

Pentateuch

I. **Overview of the Pentateuch**

II. Primeval History (Gen 1-11)

III. Patriarchal History (Gen 12-50)

IV. Exodus Narrative (Ex 1-15)

V. Wilderness Narrative (Ex 16-19, 24, 32-34; Num 11-25; Deut 1-4)

VI. Laws, Lists & Land at Sinai (Ex 20-23, 25-31, 35-40; Lev 1-27; Num 1-10, 26-36; Deut 5-28)

VII. The Moab Covenant (Deut 29-34)

An overview of the Pentateuch

- When reading the Pentateuch, it can be easy to forget that we are dealing with the work of one author. I will refer to him as Moses, while acknowledging that Moses couldn't have written every last word of it (Deut 34 was likely written a thousand years later, and there appear to be a few other signs of editing, e.g. Num 12:3!)
- But because we have one author, we have one unifying structure (John Sailhamer, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch*)

NARRATIVE

- Primeval history (Gen 1 – 11)
- Patriarchal history (Gen 12 – 50)
- Exodus narrative (Ex 1 – 19)
 - Moses and the elders meet Yahweh (Ex 24)
 - The golden calf (Ex 32 – 34)
 - Worship of goat idols (Lev 17:1-9)
 - Preparations for departure from Sinai (Num 1 – 10)
- The wilderness narrative (Num 11 – 25)
- The conquest narrative (Deut 1 – 11)
 - Blessings and curses (Deut 27 – 28)
- The Moab covenant and Moses' departure (Deut 29 – 34)

LAW

- Covenant code (Ex 20 – 23)
- Priestly code part I (Ex 25 – 31)
- Priestly code part II (Ex 35 – Lev 16)
- Holiness code (Lev 17:10 – 27:34)
- Further laws (Num 26 – 36)
- Deuteronomic law (Deut 12 – 26)

An overview of the Pentateuch (cont.)

- Within that structure, there are a number of key themes that come through
 - The five major narratives place a huge emphasis on the role of faith in Israel’s life together, and as the suitable response to Yahweh’s grace to them
 - The “seed” of Gen 3 is subsequently clarified as the seed of Abraham in whom all the nations of the earth will be blessed (Gen 12, 15, 17, 22, 26) ...
 - ... and the poetic pieces of the Pentateuch, especially Gen 49 and Num 23-24, develop this further, until it is clear that a specific ruler from the tribe of Judah will bless the world, inherit the land, possess the gate of his enemies (and quite possibly crush the serpent’s head as well)
 - This overlaps closely with the theme of God’s kingdom, as expressed through the star / sceptre / lion of Judah – but the theme of God’s kingdom comes through even more clearly in one of the two other major poems, Exodus 15
 - Law and judgment are only given to humanity because of hardness of heart. The original Mosaic covenant did not have masses of laws; it was only after Israel’s rebellion that these were given (cf Gal 3)

- Look out for stories, meals and songs (Eugene Peterson)
 - Narrative sections are the main point, not legal sections
 - Meals are often important story-markers and covenant signs (Melchizedek, Abraham’s fellowship with the angels, Passover, the elders’ meal on Mount Sinai) ...
 - ... as well as demonstrations of idolatry and rebellion (after the golden calf, the demand for meat and other delicacies in the wilderness, idolatrous meals with the Moabites, etc)
 - And songs carry enormous significance within the overall story: Genesis 49, Exodus 15, Deuteronomy 32

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Tohu wa'bohu → forming and filling

Context	Forming	Filling
When the universe was created, the earth was ...	<i>Tohu</i> (= formless, shapeless, chaotic, ugly)	<i>Bohu</i> (=desolate, empty, lifeless, void)
Creation days relating to space	1 – God forms by separating light from darkness	4 – God fills space, creating the sun, moon and stars
Creation days relating to the sky	2 – God forms by separating the waters above from waters below	5 – God fills the sea and sky, creating fish and birds
Creation days relating to the land	3 – God forms by gathering the waters together into one place, and creating plants	6 – God fills the land, by creating animals and finally humans, in his image, to complete the task
Commission to mankind	“Subdue and have dominion” (= form: bring order, structure, beauty)	“Be fruitful and multiply” (= fill: bring life, and the image of God)
Description in Genesis 2	2:4-17 – work, stewardship, leadership	2:18-25 – family, sex, marriage, relationship
Primary agent (in Genesis 2-3)	Man	Woman
Curse in Genesis 3	To man, on his primary role: earth will be chaotic (3:17-19)	To woman, on her primary role: producing life will be painful (3:16)

Human beings are created in the image of God

- As the climax of the passage, man is created in the image of God, both male and female. There are all kinds of components of what it means to be made in God's image, but they include:
 - Representing God. Many ancient kings would establish statues, or images, of themselves and place them on the borders of their territories, to mark off where their kingdom began. Man serves as God's "image"
 - Resembling God. We physically look the way we do because that's what God looks like when he takes physical form (as in Ezekiel 1, Daniel 7, Joshua 5, and obviously in Jesus.) Compare the phrase "in his likeness" in Genesis 1:26
 - Ruling for God. Man is given the responsibility of governing creation on God's behalf, exercising "dominion"
 - Relating like God. As is often pointed out, the relationship in the trinity is mirrored in the way human beings form community, and have relationships with one another
 - Reproducing for God. Human beings were intended to have lots of sex and lots of children, so that the world would be filled with people bearing God's image and glory. No creature is as adaptable to different environments as a human (from Inuits to Bedouins) – we were intended to fill the earth
 - Reasoning like God. The capacity to use language and abstract reasoning is the intellectual component of what it means to be in God's image. "Get the big red hammer from my workbench"
 - Resting like God. No other creatures take one day off in seven, but we do, because we are made in the image of God. Notice that Israel observed this before the institution of the Sabbath in the ten commandments (Exodus 16)

Israel worships the real God, and the gods of the nations are useless parodies of the real thing

- The whole chapter is written in such a way as to emphasise the sovereignty of God over all the “gods” of the nations, and the total contingency of the latter
 - God is completely sovereign. He says “let there be light”, and there is light. The phrase “and it was so” keeps recurring, as if to emphasise the immediacy of creation’s response to its Creator
 - God made the sky, divided the waters, “and it was so”. In contrast, in the Babylonian *Enuma Elish*, Marduk uses half the cadaver of an evil goddess to make the sky and control the waters: “Then the lord paused to view her dead body, that he might divide the monster and do artful works. He split her like a shellfish into two parts; half of her he set up and sealed it as sky, pulled down the bar and posted guards. He bade them to allow not her waters to escape”
 - The astral deities of other Mediterranean religions are humiliated by being created on day four, after light itself (and with stars, which receive priority in *Enuma Elish*, being made last, and casually: “also stars”)
 - The writer also refers to the “greater light” and “lesser light”, rather than using the words for sun and moon, because these words were frequently names of deities in the Near East
 - In the Ugaritic creation narrative (in which Baal is the chief deity), the sea and the great sea creatures are pictured as enemies of Baal that need to be conquered. On day five, however, God simply creates the sea creatures
 - Many Mesopotamian religions would have a place for the king, or a senior official, to be in the image of the gods. What is radical about the biblical picture is that all humans bear the divine image

- In a sense, then, Genesis 1 is a polemic against the “gods” of the nations

The origin of man

- There is a fairly sudden change in style in 2:4
 - “There are the generations of ...”
 - Geographical specifics (“eastward in Eden”, “four rivers”, “the one which flows round the whole land of Havilah”, “the whole land of Cush”, “towards the east of Assyria”, etc)
 - Physical details (“every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food”, “the gold of that land is good”, “bdellium and onyx are there”, etc)
 - Therefore, I personally believe that although the genre of Genesis 1:1 – 2:3 is poetic narrative – and hence Genesis fits with an “old earth” scientific perspective – the same is not true of the creation of man in Genesis 2

- Work is good, and belongs to the era before the Fall. The man is placed in the garden to work it and keep it – to produce order out of chaos, for human flourishing – and that is the purpose of work from then on

