

BANNED

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BIBLE



The Rev. Dr. Carl Gregg

Mondays, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm,

March 3 – April 21

Housekeeping

- Slides: frederickuu.org/about/FCC
- **Attendance** for FCC
- Add to **email** list?
- **Other?**

Covenant

- Use **“I” statements**: *speak from your own experience.*
- **Ask permission before sharing** other participants’ stories outside the group.
- **Step-up, step-back**: be conscious of the level of participation that you bring to the conversation. Allow everyone a chance to speak before you speak again.
- You always have **permission to “pass.”**



Upcoming Classes

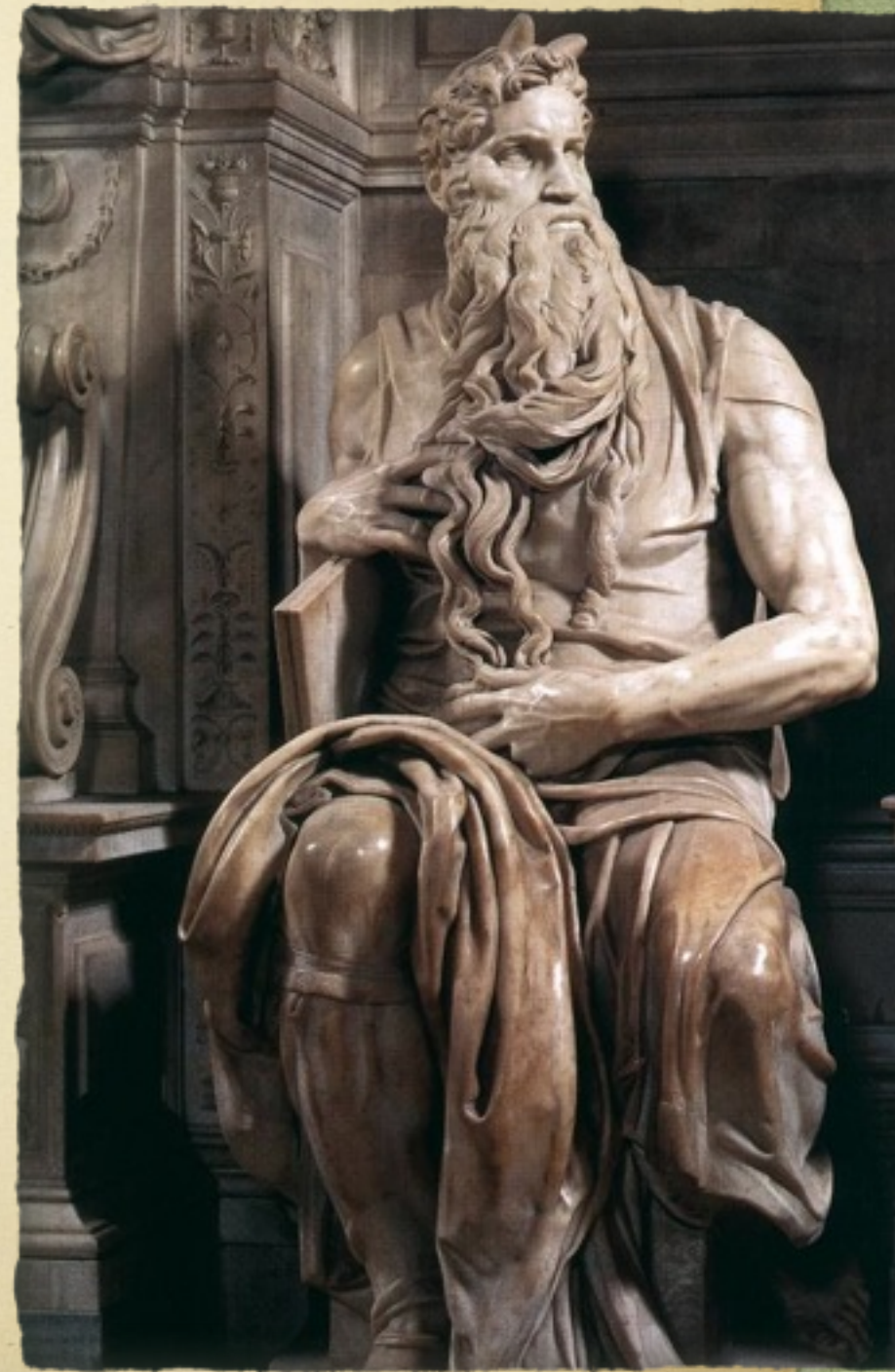
- **Session 4: (*finish Exodus*) + Leviticus and Numbers**
- **Session 5: Deuteronomy and Joshua and Judges**
- **Session 6: Samuel and Kings**
- *(Topics will be adjusted, depending on how far we get each session.)*
- Options for Fall 2014: (a) Pick-up wherever we stop, and continue through the Hebrew Scripture / Old Testament OR (b) Skip to New Testament and come back later to finish Hebrew Scripture.

