

CHAPTER FIVE SYSTEM, OR DISORDER?

Another objection frequently raised against the unity of these laws is, that they present all the features of a compiled body, where no guiding-thread combines the collected material. This is indeed doing little honor to the redactor on the part of those who hold the divisive theories. But even among believers in the Mosaic origin and essential unity of the Codes, it is not uncommon to hear the remark made, that they are not arranged systematically on any legal or religious principle, and that the sequence of the laws is only determined by the chronology of their promulgation. This statement, however common it may be, involves a double mistake: First, by laying so much stress on the chronological principle, it tends to awaken the idea that a systematic and a chronological arrangement exclude each other; and secondly, it would seem improper to assert that God, when revealing himself, and his will concerning Israel, in successive acts or stages, should do so without any inherent order.

Chronology is the frame of history; and Israel's history is nothing but the record of God's revelation, its beginning, progress, and fulfillment. Separated from the world, that it might be holy unto God, with Israel every thing becomes subservient to this high calling. Hence its history is not shaped by accident or chance, or according to earthly purposes: it does not run its course independent of God's intentions with regard to his people, but flows from beginning to end in the channels of his revealing grace.

God is a God of order. We must therefore expect, if the law be his revelation, and not the fruit of a blind process of development, to find in it a system, an intended adjustment of part to part, and of each part to the whole, a gradual progress and advance from the more fundamental and simple to the more complex and specified in detail.

This order, if there be any, must be a genetic one. God made Israel his Covenant-people at Sinai. He did not present to them all at once their perfect and complete constitution, requiring immediate conformity to its demands. Gradually and progressively they were organized and built into a theocratic nation, first on a broad basis, then on a more specified plan, till finally the superstructure appeared in its divinely intended perfection and beauty. The process of logic has here become a process in time: the organism is shown to us, not in the reality of completion, but in the mirror of history, only for this very reason the more clear and distinct.

Bertheau has found in the Code of Exodus—Numbers seven groups of Mosaic laws, each of them containing seven series, each series ten commandments. The four hundred and ninety commands thus obtained, according to him, once constituted a Code of purely legal contents, and existed prior to the narrative which now divides the groups, and is often interwoven with them. The hypothesis is very ingenious, but cannot be carried out without great precariousness in details. Reuss has characterized it as "a beautiful illusion." We shall have occasion to refer to it more than once.

First of all we must consider the charges that have been made against the unity of the feast-laws in Exod. 12 and 13. A survey of the numerous critical divisions proposed cannot be given here. The main divisions, on which all critics more or less agree, have been stated before. They are, Exod. 12:

24-27, 29-39 (except ver. 37), 13:3-16, Jehovistic, the rest Elohist.

A positive exposition of the essential unity will prove the best argument against all these dissections. (1) 12:1-20 contain the divine institution of Passover and Mazzoth (unleavened bread) *as given to Moses and Aaron*. (2) 12:21-27. The communication of this divine command to the elders of the people, *so far as it was required by immediate necessity*. For the latter reason, only the prescriptions concerning the Passover-lamb are repeated, whilst the announcement of the Mazzoth-law is reserved for a later occasion. Ver. 28 states the fulfilment of this command on the part of the people in the emphatic phrase, "so did they." (3) Ver. 29-42 describe the last plague, the exodus, and how the children of Israel were providentially compelled to leave Egypt with unleavened dough. Ver. 40, *seqq.*, contain a retrospective glance at the whole sojourn in Egypt during four hundred and thirty years, which serves to enforce anew the sacredness of the feast instituted as a memorial of this exodus. (4) Since ver. 38 had stated that a mixed multitude went up with the Israelites, a new provision was made necessary for observance of the feast by strangers. This is given in ver. 43-51. (5) The divine command *to Moses* that the first-born henceforth shall belong to Jehovah, 13:1, 2. (6) The communication of this to the people, ver. 11-16, after Moses had first discharged the second half of the commission received before the exodus, 12:1-20, which was then only partially given to the people on account of the peculiar circumstances, ver. 3-10.

