be lost.

Accordingly, there is a close relation between vv.<sup>10ff.</sup> and vv.<sup>20ff.</sup>, a relation which Steuernagel and Hempel have failed to recognize, because they have not grasped the full import of the earlier section. There is only one means of bridging the gap between the generations, only one means of making sure that the finest possession of one generation shall pass into the possession of those who inherit its other gains. That is education. Therefore, the writer insists, it is the task of the elders to transmit their best possession to their children. Their best possession is the knowledge of their distinctive Jewish faith. Hence he bids the fathers instruct their sons in the *hūqqim* and *mishpatim* which constitute that faith. The fathers already know these. But in both passages the content of this specific faith in its distinctiveness and its power is already recognized.

Again, the earlier vv.<sup>4-9</sup>, which contain the famous *Sh'ma*, are intended to develop two leading ideas. The one is that Yahweh, the God of Israel, is one in the sense that He is unique, the only God for the nation. The other is that the right religious attitude of every true Israelite is reverent love. But these two large utterances take for granted a great deal. Thus they take for granted that the people know who Yahweh is and what there is in His character, and especially in His relation to them, which makes Him unique to them. The passage assumes that every Israelite knows the record of the deliverance from Egypt and the covenant at Horeb which constitute the basis of their national faith. So entirely does the writer take this knowledge for granted that he does not preface the *Sh'ma* even with the brief introduction which appears before the commands of the Decalogue in v.<sup>6</sup>: 'I am Yahweh thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, the house of slaves.' He is basing upon the admitted foundations of the faith and does not find it necessary to repeat them.

In the same way he urges the people to cherish a reverent love to their God and to bring this right temper into association with all their life, so that everything in their life may be controlled by its influence. All they do is to be hallowed to finer issues by the sense that it can become a loving service of their God. But the man who could write in such terms was already conscious that his religion concerned itself with a man's going in and going out, his lying down and rising up. He could and did take it for granted that his people realized that the Yahweh faith had to do with the whole of a man's conduct at home and abroad. Only the way

in which men fulfilled these constant demands of their religion could be and ought to be fulfilled with the temper of reverent love to Him who exacted them all. Without this their obedience would lose its full content to themselves and to Yahweh, to whom it was rendered.

What the writer was pressing on the attention of his people can be well recognized from an example taken from the Code itself. Chapter 15<sup>12ff.</sup> orders a master to set free his Hebrew slave in the seventh year, and requires that at the time of the emancipation he shall liberally supply the newly freed with an equipment which shall enable the man to face his independent life and make a hopeful fresh start. Not content with this, the law continues that the master must do this in no grudging spirit. Let him remember that he owes to the Divine grace the fact of his own freedom: thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt and the Lord thy God redeemed thee. His religion is to be of such a quality that it goes beyond a mere sour obedience to the letter of the law. But such a demand is only made from men who know the letter of the law.

That is the attitude of the writer of vv.<sup>4ff.</sup>, Israel has its own way of life determined by its Divine law. The man does not repeat the content of this law in precept and ordinance, any more than he halted to say why Yahweh had the right to the entire allegiance of His people. He insisted on the gracious temper which could make beautiful and worthy all the obedience exacted from Israel. And this temper sprang from a full understanding of the religion which required the obedience, for its fundamental principle was loving gratitude to Yahweh in the recognition of His grace to Israel. But a man who wrote in these terms had behind him the thought of a religion which, because it demanded so much, could easily be made into a heavy yoke instead of being construed as a means by which gratitude was manifested. The attitude of the writer takes the knowledge of the Code for granted, as it takes a knowledge of Israel's relation to Yahweh for granted.

