

- term is used only here and in 9:26 in Exodus, but is common at the end of Genesis when the family of Jacob takes up residence there. There is also an (unrelated) city of Israel and a district of Israel with the same name.
5. **v. 23 division.** The root *padah*, meaning 'to redeem' (cf. 13:13; a different word is used in 6:6), suggests that the correct translation is 'a redemption' (so AV margin). Some authorities suggest changing the consonants to *p-l-t*, from the root *palah* which means 'to separate', 'distinguish' (this root is used in verse 22, translated 'sever', see Note 3 above). The Septuagint and AV body text follow this approach.
  6. **v. 24 corrupted.** This term, *shachat*, 'be destroyed', 'corrupted', is used four times in the Flood narrative, to describe firstly the corrupt state of the earth and then God's consequent plan to destroy it (Gen. 6:11,12,13,17). It is possible that there is a deliberate echo here.
  7. **v. 28 I will let you go.** The 'I' here is emphatic, as though Pharaoh did not like the idea that God was doing the commanding (see v. 27), and now wanted to emphasise that it was still only down to his own magnanimity in giving permission that the Israelites could go! Moses deliberately picks up on this and throws Pharaoh's 'I' back at him in verse 29 by giving him an 'I' of his own. Moses also mimics Pharaoh's use of the term *raq*, 'but', 'only'. Pharaoh says 'but don't go too far away!'; Moses says 'only don't be deceitful any more!'
  8. **9:3 the hand of the LORD is upon.** Literally, 'the hand of the LORD will strike'. The word 'strike' here, *hoyah*, may be a play on YHWH.
  9. **v. 3 murrain.** A plague (in this case on the cattle). The word, probably coincidentally, has the same consonants as the Hebrew *dabar*, 'word', 'thing'. A parallel Arabic word means 'departure', 'death'. The term is also used to describe the seventh plague (hail), and is translated 'pestilence' (v. 15).
  10. **v. 10 it became a boil.** The connection between Moses sprinkling the ash before Pharaoh and the sudden eruption of boils throughout Egypt is evident in the text. The wording seems to exclude the possibility of a naturalistic explanation that anthrax (perhaps the root cause of the previous plagues) simply spread to humans. Moses sprinkled the dust in Pharaoh's presence so that Pharaoh could see that what transpired was totally miraculous and came because of what Moses did.
  11. **v. 10 beast.** The cattle had already been afflicted in plague 5, but evidently not all have yet died. In fact, the word *behemoth* used here was not used regarding plague 5, so there *may* be a distinction in which types of animal were affected. Animals will be affected again in plague 7, the plague of hail.



## Encounter

Reprinted items from earlier issues, chosen by  
the Publishing Editor

# The Law given through Moses\*

## 16. Prophetic shadows

Islip Collyer

**B**EFORE CONSIDERING the last and most joyous of the feasts under the Law, the Feast of Tabernacles, it seems desirable that we should deal with the solemn event which preceded it, the great Day of Atonement. And before examining this central feature of the Law it seems necessary to have clearly in mind the instructions given from Mount Horeb. We need to remember the basis of the elaborate ritual, for we have definitely come to the great parable

in types, shadows, allegories and ritual prophecy.

If it should happen that any reader of these lines is definitely unbelieving, unwilling to admit even the possibility that there was a deeper meaning in these matters, we may suggest that there is still a reason for reading carefully, for

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surely it is desirable to understand the mentality of men who even in these days retain full faith in the statement that God “at sundry times and in divers manners” spoke through the prophets of Israel (Heb. 1:1). An honest attempt to understand the position of others may lead to the apprehension of things which would never be seen by an uninterested reader. The cumulative force of many discoveries may finally compel a recognition of the fact that the Law given through Moses was not only a wonderful code for the guidance of a people, but that it was still more wonderful as a parable of greater things to come.

IF students are alert, they will see much internal evidence of truth which becomes both interesting and convincing. It is well to take note of these matters as the study proceeds. In a [previous article](#)<sup>1</sup> attention was called to certain matters which illustrate the possibilities of interesting discovery—the frank narration of incidents so unpleasant from the national point of view that the natural desire would be to omit them or to modify them in harmony with national honour. It was pointed out that some of these unpleasant truths were inseparably connected with the giving of the Law and its preservation. There were many incidents which the Jews would not desire to record, far less to invent. Some of them presented the priests in a most unfavourable light, and even Moses does not escape from censure.