All this forms a well-connected complete narrative; and, as we shall see, it is only a persistent refusal to consider each single part in the light of the whole, that can give some semblance of necessity to the application of the critical knife.

A chronological objection has been raised against 12:3; for whilst 11:4 falls evidently on Abib 14, the divine injunction to Moses and Aaron must have been given before the 10th, as on the latter date the lamb was to be selected and set apart. The difficulty disappears on the natural supposition, that the author did not wish to interrupt his narrative of the plagues by this law, and therefore, having reserved it up to this point, uses the account of its execution to mention also its promulgation, though the latter actually took place at least four days before. The expression בַּלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה in ver. 8 does not contradict this; for it does not designate the present night, but the night referred to in the context, and spoken of in ver. 6.

Hupfeld's objection, that here a memorial is instituted and observed *ante factum*, has no force at all. The first Passover, as Wellhausen has strikingly remarked, was no memorial feast, it was history; and it was a sacrament, a real instrument of salvation. Of the unwarranted inferences which Wellhausen draws from this, we shall speak hereafter. As to the fact, his statement is correct, and the best answer to Hupfeld's objection.

Kayser alleges that the Elohist alone makes the institution of Pesach (Passover) and Mazzoth precede the facts of which they were memorials, whilst the Jehovist gives the more natural representation that it followed them. This is inaccurate; for the Jehovistic verses, as he reckons them, 12:21-27, treat of the rite, not as to be observed in the remote future, but as in the immediate present, during the night of the exodus: ver. 23 says, "When He seeth the blood upon the lintel," etc.

Common to nearly all the critics is the statement, that the Jehovist (12:34) gives a different

explanation of the eating of Mazzoth from the Elohist. The truth is, that neither of them gives an explanation at all. At least, it is not explicitly stated in the narrative. Ver. 34 simply informs us that the Israelites were providentially compelled to take no leaven out of the land of Egypt along on their journey, which certainly had a deeper symbolic meaning; so that it would be exactly the Jehovist, whom the critics charge with having ascribed the origin of such an important usage to so trifling an accident, who intimates the real significance of eating Mazzoth.

But we are told ver. 8 of the Elohist is inconsistent with ver. 34. If the flesh of the Passover-lamb was to be eaten with unleavened bread, and for this purpose, according to ver. 15, all leaven had to be removed, how can it be ascribed to the haste of the Israelites in departing, that they took their dough before it was leavened?

The answer is obvious. According to ver. 21-27, only the first half of God's commission to Moses was communicated to the people before the exodus. Concerning Mazzoth, as yet nothing was said. The Israelites were simply instructed to kill the Passover-lamb, and eat it with unleavened bread. God evidently intended that Moses should confine his immediate instructions to this point. That only the Passover-law was to go into effect before the exodus, is intimated by the peculiar position of ver. 11-14. They apply only to the observance in Egypt; and their insertion between the Pesach-command and the Mazzoth-law shows that the former was, the latter was not, destined for immediate observance in Egypt. Hence the regulations concerning Mazzoth are kept general throughout, as they were evidently adapted to a more remote period in the future. Compare ver. 19 and 20.

Now, if Moses, in agreement with God's purpose, published only the Passover-law immediately; if, further, this law neither commands nor forbids that leaven should be altogether removed, but simply prescribes that the lamb should be eaten *with unleavened bread*,—then it is entirely natural that the Israelites, as yet not knowing that the Passover would be followed by Mazzoth, and that the latter feast would forbid the presence of any leaven in the houses, should have kept their leaven, and were only prevented by their hasty departure in the morning from using it in the preparation of their dough and bread.

But even if we admit that all leaven was actually removed for the observance of this first Passover, still, it is not likely that the Israelites intended to go on their journey without providing leaven. They evidently thought, that, when the Passover-night was past, the prohibition had ceased. God's providence, however, as we have seen, intervened preparatory to the promulgation of the Mazzoth-law. As Ranke has beautifully expressed it, "Jehovah's history and Jehovah's law were made by him the mirror of each other."

