Lecture 1: Reading the Bible.

Reading: Kugel xi-xiv and 1-46; Canons of the Hebrew Bible (following these notes).

The Hebrew Bible is an anthology of books, written in Hebrew (mostly) by the people of Judah and Israel between (approximately) the eighth century BCE and (approximately) the second century BCE.

Four main types of books:
- history (narrative) (+ law);
- prophecy;
- wisdom (advice on how to live a good life; or books reflecting on the ways of the world);
- hymns (the book of Psalms).

The quadripartite arrangement of Christian Bibles (Law; History; Poetry/Hymns; Prophecy) reflects this.

Biblical books derive from different groups/classes:
- Priests (teach Torah); institutional home of priests was temple; cult of sacrifices;
- Prophets (speak the word of the Lord); not institutional; warning figures and social critics;
- Scribes (or sages) (give sage advice to upper class).

The tripartite arrangement (Torah; Prophets; Writings) of Jewish Bibles reflects this.

Modern Bible scholarship/scholars (MBS) assumes that:
- The Bible is a collection of books like any others: created and put together by normal (i.e. fallible) human beings;
- The Bible is often inconsistent because it derives from sources (written and oral) that do not always agree; individual biblical books grow over time, are multi-layered;
- The Bible is to be interpreted in its context:
  - Individual biblical books take shape in historical contexts; the Bible is a document of its time;
  - Biblical verses are to be interpreted in context;
  - The “original” or contextual meaning is to be prized above all others;
- The Bible is an ideologically-driven text (collection of texts). It is not “objective” or neutral about any of the topics that it treats. Its historical books are not “historical” in our sense.
  - “hermeneutics of suspicion”;


Consequently MBS often reject the alleged “facts” of the Bible (e.g. was Abraham a real person? Did the Israelites leave Egypt in a mighty Exodus? Was Solomon the king of a mighty empire?);

- MBS do not assess its moral or theological truth claims, and if they do, they do so from a humanist perspective;
  ★ The Bible contains many ideas/laws that we moderns find offensive;
- The authority of the Bible is for MBS a historical artifact; it does derive from any ontological status as the revealed word of God;

Ancient Jewish and Christian interpreters, and their medieval and modern continuators, have an opposite set of assumptions according to which the Bible is:

- True (in two senses: factually, morally);
- Qualitatively different from all “regular” books:
  ★ Revealed by God;
  ★ Written by people who were in touch with God;
  ★ Divine speech is omnisignificant, cryptic, many meanings, layers of meaning;
  ★ Demands interpretation (exegesis);
- Harmonious, perfect;
  ★ Inconsistencies are only apparent;
- eternally true, speaking to and about us;
  ★ Not bound by any historical context, not historically conditioned;
  ★ Hence Jews could find Judaism in the text, and Christians could find Christianity, although historically considered the text is neither Jewish nor Christian;
- Kugel has a slightly different version of these “Four Assumptions “ (pp. 14-17);
- In reaction to MBS, the theory of evolution, archaeological discoveries, etc. some Jews and Christians began to insist on these assumptions all the more so:
  ★ E.g. Evangelical Protestant doctrines of “inerrancy”;
    ★ See e.g. the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (1978);
  ★ On-going struggles within Judaism and Christianity between modernist and anti-modernist wings;
    ★ See the troubles of Charles Augustus Briggs discussed by Kugel;
    ★ Kugel’s own twists and turns;

Perhaps the most obvious and blatant conflict between MBS and traditional belief concerns the date and the authorship of the biblical books:

- Traditionally the Biblical books are seen as unitary compositions from single authors, none of them later than the Persian period (ca. 450 BCE);
• MBS: most of the books have a long period of gestation and derive from many sources; the latest books derive from long after c. 450 BCE, even as late as the mid-second century BCE;

• The great battleground is the Torah (the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses): is the Torah the earliest biblical book, revealed by God to Moses shortly after the Exodus, around 1300-1200 BCE, or one of the latest, not completed until the exilic period – or later? (see Kugel)

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<th>Hebrew Bible (Jewish)</th>
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<td>6) Joshua</td>
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<td>WISDOM/POETRY</td>
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<td>14) Psalms</td>
<td>Job</td>
<td>Job</td>
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<td>15) Proverbs</td>
<td>Psalms [Psalm no. 151] [Odes]</td>
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<td>19) Psalms</td>
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<td>16) Job</td>
<td>Proverbs</td>
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<td>17) Song of Songs</td>
<td>Ecclesiastes</td>
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<td>18) Ruth</td>
<td>Song of Songs</td>
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<td>Wisdom of Solomon</td>
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<td>Baruch</td>
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<td>26) Ezekiel</td>
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Source: adapted from [http://www.bible-researcher.com/canon2.html](http://www.bible-researcher.com/canon2.html); cf. JSB p. 2076
Lecture 2: The Bible’s Main Ideas.

Reading: Hayes, excerpt from Lecture 2 (Kaufmann on Polytheism); Wikipedia, “Documentary Hypothesis”; the text which appears on the Basic Ideas timeline when you rollover each of the horizontal bars (also available as a PDF file).

Theological truth claims of the Bible:

- God, variously called YHWH or Elohim, is the universal God who created the world and established a universal moral order;
  - YHWH = a uniquely Israelite name for God;
    - Pronunciation uncertain (not “Jehovah”), translated “Lord”;
  - Elohim = the deity, translated “God,” a variant on a divine name found all over the ancient near east (El);
  - Documentary hypothesis makes much of the change of names (“J,” “E”).
- There is no other God;
- This God is the God of both nature and history:
  - Nature: creation; natural phenomena obey God;
  - History: the Bible’s grand narrative, from the creation of the world, to the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob), the Israelites in Egypt (Joseph), the Exodus (Moses), the conquest of Canaan (Joshua), the establishment of the monarchy (David and Solomon), the splitting of the kingdom in two, the destruction and exile of the northern kingdom (722 BCE) and the southern kingdom (587 BCE), exile to Babylonia, return from Babylonia.
- God stands in a special relationship with the people of Israel through a covenant and revealed law;
- God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked, both individually and collectively, both of Israel and of the nations.

These truth claims are accepted by both Jews and Christians.

The Bible shows in spite of itself that these truth claims have a history, esp. “there is no other God” and “God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked.”

“**There is no other God.**”

Bible’s own view: One true God creates the world; truth precedes error.