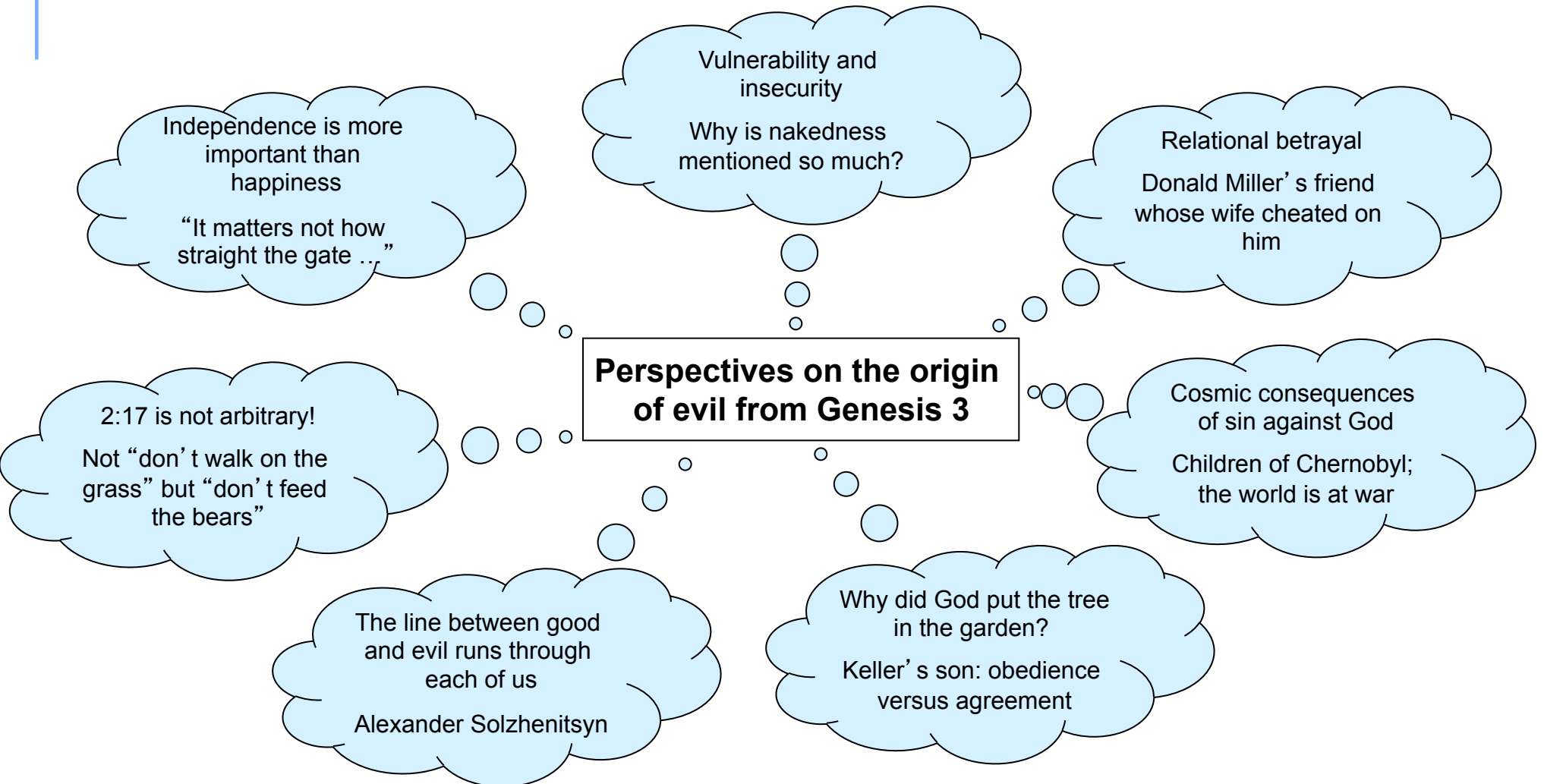
- 2:18 does not mean that it is not good for the man not to be *married*. This would undermine the teaching of Jesus and Paul (Matt 19; 1 Cor 7). It refers to man living *alone* (note that the first helpers to be created are animals!)

- Marriage was created as a picture of Christ and the church (Eph 5:22-33), not the other way round. So we mustn't mess with it: headship, submission, respect, cherishing, etc

The origin of the temple

- In his superb *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, G. K. Beale makes a strong case for seeing the biblical story in terms of the expansion of the temple, beginning in Eden, developing through the tabernacle, Jerusalem temple and the church, and then culminating in the whole cosmos becoming a temple in Revelation 21-22
- Beale makes a number of observations that point to Eden as a prototypical temple
 - Eden is the place of God's dwelling, which is the essence of what the tabernacle and the Jerusalem temple subsequently were
 - Adam was the first priest, who 'served' and 'guarded' the dwelling place of God (when these two words are used together in the OT, they often refer to priests serving and guarding the tabernacle [Num 3:7-8; 8:25-6; 18:5-6; 1 Chr 23:32; Ezek 44:14])
 - The garden was the first instance in which a cherubim guarded the dwelling place of God
 - The tree of life seems the most likely source of the tree-like lampstand that appeared in the Jewish tabernacle and temple ever since (see Exodus 25:31-40)
 - Subsequent tabernacles and temples were filled with garden imagery as well as precious stones, both of which find their original roots in Eden
 - Eden was the source of four rivers, and eschatological temple visions in Scripture frequently pick up Eden imagery with the river of life flowing from the temple / throne (Ezekiel 47 and Revelation 21)
 - The Garden had an eastern-facing entrance, like all subsequent temples in Scripture
 - In Ezekiel 28, the Garden of Eden is depicted as a sort of temple (see especially v18)
- The commission to man, then, was to expand the boundaries of the temple until the dwelling place of God filled heaven and earth. This helps explain why man is told to "go forth" as well as to "serve and guard" the garden

The origin of evil



The curses

- An authority structure that was created to run God → man → woman → animals has been totally inverted, running serpent → woman → man. All three agents in the story are held accountable for what has happened
- The serpent is the first to be judged – the one that was *arum*, cunning, is now *arur*, cursed
 - Hamilton: “If one is prepared to see in the decree *on your belly you shall crawl* a change in the snake’s mode of locomotion, then to be consistent one must also see in the decree *dust shall you eat* a change in the snake’s diet. The writer clearly intends these two facts to be expressions of humiliation and subjugation (as in Ps 72:9; Isa 49:23; Mic 7:17).” In terms of seeing the snake as the satan, cf Rom 16:20
 - The same verb is used for “strike” and “crush” (ESV has “bruise” both times). The distinction is not in the severity of the action, but in the place where it occurs (head vs heel)
 - When you read the Pentateuch as a whole, written by one author, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the “seed” is a Messianic figure (cf Gen 22:15-18, which is then specified in Gen 49:10 and Num 24:17)
- The woman is then judged in her two roles as mother (pain in childbearing) and wife (“desire for your husband”; this is not primarily sexual, but a desire to master her husband, as in Gen 4:7)
- Finally the man is judged in his role as tiller of the ground (17-18), and his mortality is made clear (19)
 - It is uncertain whether the curse on the ground refers to (1) the garden, (2) the whole world, all of which was perfect until this point, or (3) the exile of man from the (perfect) garden into the (chaotic) world
- Because mankind has now sinned, it is inconceivable that immortality should be available to them. So God exiles them from his dwelling place – an exile that is ultimately undone only in Revelation 21:3

The consequences

- It does not take long for the wheels to come off the wagon completely – within a few verses, murder and polygamy, among other things, have entered the world
- What is the difference between Cain’s offering, which was not acceptable, and Abel’s, which was?
Possibilities:
 - Abel brought the firstfruits, and Cain did not
 - Abel brought blood sacrifice, and Cain did not
 - There was no difference at all, and it simply came down to Yahweh’s sovereign choice
 - Abel brought his offering in faith, and Cain did not (cf Heb 11:4). This is probably to be preferred
- Verse 7 gives a chilling portrayal of the way sin works, picturing it as an animal crouching, waiting to pounce
- The curse on Cain is fourfold: exile, separation from God, nomadism and the probability of being killed. For Cain, this is too much to be bearable – and Yahweh acts in grace and protects him with a mark
- The whole chapter indicates that a number of other people are alive as well as the main characters. The two possibilities are (1) that God created other people than Adam and Eve, (2) that these others are Cain’s siblings
- The genealogy of Cain draws attention to the introduction of various inventions (tent-dwelling livestock herding, harps and flutes, bronze and iron), as well as to expressions of sin (vengeance, murder, polygamy, arrogance)
- The generations of the heavens and the earth conclude with a twofold note of hope – the “seed” is back, with Seth replacing Abel, and men have begun to call on the name of Yahweh (4:25-6)