Upcoming Classes

- **Fall 2014:** (1) Isaiah, (2) Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Book of the 12, (3) Psalms, Proverbs, (4) Job, (5) Five Scrolls and Daniel, (6) After the Hebrew Bible
- **Spring 2015:** (1) Mark, (2) Matthew, (3) Luke-Acts, (4) John, (5) Jesus, Part 1, (6) Jesus, Part 2
- **Fall 2015:** (1) Paul, (2) Corinthians, (3) Gal-Phil-Phil, (4) Romans, (5) 2 Thess, Col - Eph, Pastorals and Hebrews, (6) Heb, 1 Pet, James, Jude, 2 Pet, Rev
- **Spring 2016:** Comparing Religions: Coming to Terms
- **Fall 2016:** Building Your Own Philosophy

Michelangelo “Moses”

- Vulgate: Jerome mistranslated the Hebrew *qaran* in Exodus 34:29 as “horns.”
- Qal form: “send out rays”
- Hiphil form: display (grow) horns (be fully developed)
- *Qaran* is derived from a noun meaning “horn.” Jerome took the basic meaning of the word and neglected its derived meaning of “to emit rays.”
- Many times in Hebrew one must assign the meaning of a word based on its context.
- In Psalm 69:31, *qaran* is used to describe an ox or young bull. “This will please the Lord more than an ox or a bull with horns and hoofs.”
- Paul got it right in 2 Corinthians 3:7-13, “...Israel could not gaze at Moses' face because of the glory of his face, a glory now set aside... Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside.”





Capricious? (*whim, impulsive, unpredictable*)

Does God Change God's Mind? (*Exodus 32: 7ff*)

➤ **The people break the covenant; therefore, God wishes to destroy the people, and make a new nation from Moses.:** “7 The Lord said to Moses, “Go down at once! *Your people*, whom *you* brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; 8 they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’ 9 The Lord said to Moses, “I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are.”

➤ **Implication that Moses can have an effect:** “10 Now *let me alone*, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation.”

Capricious? (*whim, impulsive, unpredictable*)

Moses Counter-argument (*Exodus 32: 7ff*)

➤ **What would the Egyptians think?** (*God's reputation*): "11 But Moses implored the Lord his God, and said, "O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? 12 *Why should the Egyptians say, "It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'?* Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people."

➤ **What about the covenant?** (*God's investment, "sunk cost"*): "13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, "I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever." "

Aristotle's "Unmoved Mover" vs.

"Most moved mover?"

- Jeremiah 18:10, "But if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will **change my mind** about the good that I had intended to do to it."
- Jeremiah 26:3, "It may be that they will listen, all of them, and will turn from their evil way, that I may **change my mind** about the disaster that I intend to bring on them because of their evil doings."
- Jeremiah 26:19, "Did King Hezekiah of Judah and all Judah actually put him to death? Did he not fear the Lord and entreat the favor of the Lord, and did not the **Lord change his mind** about the disaster that he had pronounced against them? But we are about to bring great disaster on ourselves!"
- Jonah 3:10, When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, **God changed his mind** about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

Capricious? (*whim, impulsive, unpredictable*)
Does God Change God's Mind? (*Exodus 32: 14*)

- Literally, “The LORD repented of the evil”
- NRSV: “the LORD changed his mind”
- ASV: “And Jehovah repented of the evil.”
- KJV: “And the LORD repented of the evil”
- NIV: “relented”