Bible does not explain how idolatry came about; but it shows that the Israelites (beginning with the golden calf episode, Exodus 32) regularly practiced it.
The Hebrew Bible: Notes for All Lectures (1-25), Shaye J.D. Cohen

- Bible does not have a word for idolatry but refers frequently to two interrelated phenomena:
  - Worship of images (proper worship of God is to be aniconic, without images);
  - Worship of many gods (polytheism) in addition to, or instead of, YHWH.

The Bible’s grand narrative: from worship of the one God to idolatry back to worship of the one God (when the Israelites repent).

MBS: this entire narrative is backwards. Polytheism and image worship come first.

Biblical itself and archaeology show that for a long time Israelites worshiped more than one God. (We have a large number of Israelite cultic figurines.)

The contrast between polytheism and monotheism is not just the one and the many; contrast in world views; see Hayes summarizing Kaufman.

Standard view of MBS:
- 8th century BCE emergence of God-alone theology; prophets (Hosea) are champions of monolatry: Israel is to worship one God (not necessarily a statement about the existence of other Gods). Marriage metaphor; Israel is to be a one-man (one-God) woman (people).
- 6th century BCE emergence of monotheism; prophets (Second Isaiah) promote the belief that only one God exists;
- Image-less worship is associated with these two movements.

So, belief in one true God who created heaven and earth is a belief that derives not from the beginning of the biblical period but from the middle, and is projected back onto the narratives.

The Torah reflects this belief even if there are traces here and there of monolatry (Deuteronomy 4:19) and more than one God (Exodus 15:11).

God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked.

Numerous Biblical passages (as we shall see) and the book of Job show that many Israelites were not comfortable with the traditional belief that God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked.

As a result in the second temple period there were two major developments:
1. Instead of the view that the one true God is in charge of everything (cosmic monism), comes the view that some hostile force (Satan, the elements, Beliar, the rulers) is in temporary command of this world (cosmic dualism) and that God’s full power is manifest only in the next world.

2. Reward and punishment take place not in this world but the next:
   - Heaven/hell;
   - Judgment after death, judgment in the end time;
   - Messiah, messianic deliverer;
   - Resurrection of the dead;
   - “Apocalypticism”: the belief that history is about to end, that the fated pre-determined time is about to come, that we are living on the brink, that the evil forces will soon be overthrown, etc.

Christianity will carry forward cosmic dualism.
Rabbinic Judaism will carry forward cosmic monism.

**Lecture 3: Biblical Chronology and Geography: When and Where.**

*Reading*: The text which appears on the Ideas Timeline (Basic) when you rollover each of the horizontal bars (also appended below);

Four maps (http://www.lds.org/scriptures/bible-maps?lang=eng):
- Near East;
- The Kingdom(s) of Judah and Israel;
- Judaea/Palaestina: 15 required items;
- Judaea/Palaestina: contours;

Four timelines (http://ruml.com/cb39/timelines/):
- Overview: Eras and Precipitating Events;
- Biblical People and Events;
- Biblical Chronology as presented by the Bible Itself (with MBS addendum);
- Chronology of Ideas (Basic)

There are no lecture notes per se for lecture 3. The lecture refers to maps reproduced below and to an interactive timelines which can be accessed at: http://ruml.com/cb39/timelines/.
The Hebrew Bible: Notes for All Lectures (1-25), Shaye J.D. Cohen
5. The Assyrian Empire

721 B.C. (2 KINGS 17:1–6)

KEY

- Assyria about 721 B.C.
- Assyrian Empire about 650 B.C.
- Judah

6. The New Babylonian Empire and the Kingdom of Egypt

600–587 B.C. (2 KINGS 24–25)

KEY

- New Babylonian Empire
- Kingdom of Egypt
7. The Persian Empire

1100 BCE: Isn’t a firm date: by scholarly convention, the Exodus occurred (if at all) about 1200 with Joshua’s conquest of Canaan 40 years later. So, 1100 seems to be a reasonable nominal date for the start of the period of Judges.

In 1020 BCE (more or less) the monarchy began with the anointment of Saul as King by Samuel (followed by David and Solomon).

In 931 BCE, on the death of Solomon, his son and successor declined to lighten the heavy taxation imposed by his father and the ten northern tribes broke away to become the Kingdom of Israel. The remaining two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) remained loyal to the Davidic house and formed the southern kingdom, the Kingdom of Judah.

In 722 BCE, Assyria conquered the Northern Kingdom and forced the people to resettle elsewhere. Many fled to the Southern Kingdom but the others remain unaccounted for.

In 587 BCE, Babylonia under King Nebuchadnezzar II conquered the Southern Kingdom and destroyed the Temple. The elites had been sent into exile in Babylon ten years earlier (-597).

In 539 BCE, the Persians under Cyrus conquered Babylonia and in the following year Cyrus’ famous edict gave permission to the Judeans to return to Jerusalem to rebuild their temple.

In 334/332 BCE, Alexander the Great conquered Judea while passing through on his way to Persia and points east. When he died ten years later (-323), Judaea became part of the Egyptian empire of the Ptolemies. In 200 BCE it came under the control of the Seleucid Empire.

In 168 BCE, the Maccabean Revolt began. It eventually established the first independent government in over 400 years.

In 63 BCE, the Roman Army conquered Judea and in 37 BCE installed Herod the Great as client king; he was a great builder and dramatically enlarged and refurbished the Second Temple (d. 4 BCE).

In 70 CE, the Romans ended the First Jewish War (66-70) by sacking Jerusalem and destroying the Temple.
Lecture 4: The Two Creation Stories.

Reading: Genesis chapters 1-3.

- Gen 1:1-2:3 First creation account, climaxing in the Sabbath;
- Gen 2:4—3:24 Second creation account, climaxing in the expulsion from the Garden of Eden; [first rebellion in a series of rebellions against God; see next lecture]

Creation stories world-wide (flood stories too as we shall see) generally feature either copulation or battle, esp. between monsters, or both.

- Relics of mythological creation story elsewhere in the Bible; mysterious [sea] monsters; creation of world and end-time restoration involve beating back the forces of chaos:
  - Yam (“Sea”): Isaiah 50:2, 51:10; Psalm 74:13; Job 7:12;
  - Leviathan and Tanin (“Dragon”): Isaiah 27:1; Psalm 74:14.

- These texts might be thought to support a theory of “cosmic dualism” in which the sea-monsters play the role later played by Satan, but probably not. Serious question whether this is “theology” or “literature”.

In contrast: Genesis 1 (“P”) and 2-3 (“J) are non-mythological, perhaps anti-mythological.