Beyond these obvious indications of truth we must take note of the fact that the details of the Law are presented in four different books, and if most of the writing was the fabrication of a later age, as sceptics suggest, the amount of contrivance necessary might well daunt even the most unprincipled of forgers. As a student proceeds with his investigation, he may well ask the question, For what conceivable object could such a forgery be produced, even if it were possible to make it and impose it upon the nation?

The book of Exodus gives the details of the sanctuary, other books show the use to which the symbols were put. In one part we are told of an incident which occurred during the march from Egypt, in another we are shown the effect of it. There are elaborate provisions obviously designed for life in the wilderness, and some appropriate modifications when the people were settled in the land. How can anyone suppose that all these matters were cunningly designed centuries later when they were meaningless?

Blunt in his *Undesigned Scriptural Coincidences* mentions one matter which may be taken as a specimen of the kind of internal evidence a student may find, and in stating the argument Blunt put a question which may be applied to many other incidents. In Numbers 7 we are told that on the day that Moses set up the tabernacle the princes of the tribes made an offering of six wagons and twelve oxen, and these were assigned to the Levites for the removal of the tabernacle and its appointments from place to place. Two wagons and four oxen were given to the sons of Gershom and four wagons with eight oxen to the sons of Merari.

No explanation is offered as to why one family should have twice the equipment of the other, but the disparity is explained if we turn three chapters back and make a careful examination of the instructions there given. In Numbers 4:21-33, separated from chapter 7 by many other details, we are told of the respective duties of these two families of the Levites, and then a little calculation will show that the sons of Merari would need twice the number of wagons and oxen for the heavy work assigned to them. Anyone who will take the trouble to read the details of the tabernacle, the outer court, the number of boards, pillars, sockets and so forth, will see the point quite clearly. Blunt asks the question, “Is it a matter of coincidence, or of cunning contrivance, or of truth and only truth?”

IT is difficult to believe that any intelligent reader would attempt to account for these matters either on the ground of coincidence or contrivance. The fitting of many details goes far beyond the possibility of coincidence, and in the time when these books were written, even on the assumption of such a late date as the critics assign to them, we cannot suppose that there was even a reason for contrivance. If therefore sceptical readers will consider some of these matters with at least a sympathetic readiness to understand the simple faith of those who still believe, it may lead to a realisation of meanings partly revealed and partly concealed, but sufficiently evident for their cumulative force to lend powerful aid to Christian faith.

The first item of ritual prophecy to which we would draw attention has to do with the Law-giver rather than the Law itself. It came at a

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1. [Aug. 2002, p. 291.](#)

significant moment and seems to be the appropriate beginning of a series of types related to each other and pointing forward to matters far greater than anything in the history of the Exodus. When the people of Israel first reached Horeb, and before Moses was called up into the mount, they urgently needed water. They had come through a wilderness, supplies of water were exhausted and they suffered acutely from thirst. We read that the Lord commanded Moses to take the rod wherewith he had smitten the river. "Behold", said God, "I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink" (Ex. 17:6).

It may be assumed that all readers know the meaning the apostle attaches to this episode. He says plainly, "that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4). As with so many other matters in which the writers of the New Testament expound the Old, he goes no further than this plain intimation of the meaning, leaving the readers to work out the details. He does not point out that by Divine authority the rock was smitten, nor does he say anything regarding the rod.

READERS of the Old Testament will assuredly perceive that there is something arresting in the very idea of the rock being smitten. They will remember how often the rock is used as a figure for the God Who guided and sustained the people. It is used by Moses in contrasting the ill-founded hopes of the Gentiles with the sure foundation of the chosen people: "their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges" (Deut. 32:31). In this great song which Moses taught the people, the word 'Rock' is used six times in this figurative sense. We find it in the Psalms and the prophets, with frequent reminders that God was the Rock of Israel.