Kayser's allegation that ver. 11-13 make a violent separation between 10 and 14, and are accordingly a Jehovistic section interpolated by the redactor, is groundless. The verses are entirely appropriate in this connection when we understand them, as was intimated above. They served, indeed, to make a separation between ver. 10 and 14, though not a violent, but a necessary one, which should indicate that only the Passover-ordinance was to be published immediately before the Exodus.

Neither is it true, as Kayser also asserts, that ver. 22 contradicts ver. 4 and 7. That small households should combine for the purpose of consuming the lamb, does not prove that they joined each other

during the night. They could do this the evening before. To press the possessive pronoun in ver. 22, "his house," is absurd.

It is claimed by Hupfeld and Dillmann, that ver. 42 stands very abrupt in its present connection. Hupfeld asserts that it formed originally the close of the section, ver. 1-13; whilst he makes ver. 14 prospective, and belonging to the Mazzoth-law. As Bachmann, however, remarks, the transition from the second person in ver. 1-13 to the third in ver. 42 (לְהוֹצִיאֵם) would be very strange. For this reason Dillmann helps himself in another way by carrying the verse back to ver. 39, and assigning it to B; though he finds this hard to reconcile with the expression לְרִרְתָּם (proper to A), so that he must also call in the redactor to account for its insertion. All this trouble is avoided by giving the verse its natural and unforced meaning. In connection with the retrospective glance at the whole sojourn in Egypt (ver. 40, 41), it contains a new reminder of the sacredness of the feast instituted in memory of the deliverance from so long a bondage.

Dillmann, moreover, objects against the unity of these chapters, that we have here two laws concerning the consecration of the first-born, two concerning Mazzoth, and three about the Passover, of which the second (12:21, *seqq.*) differs somewhat from the first. The right view of the relation of these laws to each other has been given already, and no other answer is necessary.

Finally, the remark has been made that Moses, in his instruction to the elders (ver. 21, *seqq.*), makes no mention of unleavened bread at all; which would fall in with Kayser's view, who combines these verses with the following Jehovistic section. It is obvious that we have here no *verbatim* report of Moses' words, but simply a summary, which could be all the shorter since the divine injunction had been stated in full. The use of the article in הַפֶּסַח is an independent proof that the *ipsissima verba* of Moses are not retained here.

If, then, all the objections urged against the unity of these feast-laws prove irrelevant, we may proceed to the book of the Covenant. The name is derived from Exod. 24:7, and the Mosaic authorship expressly stated in 24:4. Whether it included the Decalogue, it is difficult to determine; but the view that the passage last quoted refers to the Decalogue alone, is certainly untenable. All critics agree that we find in both the oldest preserved Code, though not even this in its original form. Kuenen places its origin in the reign of David, "if not earlier:" still, he has serious objections against the Mosaic authorship. Reuss assigns it to the reign of Jehoshaphat; others, to yet other dates. Proofs in the strictest sense of the word are not given. We simply remark, that whatever arguments are urged in favor of the relative antiquity of this Code, are entirely derived from its peculiar significance and unique place in the constitution of Israel. When Kuenen claims that the laws of Exod. 20-23 distinguish themselves by their simplicity and originality, this is exactly what we would expect of a Code destined to be the fundamental law of Israel, and to present in a few general commands the primary relations and duties devolving upon the Covenant-people. To speak of originality is begging the question, and the simplicity is fully accounted for by the historical situation in which the Pentateuch places it. Indeed, we should be surprised if these commands were less simple, if God had at the outset overwhelmed the Israelites with a mass of ceremonial detail, and on such a basis entered with them into a solemn covenant. Jer. 7:22 gives the right point of view. On the other hand, how natural and fitting is the place of this Code at the beginning of the great career upon which Israel was to enter. The whole is an application of the Decalogue to the most general features of national

life. Consequently, in chap. 21:1 we meet the word **משפטים**, designating “the rights by which the national life was formed into a civil commonwealth and the political order secured.” Intimately connected with the Decalogue, they start with emphasizing the same principle,—viz., the unity and spirituality of God,—and cover nearly the same ground. Exception has been taken to the lack of the religious element; but the objection leaves out of view Exod. 20:22-26 and 23:14-19, which certainly formed a part of the book of the Covenant.