PROCESS
THEOLOGY

A Guide for the Perplexed

Bruce G. Epperly

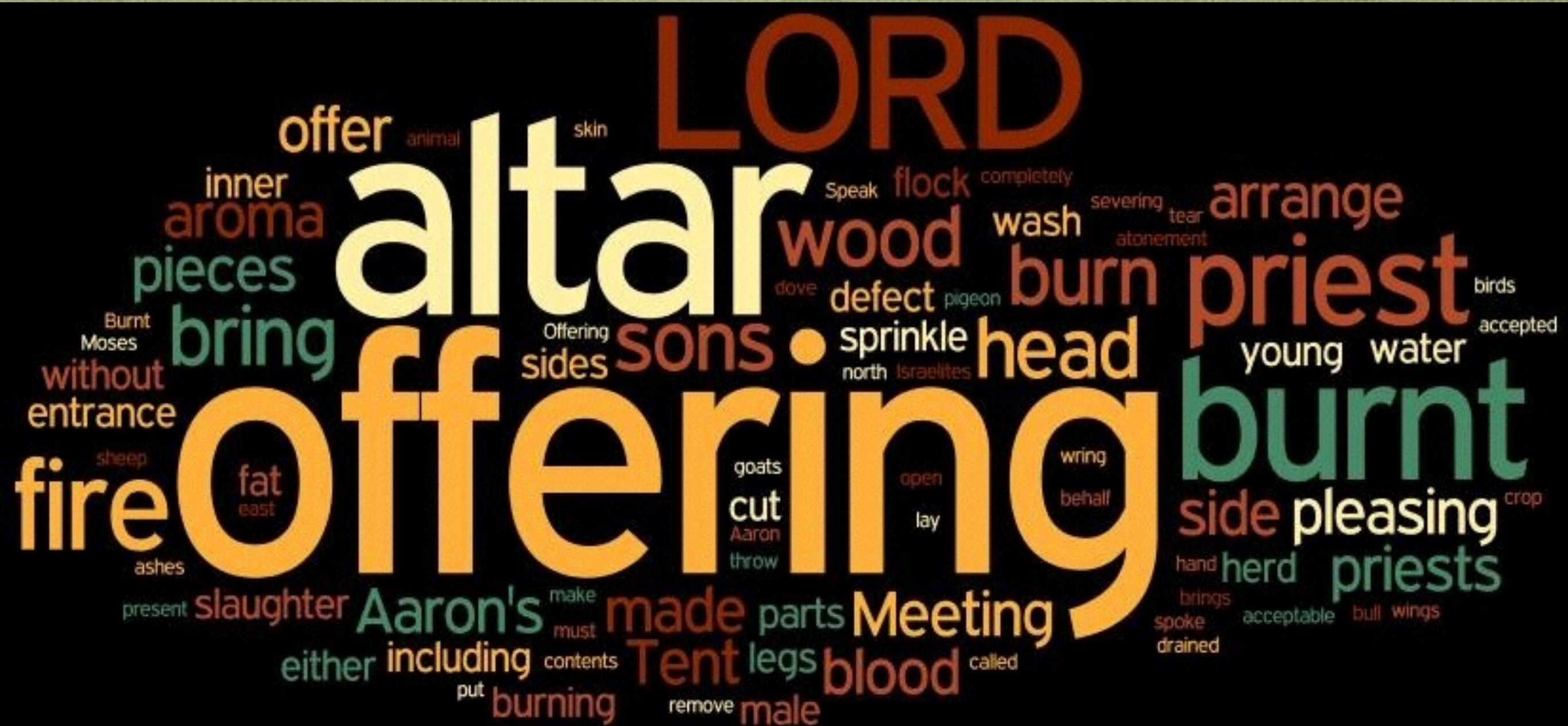
Alfred North Whitehead

Capricious? (*whim, impulsive, unpredictable*)
Does God Change God's Mind? (*Exodus 32: 14*)

- **Post-Holocaust Theology** (Middle Passage, Armenian genocide, Rwandan genocide at the end of the 20th century)...theodicy
- **John Calvin** (1509-1564): his influence on predestination/foreknowledge.
- **Models of God**



Alfred North Whitehead



“Be Holy for I am Holy”:
 Interpreting Leviticus

Center book of the Torah

Genesis - Exodus - Leviticus -
Numbers - Deuteronomy

- **Broad sweep:** revelation of the law on Mount Sinai *through* the building of the Tabernacle.
- Begins: Exodus 19:1, “On the third new moon after the Israelites had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day, they came into the wilderness of Sinai.”
- *through* Leviticus
- *until* Numbers 10:10 [11 months and 58 chapters later, Israel departs Sinai]

Another Angle on the Broad Sweep of Exodus - Leviticus - Numbers

- **Exodus:** construction of the tabernacle, its contents, and the priestly dress.
- **Leviticus:** priestly objects are put into practice.
- **Numbers:** laws about *moving* these priestly objects — significant concern in a nomadic culture.

