

III. AUTHORSHIP OF THE PENTATEUCH

We are now going to look principally at the traditional positions regarding the authorship of the Pentateuch.

A. Parts of the Pentateuch Claim to be Written By Moses

In the legal sections we find references to Moses as the writer. For instance, in the Book of the Covenant, in chapter 24, the chapter which deals with the ratification of the Covenant (the last chapter of the Book of the Covenant). In 24:4 we find a statement made that Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. Here the statement is made that Moses wrote this Book of the Covenant, the Ten Commandments, and the Ordinances. Then, over in the legal section, in Deuteronomy 31:9 we find the statement, “and Moses wrote this law and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the Covenant of the LORD and unto all the elders of Israel.” Does that mean the law contained in the book of Deuteronomy or does it mean the whole Pentateuch? It at least means Deuteronomy. Then in the same chapter, in verses 24-26, we find, “And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the Covenant of the LORD, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God that it may be there for a witness against thee.” So we have these three statements that laws were written by Moses.

There is no statement in Genesis that Moses wrote Genesis, but the narrative section of Exodus contains a statement about Moses writing. In Exodus 17:14 we read, “And the LORD said unto Moses, ‘Write this for a memorial in a book.’ ” Our English version says “a book.” But here the Hebrew says, “in the book,” “Write this for a memorial in the book and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.”

Numbers 33:2 says, “And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the LORD. These are their