The genealogy of Adam

- Genesis 5 begins with a restatement of the *imago dei*, as if to remind us that, despite sin, man is still created in God's image and likeness, male and female, and blessed by God (5:1-2)
 - This theme is then reinforced in v3, in which Adam begets a son “in his own likeness, after his image”, and names him Seth. As such, Genesis 5 traces the image of God through the human race
- The genealogy runs: Adam (930) → Seth (912) → Enosh (905) → Cainan (910) → Mahalalel (895) → Jared (962) → Enoch (365*) → Methuselah (969) → Lamech (777) → Noah (950). Each ends with “and then he died”
- The genealogy itself may well be selective
 - Other biblical genealogies certainly are (e.g. Matthew 1:8c) – to say that “X fathered Y” sometimes means that X became the ancestor of Y
 - Biblical genealogies are often structured to bring emphasis to particular key individuals (hence Matthew's structure of 3 x 14, or 6 x 7; note also that Luke 3 has Jesus as Adam's 77th descendant)
 - In this case, the genealogy contains ten names, with Noah the tenth and Enoch the seventh
 - Consequently, few (if any) biblical scholars today would argue that the age of the human race can be precisely calculated by adding up the genealogies, a la Archbishop Ussher (4004 BC)
- In the midst of all this, we have the cryptic description of Enoch, who “walked with God, and he was not, for God took him”
 - Enoch lives on earth the shortest time of all the antediluvians, and his son lives longer than any others
 - Apparently, long life is not the greatest blessing that can be bestowed on humans – being taken by God without dying, as happened only to Enoch and Elijah, is an even greater honour

The sons of God and the daughters of men

- The opening few verses of Genesis 6 are among the most difficult in the whole of Scripture, and pose a number of questions
 - Who are “the sons of God” and “the daughters of men”?
 - Sethite men and Cainite women? Pros: makes for a nice, neat solution, with no angels in sight, and points forward to subsequent injunctions against believers marrying non-believers (e.g. Nehemiah and 1 Corinthians.) Cons: Sethites are never called “sons of God” elsewhere in Scripture; conflicts with all Jewish and early Christian interpretation
 - Angels and human women? Pros: fits with interpretative history in Judaism (LXX has *angeloι tou theou*), and, many have argued, with Jude. Cons: bizarre, especially in the light of Jesus’ comments about angels in heaven being non-marrying. It would also involve Yahweh judging man for being “indeed flesh” when it was primarily the angels who sinned
 - Kings and harems? Pros: avoids the oddities of the angel view, yet has slightly more basis in the phrase “sons of God” than the Sethite view. The sin in question is that of polygamy, like Lamech. Cons: the phrase “sons of God” is still never used of kings in the plural (although it is in the singular); conflicts with almost all Jewish interpretation (the exception is a Rabbinic tradition)
 - Does “his days shall be 120 years” refer to human lifespan, or the time lag before the flood?
 - Are the Nephilim the descendants of the union between sons of God and daughters of men? The text doesn’t actually say they are, so it could just be a parenthetical detail (like Deut 2:10-12)
 - Are they “giants” (LXX has *hoι gigantes*), as in Num 13:33? If so, how do they reappear after the flood?
- Yahweh is said to regret his creation of man (6:6) because of their wickedness, which is an intriguing comment in the light of 1 Sam 15:29 (cf also 1 Sam 15:11)
- Noah, however, we are told, “found grace in the eyes of Yahweh.” Salvation from judgment is always by grace!

The reason for the flood

- Yahweh’s reason for flooding the earth, which we will look at more fully in the next session, is given clearly in verse 5: “the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”
 - Sometimes, the only way to wipe out evil is to wipe out all the people who cause it
 - And this generation, we are told, is as evil as they come: *every* intent, *only* evil, *continually*
- It is helpful to draw a contrast between the flood narrative at this point, and the most well-preserved alternative flood narrative, the Akkadian (ancient Mesopotamian) “Atrahasis Epic”
 - In the Atrahasis Epic, 1200 years after the creation of man, mankind becomes so noisy that Enlil (god of land) begins to suffer from insomnia
 - Enlil therefore sends a plague to wipe out man, which fails, and then tries a drought and a famine, which also don’t work
 - Finally, he sends a flood, at which point Enki (god of water) warns Atrahasis, the hero, to build a boat. Enlil is furious with Enki for telling Atrahasis, which he had previously promised not to
 - While the flood is going on, even the gods are afraid of its power
 - After the flood, the gods become hungry (!) because there are no farmers and no sacrifices left. When they discover Atrahasis has survived, the gods eventually agree on other means of population control (celibacy, infant mortality, childbirth) to keep the noise down
- In contrast, Yahweh is sovereign, faithful, gracious, covenant-making, patient and just. “Who is like you among the gods, O Yahweh?”

The aftermath of the flood

- In the days immediately after the departure from the ark, a number of significant things take place for the relationship between God and man
 - First, the commission to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth is reissued, both to animals (8:17) and humans (9:1). This symbolises a fresh start, and a renewed desire to stop the earth from being *bohu*
 - Second, clean animals and birds are offered as burnt offerings on the altar (8:20), which causes Yahweh to be pleased, and to guarantee never again to curse the ground, strike down every living creature, or interrupt the regular pattern of seasons or days
 - Third, man is blessed once again (9:1). Blessing is a beautiful repetitive note throughout the Pentateuch
 - Fourth, man is given permission to eat animals (9:2-3), where previously he appears to have been limited to vegetables, although not to eat blood. (Surprisingly, there is no mention of animals being able to eat other animals; might that suggest that some of them were not created herbivorous in the first place?)
 - Fifth, God institutes capital punishment for those who deliberately take the life of a human being (9:5-6). Interestingly, this is not based on public safety, deterrent or even retribution, but on the value of a human life because it is made in the image of God
 - Sixth, God makes a covenant, not just with man but with every creature on the earth, never again to send a flood to destroy all flesh. He gives the rainbow as a sign
 - Seventh, Noah gets drunk and falls asleep naked in his tent, which shows (a) that the flood has not destroyed sin permanently, and (b) that Noah is not a perfect human being, but a man who found grace. The resulting curse is on Ham, and blessing on Shem and Japheth

Noah's curse and blessing

- Following Noah's drunken nakedness, Ham's action in mocking his father to his brothers was shameful. As a result, Noah curses his youngest son's youngest son, Canaan, and tells him that he will be a servant of servants to his brothers (9:25)
- At the same time, Noah blesses (rather surprisingly) "Yahweh, the God of Shem", rather than Shem himself
- The real puzzle in Noah's song is the third verse: "May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant." This could have one of two interpretations, of which I prefer the second
 - One: Japheth will peacefully cohabit with Shem, so there will be harmony between Europeans (Japhethites) and the Semitic peoples, at least within the scope of this prophecy
 - Two: Japhethites will forcefully dispossess some of the Semites
 - If we read on into chapter 10:2, 4, 22 and 24, we find the Medes, Greeks and the Kittim are in the family of Japheth, and Eber and Asshur are from Shem. (The Kittim were originally from Cyprus, but the Jews used the word collectively for Mediterranean sea powers, a bit like our word 'Viking')
 - Balaam's oracle in Numbers 24:24 (remembering that the Pentateuch is written by one person) says, "But ships shall come from Kittim and shall afflict Asshur and Eber; and he too shall come to utter destruction"
 - Balaam seems to be prophesying along exactly the same lines as Noah – the Kittim, which in Daniel 11:30 refers to Rome, would dispossess the lands of Assyria and Babylon, but eventually be destroyed (by Israel's God?)
 - This, of course, is exactly what happened, 3000 years after Noah said this!

The table of nations in Genesis 10



The city and the tower

- I think Genesis 11:1-9 is a very misunderstood passage. For a start, it's often told as if God doesn't like big buildings, as if that is the main point of the story
 - Man builds a big tower; God doesn't like it; so he muddles up everybody's languages, and in one fell swoop produces racial conflicts and foreign students and Latin lessons. What is all that about?
- Not only that, but the story is always called "the tower of Babel", when it's not just about a tower, but a city as well
 - Verse 4: "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth"
 - Man builds two things (a city and a tower), and he does it out of two motives (making a name for himself, and avoiding being dispersed over the whole earth)
- Both of these projects – the city and the tower – are in deliberate defiance against God
 - God had made man for the sake of his name, but man wanted to make a name for himself, so he built a tower. This is smugness at best, blasphemy at worst
 - God commissioned man to go forth and fill the earth with his glory and beauty and life and image – but man wanted to avoid being dispersed, so he built a city, to avoid being scattered
 - It's more like a gated community than the leaning tower of Pisa. In fact, Babel is the first middle-class gated community. It's full of Bronze Age NIMBYs – people who were created to rescue the world, but would rather stay safe in their little city, and avoid going out there
- So Babel is misunderstood – it's not about structures, but smugness and security. So God sorts them out

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The Abrahamic Covenant

JACOB WRESTLES WITH GOD

Gen 28:10-22: Jacob's ladder. "I will give you and your seed this land, they will be numerous, and in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed." Bethel. Tithes.

JACOB MEETS YAHWEH

Gen 26:2-4: "Isaac, stay here, and I will give you this land, and establish the oath I made to Abraham. I will multiply your seed, give your seed these lands, and in your seed all nations will be blessed."

MELCHIZEDEK MEETS ABRAM

The Abrahamic Covenant

Gen 15:1-21: "Your seed will be like the stars of the sky." Abraham believes God, and it is credited as righteousness. The covenant is cut. "I give this land to your seed."

