

**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](http://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 5: Joshua and Judges [Ruth *not* one of the former prophets, so she will be covered later as one of the “Five Scrolls”]
- Session 6: Samuel and Kings
- *(Topics will be adjusted, depending on how far we get each session.)*
- Fall 2014: 6-week Class finishing Hebrew Bible, starting with the Prophets.



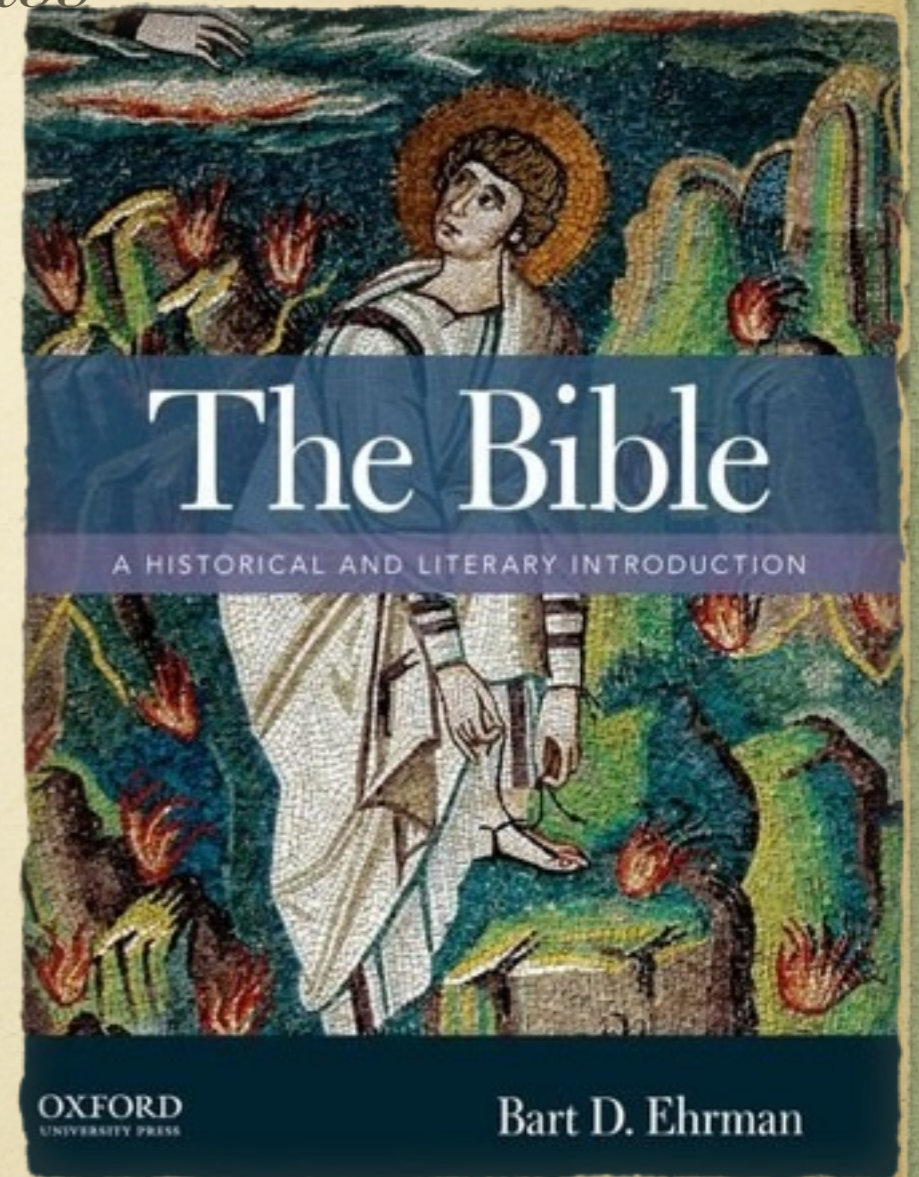
Alternately: Read primary text...*and* annotations  
...*or just come to class*

❧ Chapter 1: What is the Bible? And Why Is It So Hard to Understand?

❧ Chapter 2: Genesis: The Contents of Genesis and the Problems They Pose  
Authorship: Who Wrote the Pentateuch?  
Oral Traditions and Cultural Parallels

❧ Chapter 3: From Egypt to the Promised Land: Exodus to Deuteronomy

❧ Chapter 4: The Deuteronomistic History  
Joshua to 2 Kings





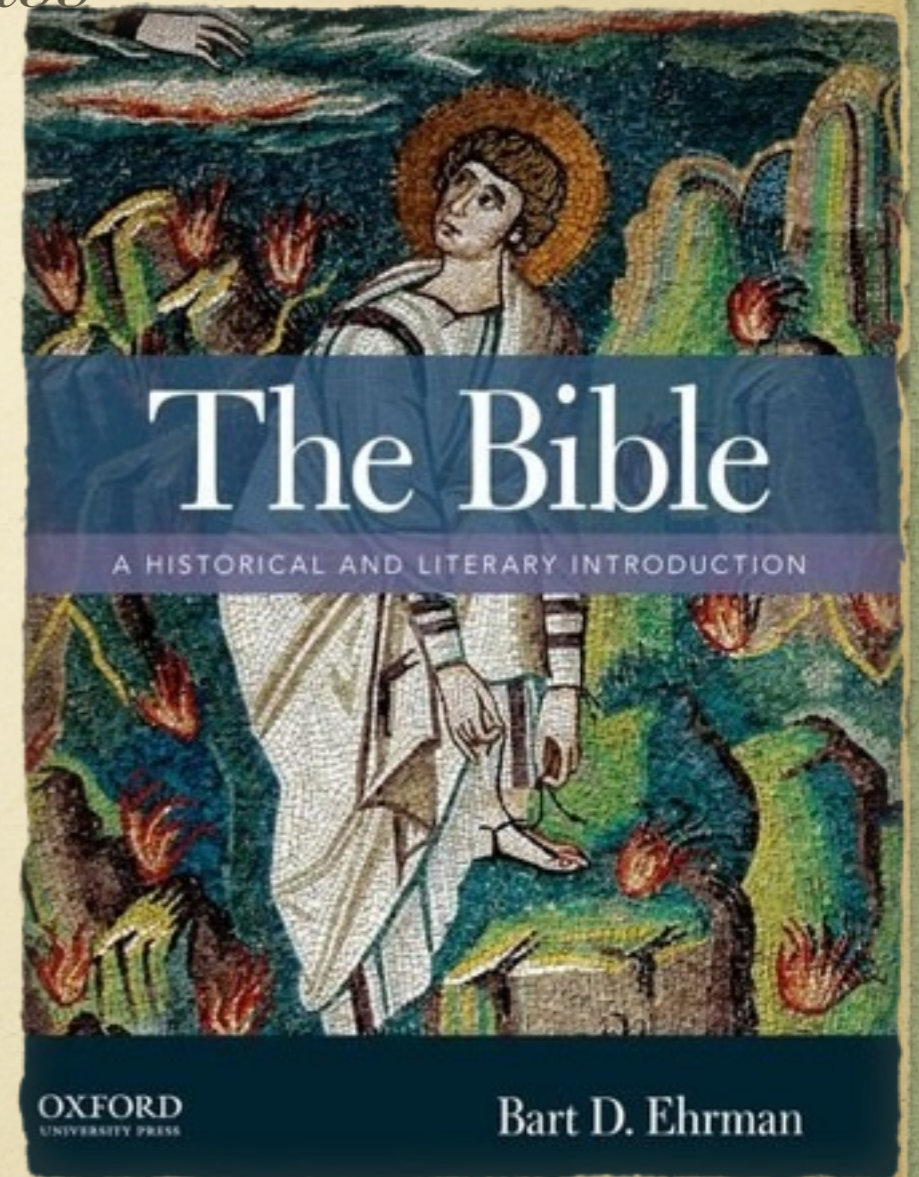
Alternately: Read primary text...*and* annotations  
...*or just come to class*

➤ Chapter 5: The Early Israelite Prophets: Amos, Isaiah of Jerusalem, Jeremiah, Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk

➤ Chapter 6: The Historians and Prophets of Exile and Return: Ezra and Nehemiah, Second Isaiah, Joel, Obadiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Third Isaiah, Malachi

➤ Chapter 7: Poets and Story Tellers of Ancient Israel: Psalms, Lamentations, Song of Songs, Ruth, Esther, Jonah, Daniel, 1 and 2 Chronicles

➤ Chapter 8: Wisdom and Apocalyptic Literature: Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Selections of AL