- Mythological relics:
  - tehom, “the deep,” “the waters” in 1:2;
  - Note correct translation of 1:1-2; not “In the beginning God created” but “When God began to create”;
  - Note all the nouns in 1:2 – whence do all these entities come?
- taninim, “dragons,” in 1:21;
- Plural in 1:26 (let us make Adam in our image) which reminds us of the ANE idea of council of Gods;
  - Later Jews and Christians: the passage refers to God and his angels. But when and where did God create angels?
- In Genesis 2-3: we have folklore relics more than mythological relics (Kugel): magic garden and magic trees and talking snakes;
- God is masculine [and plural!] but sexless [in spite of some gendered-images of God, e.g. Isaiah 42:13-14, juxtaposition of male and female image].

Compare and contrast Genesis 1 (“P”) and 2-3 (“J”).

Documentary hypothesis in its various forms clearest in the book of Genesis: see Kugel;
• Reminder: it is just a hypothesis, an approach by which to explain some puzzling features of the biblical text.

Genesis 1 (‘P’); God creates through speech; through separation/making distinct; and the mysterious verb *bara* ‘create’;

Genesis 2-3 (‘J’) is less “philosophical” God is a master craftsman; creating not through speech but through artifice; no *bara*.

The God of ‘J’ (YHWH or YHWH-Elohim) is *anthropomorphic* [having human shape] and *anthropopathic* [having human emotions]; the God of P (Elohim) is neither.

The point of the P creation story is to explain the Sabbath; see Exodus 20:10; see Kugel; The point of the J creation story is to explain why human society is structured the way it is: an *etiological* tale:

• why working the soil is so difficult;
• why bearing children is so difficult;
• why women are subservient to their husbands;
• why snakes don’t have feet;
• why humans wear clothes;
• why men desire women (etiology explicit at 2:24).

Major contrasts of the two versions re creation of Adam:

• At the end of creation (P) or at the beginning (J);
• Male and female together (P) or male first, female second (J);
• Male and female in the image of God (P).

Why does Israel’s sacred book open with this material? Probably because of its strong moral focus. A universal God who demands righteousness from all creatures and punishes them when they fail.

• God the creator a prominent theme in the Bible; see esp. Isaiah 45; Job 38-41; Psalm 104; Proverbs 8. The theme of these passages is the universality of God’s rule and God’s moral order.
• At what point Israelite monotheism reached this conception is debatable; perhaps not until the exilic period.
• Throughout the Bible: God uses natural phenomena (rain, drought, plague) to reward the righteous and punish the wicked.
• Morality tales continue in Genesis (see next Lecture).
Lecture 5: The Primeval History.

Reading: Genesis chapters 1-11:
- Gen 1 First creation account, climaxing in the Sabbath;
- Gen 2-3 Second creation account, climaxing in the expulsion from the Garden of Eden; \[\text{first rebellion against God}\];
- Gen 4 Murder of Abel by his brother Cain and Cain’s punishment; \[\text{second rebellion against God}\];
- Gen 5: the “begats”: ten generations from Adam to Noah;
- Gen 6:1-8 Evil in the world, miscegenation of divine beings with the daughters of Adam; \[\text{third rebellion against God}\];
- Gen 6:9-8:14 Noah and the Great Flood;
- Gen 8:15-9:29 aftermath of the great flood; God’s pledge not to bring another flood; God’s instructions to humanity;
  + Gen 9:8-17 God’s covenant (berit) with Noah and his descendants;
  + Gen 9:19-27 Noah, Ham, and Canaan;
- Gen 10 repopulating the earth;
- Gen 11:1-9 the Tower of Babel \[\text{fourth rebellion against God}\];
- Gen 11:10-32 more “begats”: ten generations from Noah to Abraham.

Sequence of episodes, not an organic history.

A series of rebellions against God (three of the four told only by J), each resulting in divine punishment: rebellions 1, 2, and 4 result in exile or banishment; rebellion 3 results in the flood.
- God punishes Cain, and the generation of Noah for violating laws that were never stated. The narrator assumes that God can hold people responsible to an inherent or self-evident morality:
  + Adam and Eve violated a law that had been given to them – not to eat of the fruit; not so here;
  + After the flood (9:1-7) Noah receives instructions from God for the new society; murder of humans is prohibited, but killing animals is permitted.

Later readers found in these rebellions hints as to the origins of evil (after all, creation is “good” or “very good” in Gen 1; whence evil?); see Kugel.
- The serpent = Satan; Cain = Satan; fallen angels of Gen 6 are the brood of Satan.
- Cain story was moved here (Kugel) to explain how a good creation goes bad.
- But not likely that this was the original function of these stories; no cosmic dualism here.
- These are morality tales focusing on the righteousness of God.
Observations on the Four Rebellions.

Rebellion 1: Adam and Eve in the Garden.
New England Primer (1777) “In ADAM’S Fall, We sinned all.”
But etiological ending of the story says nothing about fallen state of humanity; life is hard and humans are mortal (as are all other creatures). Whether Adam was meant to be immortal, not clear; if he was, what then was the point of the tree of life?

Rebellion 2: Cain and Abel.
Eternal conflict between farmers and ranchers/herders.
God prefers the sacrifice of Abel because God prefers meat.
Divine curse of Cain (4:11-12) resembles divine curse of Adam (3:17-19).
Cain is cursed to wander but he founds a city (4:17); probably a commentary on urban crime.
Whom did Cain marry?

Rebellion 3: Miscegenation and the Flood.
Flood story:
• Found in many cultures (see Kugel);
• Biblical flood story seems to have strong connections with the ancient Babylonian flood story from the epic of Gilgamesh (see Kugel);
  ♦ Most striking is the parallel to Gen 8:21: God smelling the sweet savor of Noah’s sacrifice;
  ♦ But the Biblical story is a morality tale; not so Gilgamesh.
• Biblical account seems to be a combination of two parallel versions (see next lecture);
Background to the flood is the story of divine-human miscegenation;
• This seems mythological, a relic of a much longer story;
• Other such relics in the Torah: Exodus 4:24-26 (circumcision); Serah daughter of Asher (Genesis 46:17, Numbers 26:46); Genesis 48:22 seems to allude to a story that we don’t have.
Genesis 9:8-17: God enters into a covenant with Noah, and the covenant has a sign (rainbow); note parallel with Genesis 17 (covenant and sign with Abraham).

Rebellion 4: Tower of Babel.
Certainly of Mesopotamian provenance; cf. flood.

Features of interest:
God’s instructions to Noah after the flood (9:1-7) (“P”).
Lecture 6: A Closer Look at the Flood Story.

Reading: Richard E. Friedman, at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/bible/flood.html (be certain to click on “launch interactive” about halfway down); reread Genesis 6-9 (can you see the seams?).