ANGEL MEETS HAGAR

Gen 17:1-21: "You are now Abraham. I will make you a father of many nations, and you and your seed will get Canaan." Covenant sign of circumcision.

ANGEL MEETS ABRAHAM & SARAH

Gen 22:15-18: "Because you have done this, I swear by myself that I will surely bless you and multiply your seed, and your seed will possess the gate of their enemies and bless all nations."

The Battle of the Kings (Gen 14)

Amraphel king of Shinar
Arioch king of Ellasar
Chedorlaomer king of Elam
Tidal king of Goiim

vs.

Bera king of Sodom
Birsha king of Gomorrah
Shinab king of Admah
Shemeber king of Zeboiim
The king of Bela (that is, Zoar)

The four kings win, and take Lot captive

Abram, with 318 men, pursues the four kings to Hobah, north of Damascus, and recaptures Lot, the possessions, the women and the people

Melchizedek, King of Salem and Priest of God Most High, appears out of thin air, blesses Abram, receives a tithe from him, and brings out bread and wine (!)

The king of Sodom offers Abram the possessions, but Abram refuses, on the grounds that no man will make him rich

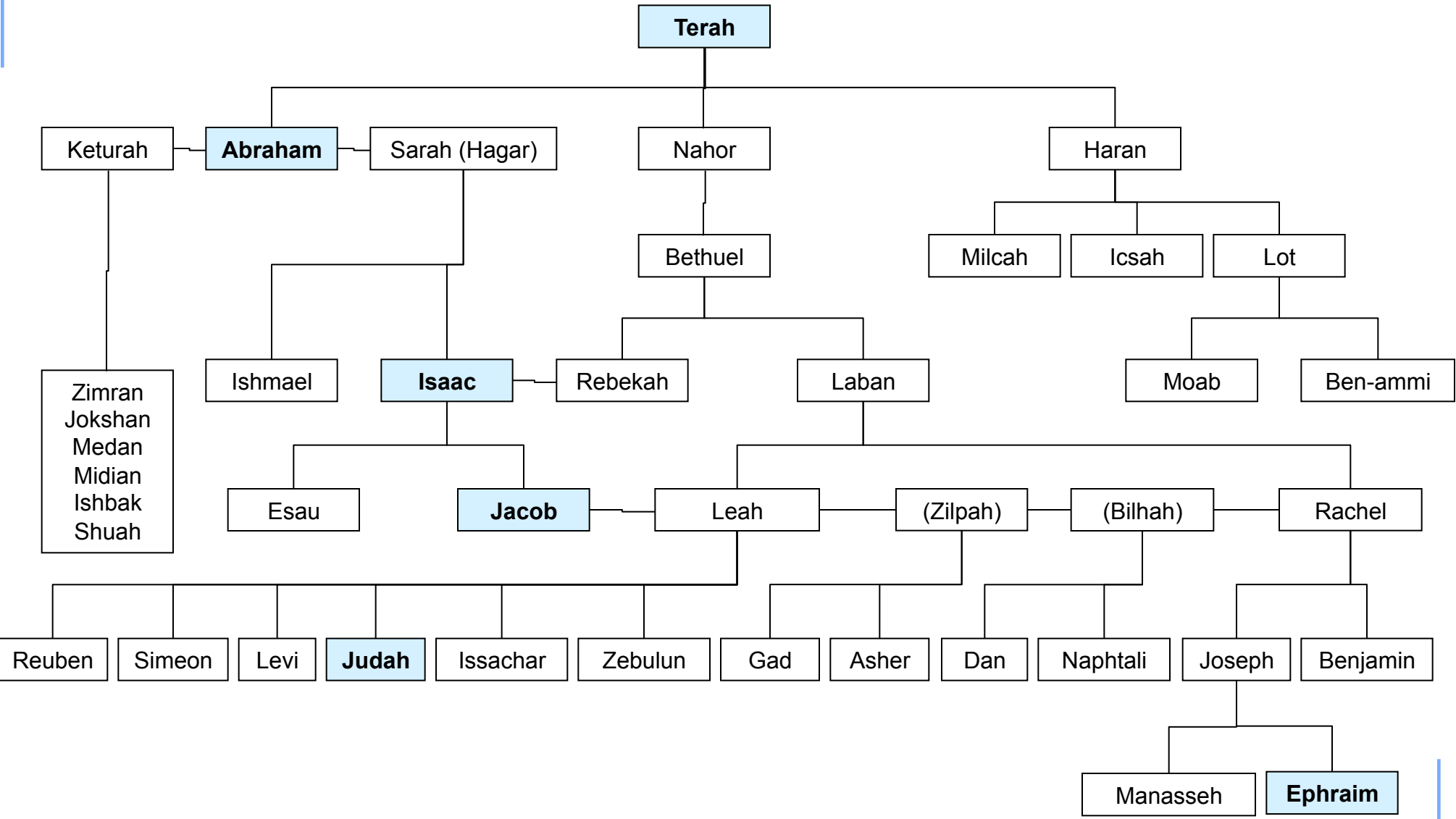


Apologetics Interlude

- According to some books, online videos, and a number of angry atheists out there, the patriarchal narratives indicate that Yahweh approves of a whole bunch of appalling evils, and therefore is not worthy of worshipping
 - Deceit (12:10-20; 27:1-40; 29:23-28; 31:26-35)
 - Incest (19:30-38; 20:12; 38:13-26)
 - Slavery (16:1)
 - Rape (19:1-9)
 - Destruction of Cities, including women and children (19:24-29)
 - Child sacrifice (22:1-14)
 - Polygamy (16:3; 29:16-30)

- How do we handle passages like these? The narrative frequently does not pass judgment on the sinful actions – and indeed many of the major characters in the story are guilty of several of them
 - It is important to realise that the patriarchs are not cast as heroes
 - Narrative often passes judgment implicitly, just by telling the story. Does the BBC approve of genocide when it reports it? Or imagine *Schindler's List* concluded with the line, “by the way, anti-Semitism is evil”
 - The purpose of narrating stories of evil, often, is not to approve of them, but to ensure that they never happen again
 - And in several of the above cases, the narrative makes it glaringly obvious that God is angry (through the negative consequences that follow, direct judgment of e.g. Sodom, blinding the assailants, etc)
 - The slight curveball is the call for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac – but this truly is the exception that proves the rule, in that God of course provides a substitute
 - We will consider the difficult commands God gives about slavery, polygamy and destruction later on

The Patriarchal Family Tree



The Joseph Story

- What is the Joseph story intended to show us?
 - The importance of vision?
 - Perseverance through trials leading to vindication?
 - The chosen child of God, sold for the price of a slave, and then exalted after suffering to be seated at the right hand of the Power?
 - The sovereignty of God, who works all things for good?
 - No matter how long a man has been away, he never forgets his family?

- Within the context of the Abrahamic covenant, and the Exodus story which follows, what would you suggest?
 - “I will bless those who bless you, and curse those who curse you” → where is this in the Joseph story?
 - “In you, all the families of the earth will be blessed” → where is this in the Joseph story?
 - “I give you this land. Your seed will possess the gate of his enemies” → where is this in the Joseph story?
 - “I will multiply your seed as the stars of the sky and the sand of the seashore” → where is this in the Joseph story?

Jacob's Blessing (Genesis 49:3-27) – “What will happen in the latter days”

"Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, and the firstfruits of my strength, preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power. Unstable as water, you shall not have preeminence, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it—he went up to my couch! Simeon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords. Let my soul come not into their council; O my glory, be not joined to their company. For in their anger they killed men, and in their willfulness they hamstrung oxen. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.

Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you. Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he has washed his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.

Zebulun shall dwell at the shore of the sea; he shall become a haven for ships, and his border shall be at Sidon. Issachar is a strong donkey, crouching between the sheepfolds. He saw that a resting place was good, and that the land was pleasant, so he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant at forced labor. Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent in the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels so that his rider falls backward. I wait for your salvation, O LORD. Raiders shall raid Gad, but he shall raid at their heels. Asher's food shall be rich, and he shall yield royal delicacies. Naphtali is a doe let loose that bears beautiful fawns.

Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring; his branches run over the wall. The archers bitterly attacked him, shot at him, and harassed him severely, yet his bow remained unmoved; his arms were made agile by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), by the God of your father who will help you, by the Almighty who will bless you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that crouches beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of your father are mighty beyond the blessings of my parents, up to the bounties of the everlasting hills. May they be on the head of Joseph, and on the brow of him who was set apart from his brothers. Benjamin is a ravenous wolf, in the morning devouring the prey and at evening dividing the spoil."