Fall 2014

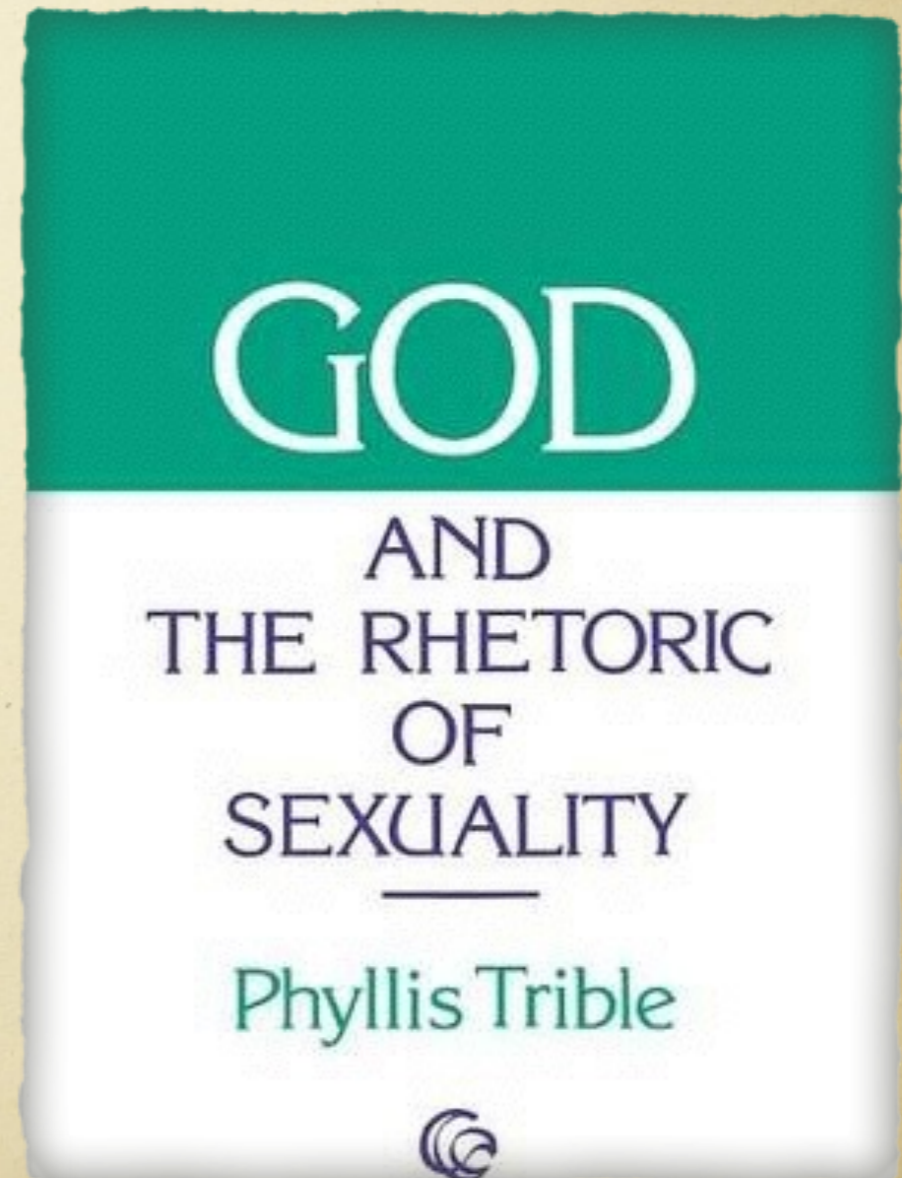


“Where *God* is male, *male* is God.”

-Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father*

➤ "Hebrew grammar employs masculine pronouns for God. Though grammatical gender decides neither sexuality nor theology, these distinctions are difficult, if not impossible, to maintain in our hearing and understanding. Consequently, masculine pronouns reinforce a male image of God, an image that obscures, even obliterates, female metaphors for deity. The effect is detrimental for faith and its participants. In my own writing, I avoid pronouns for deity."

➤ God/Goddess, Lord/Lady





# “The Gospel of Jesus’s Wife”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/10/science/scrap-of-papyrus-referring-to-jesus-wife-is-likely-to-be-ancient-scientists-say.html>

- A faded fragment of papyrus unveiled by a Harvard Divinity School historian in 2012 has been tested by scientists who conclude in a journal that the ink and papyrus are very likely ancient, and not a modern forgery.
- Contains a phrase never before seen in any piece of Scripture: “Jesus said to them, ‘My wife...’ ”
- The papyrus fragment has now been analyzed by professors of electrical engineering, chemistry and biology at Columbia University, Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who reported that it resembles other ancient papyri from the fourth to the eighth centuries.





# “The Gospel of Jesus’s Wife”

- The test results do not prove that Jesus had a wife or disciples who were women, only that the fragment is more likely a snippet from an ancient manuscript than a fake.
- Karen L. King, the historian at Harvard Divinity School who gave the papyrus its name and fame, has said all along that it should not be regarded as evidence that Jesus married, only that early Christians were actively discussing celibacy, sex, marriage and discipleship.
- The Harvard Theological Review, which is publishing Dr. King’s long-delayed, peer-reviewed paper online on Thursday, is also publishing a rebuttal by Leo Depuydt, a professor of Egyptology at Brown University, who declares the fragment so patently fake that it “seems ripe for a Monty Python sketch.”





## “The Gospel of Jesus’s Wife”

- Very unusual to test the ink and papyrus of a fragment so small — this one is 4 by 8 centimeters — because it can damage the item, papyrologists say. The authenticity and dates of other famous fragments were determined by paleographers examining the handwriting.
- Analyzed at Columbia University using micro-Raman spectroscopy to determine the chemical composition of the ink. James T. Yardley, a professor of electrical engineering, said in an interview that the carbon black ink on this fragment was “perfectly consistent with another 35 or 40 manuscripts that we’ve looked at,” that date from 400 B.C. to A.D. 700 or 800. At M.I.T.’s Center for Materials Science and Engineering, Timothy M. Swager, a chemistry professor, and two students used infrared spectroscopy to determine whether the ink showed any variations or inconsistencies. “
- The main thing was to see, did somebody doctor this up?” Dr. Swager said in an interview. “And there is absolutely no evidence for that. It would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible.”



## For more information:

<http://gospelofjesusswife.hds.harvard.edu/>

- However, Dr. Depuydt, the Egyptologist at Brown University, said that testing the fragment was irrelevant and that he saw “no need to inspect it.” He said he decided based on the first newspaper photograph that the fragment was forged because it contained “gross grammatical errors,” and each word in it matched writing in the Gospel of Thomas, an early Christian text discovered in Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945. “It couldn’t possibly be coincidence,” he said. A forger could easily create carbon black ink by mixing candle soot and oil, he said: “An undergraduate student with one semester of Coptic can make a reed pen and start drawing lines.”
- But the scientists say that modern carbon black ink looks very different under their instruments.
- And Dr. King said that her “big disappointment” is that so far, the story of the fragment has focused on forgery, not on history.



# Torah

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy





# Nevi'im ("Prophets")

THE JEWISH BIBLE

## TANAKH THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

THE NEW JPS  
TRANSLATION  
ACCORDING TO  
THE TRADITIONAL  
HEBREW TEXT

TORAH · NEVI'IM · KETHUVIM



# Torah/Prophets

[Torah-----] [-----Former Prophets-----]

**Gen Ex Lev Num Deut Josh Judges Samuel Kings**

[Tetrateuch-----][-----Deuteronomistic History (DH)-----]

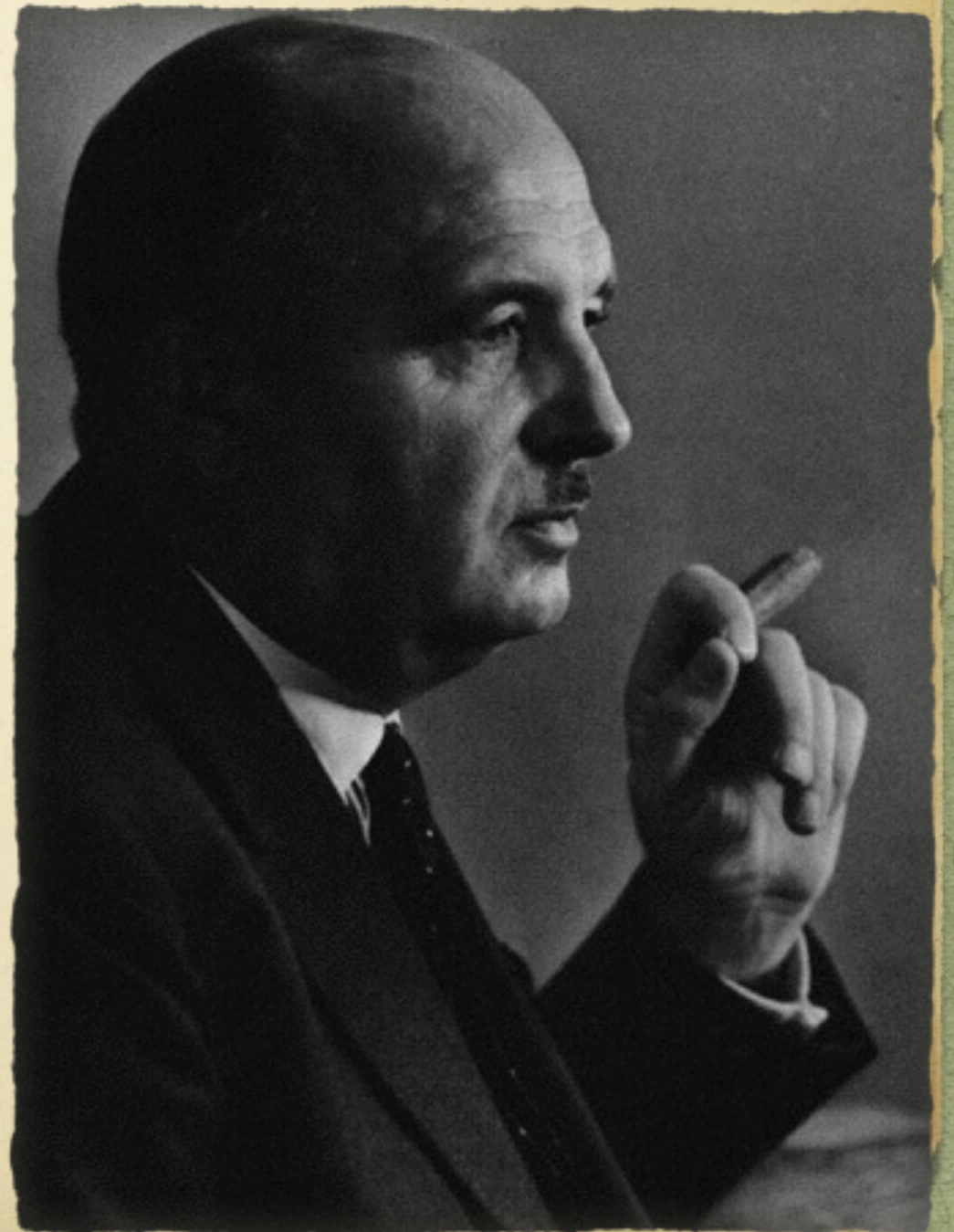
[Hexateuch-----]