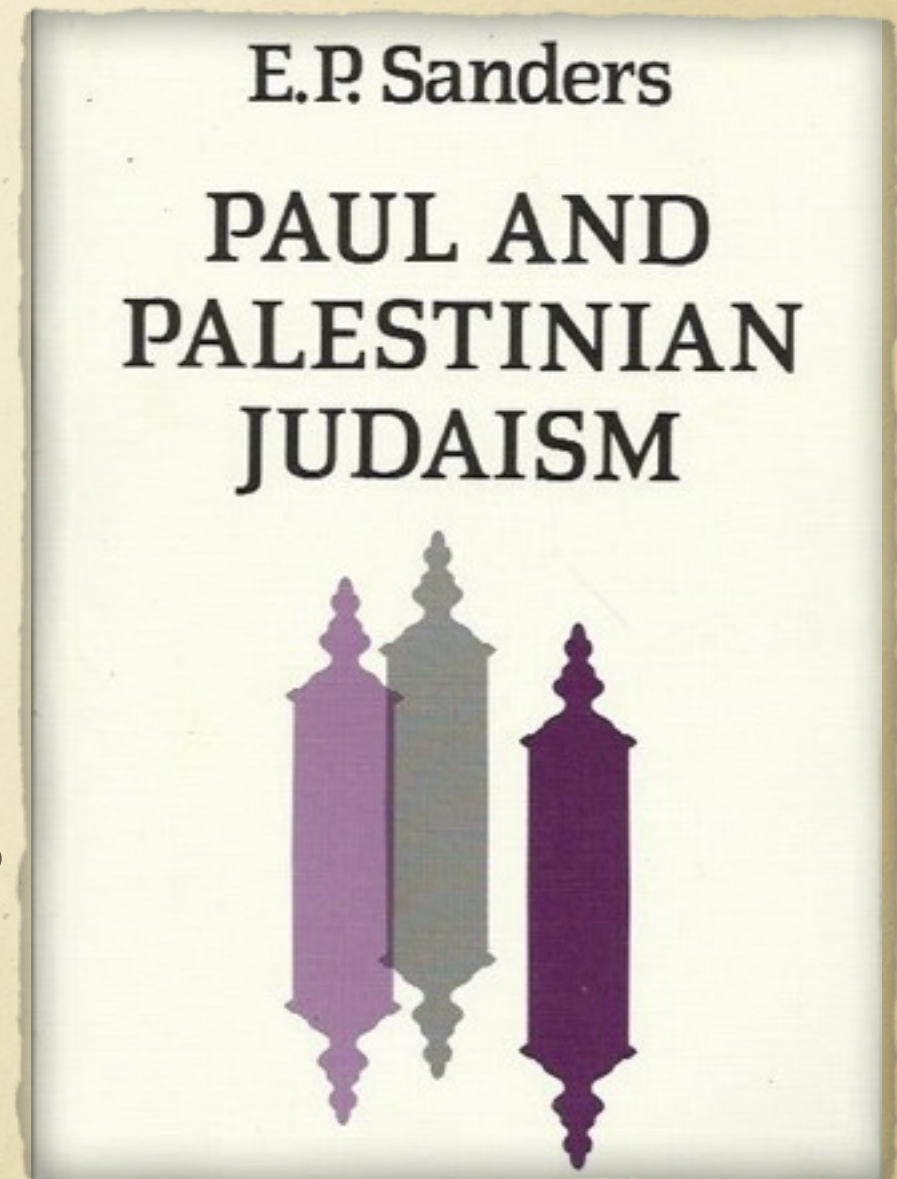
Title

- Septuagint (LXX): *Levitikon* (“things Levitical/priestly)—
 - *Levi* + *-tius* (“relating or pertaining to”).
 - Priests came from the tribe of Levi (the Levites), so the book came to be called Leviticus.
- Levites - members of one of the tribes of Israel, took care of the tabernacle (and later the temple), but generally could not serve as priests unless they were from the family of Aaron.
- Early rabbinic name more accurate: *Torat Kohanim* (“Instructions of/for/by Priests” or “the Priest’s manual”) because the Levites are only mentioned in one passage in the book, Lev 25:32-34.
- Most of its contents were addressed to and concerned the people as a whole.

Law Codes

- Do these long lists of laws seem burdensome?
- Have you tried reading some of the U.S. Law Code?
- In the 21st-century, we can find the laws of ancient Israel (from 3500 years ago) bizarre, but the **ancient Israelites didn't think that much more about their laws than we do about our laws.**
- Laws shape society, and humans get accustomed to living according to them without that much undue effort.
- Levitical laws help separate clean from unclean and the holy from the common, so the peculiarities of Israel's law code served to differentiate them from the surrounding cultures. Following them, set them apart as holy to God.

- Outsider: “law as legalism and burden”
- Insider: another gift of God’s graciousness for life within the covenant
- Sanders took into account a broad range of 2nd Temple Jewish writings, not just Christian writings about Judaism.



1977

- Leviticus 10, “10 You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean; and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the Lord has spoken to them through Moses.”
- Clean & unclean, sacred & profane — *holiness*, “set apart.”
- Refrain: “Be Holy for I am holy” (Lev 11:44-47; 19:2; 20:26)

Holiness Continuum (Jensen 1992)

	Very Holy	Holy	Clean	Unclean	Very Unclean
Places	holy of holies	holy place	court	camp	outside the camp
People	high priest	priest	Levites, clean Israelites	minor impurities	major impurities, the dead
Rituals	sacrifice (not eaten)	sacrifice (priests eat)	sacrifice (non-priests eat)	purification (1 day)	purification (7 days)
Times	Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)	festivals, Sabbath	common days		

Yom Kippur

(“Day of Atonement”)

- Culmination of the Jewish “High Holy Days” (year’s holiest day and a day of fasting)
- Re-establish *oneness* with God. Ask forgiveness and forgive others.
- Begins in the evening ten days after Rosh Hashonah.
- Lev 16:29-30, “This shall be a statute to you forever: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall deny yourselves, and shall do no work, neither the citizen nor the alien who resides among you. For on this day atonement shall be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins you shall be clean before the Lord.”