It is natural that he, who has been requiring love to God, should continue in v.<sup>13</sup> by speaking in the same breath of the fear of God. The one does not at all exclude the other, for the fear of Yahweh is simply the practical side of his religion. It means the avoidance of everything which might kindle the Divine anger, and the constant service of the Divine will. It is indeed the religion which concerns itself with a man's conduct at home and abroad (v.<sup>7</sup>). And this in all its practical demands and in its wide reach of restraint and constraint is to be

informed with the love of God. Vv.7.<sup>13</sup> are engaged on the same theme.

The author sees the entire life of his nation to rest on the unique character of the God who claims the entire devotion to Israel. All who know what He has been to them must give Him reverent love. But Israel's life is concerned with the way men conduct their affairs at home and abroad, and in every detail they ought to serve and fear their God there. But this life can only be rightly and worthily carried on, when all its obedience is seen to be love's claim on a grateful heart. Whenever men forget God, their whole way of life, even in the land of their God's gift, drops to a lower level. It becomes a wallowing in the good things of Canaan. The people must, accordingly, be on their guard against the dangers of success with its attendant self-reliance. To prevent such a weakening of the national fibre, the elders must make it their business to help their children to recognize their spiritual as well as their physical heritage. The younger generation must be trained to see that Israel's way of life derives directly from the character of Him whom they worship. Its passover festival is a reminder of what Yahweh did for His people at the Exodus. Its law-courts are conducted after the principles of a Divine righteousness. Its king is one who rules as the servant of Yahweh, and who submits to Him while he governs others. All the distinctive features of the national life into which the boy grows up owe their origin to convictions which ultimately derive from the fact that the God whom the people worship is unique in His nature.

What the writer of the chapter has to say is contained in his opening sentences: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is unique, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. All the positive religion which guides and controls the life of the nation has for its norm the character of Him who has revealed it; and the nation's obedience only remains sweet and wholesome when its motive is grateful love to this God. The writer does not stop to say how men are to learn the character of the God they worship, nor how they become acquainted with the terms of the obedience which He demands. He takes it for granted that both are known, since he expects the parents to be able to teach these matters to their sons. The chapter is a unity. Vv.4.<sup>5</sup> give its dominant ideas: the rest is corollary.

There can be no question as to the source from which this has been derived. Its author has been

at school with the two prophets, Amos and Hosea, and has imbibed their teaching. Amos told the men of his time that the root of their sin was that they took possession of the land of the Amorites which Yahweh had given, but stifled the warning voices of the prophets whom He had sent to teach them how they were to live there (2<sup>12</sup>). Hosea declared that, when they came to Baal Peor, they became abominable like the thing they loved (9<sup>10</sup>). They took the corn and the wine of the land into which Yahweh brought them and forgot the Giver (ch. 2). They imagined mischief against Him who had strengthened their arms (7<sup>15</sup>). Steuernagel has pointed out that the idea of love to Yahweh as fundamental in the national religion is unique in the Hexateuch, and has recognized in it the characteristic teaching of Hosea. He might have added that the same prophet lays equal stress on the need for a right knowledge of Yahweh. His complaint against priest and people is that they do not really know their God (4<sup>1-6</sup>). They do not recognize His true nature, and, lacking this, they fail to give Him the grateful love which could not but rise from their acknowledgment of what He is and what He has done for them. Through this failure their national life has lost its distinctive character and sunk to the same level as that of other peoples. Ephraim has become mixed among the nations (7<sup>8</sup>): they are among the nations as a vessel in which there can be no pleasure (8<sup>9</sup>). In their present temper they do not need more or better laws: though Yahweh multiplied His statutes, these would only seem to them idle things (8<sup>12</sup>). They need a radical change of outlook.

The author of this chapter is applying these prophetic ideals to the actual Code by which the people were required to live. Not merely in vv.20-25, but throughout, he has the Code before him. As the author of chap. 5 had Decalogue and Code before him and tried to define the relation between these two, so this writer has the entire religion of his nation in his mind, and insists on its fundamental principles. Because, however, he does not think of Decalogue and Code as separate constituents of this religion, but sees this to be one whole, he is more careless in his language. Chapter 5 distinguishes between the d'bharim of the Decalogue and the huqqim and mishpatim of the positive religion. Chapter 6 speaks of huqqoth and mitzwoth (v.<sup>2</sup>), describes the religion which is taught to the children as made up of 'edôth, huqqim, and mishpatim (v.<sup>20</sup>), but is content to describe the same subject in the same connexion by huqqim (v.<sup>24</sup>). The purpose of the two writers has inevitably influenced their language.