- **Former Prophets**: (Joshua, Judges, Sam, Kgs) - because “*before*” latter prophets in *canonical* (not chronological) order.
- **Torah/Pentateuch**: current canonical division
- **Deuteronomistic History**: Influence of Deuteronomy
- **Tetrateuch**: *Shrinks “Torah”* to four books (Gen-Num as unit of JEP sources) because D mostly only in Deuteronomy.
- **Hexateuch**: *Expands “Torah”* to include Joshua (the claiming of the Promised land). Brings closure to the Torah, which currently ends with expectation of Moses on Nebo and Israelites poised on bank of Jordan.
- Canonical tradition vs. more “natural” break points.



# Martin Noth (1943)

- First scholar to develop the theory of the Deuteronomistic History.
- Argued that the DH was composed/edited to explain why the nation of Israel was destroyed by the Assyrians in the 8th c. BCE.
- DH focuses on the idolatry of Israel's kings and people, and explains why Yahweh allowed judgment to come upon them.
- Written to the Judean refugees of the Babylonian exile. Justified God and at least provided the assurance(?) to the exiles that what happened to them happened for a reason.





# Gerhard von Rad (1962)

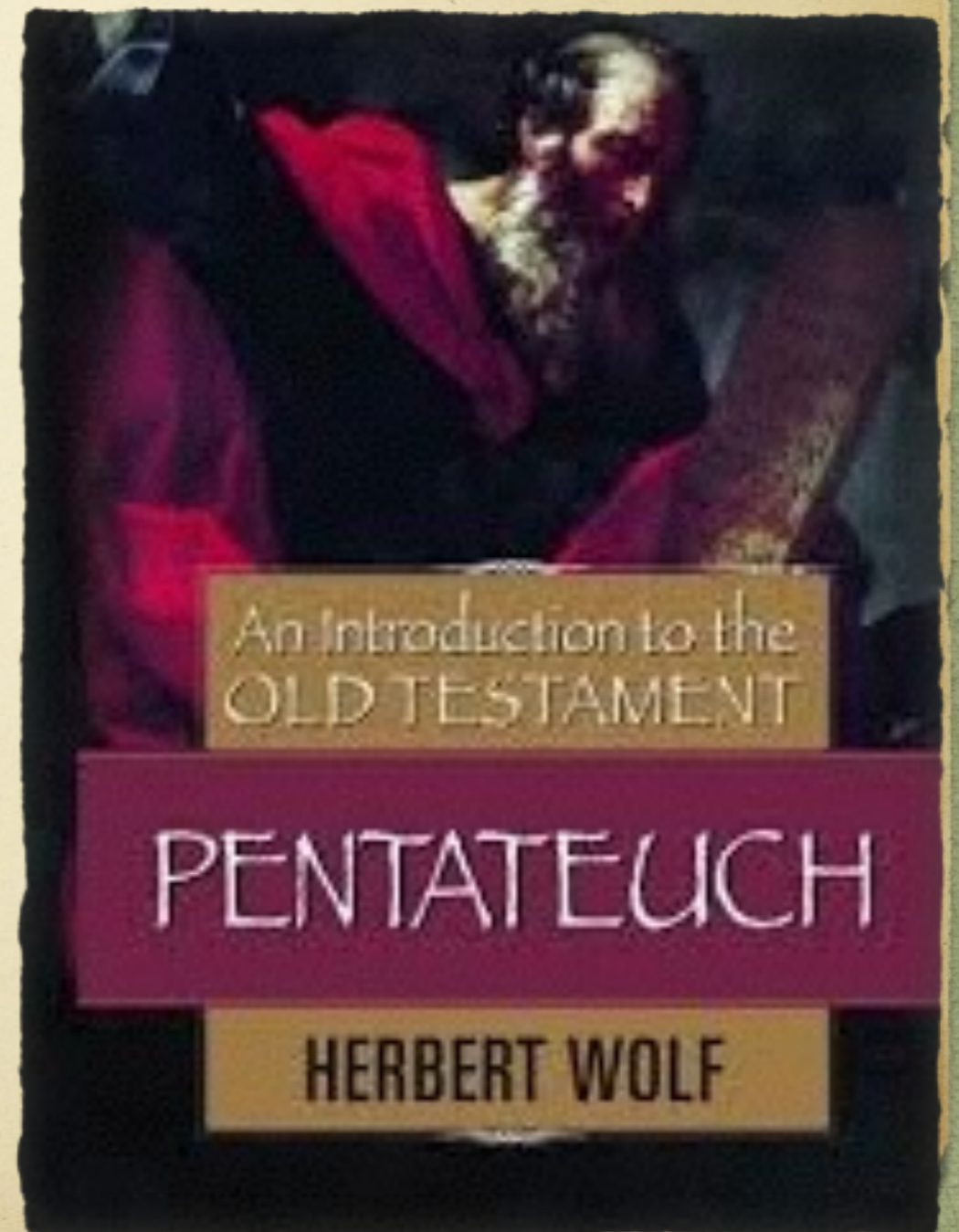
- In addition to Noth's theory of DH's the theme of judgment, von Rad emphasized the *hope for the future* that was based on the covenant.
- Argued that the *release of Jehoiachin from prison* (note on which 2 Kings ends) was intended to inspire the exiles.





# Herbert Wolf (1982)

- More purpose to the DH than justifying God's judgment or providing hope based on the covenant.
- Viewed the DH as essentially a call to repentance.





# Transition

➤ **Deuteronomy 34:** 1 Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho, and the Lord showed him the whole land: Gilead as far as Dan, 2 all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, 3 the Negeb, and the Plain—that is, the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees—as far as Zoar. 4 The Lord said to him, "This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, "I will give it to your descendants'; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there." 5 Then Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, at the Lord's command. 6 He was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor, but no one knows his burial place to this day. 7 Moses was one hundred twenty years old when he died; his sight was unimpaired and his vigor had not abated. 8 The Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the period of mourning for Moses was ended. 9 Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him; and the Israelites obeyed him, doing as the Lord had commanded Moses. 10 Never since has there arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face. 11 He was unequalled for all the signs and wonders that the Lord sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants and his entire land, 12 and for all the mighty deeds and all the terrifying displays of power that Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

