

**"CHRIST IS ALL." THE
GOSPEL OF THE
PENTATEUCH. NUMBERS -
DEUTERONOMY**

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HENRY LAW

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THE

GOSPEL OF THE PENTATEUCH.

BY THE

**VERY REVEREND HENRY LAW,
DEAN OF GLOUCESTER.**

NUMBERS—DEUTERONOMY.



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"CHRIST IS ALL"

THE NUMBERED PEOPLE.

"Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of their names, every man by their polls, from twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel." NUMB. 1. 2, 3.

THESE verses bring us to the camp of Israel still circling Sinai's base. Christian thought—waiting for dews of heavenly grace—delights to linger here. Let us observe the people closely. They are snatched by God's hand from tyrannizing foes. A miracle of care supplies their daily wants. A moving pillar guides their way. The law has been repeated to them amid terrific prodigies. Moreover they are fenced around by strict peculiarities of social custom and of typical worship. Their contact with the world is broken. They move amidst the nations of the earth, as a stream flowing through the ocean's bed, unmingling with contiguous waves. God near, with sheltering arms, is their defence. Goodness and mercy guard their present steps. The land of promised rest is the horizon of their hopes.

Reader, these annals are an historic mirror. They image out a heavenly Father's special dealings with each child of

faith. In every age and place there is an Israel thus mercifully loved, and led, and fed. The antitype will never fail, till the last Christian's course is run.

Hence precious teaching meets us in the study of this chart. We often err and fail, through dim discernment of our state. Peace would abound, and comforts cheer, and strength put forth more vigour, if right perceptions shed a clearer light. Let us, then, view ourselves in Israel's varied story. Our every step finds counterpart in them.

The parallel is quickly drawn. They once groaned bitterly in cruel bondage. But mercy set them free. Believer, you too were once a slave at Satan's will. He ruled you with an iron yoke. But now the chain is broken, and you rejoice, the ransomed freedman of the Lord. Egypt is escaped. The tyrant holds you not.

Israel's tribes are journeying, as strangers, through a desert-waste. And is not yours a wilderness-career? The abiding country is not here. The rest is far away. But they are convoyed by a heavenly guide. So, too, a beckoning hand marks out your wanderings by day—by night. Is your soul needy? The bread of life fails not. Are you athirst? The wells of life are ever open.

They had heard "the voice of words"—the fiery law. This law has also pierced the deep recesses of your inner man. You have thus learned the glorious righteousness of God—the hateful sinfulness of sin—your ruined state in self. You hence are taught to prize the grace of your curse-bearing Lord, and the rich worth of His imputed merits.

Was Israel God's special portion? You, too, are not your own. You are a purchased property:—a peculiar race. You shun the world, as a forbidden path—a rebel camp—an un-

congenial clime—an alien tribe—a Jael's tent—a land of filth and snares.

This is a scanty outline. Daily experience fills in the picture. Let each similitude be traced. For each is a fruitful school of wisdom and improvement. There is, indeed, no novel thought in this recital. Each Bible-reader knows these things. But common truths—like common blessings—soon lose their point. Colours soon fade without renewing touch. The flame expires, without reviving breath. Reader, be wise, and often trace your own case in this predictive story.

And now, before the people move, God speaks again. He gives command to register the Number of each tribe. Account must be distinctly taken. All names must be recorded. Their multitudes must all be reckoned and exactly known.

New instruction meets us here. God ever leads us in a brightening path. Fresh dealings are fresh seeds of wisdom. They call us to discern anew His mind. May, then, this Numbering-act enrich faith's stores!

In common matters, men count possessions, which are choice, and dear, and prized. They, whose mean joys are fixed on this world's self—thus calculate their gold. Their coffers are oft opened. Frequent reckonings review the contents. See, too, the watchful shepherd's care. His marking eye perpetually surveys the flock. As they go forth—as they return—the Number is most diligently told.

Do we, then, stray beyond sound limits—do we indulge unfounded fancy—when in God's Numbering we read God's love? Do not clear characters here write, that His people are thus Numbered, because loved—counted, because prized?

This truth extends to all the children of faith's family. My soul, come bow before it. Its worth exceeds all worlds.

There is no blessedness like his, whose glowing gratitude oft realizes, My God loves me:—my name is in His heart. The Lord of all creation esteems me among His choicest jewels.

The knowledge of this fact is reached by happy steps. They are all scripturally firm.

Review them. Wherefore was Jesus sent to bear your sins, and deck you in His robe of righteousness? Why did Jehovah inflict on Him the hell-pains, which were justly yours? Why was Christ slain? Why are you spared? There can be only one reply, God loves you.

And wherefore did the Spirit speed to arouse your sleeping conscience—to show self's ruin, and the remedy of the cross? Why did your inward adamant dissolve, and unbelief melt into faith, and your whole heart clasp Jesus, as its own? There can be only one reply, God loves you.

How is it, that your slender bark still rides above the raging billows of an engulfing world? How is it, that your tottering feet are still upheld along the slippery hill, which leads to Zion's heights? The strength is not your own. It is most freely given. There can be only one reply, God loves you.

When did this love commence?—Tell me, when God began to be, and I will tell you, when His love began. Will not this love expire? Can God be no more God? While God is God, He must be love.

God loves you! Would that the eye of faith for ever rested on this glorious truth!

Heroic might will brace the inner man, just as this thrives and strengthens. God loves you? What an amazing impulse to bear the willing servant over all mountains of doubt, and fear, and hindrance! God loves you! What a strong shield