Topics:
- Why did the animals die? (What about fish?)
- “Pure” and “impure” animals (7:2; 8:20) - cf. Leviticus 11:47.
- Are you convinced by Friedman’s analysis? Do you see two versions of the same story woven together? or, perhaps, a narrator who, for his own stylistic reasons, goes back and forth in his story-telling?
- Should pious believers continue to send expeditions to Mt. Ararat in Armenia to search for remains of Noah’s ark?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modern Bible Scholars (MBS)</th>
<th>Traditionalists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working assumption</td>
<td>The Torah should be read like any other text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contradictions and</td>
<td>Evidence of “seams” between sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inconsistencies;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>different names of God</td>
<td>Evidence of different sources (“J” vs. “P” or “E”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(YHWH vs. Elohim)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources</td>
<td>Sources can be reconstructed; in the case of the flood narrative, “J” and “P”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources</td>
<td>The date and social location of the sources are debated by scholars, but can be reconstructed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Torah as we have it</td>
<td>Put together by a “redactor,” but the work of the redactor has not obliterated the evidence for multiple sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The flood story Genesis 6-8</td>
<td>Two distinct parallel stories stitched together to create a single narrative.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[The following pages were prepared by the teaching fellows to accompany the debate which is part of Lecture 6]
Introduction (Documentary Hypothesis): When we look closely at the flood story, we discover that the story has a very surprising history. Originally, there were two separate flood stories, written down at different times on two different scrolls. Each of these stories—one composed by an author we call J (for Yahwist) and another composed by an author we call P (for Priestly author)—was considered a sacred book, but each had a different flood narrative. Later, a third person, whom we call the redactor (R), decided to combine these two narratives. Although the stories contradicted each other, R felt he (probably not she) could not change them because of their sacred status. How do we know this?

1. **Repetitions**: The story as we have it repeats itself awkwardly, but when we separate the story into two sources, this awkward style disappears.

   a. God commands Noah to get into the ark twice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>J</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“. . . you shall enter the ark . . .” (6:18)</td>
<td>“Go into the ark . . .” (7:1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   b. God commands Noah to gather animals twice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>J</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Of all that lives, of all flesh, you shall take two of each into the ark . . .” (6:19)</td>
<td>“Of every clean animal take seven pairs . . . every animal that is not clean two . . .” (7:2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   c. Noah follows God’s commands—to get into the ark and gather animals—twice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>J</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Noah did so; just as God commanded him (Hebrew: according to all that God commanded him) so he did).” (6:22)</td>
<td>“And Noah did just as the LORD commanded him (Hebrew: according to all that the LORD commanded him).” (7:5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   d. Other repetitions: God “sees” human wickedness twice (6:12 [P]; 6:5 [J]), God states his intention to destroy mankind twice (6:13 [P]; 6:7 [J]), the reason Noah is spared is stated twice (6:9 [P] 6:8; 7:1 [J]), God announces a coming flood twice (6:12 [P], 7:4 [J]), the beginning of rain is described twice (7:11 [P]; 7:12 [J]), the death of animals is mentioned twice (7:21 [P], 7:22 [J]), the end of rain is described twice (8:2 [P] 8:2 [J]), the recession of the waters is described twice (8:3 [P]; 8:3 [J]), the completely dry earth is described twice (8:14 [P]; 8:13 [J]), God promises not to send a similar
We see this in no other major literature.

I would agree completely that from a modern standpoint these repetitions are problematic aesthetically. No good modern author will repeat herself/himself nearly so often. But is it fair to judge an ancient text by such standards—a text that was undoubtedly written to please a different aesthetic sensibility? More particularly, it is counter-intuitive to conclude from the repetitions themselves that their origin must be in separate documents. According to your model, Gen 1.1-2.4 is all ONE document, yet it is one of the most obnoxiously repetitious portions of the whole Bible! *God said blah blah blah, and then blah blah blah happened. And then it was morning, and then it was evening. God saw that it was good.* Are these monotonous examples from a putative *single* source somehow less repetitive than what you quote above about God *telling* Noah that he would someday go into the ark, and then God *commanding* Noah to go into the ark?

Elsewhere repetition is understood by MBS-s to be a sign that disparate passages are part of the *same* source, not as here, a sign of the conflation of two different sources. Consider, Gen 1.26-27 next to Gen 5:1-2. The DH understands both of these to be P. Yet, it repeats the same content with slightly different wording. According to your logic ought Gen 5.1-2 not be YET ANOTHER source, because it repeats information already given, not a continuation of a first one? The criterion of “repetition” as an indication of difference sources is inconsistently applied—sometimes it is an example of the continuity of sources and other times it is of discontinuity. What is the controlling principle?

1a. God’s first “command” to Noah to enter the ark (6:18) is actually part of longer narrative sequence in which God lays out what he is going to do; sort of like how a pilot talks about his flight plan before takeoff. (The argument of MBS here is tantamount to saying that the pilot discussing his flight plan is no different than the flight itself.) Noah’s entering the ark is just part of God’s larger plan, which He discloses to Noah before the calamity begins (using an indicative verb). The actual command (with attendant verb) comes in 7:1. The same goes for (1b) with regard to the collecting of the various animals.

1c. According to Rashi, the same verb may be used in both verses, but each describes a separate action. In the first verse, it describes Noah assembling the ark, while in the second verse, it describes Noah entering the ark.

2. **Contradictions:** The story as we have it contains a number of contradictions, but when we separate the story into two sources, the contradictions disappear.
### a. Dates and Time Periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>J</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flood begins: 2nd month, 17th day (7:11)</td>
<td>Rain falls for 40 days (7:12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flood increases for 150 days (7:18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flood finishes: 7th month, 17th day (8:3-4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The waters recede enough for the mountains to be visible: 10th month, 1st day (8:5)</td>
<td>At the end of 40 days, Noah opens window of ark (8:6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice in particular that we have two different accounts of how long the rain lasted (described using “floodgates of the sky” in P and described as “rain” in J):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>J</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“And when the waters had swelled on the earth one hundred and fifty days . . . the floodgates of the sky were stopped up . . .” (7:24; 8:2)</td>
<td>“. . . and the rain from the sky was held back 8:2”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### b. Animals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>J</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“And of all that lives, of all flesh, you shall take two of each into the ark . . .” (6:19)</td>
<td>“Of every clean animal you shall take seven pairs, males and their mates, and of every animal that is not clean, two, a male and its mate” (7:2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Of the clean animals, of the animals that are not clean, of the birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, two of each, male and female, came to Noah into the ark, as God had commanded Noah.” (7:8-9)</td>
<td>“They came to Noah into the ark, two each of all flesh in which there was the breath of life (7:15)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I’ll admit that the concatenation of numbers here regarding the duration of the Flood is confusing. But the examples you have offered cannot properly be understood as contradictions. A contradiction is: the car is blue. the car is red. These are clearly not the same car. In example A you are not describing a contradiction. Anybody who’s ever seen a flood, knows that “flood” and “rain” are not cotermous. The start of rain in a particular location has little to do with when flooding starts in that location. Similarly, it is not as though flooding immediately subsides as soon as rain stops falling. When the southern Mississippi or Ohio Rivers flood after an afternoon of heavy rainfall somewhere upriver, it can take days and weeks for the waters to subside. That is what these putative sources are describing with their “contradictory” numbers. The duration of rainfall and the duration of the flood.