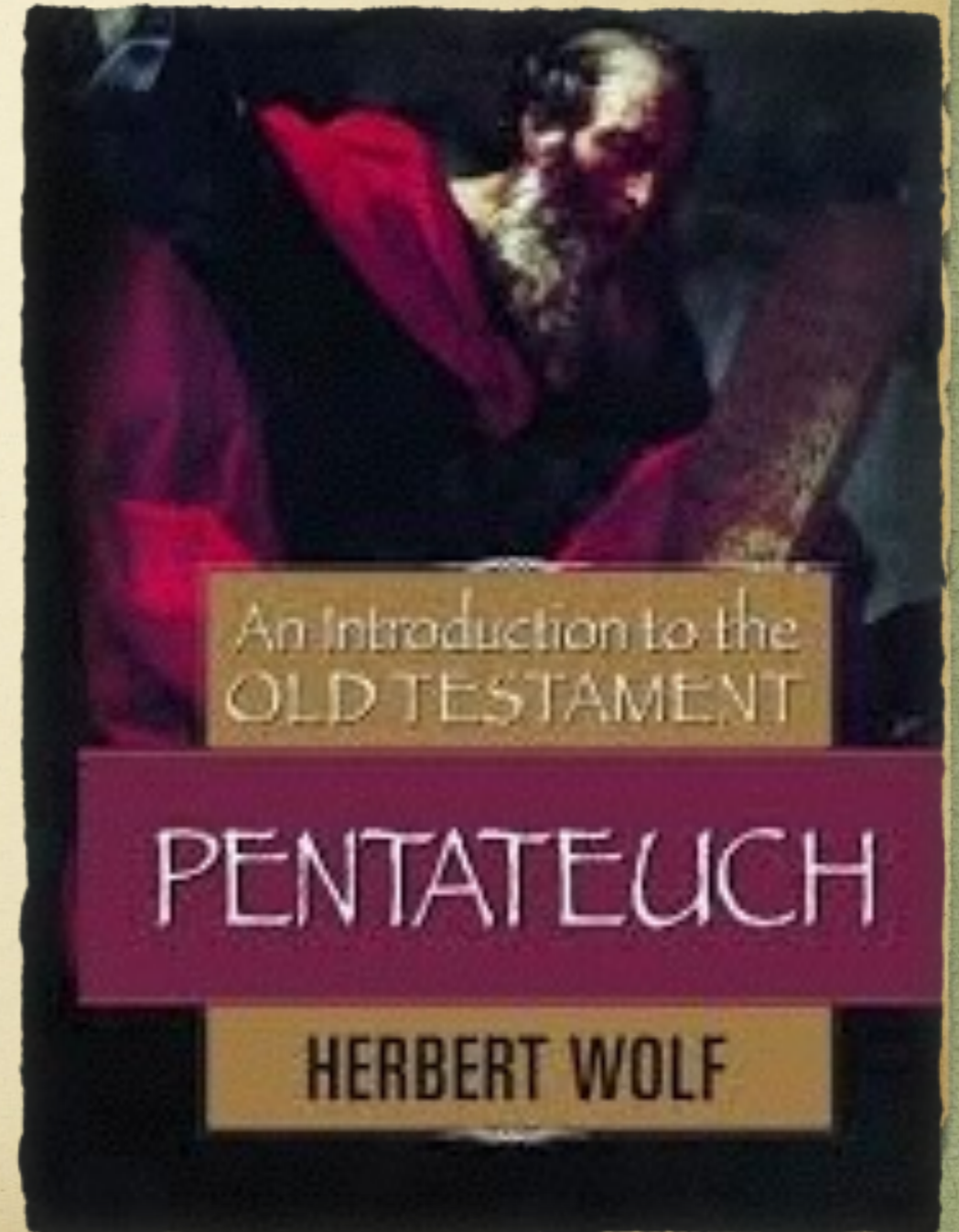
➤ Joshua 1: Death of Moses



## Considering the Conquest:

How the Israelites came to smite the Canaanites, or, as a scholar might say: “that's not how it happened at all”

- More purpose to the DH than justifying God's judgment or providing hope based on the covenant.
- Viewed the DH as essentially a call to repentance.





# Outline of Joshua

- Chapters 1-12: Conquest (*Military victory of Israelites over Canaanites*)
- Chapters 13-21: Settlement (*splitting the Canaanite territories amongst 12 tribes*)
- Chapters 22-24: Joshua's Farewell Address





# Conquest

- Tradition Summary: overwhelming, united victory
- Close reading: ‘settlement’ was a long and complex process
- Joshua 13:13, “Yet the Israelites did *not* drive out the Geshurites or the Maacathites; but Geshur and Maacath live within Israel to this day.”
- Joshua 15:63, “but the people of Judah could *not* drive out the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so the Jebusites live with the people of Judah in Jerusalem to this day.”





- Good Story of Liberation: slaves both emancipated and inherit a “good and broad land...flowing with milk and honey.” [*40 acres and a mule?!*]
- Shadow: Was it really necessary for God to slaughter all the firstborn children of the Egyptians in the process? Why the innocent children? And what about drowning the Egyptian army? If you're God, isn't there another way?
- Shadow: Deuteronomy 7:1-2, “1 When the Lord your God brings you into the land that you are about to enter and **occupy**, and he clears away many nations before you—the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations mightier and more numerous than you— 2 and when the Lord your God gives them over to you and you defeat them, then you must **utterly destroy** them. Make no covenant with them and show them **no mercy**.”



# Apocalypse Now

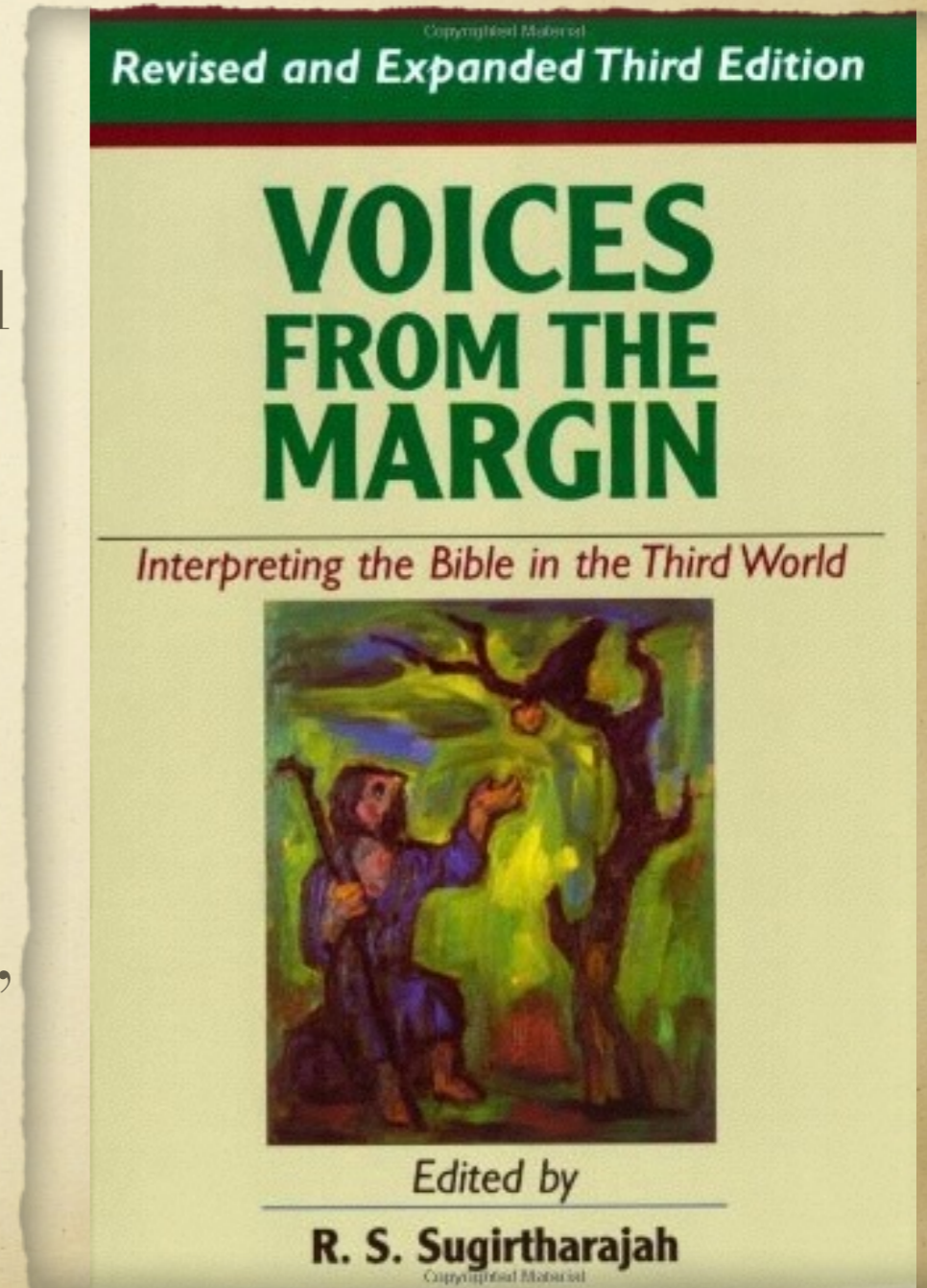
- “Terminate with extreme prejudice.”
- “I love the smell of napalm in the morning.... Smells like victory.”
- Colonialism