Genesis in Biblical Theology: God, Gospel, People, Mission

- We have deliberately spent such a long time on Genesis, because it is so formative for Pentateuchal (and biblical!) theology
- Now, based on all that we have looked at so far, work in your groups and consider how we can arrange, and pull together, the theology of Genesis in the following categories:
- What does Genesis teach us about **God**?
 - God-in-himself, as **Trinity**
 - The **attributes** of God, with respect to the world
- What does Genesis teach us about the **gospel**?
 - What is the **problem** with the world, and with humanity?
 - What is the **solution**?
- What does Genesis teach us about God's **people**?
 - The **community** of God's people: nature, leadership, sacraments
 - The **ethics** of God's people: how should they live?
- What does Genesis teach us about God's **mission**?
 - What does the **kingdom** of God look like?
 - What **eschatology** is taught or assumed?

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- VII. The Moab Covenant (Deut 29-34)

The Exodus Story

- An overview of the Exodus story
 - Ex 1: Delivered at birth
 - Ex 2: Kills an Egyptian and flees into the wilderness
 - Ex 3-4: Encounters God at the burning bush. Receives revelation of who God is
 - Ex 5-6: Confronts Pharaoh, makes the slavery worse, and is recommissioned by God
 - Then the plagues, which deliberately challenge Egyptian views of the gods:
 - Ex 7: Blood
 - Ex 8: Frogs, Gnats, Flies
 - Ex 9: Plague on livestock, Boils, Hail
 - Ex 10: Locusts, Darkness
 - Ex 11-12: The final plague: the death of the firstborn, and the Passover
 - Ex 13-14: Moses leads Israel out of slavery into freedom
 - Ex 15: The Israelites celebrate victory together

Group Exercise #1 – Exodus 3: God, Gospel, People, Mission

Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the LORD said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" He said, "But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."

Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, "I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt, and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.'" And they will listen to your voice, and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.'

But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand. So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it; after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and when you go, you shall not go empty, but each woman shall ask of her neighbor, and any woman who lives in her house, for silver and gold jewelry, and for clothing. You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians."

Group Exercise #2 – Exodus 12: God, Gospel, People, Mission

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, "This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household. And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's Passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt ...

Then the people of Israel went and did so; as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did. At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon and all the firstborn of the livestock. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians. And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where someone was not dead. Then he summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, "Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as you have said. Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also!" The Egyptians were urgent with the people to send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead." So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls being bound up in their cloaks on their shoulders. The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing. And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they plundered the Egyptians. And the people of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. A mixed multitude also went up with them, and very much livestock, both flocks and herds. And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they had brought out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves. The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years. At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. It was a night of watching by the LORD, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; so this same night is a night of watching kept to the LORD by all the people of Israel throughout their generations.

Group Exercise #3 – Exodus 15: God, Gospel, People, Mission

Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying, "I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him. The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is his name.

Pharaoh's chariots and his host he cast into the sea, and his chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea. The floods covered them; they went down into the depths like a stone. Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power, your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy. In the greatness of your majesty you overthrow your adversaries; you send out your fury; it consumes them like stubble. At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up; the floods stood up in a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.

The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them. I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.' You blew with your wind; the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters. Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? You stretched out your right hand; the earth swallowed them.

You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed; you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode. The peoples have heard; they tremble; pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia. Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. Terror and dread fall upon them; because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone, till your people, O LORD, pass by, till the people pass by whom you have purchased.

You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain, the place, O LORD, which you have made for your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established. The LORD will reign forever and ever." For when the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, the LORD brought back the waters of the sea upon them, but the people of Israel walked on dry ground in the midst of the sea.

Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. And Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea."

Sovereignty and Responsibility: The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart

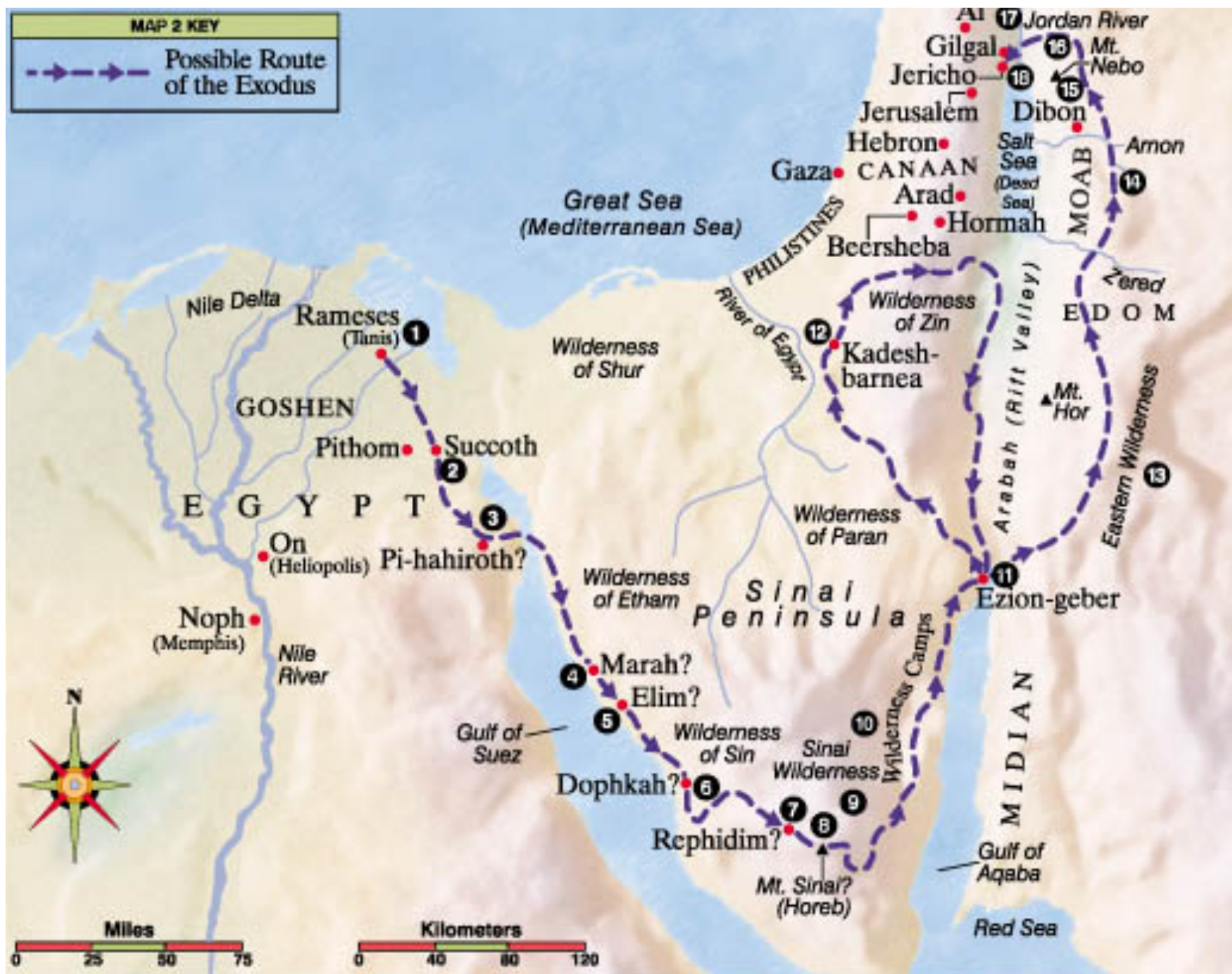
- One of the thorniest theological questions we face, as those who take the Bible as God's inspired and authoritative word, concerns the relationship between divine sovereignty and human responsibility
- The hardening of Pharaoh's heart raises this question, and it is also quoted in the most famous NT passage to address the issue, Romans 9
- In chronological order, here's how it goes in the Exodus story:
 - 3:19-20: "But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand. So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all the wonders that I will do in it; after that he will let you go."
 - 4:21: And the LORD said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do before Pharaoh all the miracles that I have put in your power. But I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go."
 - 7:3-4: "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, & though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh will not listen to you."
 - 7:13-14: Still Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go."
 - 7:22: So Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.
 - 8:15: But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart and would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.
 - 8:19: But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.
 - 8:32: But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.
 - 9:7: But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.
 - 9:12: But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he did not listen to them, as the LORD had said.
 - 9:34-35: But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants. So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people of Israel go.
 - 10:20, 27; 11:10: But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let [the people of Israel] go.