Regarding the numbers and kinds of each animal, is it not better to assume that there is a clarification here, not a contradiction? Since most wild animals are “unclean” does it not make sense to generalize the instruction as “one pair of each kind” and then in the less common case of clean animals fit for sacrifice to provide further clarification that seven of each clean pair be preserved in the ark. This was also a necessity, because as soon as Noah left the Ark, he made a sacrifice—which would have obliterated one of the mating pairs. (This is also Rashi’s solution.)

The extent of these “contradictions” is greatly overstated, and even if we were to permit them, positing four disparate and yet largely parallel original sources mysteriously interwoven by a hypothetical editor hardly requires a much greater suspension of disbelief than the assumption of narrative integrity.

The picture here is complicated for Rashi. On the one hand, the text presents a very complex timeline; on the other hand, Rashi is beholden to an ancient Jewish teaching that it was one full 365 day year from the first rainfall to Noah’s exit from the ark. To achieve this count and to , Rashi employs all of the dates and time periods mentioned in the text and harmonizes them into one whole. (See this website for more info.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flood begins</td>
<td>Year 600: 2nd month, 17th day (7:11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainfall</td>
<td>40 days (7:11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flood increases for</td>
<td>150 days (7:18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noah opens the window</td>
<td>40 days later (8:6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three dispatches of the dove</td>
<td>21 days (7 days between each dove)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noah sees the saturated</td>
<td>Year 601: 1st month, 1st day (57 days later)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flood ends</td>
<td>Year 601: 2nd month, 27th day (8:14; 57 days later)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. **Different Terminology.** When use the contradictions and repetitions to isolate separate sources, we find that the separate sources we have isolated also have distinct terminology. This fact that these differences in terminology fit perfectly with the evidence of repetitions and contradictions further confirms our hypothesis.

   a. **Names for God**
      i. P: Elohim ("God")
      ii. J: YHWH ("LORD")

   b. **Other**
      i. P: “expired”
      ii. J: “died”

4. **Consistency with Sources Elsewhere.**

   a. **Names of God.** According to Exodus 6:3, a text written by P, the name YHWH was not revealed to mankind until the time of Moses. Thus, it makes sense that P does not use the name YHWH in this account, since this is long before Moses. J, on the other hand, uses the name YHWH from the very beginning of his narrative (Gen 2).

   b. **Animals.** According to J, sacrifices were performed since creation. Thus, J’s narrative has seven pairs of pure animals in the ark and concludes with a sacrifice. According to P, sacrifices were only authorized in the time of Moses. Thus, P’s narrative has only one pair of each animal in the ark.

   c. **Depiction of God:** In J God is anthropomorphic and anthropopathic, just like in Genesis 2: He shuts the door on the ark, feels regret, and smells the odor of the sacrifice. In P, God is not depicted in these ways, but instead is more separate from creation.

   d. **Dates, Measurements.** Throughout the Torah, P tends to give precise dates and detailed measurements. Thus, it makes sense that P includes gives a detailed dating scheme for the flood and detailed instructions for the building of the ark. J, on the other hand, tends to use round numbers and rarely includes long lists of detailed measurements. Thus, it makes sense that J uses the round numbers of “7” and “40” and does not have precise instructions for the ark.

   e. **Conception of the Universe.** In P, the sky is a “firmament,” a solid disk with a heavenly ocean above it. Thus, P describes rain as the opening of the “floodgates of heaven.” J, on the other hand, never describes such a firmament and simply describes rain as “rain.”

Regarding the names used for the deity of Israel, you are misleading when you say that your hypothetical P uses “Elohim” *God* and that your hypothetical J uses “Yahweh” *LORD*. In fact, J uses Yahweh-Elohim, *LORD GOD*, a combination of the two, not simply one exclusively. Yet you rightly note that there is a difference here, some kind of change. But are there not myriad other places in the Hebrew Bible in which there is free and seemingly meaningless variation between the divine names? For instance in Jonah 4 we find within a span of four verses:
Jonah 4.4: And the LORD said, “Is it right for you to be angry?”

Jonah 4.6: The LORD God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush.

Jonah 4.7: But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered.

Applying your fragmentarian principles ought we not then attributed each of these actions to different hypothetical sources or perhaps to different deities all together?

Likewise, concerning your observation about the initial revelation of the divine name, Yahweh. In your P source you claim this occurs first in Exodus 6:3. It says there that Yahweh was the deity formerly known as El-Shaddai, God Almighty or perhaps God of the (Two?) Mountains. If we are to buy into the idea that this is a distinct source, would it not make sense to define the corpus attributed to this “source” according to the very principle it establishes there? Namely, before Ex 6:3 only those scant few places that refer to the deity if Israel as El-Shaddai should be considered part of the source. Should Ex 6:3 represent a line from a distinct source, would it not make better sense for this source’s earlier references to God to use the term the “source” itself says it used for God in times gone by?

As an aside, let’s look at how we address our venerable lecturer. If you were to address him, you would call him “Professor Cohen,” “Professor,” or, heaven forbid, “Dr. Cohen.” Behind his back, you might call him “Cohen,” or perhaps even “Shaye.” That there are so many ways to address Professor Cohen does not mean that he has split personalities. And if Professor Cohen has that many names, imagine how many names belong to God!