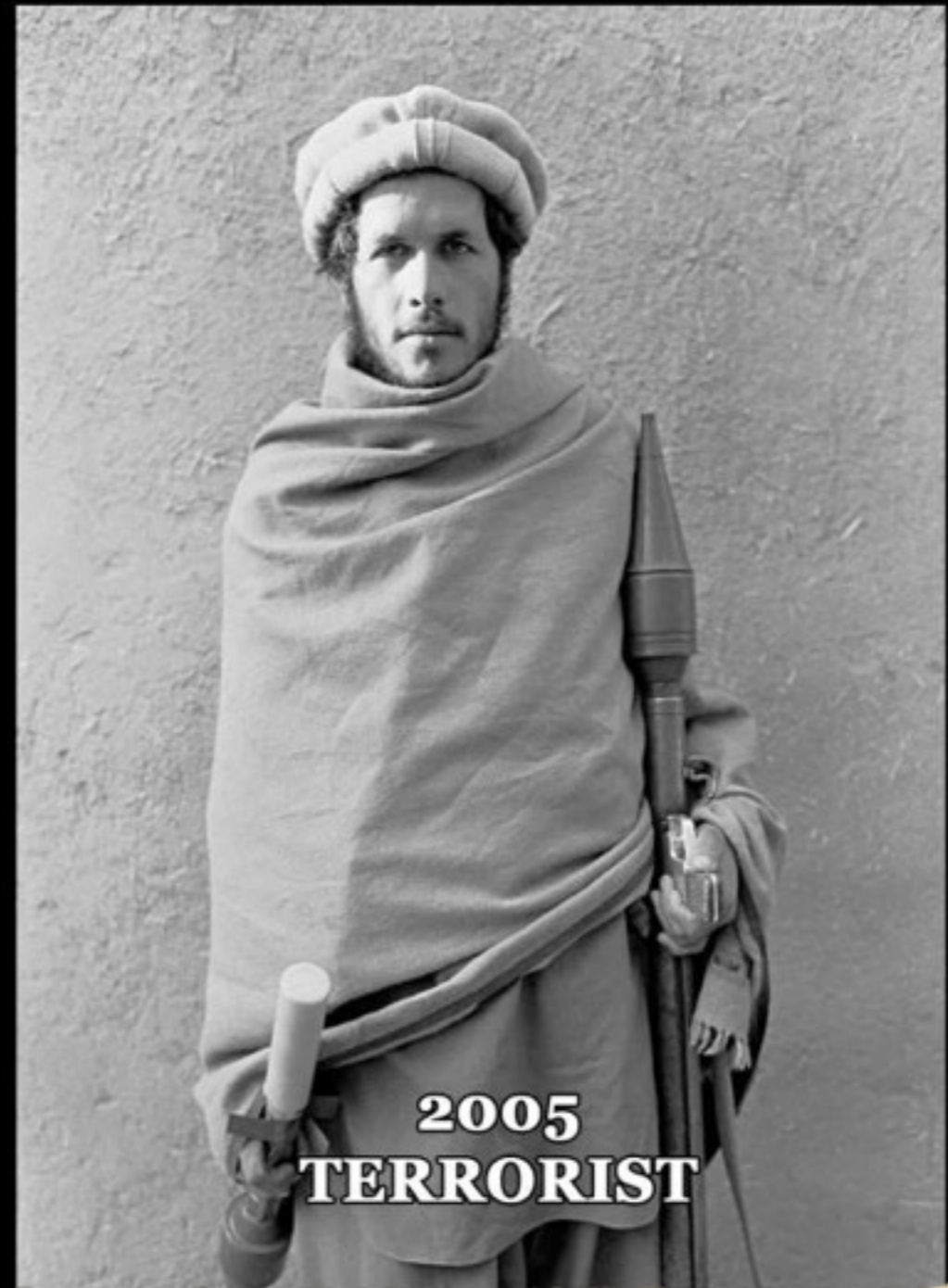
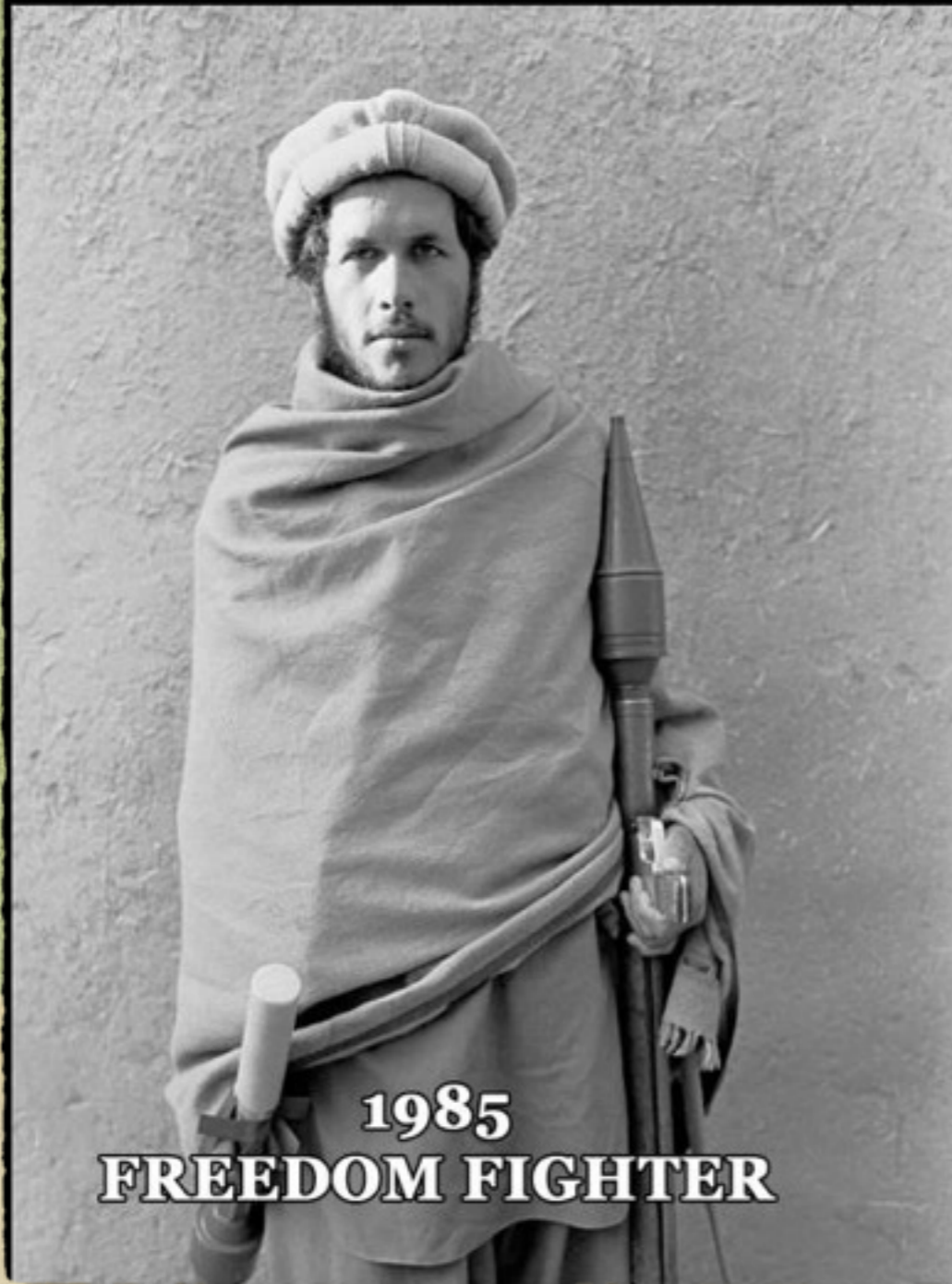
Robert Allen Warrior,  
“A Native American Perspective:  
Canaanites, Cowboys, and Indians”

- Early colonists in the U.S. were inspired by the Exodus account.
- “Many Puritan preachers were fond of referring to Native Americans as Amelkites and Canaanites—in other words, people who, if they would not be converted, were worthy of annihilation.”





**CAN YOU SPOT THE DIFFERENCE?**

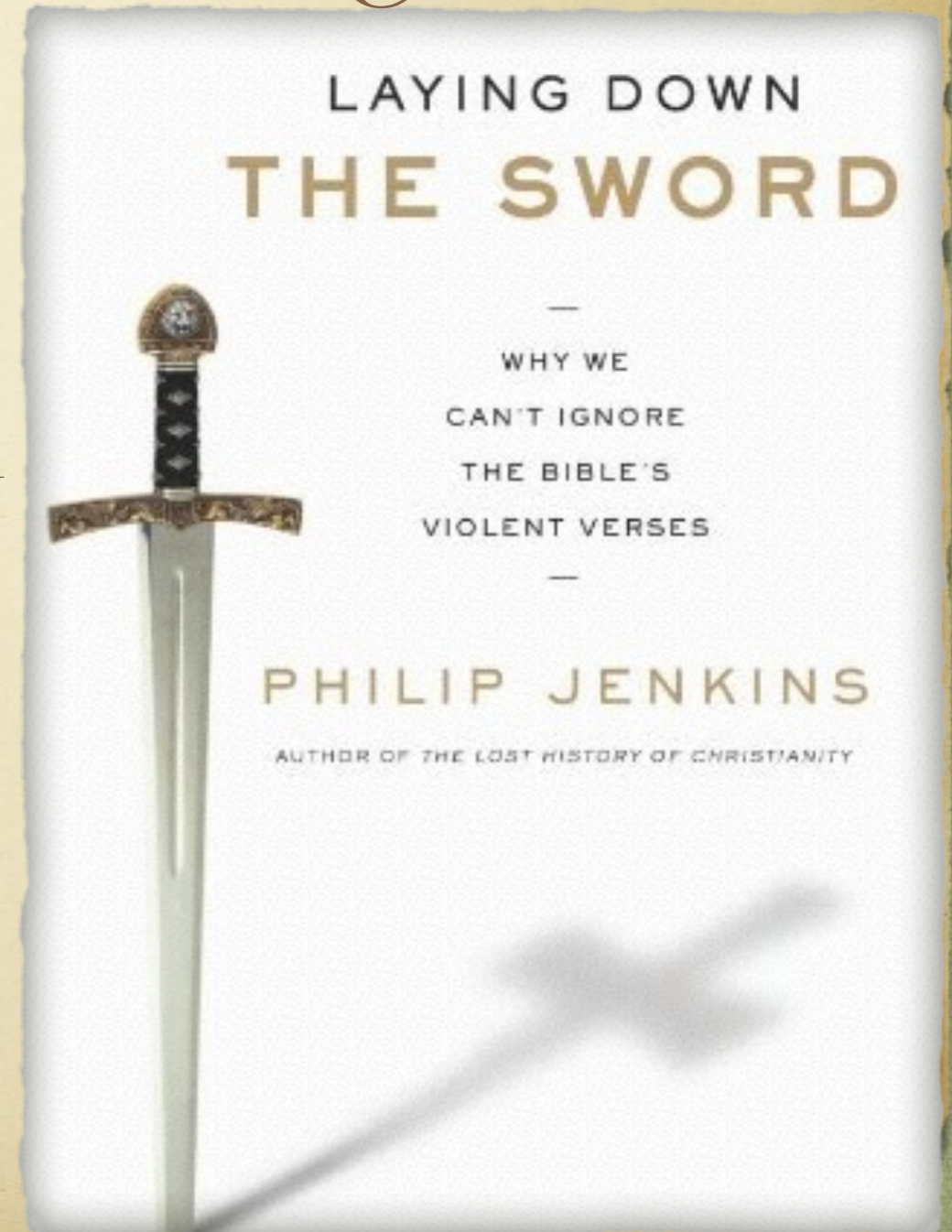


One person's "terrorist"  
is another's "freedom fighter"