The one, who was making a distinction between two constituents of Israel's religion, needed to choose his terms with care. The other, who was thinking of his faith in its unity, could afford to be more lax in his language.

But all this implies that the chapter, like its predecessor, is later than the Code with the fundamental principles of which it deals. Further, it also derives from North Israel. Not only are the principles which it applies to the Code those of the two prophets of the North. But even the annotator who added in vv.<sup>16f.</sup> the reference to Massah used for the purpose the version of E in Ex 17<sup>2,7</sup> as contrasted with J's account. It is more difficult, however, to determine what may have been the original connexion to which the passage belonged. It certainly forms no part of the surroundings among which it has been placed. Thus v.<sup>2</sup> cannot be read as a continuation of v.<sup>1</sup>. Not only is there the sudden, unaccountable change over from 2nd plur. to 2nd sing. But v.<sup>1</sup> speaks of a commandment, consisting of statutes and judgments: v.<sup>2</sup> speaks of statutes and commandments, and in mentioning statutes makes it feminine, while v.<sup>1</sup>

makes it masculine. It is impossible to believe that the same person wrote those two verses in a continuous sentence. But that leaves v.<sup>2</sup> hanging in the air, a half-sentence, since it begins with 'in order that.' Either it has once been connected with some other passage, or it has been inserted where it stands in order to create a tolerable connexion with what precedes. It were rash, on the basis of these two chapters, to decide where chapter 6 originally appeared. Only it should be added that it has very much the appearance of never having been intended for an introduction to the Code. Its more appropriate place would be at the close of the law, since it does not give the impression of leading up to anything. Or, if it leads up to anything, it is rather to the institution of a system of education, than to a statement of the law. One could conceive of the chapter, even more readily than of chap. 5, having been a piece of religious literature which gathered round the Code, and which proved how that Code had appealed to the religious thought of the prophets, and how these in turn had developed and deepened its teaching.

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## In the Study.

### *Virginitus Puerisque.*

#### Under New Management.

BY THE REVEREND PHILIP E. PEGG, SCARBOROUGH.

'By their fruits ye shall know them.'—Mt 7<sup>20</sup>.

THE other day while I was walking along the street I caught sight of a large notice outside a shop. It said: 'This business is now under entirely new management.' I expect you have seen a notice like that pasted on the windows of a good many shops; sometimes a sweet-shop, sometimes a toy-shop, sometimes a boot-shop, sometimes a grocer's shop. I suppose that almost every kind of shop there is, at some time or other, somewhere, has had that notice: 'Under new management.'

I wonder why the people had put that notice outside the shop. Well, it was the best way of letting people know that a different person was in charge of the business. It wouldn't have been much use, would it? if the owner of the shop

stood outside and, as the people passed, went up to them and said, 'Excuse me—this shop is now under entirely new management.' If he had done that he would soon have had a policeman come and tell him that he was obstructing the traffic—which is the policeman's way of saying 'getting in the way.' But the owner of the shop wasn't as foolish as that. He put the large notice outside and then everybody could see for themselves.

Now I wonder why he wanted the people to know that the shop had a new manager. I suppose it was because the man who had had it before wasn't a very good man. Perhaps his goods hadn't been the right sort—the right quality, grown-up people would say. Or, perhaps, he charged too much. We think that is true of most shops, don't we? At any rate I expect the business hadn't gone very well before—there hadn't been very many customers. People had come perhaps and not been treated very nicely and had gone away and not come any more. The new man wanted them to