Rosh Hashonah

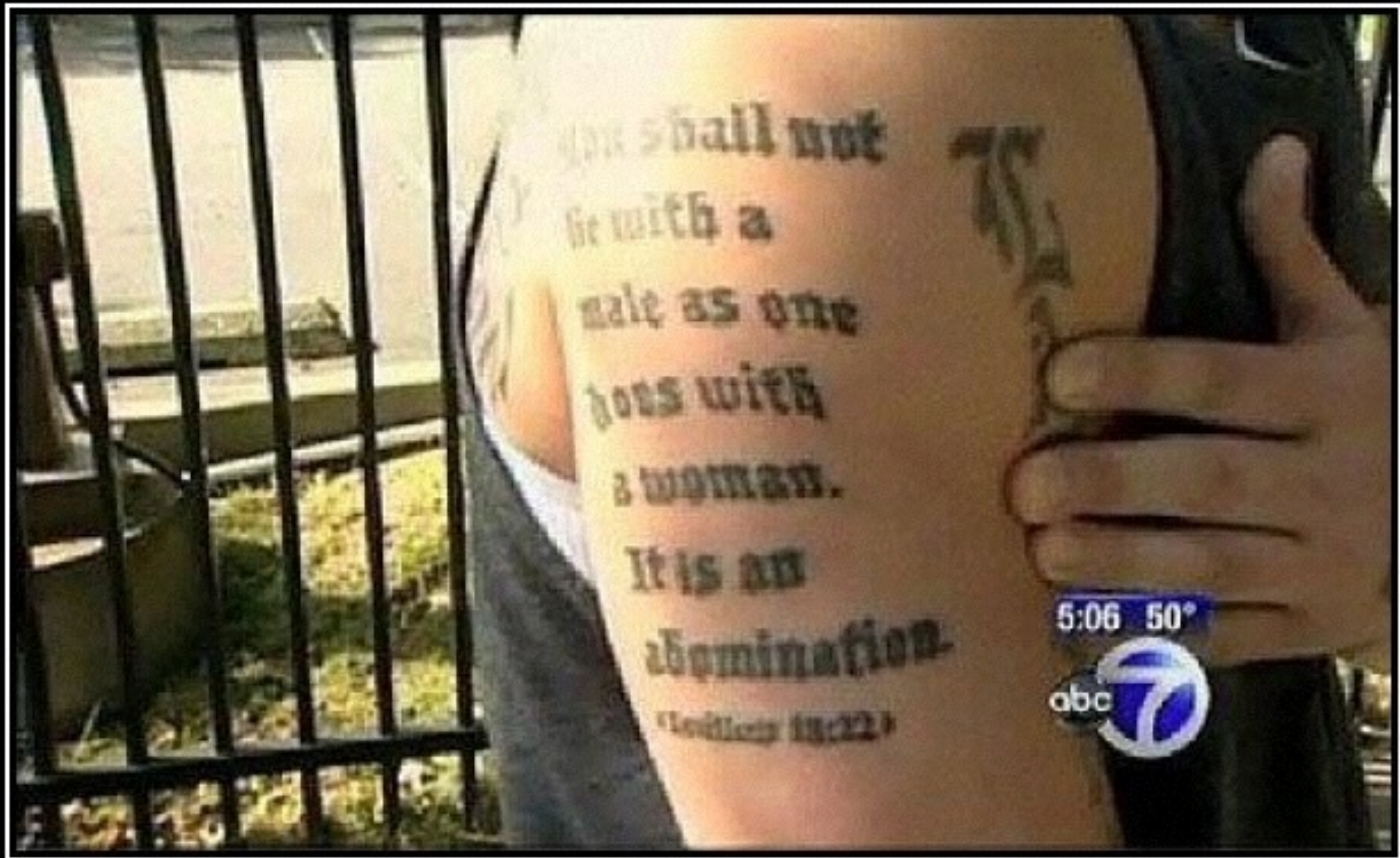
(“head of the year”)

- Rosh Hashanah 2014 *begins* in the evening of Wednesday, September 24 and *ends* in the evening of Friday, September 26.
- First and second days of the first Jewish month of Tishrei. (Previous month Elul.)
- Jewish New Year, and anniversary of the creation of the world. It is the first of Ten Days of Awe or Repentance.



Same-sex acts & the Holiness Code

- Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 are the only direct reference to male same-sex acts in the Hebrew Bible (female same-sex acts are not mentioned and Gen 19 is about inhospitality).
- They are part of the holiness code, which was given to the Jews to distinguish them from the Canaanites.
- **What about football?! Lev 11:7-8, “The pig, for even though it has divided hoofs and is cleft-footed, it does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you. 8 Of their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch; they are unclean for you.”**



LEVITICUS 18:22 TATTOO: \$300.