# High/Low Points in Scripture: *Picking & Choosing*

➤ “There are two kinds of Christianity, along with two kinds of Islam, Judaism, and every other religion and non-religion too: one of social control and one of social transformation; one to hold people down, one to lift them up; one an opiate to pacify people into compliance, the other a stimulant to empower people to imagine a better world, a better future, a better life — giving them the courage to live in peaceful defiance of violent, corrupt, and greedy powers-that-be. Neither kind is perfect, and both kinds contain good and sincere people.” —Brian McLaren





# *REPRISE*: Conquest

- Tradition Summary: overwhelming, united victory
- Close reading: ‘settlement’ was a long and complex process
- Joshua 13:13, “Yet the Israelites did *not* drive out the Geshurites or the Maacathites; but Geshur and Maacath live within Israel to this day.”
- Joshua 15:63, “but the people of Judah could *not* drive out the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so the Jebusites live with the people of Judah in Jerusalem to this day.”





## Model 1 of 3:

# Military Conquest

- Scholars: W.F. Albright (1949) and G.E. Wright (1962)
- Theory: Mostly accept and support the **essential historical accuracy** of the Joshua account by relating it to modern archaeological findings.
- Suggests that Joshua led a **core group of Hebrews** who had escaped from Egypt into Transjordan and Canaan and secured their presence in the land.
- Claim the **evidence of a sudden and violence destruction in the 13th century BCE** (“Exodus in 1300”) can be found at several city sites. The change in technique and level of material culture correlates with the transition from a sophisticated Canaanite occupation to a less-developed Israelite takeover.
- Critique: key sites of **Jericho and Ai** do not evidence destruction at the expected time.
- Response: Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.



## Model 2 of 3: Migration

- Scholars: M. Noth (1960) and M. Weippert (1971)
- Denies any significant military action apart perhaps from a few **minor skirmishes**.
- Instead, over a span of centuries, groups of semi-nomadic herders began to settle in those regions of Canaan that were capable of sustaining a sedentary agricultural way of life. The entity called Israel took shape after such groups settled following a period of peaceful infiltration. They derived their unity, *not* from a common ancestry, but from a common sociological and theological perspective. The twelve tribes joined together around a central sanctuary under Joshua.



## Model 3 of 3:

# Internal Revolt

- Scholars: G. Mendenhall (1962/2001) and N.K. Gottwald (1979)
- At most only a **minimal incursion of foreign groups** from outside of Canaan.
- Predominantly, the birth of Israel was the result of **internal political upheaval and social revolution**.
- Joshua and a small group of Hebrews were the **catalyst** for the insurrection.
- Hebrew *under* the “Cannanite umbrella”



# Joshua 24

(Canaanite similarities showing)

15 Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.... He is a jealous God.... 20 If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good." 21 And the people said to Joshua, "No, we will serve the Lord!"



## Reading Judges:

# Telling Sad Stories, Interpreting Texts of Terror

- Moses (*the leader of the Exodus*) and Joshua (*the leader of the Conquest*) are dead
- David (*ruler of the United Kingdom*) is yet to come.
- Transitional time of the Judges (c. 1200 – 1020 B.C.E.)
- *After Exodus/Conquest through the birth of Samuel...then onto Saul and David in Samuel and Kings.*

## TEXTS OF TERROR

Literary-Feminist Readings  
of Biblical Narratives

---

Phyllis Trible



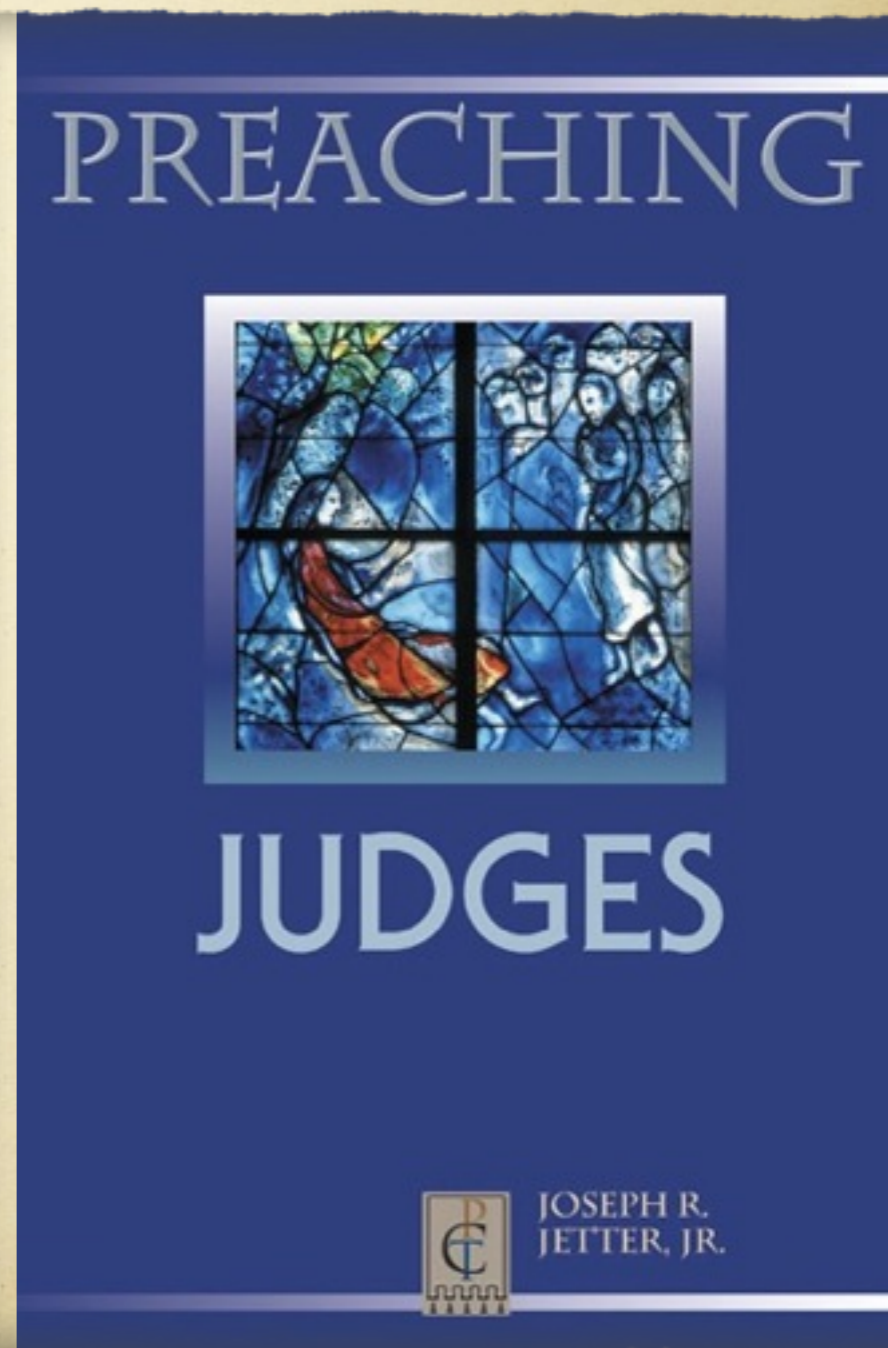
OVERTURES TO BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

1984



# Reading Judges: Telling Sad Stories, Interpreting Texts of Terror

- Joshua 2:1 - Prostitutes “spent the night there” (literally “lay down”)
- Joshua 5:8 - Circumcision
- Joshua 10:13-14 - Sun stops
- Joshua 10:39ff; 11:19-20ff - annihilation
- Joshua 12:7-24 Counting the kings one-by-one





- Title: Outside of the introduction (2:16-19), the “judge” appears only once and then it refers to the LORD (11:27).
- Leadership: local, overlapping.
- *Not* contemporary courtroom judge. Derives from the role of the protagonists of the book as people have “judged” Israel and delivered God’s judgment to Israel’s enemies: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, and Samson. Diversity of leaders in the period before the monarchy. [*“Former Prophets” ...canonically*]
- As noticeable as the *absence* of the noun “judge” is the *presence* of the noun “deliverer,” or “savior” (in relation to Othniel, Ehud, Tola, and Samson), which could be alternative names for the book of Judges.
- Alternatively, “rulers or leaders or chieftains.”



# Incomplete Conquest

- Judges 1, “1 After the death of Joshua, the Israelites inquired of the Lord, "Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?”
- Canaanites are apparently *not* as totally and easily defeated as the book of Joshua can lead the reader to believe.



# Cycle/Pattern (“Form”)

- Israel sins: turns from YHWH (“did what was evil in the eyes of the LORD”)
- Enemy oppresses Israel
- Israel repents and cries for help
- Judge sent to deliver Israel.