Next come the directions concerning the building of the sanctuary (chap. 25-30). After the people, by their adhesion to the Covenant, had been constituted the peculiar property of God, their Theocratic King, provisions are made for his dwelling amongst them. The relation having been defined, the first step is taken to realize it in the accurate description of the tabernacle, which would be its symbol and pledge. As Keil expresses it, “A definite external form must be given to the covenant just concluded, a visible bond of fellowship constructed.” This is explicitly stated in chap. 25:8, with a clear allusion to 23:20, 21. The critics, otherwise so acute in discovering traces of affinity, where details are concerned seem to be blind for this most intimate relation, which makes one passage grow out of the other in the most natural way. Their dissecting methods seem to have disqualified them for a true appreciation of the theocratic idea, which germinates in the soil of God’s Covenant, and thence develops itself into the manifold forms of a system in which the social and religious life interpenetrate.

At first sight the section, chap. 31:12-17, might appear superfluous and out of place. Keil justifies its occurrence by suggesting that the Israelites might have thought it unnecessary or non-obligatory to observe the Sabbath-commandment during the execution of so great a work in honor of Jehovah. With him agree Knobel and Graf. There is nothing in the context, however, to favor this view; and it seems better to explain the emphatic repetition of this law from the great importance of the Sabbath as a Covenant sign between Israel and the Lord. In ver. 13 it is called an **אֹת**, in ver. 16 a **בְּרִית**. For this reason it is subjoined to that other visible bond of fellowship, the tabernacle. As in the latter, God by his glorious presence signified his gracious attitude towards Israel, so Israel by the observance of this day of rest would show its faithful adherence to Jehovah’s Covenant.

We pass on to chap. 34:10-27. As we have seen already, Dillmann recognizes in these verses the Covenant-law of C as it once stood after 20:20 and 24:1, 2, whilst Wellhausen postulates a new source for this passage alone. The fact is, that we have here nothing but a shorter re-enactment and restatement of the Covenant-law, that had been broken by idolatry. As the first solemn conclusion of the Covenant preceded the gift of the first tables, so, after the latter had been broken, the former must be renewed before the new tables of the Decalogue can be handed to Moses. It was a deep insight into the sinful nature of the people and a clear apprehension of the corrupt tendency manifested in this single act of idolatry, that led to emphasizing specially the prohibition of intercourse with the Canaanites. Also the reference to the golden calf in ver. 17, **אֱלֹהֵי מִסְכָּה**, is obvious. Both points of contact with the preceding chapters are disregarded by the divisive critics. It is more difficult to see why, from ver. 18 onward, the feast-laws are restated with slight differences in form from Exod. 23. Partly their religious and theocratic importance may have caused their appearance in this connection: partly their place at the end of the Covenant-law (chap. 23) may account for the fact that they, and not other laws, are repeated. As the first covenant began with the Decalogue, engraven in stone, and closed with the feast-laws, so after the breaking, though there be no formal restatement of every particular, still we find the beginning and end of the former law repeated, to indicate that

this new covenant rests on essentially the same basis as the old. The repetition is not pleonastic, but of deep significance. Decalogue and feast-laws stand as representatives of all the contents of the Covenant-book.