NOT KNOWING THAT LEVITICUS 19:28 FORBIDS TATTOOS: PRICELESS.

LEVITICUS

18:22

Do not lie with a man as
one lies with a woman;
that is detestable.

is that a poly-cotton blend?

Leviticus 19:19

"You must obey all my decrees.

Do not mate two different kinds of animals.

Do not plant your field with two different kinds of seed.

Do not wear clothing woven from two different kinds of thread."

Know Your Bible

More Context

- We do not assign the Death penalty for cursing one's parents: Lev 20:9, "All who curse father or mother shall be put to death; having cursed father or mother, their blood is upon them."
- Lev 20:10, "If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death."

Kosher/Kashrut

(“proper, ritually correct”)

- Jewish dietary practices that only land animal that chew the cud and have split hooves (sheep, beef; not pigs, camels) are permitted and must be slaughtered in a special way.
- Meat products may not be eaten with milk products or immediately thereafter;
- of sea creatures, only those fish having fins and scales are permitted;
- fowl is considered a meat food and also has to be slaughtered in a special manner.
- Both of these passage use the word **abominations**. When Leviticus speaks of “abominations,” it is concerned with *ritual impurity*, not acts that are inherently evil or a violation of the Commandments. An abomination is to be avoided because the Gentiles do it.

In between Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13

- Lev 19:18, “You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.”
- Jesus’ 2nd Greatest Commandment
- “If you’re going to pick and choose, why not choose love?”

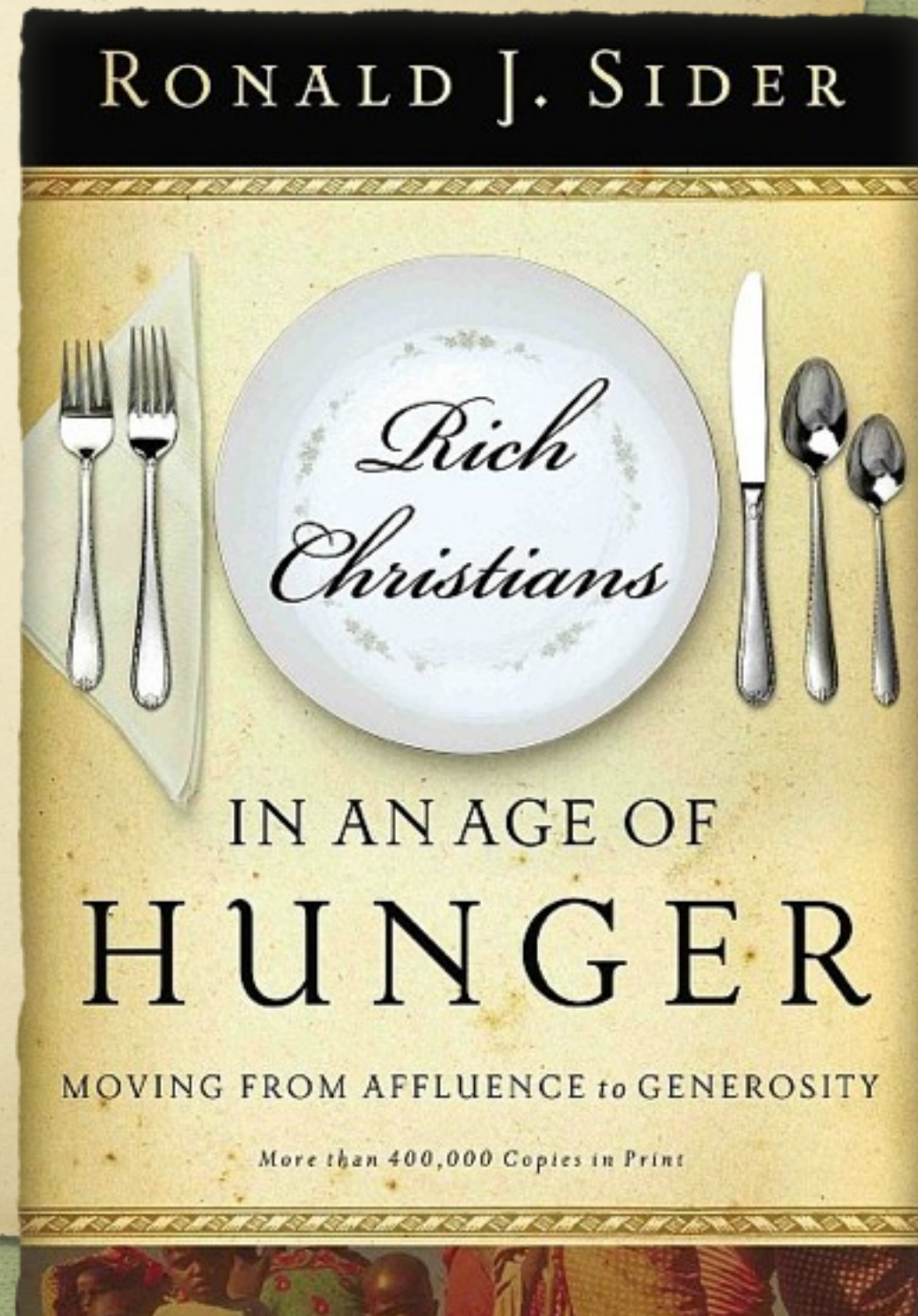
Illegal(?) Aliens

- Lev 19:33-34, “When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”



Jubilee

- Seven Sabbaths of years are counted (total 49) and the 50th is sanctified.
- No evidence of this ever having been practiced.