# Cycle/Pattern (“Form”)

➤ Judges 2:16-23, “16 Then the Lord raised up judges, who delivered them out of the power of those who plundered them. 17 Yet they did not listen even to their judges; for they lusted after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their ancestors had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the Lord; they did not follow their example. 18 Whenever the Lord raised up judges for them, the Lord was with the judge, and he delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the Lord would be moved to pity by their groaning because of those who persecuted and oppressed them. 19 But whenever the judge died, they would relapse and behave worse than their ancestors, following other gods, worshiping them and bowing down to them. They would not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. 20 So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel; and he said, "Because this people have transgressed my covenant that I commanded their ancestors, and have not obeyed my voice, 21 I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died." 22 In order to test Israel, whether or not they would take care to walk in the way of the Lord as their ancestors did, 23 the Lord had left those nations, not driving them out at once, and had not handed them over to Joshua.”



# Cycle/Pattern (“Form”)

- **Judges 4:1ff**, Deborah as Prophetess and Judge (*equal rights of women to fight in the military?!*)
- **Judges 4:17-22**, Jael
- **Judges 5:24ff**, Jael as “most blessed of women” — *used elsewhere in the Bible only for Mary the mother of Jesus in Lk 1:42 and Judith (13:18), who also murdered an enemy.*
- **Judges 5**, Song of Deborah (*Poetry form of story found in Judges 4. Song may be one of the oldest compositions in the OT — easy to remember song lyrics*)



# Jephthah's daughter

Unnamed wife - Gilead – Unnamed Prostitute

I I

Other sons Jephthah ["illegitimate"; denied primogeniture]

I

Unnamed Daughter

Judges 11: "1 Now **Jephthah** the Gileadite, the *son of a prostitute*, was a mighty warrior. **Gilead** was the *father of Jephthah*. 2 **Gilead's wife** also bore him sons; and when his **wife's sons** grew up, they *drove Jephthah away*, saying to him, "You shall *not* inherit anything in our father's house; for you are the son of another woman." 3 Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob. Outlaws collected around Jephthah and went raiding with him.





# Jephthah's daughter

- “29 Then the spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh. He passed on to Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he passed on to the Ammonites. 30 And Jephthah made a vow to the Lord, and said, "If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, 31 then whoever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return victorious from the Ammonites, shall be the Lord's, to be offered up by me as a burnt offering." 32 So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight against them; and the Lord gave them into his hand.”
- Foolish: “spirit of the LORD” already upon him. What comes to Jephthah freely, he pathologically manipulate.
- God never agrees. “Thus says the LORD” becomes “Thus says Jephthah.”



# Jephthah's daughter

- “33 He inflicted a massive defeat on them from Aroer to the neighborhood of Minnith, twenty towns, and as far as Abel-keramim. So the Ammonites were subdued before the people of Israel.”
- “34 Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah; and there was his daughter coming out to meet him with *timbrels* and with dancing. She was his only child; he had no son or daughter except her.”
- “35 When he saw her, he tore his clothes, and said, "Alas, my daughter! *You have brought me very low; you have become the cause of great trouble to me.* For I have opened my mouth to the Lord, and I cannot take back my vow." [blaming the victim]
- Jephthah mourns for himself, not for daughter



# Jephthah's daughter

36 She said to him, "My father, if you have opened your mouth to the Lord, do to me according to what has gone out of your mouth, now that the Lord has given you vengeance against your enemies, the Ammonites." 37 And she said to her father, "Let this thing be done for me: Grant me two months, so that I may go and wander on the mountains, and bewail my virginity, my companions and I." 38 "Go," he said and sent her away for two months. So she departed, she and her companions, and bewailed her virginity on the mountains. 39 At the end of two months, she returned to her father, who did with her according to the vow he had made. She had never slept with a man. So there arose an Israelite custom that 40 for four days every year the daughters of Israel would go out to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite."



# Jephthah's daughter

➤ Common for women to come out and celebrate victories

- Exodus 15:19-21, “19 When the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his chariot drivers went into the sea, the Lord brought back the waters of the sea upon them; but the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground. 20 Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. 21 And Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.”
- 1 Sam 18:5-7, “5 David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him; as a result, Saul set him over the army. And all the people, even the servants of Saul, approved. 6 As they were coming home, when David returned from killing the Philistine, the women came out of all the towns of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments. 7 And the women sang to one another as they made merry, "Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands.””



# Traditions of child sacrifice

- **2 Kings 3:26** When the king of Moab saw that the battle was going against him, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through, opposite the king of Edom; but they could not. **27** Then he took his firstborn son who was to succeed him, and offered him as a burnt offering on the wall. And great wrath came upon Israel, so they withdrew from him and returned to their own land.
- **2 Kings 16:2** Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. He did not do what was right in the sight of the Lord his God, as his ancestor David had done, **3** but he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even made his son pass through fire, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel
- **2 Kings 21:6**, “He made his son pass through fire; he practiced soothsaying and augury, and dealt with mediums and with wizards. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger.”
- **2 Kings 23:10**, “He defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of Ben-hinnom, so that no one would make a son or a daughter pass through fire as an offering to Molech.”



# Traditions of child sacrifice

- **Jeremiah 7:31**, “And they go on building the high place of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to **burn their sons and their daughters in the fire**—which I did not command, nor did it come into my mind. 2
- **Chronicles 28:3**, “and he made offerings in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and **made his sons pass through fire**, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel.” 2 Chr
- **Chronicles 33:6**, “He made his son pass through fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom, practiced soothsaying and augury and sorcery, and dealt with mediums and with wizards. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger.”



# Phyllis Tribble: Interpretive Responses

## ➤ Response 1

### ➤ Compare Gen 22 (*binding of Isaac*)

➤ Jephthah is *not* Abraham: **distrust**, not faith, has singled out his one and only child.

➤ Abraham's son of promise has a name (Isaac)

➤ Respectable family lineage: Mother (Sarah) and Grandfather (Terah)

### ➤ The daughter of Jephthah is **nameless**.

➤ Father is of illegitimate birth, mother is never mentioned, grandmother was a prostitute, grandfather can't be identified.



# Phyllis Tribble: Interpretive Responses

- Response 2: Intertextuality of Lament Ps 22, “My God, My God, why hadst thou forsaken her?”
- Response 3: Intertextuality of Memory
- 1 Cor 11:24-25, “Do this in remembrance of me.” — *remembering another innocent one who was needlessly sacrificed.*
- Mark 14:9; Mt 26:13 — Woman at Bethany with alabaster jar, “9 Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.”



# Phyllis Tribble: Interpretive Responses

- Truth: He is remembered, not her
- Judges 12:7, “Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died, and was buried in his town in Gilead.” [*Allowed to keep honorable job (next chapter!) and given honorable burial*]
- 1 Sam 12:11, “11 And the Lord sent Jerubbaal and Barak, and Jephthah, and Samson, and rescued you out of the hand of your enemies on every side; and you lived in safety.” [*Samuel praises Jephthah*]
- Hebrews 11:32-34, “32 And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, **Jephthah**, of David and Samuel and the prophets — 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.” [*Jephthah is praised in the NT*]



# Phyllis Tribble: Interpretive Responses

## ➤ Response 4: Midrash

➤ 11:40, Daughter makes her own vow during those two months, which is played out in annual vigil.

➤ Reclaim



# Shibboleth (Judges 12)

➤ Judges 12:5, “Whenever one of the fugitives of Ephraim said, “Let me go over,” the men of Gilead would say to him, “Are you an Ephraimite?” When he said, “No,” 6 they said to him, “Then say Shibboleth,” and he said, “Sibboleth,” for he could not pronounce it right. Then they seized him and killed him at the fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand of the Ephraimites fell at that time.

➤ “Shibboleth” has entered the English language and means “test word.” (identifies particular group/cause, or betray one as an outsider)

**Shibboleth**  
*Can you say it?*





# Samson (Judges 13)

- 13:1 Pattern, “1 The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.”
- 13:2-5 barren...Nazarite vow — “separated or consecrated”
- 14:6-8 lion barehanded
- 15:15-16 donkey jawbone.





# Unnamed Concubine: Ancient Domestic Violence

➤ 1 In those days, when there was no king in Israel, a **certain Levite**, residing in the *remote parts of the hill country* of Ephraim, took to himself a **concubine from Bethlehem** in Judah. 2 But his concubine became angry with him, and she went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there some four months. 3 Then her husband set out after her, to **speak tenderly to her and bring her back**. He had with him his servant and a couple of donkeys. When he reached her father's house, the girl's father saw him and **came with joy to meet him**. 4 His father-in-law, the girl's father, made him stay, and he remained with him three days; so they ate and drank, and he stayed there.



# Unnamed Concubine: Ancient Domestic Violence

5 On the fourth day they got up early in the morning, and he prepared to go; but the girl's father said to his son-in-law, "Fortify yourself with a bit of food, and after that you may go." 6 So the two men sat and ate and drank together; and the girl's father said to the man, "Why not spend the night and enjoy yourself?" 7 When the man got up to go, his father-in-law kept urging him until he spent the night there again. 8 On the fifth day he got up early in the morning to leave; and the girl's father said, "Fortify yourself." So they lingered until the day declined, and the two of them ate and drank. 9 When the man with his concubine and his servant got up to leave, his father-in-law, the girl's father, said to him, "Look, the day has worn on until it is almost evening. Spend the night. See, the day has drawn to a close. Spend the night here and enjoy yourself. Tomorrow you can get up early in the morning for your journey, and go home." 10 But the man would not spend the night; he got up and departed, and arrived opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). He had with him a couple of saddled donkeys, and his concubine was with him. 11 When they were near Jebus, the day was far spent, and the servant said to his master, "Come now, let us turn aside to this city of the Jebusites, and spend the night in it."