The promulgation of the Sabbath-commandment in chap. 35:1-3 is parallel to chap. 31:12-17. Moses had been commissioned to remind the Israelites in particular of this Covenant-sign. Having come down, according to chap. 34:29, he immediately executes this commission as soon as the opportunity offers itself. Here also there are regular progress and perfect connection. Chap. 35-40 correspond to 30-35, and describe the execution of what was commanded there. Of the peculiar position which chap. 30:1-10 (of the altar of incense) occupies, we must speak hereafter.

The Levitical Code, though forming a unit in its own compass, is nevertheless but a single link in the great chain: as we hope to show, it takes up the development of the Theocracy where Exodus left off, and carries it onward.

The sacrificial laws (chap. 1-7) form, as the closing verses show, a coherent group. Their position at this juncture is not only natural, but necessary. The sacrifices in their whole ritual presuppose the completed sanctuary, the erecting of which was recorded in Exod. 40. Moreover, it is stated (Lev. 1:1), that the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him, out of the tabernacle of the congregation, in accordance with his promise (Exod. 25:22). A third reason for our statement that this Code occupies a fitting place in the history of revelation, is that it is so general in its character. No specification being made concerning the time for presentation of sacrifices, or the order in which they were to succeed each other, or the number of the animals to be offered at the various occasions, all which was to be regulated afterwards, the Code confines itself to what was its evident purpose; viz., the laying down of the general principles of sacrificial service as a necessary supplement and completion of the tabernacle-worship. The enumeration of all chief topics proves beyond doubt, that we possess the Code in its original, unaltered condition. The last two chapters refer to the priests, and give special instructions concerning their treatment of sacrifices, which accounts for some repetitions of previous statements.

Chap. 8-10 describe the induction of Aaron and his sons into the priestly office. The fulfillment of the command given at the same time with the directions for the building of the tabernacle could not have been placed earlier, because the laws of sacrifices had a bearing upon this act. It could not have occurred later, because the completed regulation of the tabernacle ceremonial required an officiating priesthood, and waited but for their investiture to go into full operation. Thus we find the place of these three chapters again naturally and necessarily determined by what precedes and follows. Their omission would leave a gap, and their insertion at any other juncture would create a disturbance in the systematic order of the whole.

In chap. 11-25 we find the laws concerning uncleanness, purification, and holiness. They add a new feature to the hitherto imperfect scheme of the Theocracy. We saw its constitution in the Covenant-law, its initial realization in the laws of the sanctuary, the sacrifices, and the priesthood: here our attention is called to the fruits of purity and holiness which this organization was intended to produce, both in a ceremonial and moral aspect. Holiness was the ever-recurring condition of God's dwelling amongst them,—the one great demand, which the ritual was both to symbolize and to effect.

First it is only ceremonial and outward purity, announcing itself in the discrimination between clean and unclean animals, and in the purification of the body (11-15); but this in its turn becomes a type of that higher spiritual and moral doing away of sin, whose completion was foreshadowed in the Day of Atonement (16), and directly urged on the people by the moral commands from chap. 17 onward. It is important to notice how at this very juncture, where the critics claim to have discovered the attachment of an earlier Code ("law of holiness") to a later one, there is the most intimate coherence and connection manifested in a gradual advance from the outward to the inward; from the ritual to the moral; from what is demanded of the people, to what is imposed on the priests, to whom the call for holiness came with double force, and in a more special sense (21); from the everyday life, with its distinction in the daily food, to those holy exercises at the sanctuary, which were to be the highest and most adequate expression of an all-pervading sanctity and entire consecration to God (23). How the theocratic principle has shaped these laws, and determined their sequence, is seen in the fact, that holiness, though required in the most simple acts and forms of life, is ultimately referred to as finding its full realization in religious observances, in sacrifices (22), and holy convocations (23), and its most significant representation in the burning lamps and show-bread of the tabernacle (24:1-9).