➤ **Leviticus 25:** “3 Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in their yield; 4 but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of complete rest for the land, a sabbath for the Lord: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard..... 8 You shall count off seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty-nine years. 9 Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud; on the tenth day of the seventh month—on the day of atonement—you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land. 10 And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family. 11 That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: you shall not sow, or reap the aftergrowth, or harvest the unpruned vines. 12 For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you: you shall eat only what the field itself produces. 13 In this year of jubilee you shall return, every one of you, to your property. 14 When you make a sale to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor, you shall not cheat one another. 15 When you buy from your neighbor, you shall pay only for the number of years since the jubilee; the seller shall charge you only for the remaining crop years. ...24 Throughout the land that you hold, you shall provide for the redemption of the land.”

Last Verse

➤ Leviticus 27:34: “These are the commandments that the Lord gave to Moses for the people of Israel on Mount Sinai”

Wilderness Wanderings: Learning to Travel in Numbers

- Hebrew Title: *Bemidbar* (literally, “in the wilderness.”).
- Most of the generation that experienced the liberation from slavery in Exodus dies.
- New generation looks eagerly forward to the promised land of Canaan.
- English Title: “Numbers” from the censuses that occur in chapters 1 and 26.



Outline

- Num 1:1-10:10 Wilderness of Sinai (preparation for journey)
- Num 10:11-20:13 Vicinity of Kadesh (bulk of the 40 years)
- Num 20:14 – 36:13 from Kadesh to the steppes of Moab (preparation for the conquest and settlement of the Promised land)



Priestly Benediction

(Numbers 6:24-26)

- “The Lord bless you and keep you;
- the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
- the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.”

יְבָרֶכֶךָ ה' וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ
יְאָר ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּזְדַּבֶּר
יְשִׁיא ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ
שָׁלוֹם

Numbers 11: Manna & Quails

- Manna is from the Hebrew for “What is it?”
- Food God provided to the Hebrews while they sojourned in the wilderness for forty years.

יְבָרֵךְ ה' וַיִּשְׁמְרֵךְ
יְאֵר ה' פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ וַיַּזְדַּק
יֵשׁוּעָה ה' פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׁם לְךָ
שָׁלוֹם

God as Mother

- Numbers 11:12, “Did I conceive all this people? Did I give birth to them, that you should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a sucking child,' to the land that you promised on oath to their ancestors?”
- Deuteronomy 32:18 warns against forgetting “the God who gave you birth.”
- Job 38:29, God answers, “From whose womb did the ice come forth, and who has given birth to the frost of heaven?”
- Isaiah 42:14 God says, “For a long time I have held my peace ... now I will cry out like a woman in labor.”
- Isaiah 46:3 God beseeches, “Listen to me, O house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been borne by me from your birth, carried from the womb.”
- Isaiah 49:15, God inquires, “Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you.”
- Isaiah 66:13, God promises, “As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you.”
- Psalm 131:2, “I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; my soul is like the weaned child that is with me.”

Spy Reports

- Numbers 13:32, “So they brought to the Israelites an unfavorable report of the land that they had spied out, saying, ‘The land that we have gone through as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people that we saw in it are of great size.’”
- Num 13:33, “There we saw the Nephilim (the Anakites come from the Nephilim); and to ourselves we seemed like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.” (*Gen 6:4*)
- Num 14:1-10 minority reports from Caleb and Joshua of “an exceedingly good land”; people favor the bad news.
- Num 16:13-14 call Egypt, “the land flowing with milk and honey” —trusting in known past versus unknown future promise...creating new Egypts/Pharoahs for ourselves.

Meribah

- Numbers 20:11-13, 11 Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff; water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their livestock drank. 12 But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me, to show my holiness before the eyes of the Israelites, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them." 13 These are the waters of Meribah, where the people of Israel quarreled with the Lord, and by which he showed his holiness." [Attribute miracle to Moses, not to God.]
- Deut 32:48-52, 48 On that very day the Lord addressed Moses as follows: 49 "Ascend this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, across from Jericho, and view the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites for a possession; 50 you shall die there on the mountain that you ascend and shall be gathered to your kin, as your brother Aaron died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his kin; 51 because both of you broke faith with me among the Israelites at the waters of Meribath-kadesh in the wilderness of Zin, by failing to maintain my holiness among the Israelites. 52 Although you may view the land from a distance, you shall not enter it—the land that I am giving to the Israelites."