A comparison between Deuteronomy and Isaiah brings to light an association of ideas which is interesting to the student, though it may not have any force of argument. The Hebrew word *tsur* is said to mean a hard flint-like rock. In Deuteronomy Moses spoke of the work of God "Who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint" (8:15). In Isaiah we have the moving passage beginning with the words, "The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious" (50:5), surely a Messianic prophecy. Then, after words made familiar to everyone by Handel's *Messiah*, the one who is presented as speaking says: "therefore have I set my face like a flint,

and I know that I shall not be ashamed" (v. 7). The word is the same as that used by Moses when he spoke of water being brought forth out of the rock of flint. The rock, as the apostle tells us, was a figure of Christ.

In view of the fact that the word is so often used in this figurative sense, it surely seems significant that the rock should be smitten by Divine command in order that water of life might flow from it—more remarkable still that it should be in the sacred precincts of Horeb, the mount of God. Most significant of all is the command that Moses should use the rod by which he had performed miracles, for that was the serpent-rod, as all readers of Exodus will remember. It was the serpent-rod which smote the river and turned it into blood, just as the serpent or sin power in humanity has so often done in history. In the sacred region of Horeb, by Divine command, the rock with the God of Israel standing on it was smitten by the serpent-rod and life-giving water came from it to save the people.

When a student has seen so far, he will surely have little doubt as to the antitypical meaning. Yet he may not be clear in his mind regarding that other incident recorded in the book of Numbers, when the instruction was to speak to the rock, and when Moses was at fault (Num. 20:1-13). It is well to remember that the record in the book of Numbers relates to a different place nearly a hundred miles from Horeb, a different time, (nearly forty years later), a different word for rock (*sela*, according to Dr Young, from its elevation), different instructions ("speak" to the rock instead of "smite" it), and a different rod (the rod taken from before the Lord). The latter was Aaron's rod that budded, and was kept before the Lord in the most holy place (Num. 17:10).

Finally, we may note the different results, for after the first incident Moses was called up into the mount to receive the Law. After the second incident, while the people of the younger generation went on to enter the land, Moses was not permitted to go with them. We read that he pleaded to be permitted to go over Jordan into the land of Canaan, but his request was refused with the decisive instruction, "speak no more unto Me of this matter" (Deut. 3:26).

WHAT was the offence of Moses that he should so definitely be prevented from crossing the River Jordan into the promised inheritance? The sin—if it could be accounted a sin—seems to have been so slight that students have not been agreed

as to the nature of the error. Some have suggested that it was the use of the severe words, "ye rebels" (Num. 20:10). But, standing with Aaron's rod in his hand, this was surely the appropriate word to use, for when the rod was caused to bud God said that it should be "a token against the rebels" (17:10).

Other students have maintained that the words, "must we fetch you water out of this rock?", implied that Moses and Aaron could perform the miracle by their own strength, and so failed to give God the glory. This may be nearer the truth, and yet it is hardly conceivable that Moses even for a moment could forget that all the great work done through him was the work of God. If he had really tried to claim personal credit for such a wonder it would have been a deadly sin.

But Moses was not deprived of his honour. God still performed wonders through him, and he still had access to God in a manner never vouchsafed to others. He was able to plead with God that he might be permitted to go over Jordan. From the heights of Pisgah God showed him the land, but his request to enter was firmly refused and he was to speak no more of the matter. All the indications seem to be that a slight error, the result of human weakness, had serious consequences against which there could be no appeal.

Was there an element of ritual prophecy in this incident? It was in the purpose of God that Christ should be smitten by the serpent power, just as the rock of flint was smitten by the serpent-rod, that water of life might come to men; but Christ is not to be smitten the second time. Students of prophecy know that when he comes with all power committed into his hands the nations will try to smite him, for we read that there are some who will "make war with the Lamb" (Rev. 17:14). They will make no more impression than the slender almond twig made on the elevated rock, but those who try to wound will not be permitted to enter the Kingdom.

DID Moses, by failing to remember the details of instruction in this matter, become the type of those who will try to smite Christ in the day of his power and elevation? And was the firm refusal to allow him to go over Jordan a necessary completion of the allegory? The time was ripe for the people to go forward and take possession of the Promised Land; the elevated rock was a type of Christ in the day of power; the rod was the symbol of Divine choice and a token against the rebels. Remembering the rock in Horeb, and for the moment forgetting the instruction he had received, Moses smote the rock, just as some leaders of men with the Bible in their possession will try to smite Christ in the day of his power.