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MAP 2 KEY

→ Possible Route of the Exodus

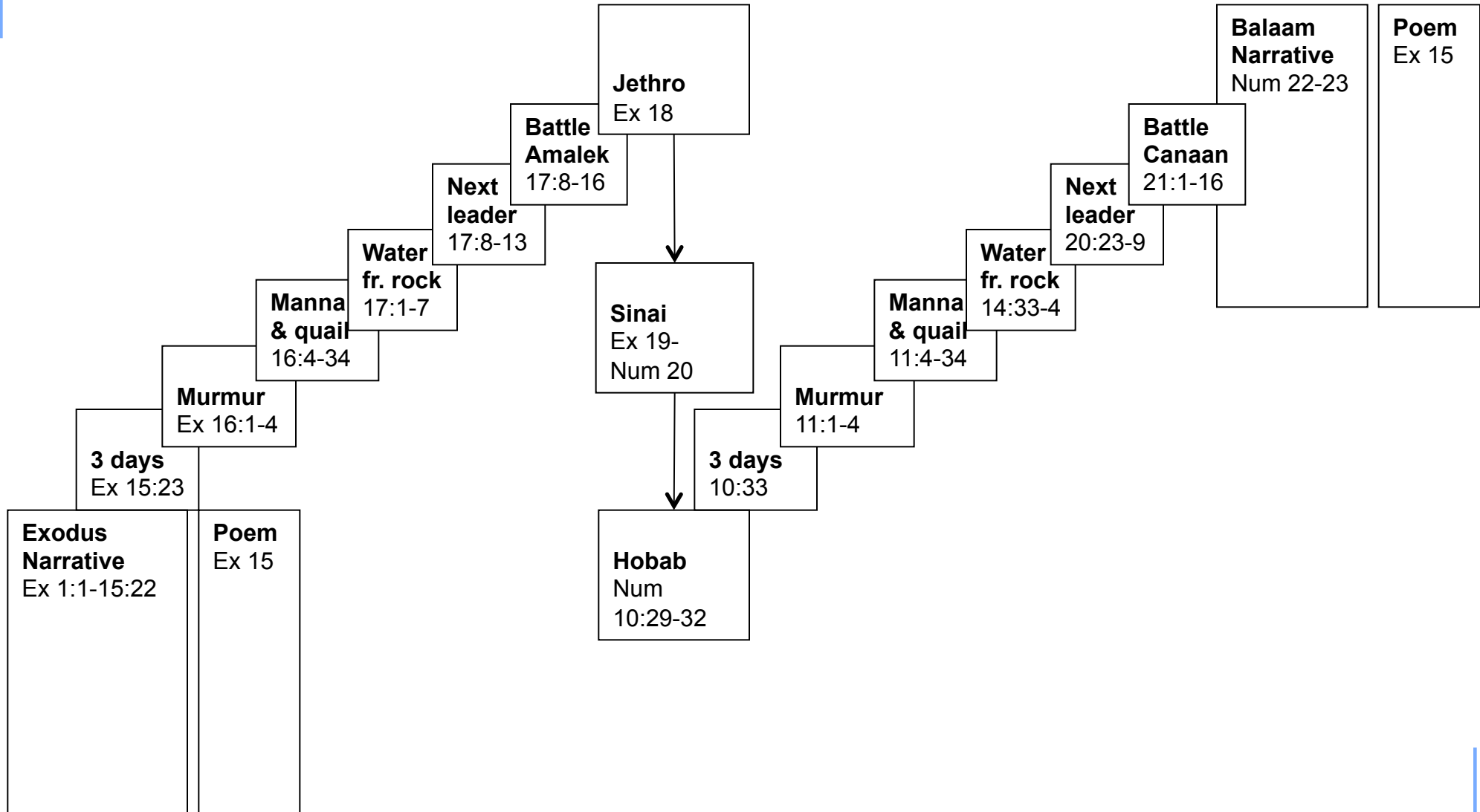


Miles 0 25 50 75

Kilometers 0 40 80 120

Parallel Structures in the Wilderness Narratives

John Sailhamer, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch*



The Journey to Sinai

- The sequence of stories between the Red Sea crossing and the arrival at Sinai bring fresh revelation to Israel, particularly relating to the character of Yahweh
 - Ex 15:22-27 – Yahweh-rophe, or Yahweh-who-heals-you. Healing is part of the character of God
 - Ex 16:1-36 – provision of manna from heaven. Note also that Israel is observing the Sabbath before the Ten Commandments, because of Genesis 2:1-3
 - Ex 17:1-7 – water from the rock, and testing Yahweh at Massah and Meribah
 - Ex 17:8-16 – Yahweh-nissi, or Yahweh-is-my-banner. The banner was the way you knew where you were needed, and where you were safe

- Then there is the very practical leadership encounter between Moses and Jethro, his father-in-law (Ex 18). There are at least five helpful leadership lessons in this brief story
 - Know your limits: “you are not able to do it alone” (v18)
 - Know your unique contribution, and do it (v19-20)
 - Only delegate to people of high competence (v21a)
 - Only delegate to people of good character (v21b; cf Acts 6:3)
 - Differentiate levels of responsibility: thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens (v21c-22)
 - The question is, of course: what if you don’t have enough good people to delegate to?
 - Whose fault is that?
 - What needs to be done about it?

Encounters with God on the Mountain

- Three narratives, each about encounters with God on Mount Sinai, give shape to the narrative of Exodus 19-40
- Yahweh descends on the mountain in fire (Ex 19)
 - Yahweh makes a covenant promise to Israel: “You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (19:3-6)
 - God speaks the Ten Commandments in the hearing of the people (20:1-21)
 - Then Moses goes up, and Yahweh gives laws to Israel about slavery (21:1-11), violence (21:12-27), property (21:28-22:15), justice (22:16-23:13), festivals (23:14-19) and idolatry (23:20-33)
- The seventy elders eat and drink with Yahweh on the mountain (Ex 24)
 - “Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.” (24:9-11)
 - Then Moses goes to Yahweh for forty days and nights, and receives laws about the tabernacle (25:1-27:21), priestly garments (28:1-43), consecration (29:1-37), offering burnt offerings and incense (29:38-30:38), and the Sabbath (31:12-18)
- The people make a golden calf, and Moses sees Yahweh's glory (Ex 32-34)
 - The people make a golden calf (32:1-8), Moses intercedes for them (32:9-14), and the people face judgment: drinking the smashed stone tablets, death by the Levites' sword, and a plague (32:15-35)
 - Then Moses sees Yahweh's glory (33:1-34:8), and the covenant is made again (34:9-35)
 - The tabernacle is built and consecrated, and the glory of Yahweh fills it (35:1-40:38)

Rebellion in the Wilderness Narratives

- Much of the narrative from Sinai onwards is the story of repeated idolatry and immorality by God's people, and repeated forgiveness and faithfulness from Yahweh. **ENACT**
 - They worship the golden calf while Moses is up Mt Sinai receiving the law (Ex 32-34)
 - They grumble about the food, and are struck with a great plague (Num 11)
 - They journey from Sinai/Horeb to Kedesh Barnea, which takes eleven days, but fail to enter the land after the report of the spies (Num 14) → faith
 - Some Israelites go ahead and invade anyway, and are easily defeated (Num 14)
 - It takes them thirty-eight years to get from Kedesh Barnea to the brook Zered. The old generation gradually die out (Deut 2:14) → the people did not get lost, but followed the cloud
 - A whole bunch of rebels contest Moses and Aaron's right to lead the people -- "You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?" – and the ground swallows them alive (Num 16), before Aaron's staff buds as a vindication of his leadership (Num 17) → anointed leadership
 - The people demand water, and Moses fails to trust God, and is barred from the land (Num 20)
 - The people test God, and he sends fiery serpents amongst them (Num 21) → Christ
 - Eventually, they defeat Sihon, King of the Amorites, and Og, King of Bashan, and progress to Moab (Num 21) → God is still with them
 - Balak, King of the Moabites, hires the rent-a-prophet Balaam to curse Israel for him, but he ends up blessing them the whole time (Num 22-24) → Israel is blessed because of the covenant
 - But almost immediately, they commit sexual immorality with Moab, and they are judged with a plague. Phinehas stops the plague by spearing an Israelite and a Moabite while they're having sex (Num 25)

Balaam and Balak

- The story of Balaam and Balak, so often dominated by the famous talking donkey, is one of the most powerful reiterations of the Abrahamic promise anywhere in Scripture. **DRAMATISE** (God, Balaam, Balak, donkey, messengers, Israel, Moab)
 - The narrative of Balaam’s journey (22:1-41) is hilarious, and very pantomime, illustrating the foolishness of opposing God (with a similar flavour to the first half of the story of Jonah)
 - Balaam then blesses Israel from three separate locations, to the growing exasperation of Balak
 - 23:7-10 – “How can I curse whom God has not cursed? How can I denounce whom the LORD has not denounced?”
 - 23:18-24 – “Behold, I received a command to bless: he has blessed, and I cannot revoke it. He has not beheld misfortune in Jacob, nor has he seen trouble in Israel. The LORD their God is with them, and the shout of a king is among them.”
 - 24:3-9 – “How lovely are your tents, O Jacob, your encampments, O Israel! ... Blessed are those who bless you, and cursed are those who curse you.”
 - Finally, after Balak has left, Balaam delivers the knockout promise in 24:15-24 – “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel; it shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth. Edom shall be dispossessed; Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed. Israel is doing valiantly. And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivors of cities!”
- This prophecy, which clearly takes up the seed / king / Messiah promise from Genesis 49, is one of the most direct and powerful Messianic prophecies in the entire Old Testament

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What Do We Do With Law?