# Unnamed Concubine:

## Ancient Domestic Violence

➤ 12 But his master said to him, "We will not turn aside into a city of foreigners, who do not belong to the people of Israel; but we will continue on to Gibeah." 13 Then he said to his servant, "Come, let us try to reach one of these places, and spend the night at Gibeah or at Ramah." 14 So they passed on and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin. 15 They turned aside there, to go in and spend the night at Gibeah. He went in and sat down in the open square of the city, but no one took them in to spend the night. 16 Then at evening there was an old man coming from his work in the field. The man was from the hill country of Ephraim, and he was residing in Gibeah. (The people of the place were Benjaminites.)



# Unnamed Concubine: Ancient Domestic Violence

➤ 17 When the old man looked up and saw the wayfarer in the open square of the city, he said, "Where are you going and where do you come from?" 18 He answered him, "We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah to the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, from which I come. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; and I am going to my home. Nobody has offered to take me in. 19 We your servants have straw and fodder for our donkeys, with bread and wine for me and the woman and the young man along with us. We need nothing more." 20 The old man said, "Peace be to you. I will care for all your wants; only do not spend the night in the square." 21 So he brought him into his house, and fed the donkeys; they washed their feet, and ate and drank.



# Unnamed Concubine: Ancient Domestic Violence

22 While they were enjoying themselves, the men of the city, a perverse lot, surrounded the house, and started pounding on the door. They said to the old man, the master of the house, "Bring out the man who came into your house, so that we may have intercourse with him."



➤ “23 And the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, ‘No, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. Since this man is my guest, do not do this vile thing. 24 Here are my virgin daughter and his concubine; let me bring them out now. Ravish them and do whatever you want to them; but against this man do not do such a vile thing.’”

➤ Hospitality to men through violence to women.

➤ **Compare Lot’s words in Gen 19,** “6 Lot went out of the door to the men, shut the door after him, 7 and said, "I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. 8 Look, I have two daughters who have not known a man; let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please; only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof."

➤ Hospitality rules only protect males...extended even over the dead bodies of women.



➤ “25 But the men would not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine, and put her out to them. They wantonly raped her, and abused her all through the night until the morning. And as the dawn began to break, they let her go. 26 As morning appeared, the woman came and fell down at the door of the man's house where her master was, until it was light.”

➤ The first and only time since the beginning of the story that the concubine is the **subject of active verbs**, although she no longer has the power to act.

➤ There was no ancient Heartley House ([heartlyhouse.org/](http://heartlyhouse.org/))



➤ “27 In the morning her master got up, opened the doors of the house, and when he went out to go on his way, there was his concubine lying at the door of the house, with her hands on the threshold. 28 "Get up," he said to her, "we are going." But there was no answer. Then he put her on the donkey; and the man set out for his home.”

➤ Unclear if she is dead.

➤ Is he a murderer as well?

➤ Contrast Genesis 22:11-12, where angel is sent to stop the knife.



➤ “29 When he had entered his house, he took a knife, and grasping his concubine he cut her into twelve pieces, limb by limb, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. 30 Then he commanded the men whom he sent, saying, "Thus shall you say to all the Israelites, "Has such a thing ever happened since the day that the Israelites came up from the land of Egypt until this day? Consider it, take counsel, and speak out.”"

➤ 19:29-30a She is viewed as male property. No better than

➤ the **oxen that Saul slaughters and mails out** in 1 Sam 11:7 “He took a yoke of oxen, and cut them in pieces and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by messengers, saying, "Whoever does not come out after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen!" Then the dread of the Lord fell upon the people, and they came out as one.”

➤ or the **garment that Ahijah divides** in 1 Kings 11:30-32, “30 when Ahijah laid hold of the new garment he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces. 31 He then said to Jeroboam: Take for yourself ten pieces; for thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, "See, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon, and will give you ten tribes. 32 One tribe will remain his, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel.”

➤ Saying, “I will do to you as I have done to this oxen or garment or women if you do not help me.”



- Response 1 (of 2): Phyllis Tribble's intertextuality
- Mark 14:41, "Truly, the hour is at hand, and the woman is betrayed into the hands of sinners."
- "Her body has been broken and given to many. Lesser power has no woman than this, that her life is laid down by a man."
- She is dis/membered, un/remembered, NOT re/membered.



- Response 2: Reader Response Criticism
- 19:1-30, in the story, all of the men speak at some point; all the women remain silent.
- 19:30b, “Consider it, take counsel, and speak out.”
- Take action against rape, date-rape, domestic violence today



# Aftermath (Judges 20)

- Members of one tribe (Benjamin) rape and murder a concubine associated with another tribe (Judah), who is married to a member of a third tribe (Levi) living in the territory of a fourth tribe (Ephraim). The Levite sends out a call for retribution to all the tribes.



20:1ff Benjamites refuse to be punished by the tribal council for the crime against the concubine, so war is declared.

➤ 1 Then all the Israelites came out, from Dan to Beer-sheba, including the land of Gilead, and the congregation assembled in one body before the Lord at Mizpah. 2 The chiefs of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand foot-soldiers bearing arms. 3 (Now the Benjaminites heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.) And the Israelites said, "Tell us, how did this criminal act come about?" 4 The Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered, "I came to Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night. 5 The lords of Gibeah rose up against me, and surrounded the house at night. They intended to kill me, and they raped my concubine until she died. 6 Then I took my concubine and cut her into pieces, and sent her throughout the whole extent of Israel's territory; for they have committed a vile outrage in Israel. 7 So now, you Israelites, all of you, give your advice and counsel here."



20:1ff Benjamites refuse to be punished by the tribal council for the crime against the concubine, so war is declared.

8 All the people got up as one, saying, "We will not any of us go to our tents, nor will any of us return to our houses. 9 But now this is what we will do to Gibeah: we will go up against it by lot. 10 We will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand of ten thousand, to bring provisions for the troops, who are going to repay Gibeah of Benjamin for all the disgrace that they have done in Israel." 11 So all the men of Israel gathered against the city, united as one. 12 The tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What crime is this that has been committed among you? 13 Now then, hand over those scoundrels in Gibeah, so that we may put them to death, and purge the evil from Israel." But the Benjaminites would not listen to their kinsfolk, the Israelites. 14 The Benjaminites came together out of the towns to Gibeah, to go out to battle against the Israelites.



- 21:10-12, “10 So the congregation sent twelve thousand soldiers there and commanded them, "Go, put the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead to the sword, including the women and the little ones. 11 This is what you shall do; every male and every woman that has lain with a male you shall devote to destruction." 12 And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins who had never slept with a man and brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan”
- They attack the town of Jabesh-gilead, murdering all the inhabitants except 400 young virgins. These females are turned over the male remnant of Benjamin just as the Levite once turned the concubine over to the wicked men of Benjamin. The rape of 1 has become the rape of 400.



- 21:16,18, "What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since there are no women left in Benjamin?" 17 And they said, "There must be heirs for the survivors of Benjamin, in order that a tribe may not be blotted out from Israel. 18 Yet we cannot give any of our daughters to them as wives." For the Israelites had sworn, "Cursed be anyone who gives a wife to Benjamin.""
- Not a single woman, child, or beast survives. The tribe of Benjamin is virtually annihilated.



- 21:23, “23 The Benjaminites did so; they took wives for each of them from the dancers whom they abducted. Then they went and returned to their territory, and rebuilt the towns, and lived in them.”
- 400 women is not enough for 600 soldiers, so they rape 200 more. In total, the rape of 1 has become the rape of 600.



# Phyllis Tribble's intertextuality

- “Inasmuch as men has done it unto the least of *women*, they have done it unto many.” (Mt 25)
- Tribal Israel failed to direct its ear to the concubine.
- Judges 21:25, “In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes.”
- Compare 19:24, “do whatever you want to them”
- “no king” —looking towards the Davidic monarchy.



# Foreshadowing

➤ “Ironically, the first king, Saul, comes from the tribe of Benjamin, establishes his capital at Gibeah [*the city where the concubine is raped*], and delivers Jabesh-gilead [*the site of the first 400 women taken*] from the Ammonites. But undercutting Saul to advocate for the reign of David isn’t that great either.

➤ David commits adultery with Bathsheba and his her husband Uriah killed; Amnon rapes Tamar; and Absalom violates the concubines of his father. In those days, there was a king in Israel, and royalty did what has seen as right in its own eyes.”

## TEXTS OF TERROR

Literary-Feminist Readings  
of Biblical Narratives

---

Phyllis Trible



OVERTURES TO BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

1984



# Upcoming Classes

- Session 6: Samuel and Kings
- *(Topics will be adjusted, depending on how far we get each session.)*
- Fall 2014: Finish Hebrew Bible, starting with the prophets.





[frederickuu.org/about/FCC](http://frederickuu.org/about/FCC)