The unity of chap. 23 has been doubted and denied on various grounds. Chiefly the frequent repetition of titles, ver. 1, 9, 23, 26, 33, has led to the inference, that the chapter presents a compilation of feast-laws, notwithstanding the undeniable fact that they are all ranged under one general principle,—the holding of a **מקרא קדש** (holy convocation),— and presented in the strictest chronological order. Dillmann thinks that ver. 9-22, 23-32, 33-43, once formed independent regulations concerning the respective feasts of which they treat. George, Hupfeld, and recently Wellhausen, assumed two complete feast-Codes,— one of the Elohist, ver. 1-8, 23-38; and one of another hand, ver. 9-22, 39-43, interwoven by the redactor. Both assertions are equally gratuitous. The two Codes as separated by Wellhausen are not complete; since the one lacks the feast of weeks, the other Mazzoth. And against both views, that of Dillmann as well as Wellhausen's, stand the uniformity of treatment, the similarity throughout in expression, and the retention of the same leading idea in all the parts. The appearance of a second title in ver. 4 is accounted for by the consideration, that here the **מועדים**, the appointed seasons proper, begin in distinction from the Sabbath. And how the recurring titles can awake suspicion in critics who are accustomed to comment upon the redundancy of the Elohist, we do not understand. By taking ver. 37, 38, not as the close of the whole preceding chapter, but only of ver. 4-36 (of the **מועדים** proper), the difficulty arising from the words "beside the Sabbaths" is relieved, and at the same time the reference of ver. 4 to the yearly recurring feasts strikingly confirmed. This view also leaves room for the supplementary Succoth-law (ver. 39-43); since, according to it, ver. 37, 38, do not close the whole, but only a subdivision, of the topic. The final close does not follow until ver. 44. The positive explanation of the supplementary character of ver. 39-43 is best given by Bachmann; viz., that the aspect of the observance described in these verses stood in no direct relation to the **מקרא קדש** and the sanctuary, and therefore could be better added subsequently than connected with 34-36, since the latter would have destroyed the unity of the chapter, which is up to that point governed by one central idea. Negatively, the view which holds ver. 39-43 to be an addition of the redactor from a different source is untenable, as Dillmann remarks, against Wellhausen and Kayser. For (a) The Elohist must have given fuller directions concerning Succoth, which he had not as yet treated in detail, than those contained in ver. 34-36. (b) Ver. 39-43 is incomplete: it does not even contain the name of the feast referred to, and requires what precedes for its explanation. (c) The language is Elohistic. We may finally remark, that in chap. 23 special attention is paid to the feasts

not exhaustively treated before (Pentecost, Succoth), whilst others, for which full provision had been previously made already, are here more summarily dismissed (Passover, Day of Atonement).

The promulgation of the laws concerning murder, damage, and blasphemy (24:10-23) was occasioned by the blasphemy of Shelomith's son.

The heading of chap. 25 indicates that its contents close the main body of Sinaitic legislation, which accordingly ends with the regulations for the Sabbath-year and the year of jubilee. This position is entirely appropriate. By these institutions the existence and continuance of the theocratic community was insured, by securing a permanent validity to its agrarian basis, which depended, of course, on the equal division of property among all its members.

Chap. 26 formally closes the Levitical Code with a prophetic appeal to the people, urging upon them faithful observance of God's law, and threatening a curse against all disobedience, showing, in a warning disclosure of future apostasy, to what dangers the people would be exposed when once in possession of the promised land. There is a manifest similarity in the closing sections of the Covenant-law, the Levitical Code, and the Deuteronomic legislation, which betrays their essential unity. The Covenant-law made last of all provision for the feasts: so does Leviticus. And as the former was sanctioned by special promises in accordance with its special scope and character (Exod. 23:20-33), so the more voluminous law of Leviticus has its more comprehensive statement of the blessing and curse at its close. Such underlying harmonious unity far outweighs the numerous external contradictions which the critics claim to have discovered in detail. Unity lies at the bottom: the discord is superficial and imaginary.

Chap. 27 treats of vows. Probably the non-obligatory character of this religious service caused its treatment outside of the main body of laws.