God’s different names certainly bothered Rashi and other ancient commentators. But they found a very elegant way to make sure that the text stayed unified and harmonious. Elohim and YHWH each refer to distinct aspects of God’s character. Elohim emphasizes God’s power of divine judgment, while YHWH underscores God’s mercy. (But this dichotomy is difficult to maintain, and a number of examples in the Flood narrative illustrate this. See, e.g., YHWH said, “I will blot out from the earth the men whom I created” (6:7) – this sounds a lot like a judging and vengeful God than a merciful one. Elohim is likewise associated with God’s mercy at the end of the narrative: “Elohim remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark, and God caused a wind to blow across the earth, and the waters subsided” (8:1). Rashi struggles here with Elohim appearing to take on a compassionate side; his comment on this verse – Elohim is, indeed, the attribute of God’s justice, but due to Noah’s prayer, He became compassionate.)
Conclusion (Documentary Hypothesis): While any one of the pieces of evidence by itself might not make for a convincing case, the manner in which so many pieces of evidence all point toward the same conclusion makes the documentary hypothesis very compelling.

The evidence compounded by advocates of this theory is stretched beyond the limits of rational and intuitive interpretation. The repetitions, contradictions and tensions enumerated are overplayed and sloppily analyzed, and the basic principles extracted from the evidence are not applied consistently. These repetition and contradiction can both be signs of continuity and discontinuity among these imaginary sources depending on the whims and particular purposes of the interpreter. Surely, there is a better way to read!

For a traditionalist reader like Rashi, the text is only problematic if it hasn’t been explained adequately. If the words of the Torah are omnisignificant, there can be no contradictions, doublets, inconsistencies, or editorial sources. Any indication that the latter exist is to the detriment of the interpreter.

Lecture 7: The Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac (and Ishmael); the Aqedah.

Reading: Genesis 12-22; Kugel 89-106, 119-132.

Second part of Genesis is the story of one family, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph.

Historicity of all these narratives is much debated; is the setting the early second millennium BCE, the ostensible date, or sometime in the first millennium BCE, the apparent date of the authors? Most scholars today, rejecting the legacy of Albright (see Kugel), prefer the second alternative.

Dramatic if unstated transition from Genesis 11 to Genesis 12ff
- Universal → particular.
- God chose Noah because he was righteous (Gen 6:9), but why Abra(ha)m? Text gives not a clue.
- In the text God chooses Abra(ha)m; in later interpretations Abra(ha)m chooses God (see Kugel); famous story about Abraham destroying the idols in his father’s workshop.
  - Gen 15:6 Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness (KJV and many others) vs. And because he put his trust in the Lord, He reckoned it to his merit (JPS in the JSB). For Paul, Abraham is archetype of “faith”; “faith” vs. “trust”.


Genesis 12-22:
Gen 12 Abra(ha)m migrates from Haran to the land of Canaan; descent to Egypt;
Gen 13 Abram and Lot;
Gen 14 Abram the warrior;
Gen 15 covenant between God and Abra(ha)m “between the sections”;
Gen 16 Abra(ha)m, Sara(i), Hagar, birth and expulsion of Ishmael;
Gen 17 covenant between God and Abraham, circumcision;
Gen 18-19 Abraham and the three visitors; destruction of Sodom; Lot and his daughters;
Gen 20 Abraham and Avimelekh king of Gerar;
Gen 21 birth of Isaac; expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael; covenant with Avimelekh;
Gen 22 the binding (agedah) of Isaac.

Duplications here:
• Wife-sister motif (Gen 12 and 20; cf. 26 re Isaac; at 26:1 the redactor seems to be aware that he is dealing with a duplicate Now there was a famine in the land—besides the earlier famine of Abraham’s time—and Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines in Gerar);
• Expulsion of Hagar (Gen 16 and 21);
• Naming of Beer Sheva (21:31, 26:33);
• Two covenants (Gen 15 and 17).

Themes within these narratives:

God speaks with the patriarchs who clearly enjoy special status and ease of access to God:
• In 20:7, God tells Avimelekh that Abraham is a “prophet” (navi, intercessor) and that Avimelekh should request Abraham to pray for him to God.
• Abraham also intercedes for Sodom.

God appears in a dream to outsiders like Avimelekh (20:3); the moral order applies to them as well.
• Destruction of Sodom.
• The sin of the Amorite in 15:16.

Promise of the land of Canaan to Abraham’s descendants: 12:7, 13:15, 15:7, 17:8, 24:7:
• Canaan is son of Ham son of Noah (10:6), cursed to serve Shem and Japheth (9:25-27); therefore the Canaanites are not entitled to the land;
• Mysterious motif: we are not of this place. Abraham and the Israelites come to the land from the outside twice-over: from Ur/Haran, and from Egypt.
Covenant (*berit*): a treaty, a compact. God had a covenant with Noah (6:18, 9:8).
Gen 15 “between the sections” (see Kugel) vs. Gen 17 circumcision.
- A covenant between a people and its God is unparalleled anywhere else in the ANE.

Narrators do not make the Patriarchs conform to later Israelite piety:
- build altars everywhere (Kugel);
- Abraham marries his half-sister (20:12; prohibited in Leviticus 18:9);
- Jacob erects a sacred pillar (28:18, 35:14), prohibited in Leviticus 26:1 and Deuteronomy 16:21
- Jacob marries two sisters (prohibited in Leviticus 18:18).
- Aside from circumcision (Gen 17) and removal of foreign gods (35:2-4), distinctive Israelite practices (e.g. Sabbath, food laws [cf. Gen 32:33]) are not mentioned.
- Is this a good argument for the date of these narratives (Kugel)?

Gen 22: a polemic against child sacrifice?

**Lecture 8: The Patriarchs: Isaac, Jacob (and Esau), and Joseph.**

*Reading*: Genesis 25-33; 37, 39-50; Kugel 133-162, 176-197. [Note that the Joseph story has a literary unity and polish that the earlier patriarchal stories do not have.]

*Topics*:
- the twelve sons of Israel;
- the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Ephraim -- a study in contrasts;
- Genesis 49:10 - one of the most cryptic verses in the Torah;
- Joseph --the first assimilated Israelite.

General pattern in the narratives of Genesis:
- Anonymous; the Torah does not claim to be the work of Moses;
  - All narratives in the Bible are anonymous;
- Omniscient narrator; knows what God said; knows private conversations of characters, etc.

A series of discrete episodes strung along a narrative frame; not a story so much as a series of stories.
- The order can be changed without consequence;
- Few references from one story to the other;
- Two good examples of self-contained stories: Gen 34 and 38 (both of which we are skipping).

Big exception to this is the Joseph story, which runs from chapter 37-50 (with some inserted material like Gen 38; 46:8-27; 49) which is a single sustained story.
Themes and Patterns

Barren matriarchs: Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, [Hannah mother of Samuel in 1 Samuel 1] [evoked by prophets like Isaiah 54:1] – message seems to be mercy/power of God.