- What do we do with the ten commandments?
 - Keep all ten of them, because “the law is holy, righteous and good”?
 - Keep none of them, because “we are not under law, but under grace”?
 - Keep nine of them, but not the one about the Sabbath?

- At a street level, I think there are four ways of engaging with the OT law
 - The Law as above us. The Law is from God, and it is holy and righteous, and therefore it should be followed by everyone who loves God. All of it. This is the approach in Hasidic Judaism and devout Islam
 - The problem is: you can’t keep it. Even the ten commandments: “no other gods but me”? “Do not covet”?
 - The Law as beneath us. In this view, the Law is a bad thing, and we should reject its authority over our lives, because we have a far better ethical standard these days. This is the view of modern secularism
 - The problem is: on whose authority do you reject the Law? (And in any case, most British people agree with what Jesus said was the essence of the commandments. **JON SNOW STORY**)
 - The Law as behind us. God’s people used to be under the Law, but then Jesus came, and now we’re under grace. God used to expect people to live up to his rules if he was to love them, but not any more
 - The problem is: God is a God of grace in the Old Testament. Law comes after redemption, and there are commands and instructions in the New Testament. Divine initiative (grace) → commands (law)
 - The Law as within us, by the Spirit, when we become disciples. Jesus fulfilled the law, and when the Holy Spirit came, he changed our hearts and caused us to love, like Jesus, and hence fulfil the law
 - This is the promise of the prophets (Deut 30; Jer 31; Ezek 36), and is variously confirmed by Jesus (Matt 7:12; 22:35-40) and Paul (Rom 8:1-4; 13:8-10)

The Tabernacle (Exodus 25-31, 35-40)

THE TABERNACLE TENT

The entire tent was 45 feet (13.7 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high. It was a wooden skeletal structure, overlaid with gold, with no solid roof or front wall (Ex. 26:15–29). Five wooden bars (overlaid with gold) passed through rings attached to each frame (Ex. 26:26–30).

The Most Holy Place was a 15-foot (4.6-m) cube, containing only the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:10–22; 37:1–9). It was here that Yahweh would descend to meet with his people in a cloud theophany (divine appearance). The high priest could enter only once a year, on the Day of Atonement (see note on Heb. 9:7).

The framed structure was covered by four layers of cloth and skin (Ex. 26:1–14).

The table for the bread of the Presence (Ex. 25:23–30)

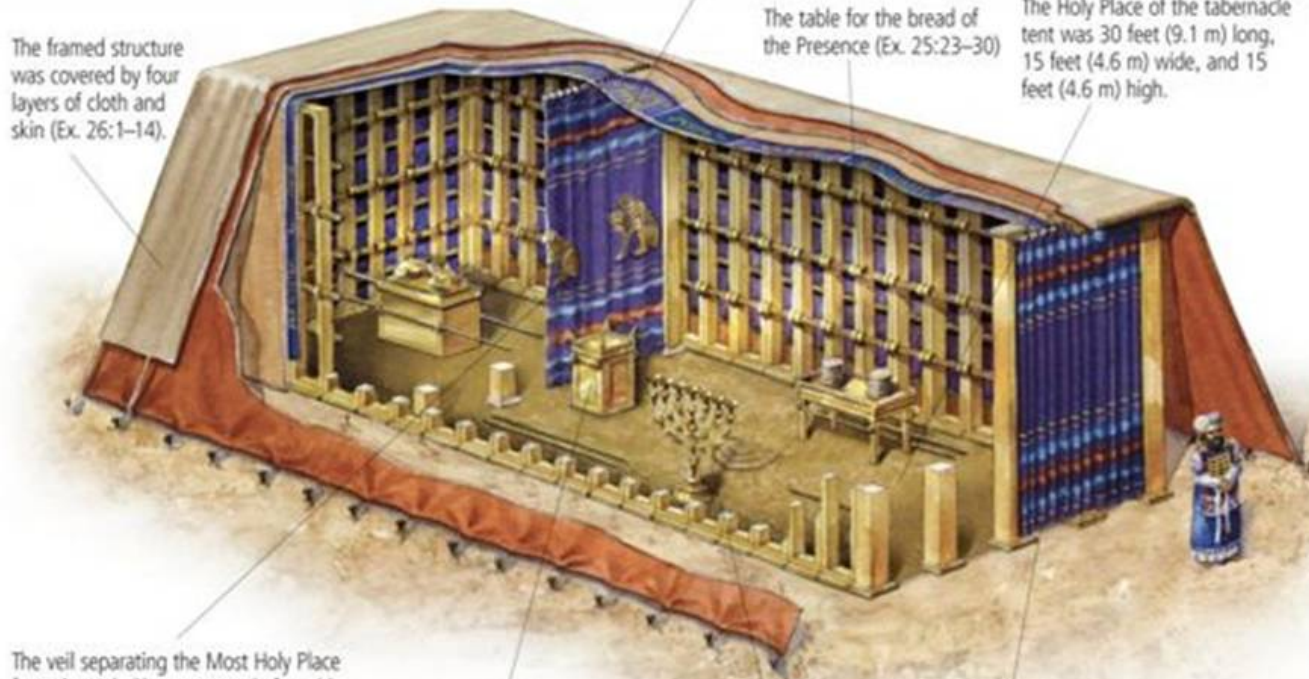
The Holy Place of the tabernacle tent was 30 feet (9.1 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high.

The veil separating the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place was made from blue, purple, and scarlet dyed yarns woven with fine twined linen and embroidered with cherubim (Ex. 26:31–33). It hung on four golden pillars.

The altar of incense (Ex. 30:1–5; 37:25–29)

The golden lampstand (Ex. 25:31–40; 37:17–24)

The veil that formed the entrance to the tabernacle was similar to the veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, except that cherubim were not embroidered on it. It was suspended on five golden pillars (Ex. 26:36–37).



The Levitical Sacrifices (Lev 1-7)

	Purpose	Offering described and explained	Handling, eating and disposal
Burnt Offering	Praise, and requests	Lev 1	Lev 6:8-13
Grain Offering	Pleasing aroma (often accompanies another offering)	Lev 2	Lev 6:14-23
Peace Offering	Fellowship with Yahweh	Lev 3	Lev 7:11-36
Sin Offering	Atonement / purification for unintentional sins	Lev 4:1-5:13	Lev 6:24-30
Guilt Offering	Atonement / compensation for unintentional sins	Lev 5:14-6:7	Lev 7:1-10

Offerings (Lev 1-7)

Burnt (1)
Grain (2)
Fellowship (3)
Sin (4-5)
Guilt (5-6)
Handling / disposal (6-7)

The Priesthood Begins (Lev 8-10)

Ordination (8)
Commencement (9)
Disaster (10)
10:10 is key, and provides a links to chs 11-15

Clean & Unclean (Lev 11-15)

Eating animals (11)
Childbirth (12)
Skin conditions (13)
Wet dreams & periods (15)

The Day of Atonement (Lev 16)

The Covenant in Detail (Deut 12-26)

Worship and idolatry (12-13)
Clean & unclean, and giving (14)
Sabbatical years and feasts (15-16)
Leadership in Israel (17-18)
Life, death, sex and property (19-25)
Firstfruits and tithing (26)

Blessings & Curses (Deut 27-28)

The Moab Covenant, the New Covenant, and Moses' Death (Deut 29-34)

Blood & Holiness (Lev 17-22)

Goat Demons and a ban on blood (17)
Sex, loving neighbour & the holiness code (18-22)

Summary of the Sinai Covenant (Deut 5-11)

The Ten Words (5)
The greatest commandment (6)
A call to faithful obedience, based on Israel's election (7), God's care and discipline (8), their disobedience previously (9-10) and love for the LORD (11)

The Structure of the Laws

Laws at Moab (Num 26-36)

The second census (26)
Land, leadership, sacrifices & vows (28-30)
The journey ends (31-33)
Land allocated (34-36)

Preparing to Leave Sinai (Num 1-10)

The census & camp (1-2)
The Levites (3-4)
Laws, Vows & blessing (5-6)
Offering & cleansing (7-8)
Passover & leaving (9-10)

Blessings, Curses and Vows (Lev 26-27)

Blessings & Curses (26)
Vows (27)

Feasts (Lev 23-25)

Sabbath, Passover, Firstfruits, Weeks, Trumpets, Booths (23), Oil & Bread, a blasphemer, eye for an eye (24), Sabbath year and Jubilee (25)