Shirley Kim

Balaam's talking donkey

(Num 22)

Choose the Path of Life: Interpreting Deuteronomy

- Transition: At the end of Numbers, Israel is encamped in the plains of Moab, prepared for an attack upon Canaan from the east by crossing the Jordan.
- Introduction: 5th and final book in the Torah (or Pentateuch). Farewell address(es) — actually three addresses — of Moses.

Theme of Deuteronomy: Choose Life either inside or outside of covenant (Deut 30:15-20)...*DH*

➤ “15 See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. 16 If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. 17 But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, 18 I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. 19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you **life and death, blessings and curses**. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, 20 loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

Title

- Jewish: from opening words *'elleh haddevarim* (“these are the words”), or shorted to *devarim* (“words”).
- Deuteronomy 1:1, “These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel beyond the Jordan—in the wilderness”
- Septuagint: *deuteronomion* (or Vulgate *Deuteronomium*), “second law” or “repeated law.”
- Misleading translation of Deuteronomy 17:18, “When he has taken the throne of his kingdom, he shall have a **copy** of this law written for him in the presence of the levitical priests.”
- Not a “second law,” but a **retelling** and **reapplication** of the law given at Mt. Sinai (which is called Mt. Horeb in Deuteronomy).

Deuteronomistic History

- *Starts* in Deut 1:1, *through* Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, and *concludes* with 2 Kings 24.
- “D” source in the JEPD of Wellhausen’s Documentary Hypothesis.
- Revises previous traditions according to the principle’s of Hezekiah’s-Josiah’s reforms (*kings of Judah*).
- 2 Kings 22:11, “When the king heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes.” Prompted Josiah’s sweeping reforms in 621 BCE.

Terms

- Deuteronomic: Books of Deuteronomy, the fifth book of the Bible
- Deuteronomistic History (DH): complex of texts (Deut – 2 Kings)
- Deuteronomist (Dtr): exilic author/compiler, who unified the material of Deuteronomy and the Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Sam, 1-2 Kings) —
- Or perhaps there was a “Deuteronomistic School” instead of single editor.
- Deuteronomy may have originally been an introduction to the Deuteronomistic history.

Kyle McCarter, Jr. on Deuteronomism

- “Style of theology that drew its major tenets from the teachings of the Book of Deuteronomy.
- Stressed centralization of worship in Jerusalem,
- obedience to Deuteronomic law,
- and the avoidance of any kind of apostasy,
- all according to a rigid system of reward and punishment.

If obedient, then blessing (Deut 7:12-20)

➤ “12 If you heed these ordinances, by diligently observing them, the Lord your God will maintain with you the covenant loyalty that he swore to your ancestors; 13 he will love you, bless you, and multiply you; he will bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your wine and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flock, in the land that he swore to your ancestors to give you. 14 You shall be the most blessed of peoples, with neither sterility nor barrenness among you or your livestock. 15 The Lord will turn away from you every illness; all the dread diseases of Egypt that you experienced, he will not inflict on you, but he will lay them on all who hate you. 16 You shall devour all the peoples that the Lord your God is giving over to you, showing them no pity; you shall not serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you. 17 If you say to yourself, "These nations are more numerous than I; how can I dispossess them?" 18 do not be afraid of them. Just remember what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt, 19 the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs and wonders, the mighty hand and the outstretched arm by which the Lord your God brought you out. The Lord your God will do the same to all the peoples of whom you are afraid. 20 Moreover, the Lord your God will send the pestilence against them, until even the survivors and the fugitives are destroyed.

➤ Contrast wisdom literature: bad things happen to good people & bad people prosper.

Deuteronomy 6:5

Shema (“Hear!”)

- Became important prayer, *not* because text itself emphasizes it, but because of early rabbinic interpretation.
- “6 Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. 7 Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.”



Texts of Terror

- Male sexual violence: Man fined and has to marry victim.
- Deut 22:28-29, “28 If a man meets a virgin who is not engaged, and seizes her and lies with her, and they are caught in the act, 29 the man who lay with her shall give fifty shekels of silver to the young woman's father, and she shall become his wife. Because he violated her he shall not be permitted to divorce her as long as he lives.”
- Written by a man from a male perspective. It is the bride's father's rights that have been violated—and he must be compensated.

Texts of Terror

- Female sexual Violence: woman gets hand chopped off
- Deut 25:11, “11 If men get into a fight with one another, and the wife of one intervenes to rescue her husband from the grip of his opponent by reaching out and seizing his genitals, 12 you shall cut off her hand; show no pity.
- Wouldn't equivalent of previous text be cutting off a certain male appendage?!

Upcoming Classes

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- Session 6: Samuel and Kings
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