Younger son ousts/takes precedence over the elder:
- Isaac replaces Ishmael (25:5):
  ✦ Different mothers: Sarah vs Hagar;
  ✦ (remarkable how little is told about Isaac);
- Jacob replaces Esau:
  ✦ Twins! Same mother!
  ✦ Storyteller seems defensive about Jacob acquiring Esau’s birthright; does so three times (oracle delivered to Rebecca Gen 25:19-26; lentils 25:29-34; Jacob steals the blessing (26);
  ✦ Perhaps reinforces the covenant idea that the link between Israel and God is not natural but constructed;
  ✦ Jacob is trickster hero; narrator has some sympathy for Esau;
  ✦ Ishmael and Esau are not part of Israelite sacred history; they are the ancestors of neighboring peoples; but all twelve of Jacob’s sons, even the sons of the maidservants, are (see Kugel)– why the shift?
- Joseph lords over his brothers;
- Ephraim gains over Menasseh (48);
- [Moses is the leader, not the older brother Aaron];
- [David is the leader, not his older brothers].

Power of blessing [and curse]:
- Noah’s curse of Ham and Canaan (9);
- Isaac’s blessing of Jacob [Esau]: Isaac blesses the “wrong” son (27);
- Jacob’s blessing of Ephraim and Menasseh: Jacob blesses the “wrong” son (48);
- Jacob’s blessing of the 12 sons (49).

Sometimes the sons are individuals, sometimes they are the eponymous ancestors of tribes or peoples (see Kugel):
- Offspring of Ishmael are [Arab] tribes (25:16);
- Rebecca’s oracle re her two sons (25);
- “Children of Israel” = people of Israel (32:33; cf. 34:7);
- Esau is Edom (25:30; 36:1);
- Blessing of Jacob: Ephraim and Menasseh (48);
- Jacob’s blessing of twelve sons = tribes (49):
+ Reuben loses primogeniture; tribe of Reuben is a weak tribe (49:4 referring to 35:22);
+ Simeon and Levi are punished (49:5-7 referring to c. 34); both are weak tribes except that Levi, through a process unknown to us, becomes the priestly tribe (a development as yet unknown to Gen 49);
+ Judah is the “royal” tribe;
+ Joseph is the prosperous tribe.

Joseph narrative or novella:

Explains how the Israelites came to Egypt.

Beautifully told story; everyone’s favorite scene: Joseph coming out to his brothers (Gen 45:1-4):

- There are occasional bumps in the story: who sold Joseph into slavery: the Midianites (37:36)? The Ishmaelites (37:25-28; 39:1)? The brothers (45:4-5)? Who pleaded with the brothers not to kill Joseph: Reuben (37:22) or Judah (37:26)?

Prominence of dreams and dream-interpretation; these are the skills of a sage.

Joseph as cultural hero: responsible for the land-tax system of Egypt (47:13-26).

Divine control of history (esp. Gen 45:7-8, 50:12) – this is stated by Joseph the character, not by the narrator.

A courtier story, from slave to prisoner to viceroy of Egypt; model for Esther and Daniel – is this the actual date of origin of the tale?

An assimilated Israelite: gets an Egyptian name and an Egyptian wife, the names of his children show he is prospering in Egypt, hides his identity ...

Lecture 9: The Exodus.

Reading: Exodus 1-15; Kugel 198-232.

Topics:
- Is the Exodus a historical event? (does it matter? Does it matter to Kugel?)
- What is the message of the Exodus narrative as a whole?
- Why did Moses need to bring ten plagues against the Egyptians – couldn’t God have taken care of them all at once?
- Why did God harden the pharaoh’s heart?
Exodus 1-15:
1 Enslavement of the Israelites; two Israelite midwives;
2 Birth of Moses, flight to Midian from Egypt;
3-4 Commissioning of Moses at the burning bush;
5-11 various confrontations of Moses with Pharaoh and conversations of Moses with God; plagues;
12 the institution of Pesah sacrifice; the deaths of the first-born;
13-14 flight from Egypt; the miracle at the Red/Reed sea;
15 The Song of Moses (and Miriam).

Two poles around which (some)(much) biblical theology revolves: creation vs. Exodus:
• the rationales for the Sabbath in the ten commandments, Exodus 20 (creation) vs. Deuteronomy 5 (Exodus);
• In the wake of the destruction of 587 BCE: Jeremiah sees God’s redemptive act in terms of the Exodus, II Isaiah in terms of creation.

Historicity of Exodus narrative (much debated: see Kugel):
• Some elements of local Egyptian color (notably Israelite names, including Moses) in the Exodus narrative;
• Hapiru (immigrant workers in Egyptian texts) seems to be related to Hebrew ivri (“Hebrew”), which is used in the Bible mostly in Egyptian contexts (Kugel);
  * The Hyksos (invaders who take over Egypt for two centuries or so) are too early to be the “real” Israelites, even if later Egyptian writers conflate them.
• Still, no archaeological smoking gun, and no clear reference to Israelites in Egypt or to the miraculous departure of 600,000 slaves;
• Commonly encountered argument: who would make up such a story;
• Cf. story that Abra(ha)m migrates from Mesopotamia;
• Common view of MBS: some tribes / groups / clans that would later go on to join the Israelites told stories of their miraculous departure from Egypt; the story of these few became the story of the many. Most Israelites were actually of Canaanite stock; their ancestors did not participate in an Exodus from Egypt;
• Israelites did not build the pyramids!!!

Themes in the narrative:
God is the God of history, for both Israelites and non-Israelites alike.
Striking that morality/sin/punishment are not the driving force of the plot here:
• All is scripted: Genesis 15:13-14 13And He said to Abram, “Know well that your offspring shall be strangers in a land not theirs, and they shall be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years; 14but I will execute judgment on the nation they shall serve, and in the end they shall go free with great wealth.
• Similar statement at burning bush: Exodus 3:19-21;
• God remembers the covenant 2:24 6:5;
• Repeated references to the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart;
• This is not “exile.”

Why then does God need the plagues?
• To show off, to convince the Egyptians and the Israelites 10:1-2 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh. For I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his courtiers, in order that I may display these My signs among them, 2and that you may recount in the hearing of your sons and of your sons’ sons how I made a mockery of the Egyptians and how I displayed My signs among them—in order that you may know that I am the LORD.”
• Pharaoh says “I do not know the Lord” (5:2). Let Pharaoh know! (7:5 14:2 14:18).
  ♦ Israelite recognition of God implies exclusivity in the Torah’s view; not so recognition by non-Israelites;
  ♦ There were some Egyptians who feared the word of the Lord (9:20).