The Day of Atonement

- **ENACT** the whole chapter. Note particularly the five different animals involved, and how they point forward to the gospel in Jesus
 - A bull for a sin offering for Aaron (compare with Hebrews 7:23-28)
 - A ram for a burnt offering from Aaron to God
 - A ram for a burnt offering from the people to God
 - A goat as a sin offering (compare with Hebrews 9:1-14)
 - A goat for Azazel – the “scapegoat”
 - **TWO BALLOONS** – one burst, one released

- The conclusion to the process comes in 16:30: “For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you. You shall be clean before the LORD from all your sins”

- In the same way, by the sacrifice of Christ, we are able to receive cleanness from the LORD from all our sins, because Christ has both been sacrificed for sins and sent outside of the camp, carrying our shame away (cf. Heb 10:11-14; 13:13)

Apologetics Interlude: Slavery, Polygamy and Destruction of Cities

- Q: What do we do with those passages in the OT Law that legislate for slavery, polygamy and the destruction of Canaanite cities? We cannot handle them the same way as appalling pieces of narrative, since they are Law
- A: Remember the three Cs: Context, Covenant, and Christ
- Firstly, Context. What do I need to know about the history and literature? If I don't ask that, then I will assume that their situation is the same as mine, and get very confused
 - In our world, for example, when we hear talk about “slavery”, we think of the West African slave trade. White people with guns kidnapping black people without guns, putting them on ships, and forcing them to work for no wages on sugar, tobacco and cotton plantations
 - But that's not what slavery means in their world at all. In fact, it's explicitly condemned (v16): whoever steals someone, or owns someone who has been stolen or kidnapped, deserves the death penalty!
 - In their world, slavery was something people would voluntarily sell themselves into out of economic need. If a daughter was sold as a slave or maidservant, they were treated like family members, and if they weren't, then they were allowed to leave without paying (v7-11)
 - Or, sometimes, people would become slaves because they were conquered or captured – like modern nations take prisoners of war. The alternative (which most nations used) was killing or mutilating them
- Similarly with polygamy. It is never endorsed, but in a nation where men died in battle and women didn't, it often happened (since there are many more women than men). So laws are passed to protect women
 - If a man takes two wives, and you imprison or execute the man, what happens to the second wife? She'll be abandoned, and no man in that culture will marry her because she's not a virgin
- And again, with the destruction of cities, literary context (which we'll look at in the next block) is critical

Apologetics Interlude: Slavery, Polygamy and Destruction of Cities (cont.)

- Secondly, Covenant: where are we in the biblical story, and how does the Covenant we're in affect things?
 - The Bible is a big story, instructions which apply in one place do not necessarily apply in another place. That's true of the laws in Exodus 21, for example. No disciples today are intended to follow them
- This question is particularly important when you bear in mind that the law given to Moses, within the biblical story, was not actually God's ultimate design for the way his people would live
 - That sounds odd, so let me explain why I'm saying it. **JESUS AND DIVORCE**: “hardness of heart”
 - In other words, the Mosaic Covenant included all sorts of allowances for people's hard hearts
 - God could have banned divorce, but he knew people would divorce anyway – the only question was, would women be protected if they were? It's the same with polygamy
 - But if you go back to creation, Jesus said, it wasn't meant to be like that. One man, one woman, in marriage. No divorce. No polygamy
- When it comes to the destruction of cities, again, we have to think carefully about the Covenant story. God said to Abraham, “whoever blesses you I will bless, and whoever curses you I will curse, and in you all the nations of the earth will be blessed” (Gen 12:3)
 - **HARRY POTTER**: Harry is the hope of the wizarding world. So if you got the chance to kill Voldemort in book 1, you probably would, wouldn't you?
 - Israel is the hope of the world. They're the way the world gets blessed. So anyone who is out to destroy them must be stopped, and destroyed themselves if necessary
 - Today, however, we don't live in that part of the story. Jesus has come. That's why Covenant is important

Apologetics Interlude: Slavery, Polygamy and Destruction of Cities (cont.)

- Thirdly, Christ. Ultimately, Jesus is the one to whom Christians look to see what God is really like
- What did Jesus say and do about slavery?
 - Luke 4: He said that his ministry was all about bringing freedom to the captives and the oppressed
 - Php 2:7: He humbled himself, taking on the form of a slave, in order to rescue people from their slavery
 - Mark 10:44: He said that anyone who wanted to lead must become the slave of many
 - And he established the church, where there was no privilege of Jew v Gentile, male v female, slave v free
- What about polygamy?
 - Mk 10: he sent people back to creation, to see that marriage was always about one man and one woman
 - Eph 5: he lived as the faithful husband, exclusively committed to his bride, God's people, and laying down his life for her. No other partners. No infidelity. No limits. No exceptions
- And destroying cities? Killing other people in warfare?
 - Matt 5: “You have heard that it was said ... But I say to you ...”
 - Yes, back then, that was necessary. But now, I'm saying to you to turn the other cheek, not to resist the one who is evil, never to avenge yourselves, make peace, and prefer suffering to violence
 - And of course, at the cross, Jesus did exactly what he told us to do, and allowed himself to suffer, and be crushed, rather than lift up his hand in violence and destroy his oppressors

Blessings, Curses and Exile (Deuteronomy 27-28)



- It was typical to conclude covenants (or treaties) with a statement of blessings and curses or equivalent, detailing what would happen if either party broke it
 - Deuteronomy 27 sees the tribes divided in half, with six tribes sent up Mt Gerizim to declare the blessings, and six sent up Mt Ebal to declare the curses
 - The twelve curses pronounced are a sample of the law, rather than a particularly important group of twelve (v26 encapsulates all the others anyway)
- Deuteronomy 28 then takes the form of an extended speech from Yahweh about the consequences of obedience and disobedience
 - 28:1-14 summarise the blessings for obedience: fruitfulness, victory, prosperity and abundance
 - 28:15-68 summarise the curses for disobedience: disease, barrenness, invasion, exile and scattering among the nations
 - The latter is longer, and reflects Israel's history more closely
- This section is particularly important for understanding Israel's history (and the Gospels), because it shows what they would have expected when the curse was lifted
- Galatians 3:10-14 shows how this was fulfilled in Christ

Pentateuch

- I. Overview of the Pentateuch
- II. Primeval History (Gen 1-11)
- III. Patriarchal History (Gen 12-50)
- IV. Exodus Narrative (Ex 1-15)
- V. Wilderness Narrative (Ex 16-19, 24, 32-34; Num 11-25; Deut 1-4)
- VI. Laws, Lists & Land at Sinai (Ex 20-23, 25-31, 35-40; Lev 1-27; Num 1-10, 26-36; Deut 5-28)
- VII. The Moab Covenant (Deut 29-34)**

The Moab Covenant

- Most people have never even heard of the Moab covenant. By the time people reach it in their Bible-in-a-year plans, they are just about done with laws, and are desperate to get back into the blood-and-thunder stories of Joshua
- But it is one of the most important passages in the whole of the Pentateuch (from a biblical-theological point of view, probably the most important passage since the Exodus), because it points forward to the new covenant
- It is also one of the most quoted OT passages in the NT, and forms the backdrop to Paul's famous argument in Romans 10
- It works like this
 - The story so far (29:1-29)
 - The promise of new hearts (30:1-20)
 - The commissioning of Joshua and the writing of the law (31:1-29)
 - The Song of Moses (31:30-32:47)
 - The blessing of Moses (32:48-33:29)
 - Moses dies (34:1-12)

The Circumcised Heart and the Return from Exile

- The key section, from the perspective of biblical theology, is chapter 30
 - The promise of a **return from exile**, as a result of repentance (30:1-5)
 - The promise of **circumcised hearts**, which will cause Israel to love Yahweh with all her heart (30:6)
 - The promise of **covenant blessings**, in response to Israel turning to Yahweh with all her heart (30:7-10)
 - The promise of **covenant achievability**, because it is in Israel's mouth and in her heart (30:11-14)
 - A renewed call to **choose life, not death** (30:15-20)
- This is the passage that is in the background throughout Romans 10:5-13, as Paul talks about the centrality of faith (as opposed to works) in identifying who is in God's people
 - 'For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?" (that is, to bring Christ down) "or "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.'
 - Paul's argument is that even in the Torah, Moses had distinguished between the righteousness based on law (the Sinai/Horeb covenant, which was of works and could not be kept) and the righteousness based on faith (the circumcised heart promised at Moab)
 - This word would not be unattainably high or low, but rather it would be in Israel's mouths (which Paul sees as confession of Jesus as Lord) and hearts (that is, faith in the resurrection), so that they could do it
- The Torah then concludes with the song, blessing and death of Moses, and the succession of Joshua