During the promulgation of the Levitical Code, the history of the Covenant-people had offered nothing remarkable, which could have been the occasion of the enactment of a new law. With a few exceptions in chap. 8, 9, 10, Leviticus contains no narrative.

In Numbers the historical principle becomes again predominant, as it was in Exodus. There is this difference, however,— that in Exodus the majority of the laws were so important that they influenced history, and drew it into their own appointed course, so that it became subordinate to legislation. In Numbers, on the contrary, much refers to the temporary circumstances of the desert journey, and therefore appears as the historical occasions offered themselves. Accordingly, the systematic arrangement has more and more to give place to an external attachment of legal fragments to the facts of history.

Still, even where the outward unity and connection are wanting, there is a ruling idea, which, as it has determined the history of this period, also has given a common character to its laws. They all relate in some way to the civil and political constitution of Israel, to the external and internal organization of the tribes as the army and the congregation of Jehovah, either as this was determined for the present by the journey towards Canaan (chap. 1-10:10), or required for the future by possession of the Holy Land (22-36). The former of these sections is chiefly legal, the latter of a mixed character:

all that falls between them gives the history of the journey from Sinai to the Jordan, interrupted by legal sections in chap. 15, 17, 18, 19.

Bertheau, up to this point having been able to trace a combination of the significant numbers 7 and 10 in various groups and series and decalogues, is now obliged to confess, that only a certain arrangement on the principle of decades can be discovered here.

The remarks made above concerning the chronological position of the laws which occur here, show that a positive vindication of their systematic unity would be in vain. We may content ourselves with answering a few objections raised against the good order of these legal passages.

Bertheau considers Num. 3:1-4 as an insertion, lacking all connection both with what precedes and with what follows, loosely suspended between 2 and 3.

The reason, however, why the generations of Aaron should be given at this juncture, is obvious; viz., to distinguish the priests at the outset from the Levites. Had the service of the latter been described without this distinction being made, it would have appeared as if they stood on a par with the priests. Ver. 6 states emphatically that the Levites were to minister unto *Aaron the priest*.

The first part of chap. 9 has suggested to many a twofold difficulty. (a) It seems unnecessary that the Passover-law should have been repeated here without any additional or supplementary directions (ver. 1-5). (b) The date mentioned in ver. 1 carries us back before the date given in chap. 1:1.

Both difficulties are best removed by considering ver. 1-5 as an introduction to the law of the second Passover, from ver. 6 onward. This instruction was, according to the context, revealed by God to Moses in the first month; i.e., at the regular Passover-time. But the supplementary provision for defiled persons was not made until some time after the regular observance,— according to 1:1, at least fourteen days later. Thus the chapter fits well in the chronology of the book, and ver. 1 repeats a command given a few weeks before to introduce the new provision stated in ver. 6, *seqq.*

Dr. Kuenen objects to chap. 15, that it is evidently an interpolation. His reasons are, that it is not connected with what precedes and follows, and that ver. 2, as it stands now, comes in very inappropriately, and sounds almost like sarcastic irony in the mouth of God, after the events narrated in the two preceding chapters. The fact is, that these laws were given during the thirty-nine years' wandering in the desert. As there is a break in the history here, neither the exact chronological position, nor the historical occasion of the announcement of them, can be determined. The irony would certainly disappear, if, between the judgment of chap. 14 and the directions of chap. 15, some months, or even years, had intervened. Instead of sarcasm and irony, it would seem that there fell a ray of hope and divine consolation on the background of these verses, in so far as the possession of Canaan is alluded to. Probably this was done to remind the rising generation that to them God would keep his promise, and bestow upon them these benefits which their fathers had forfeited by their rebellion and unbelief.

This part, also, of our task is now accomplished. Having shown that all the laws in Exodus-Numbers, so far as language and context are concerned, form one systematic, progressive, well-connected

whole, we possess a vantage-ground on which to meet the critics in their next attack upon the unity of the pre-Deuteronomic Codes.