The “ten plagues”:
• Nowhere said to be ten;
• Nowhere called plagues (makkot); they are signs (otot) or wonders (mofetim);
• The plague narratives are combined from different sources and form various patterns; see note in JSB on 7:14 p. 117;
• Long history of rationalizations; these attempts do not defend the text as much as they undo it (Kugel).

Exodus 12: history of Pesah (Passover) sacrifice:
• Sacrifice of the first born seems to be at the bottom of this;
• Replaced (?) by sacrifice of lamb or goat;
• Family feast, but its apotropaic quality is still evident in the blood manipulations;
• Gets combined with matzah (unleavened bread) festival, apparently agrarian, origins and meaning not clear;
• Eating of matzah gets historicized (12:39);
• Later in “D” becomes a pilgrimage festival (Deut 16:1-8).

• An ancient piece of poetry that may not be in complete agreement with the prose narrative that comes before it (Kugel);
• Cf. Gen 49 and Judges 5.
Lecture 10: Revelation at Sinai; Decalogue; Laws.

Reading: Exodus 19-24; the three Decalogues: Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5, Exodus 34; Kugel 240-279.

Topics:
- What is the significance of the Decalogue?
- What is “the book of the covenant”?
- How do the different versions of the Decalogue differ from each other?

Two climaxes to the exodus from Egypt:
- passage of the Red/Reed Sea (Exodus 15, the Song of the Sea);
- Covenant between God and Israel (Exodus 20, the Ten Commandments).

The Ten Words or perhaps “The Ten Revelations” (Exodus 34:28, Deut 4:13, 10.4) = Decalogue:
- “Ten Commandments” is not a biblical phrase;
- Stipulation of the rules governing the treaty (= covenant) between the suzerain (God) and the vassal (Israel) (Kugel);
- Chosen people idea 19:1-6 (from D?);
- The text clearly implies that these laws are special: only these were accompanied by thunder and lightning, only these (or some subset) are revealed to the entire people without Mosaic intermediation;
  - Later Jewish readers (see Kugel) understood these ten as headings or rubrics that encompass all the laws of the Torah; some modern scholars have suggested that the laws of the book of Deuteronomy (which otherwise seem to be entirely random and in a random order) are in fact expansions of these ten in order.

The Decalogue – indeed all the laws of the Torah – contains laws that are:
- common or standard in many societies including the ANE (honor parents, prohibition of murder, theft, adultery);
  - Not “thou shalt not kill” but “thou shalt not murder”;
- laws that are unique to Israel (exclusivity of the worship of God; Sabbath).

The Torah does not classify its laws:
- Medieval Jewish philosophers will distinguish rational laws from revelatory laws and will try to classify the commandments under various schemes;
- The Torah provides no headings or rubrics; no separation between civil, criminal, public, or cultic law, or what we would call “ethics”; see Leviticus 19 (ascribed by MBS to P or H) for a spectacular example.
Different versions of the Decalogue, Exodus vs. Deuteronomy:

- Usual assumption is that Deut revises Exod; Deut replaces creation of the world with the exodus from Egypt as the rationale for the Sabbath -- why?
- MBS try to reconstruct a shorter version of the Decalogue at the basis of both versions;
  - Demand for exclusive worship of the one God seems to have been the innovation of the prophets in the 8th centuries BCE so our version of the Decalogue would postdate them.
- Does Exodus 34 contain yet another Decalogue (usually called “ritual Decalogue”)?

Different ways of counting the ten words/commandments (see notes in JSB);

- Jewish counting takes “I am the Lord your God” as a “commandment” which seems unlikely; various Christian traditions split “You shall not covet” into two commandments which also seems unlikely.

Decalogue is immediately followed by a series of laws that modern scholars call the Covenant Code; much of this is common to the great law codes of the ANE (Kugel). This fact seems to bother Kugel a great deal and I’m not sure why.

The Israelites have “Israelized” the law of the ANE just as they naturalized the flood story, converting it to a morality story; three important postulates:

- God himself legislates; elsewhere in the ANE kings legislate (Kugel) just as in Deuteronomy Moses speaks in the first-person singular;
  - ancient Israel develops the idea that the king is beholden to the law (Deut 17:14-20).
- Equality before the law, at least in civil and criminal law; no favoritism shown to upper classes as in ANE (but this does not diminish the reality of slavery);
- Only the perpetrator suffers for his crime, and s/he suffers commensurately:
  - Lex talionis (“the law of retaliation,” Exodus 21:23-25): the point in context that you may not kill someone who knocks out your eye; and that you punish the perpetrator, not the perpetrator’s offspring (see JSB on 21:31).

Lecture 11: Dissidence in the Desert.

Reading: Exodus 15:22-17:7 (no water, no food; manna; Moses strikes the rock);
Exodus 31:18; 32-34 (the golden calf; Moses importunes God);
Numbers 11-12 (no food; manna; Miriam and Aaron);
Numbers 13-14 (spies);
Numbers 16-17 (Korah; Dathan and Aviram);
Numbers 20:1-13 (no water; Moses strikes the rock);
Numbers 21:4-9 (bronze serpent);
Numbers 22-25 (Balaam; Baal Peor);

Topics:
- Why do the Israelites rebel so often against the authority of Moses (and Aaron)?
- What is the meaning of all these rebellions?
- Why do the Israelites build images of calves – are these images idolatrous or are they meant to be images of YHWH?

Narrative structure of the last part of Exodus:
- When exactly, and how many times, Moses ascended Mt Sinai to the Lord, is not clear: Exodus 19:3 (descends in 19:14), 20:18, 24:1-2, 24:12-18.
- Chapters 25-31: Instructions for building the Tabernacle (mishkan), its appurtenances, the priestly vestments, and inducting Aaron and sons into the priesthood, etc. – apparently Moses is still on Mt Sinai the entire time.
- 31:18 God gave to Moses the two tablets of testimony. Seems to follow upon 24:18.
- 32-34 Golden calf (Moses descends, smashes the tablets, and then re-ascends and makes new ones).
- 35-40 building the tabernacle.
- Narrative thread is then lost; resumes somewhere in the book of Numbers.

Experience of Israelites in the wilderness: honeymoon with God (Jeremiah 2:2; 31:2) or rocky start to a relationship (Hosea 9:10, 13:5)? The latter tradition is enshrined in Exodus and Numbers.

Three basic patterns: Israelites grumble against Moses and/or God:
1. We have no food/water; life was wonderful in Egypt;
2. Who is Moses (who are Moses and Aaron) that he/they are in charge (Korah; Dathan and Aviram);
3. Israelites worship “idolatry” (Baal Peor; golden calf) and/or lose trust in God (spies);
- Common outcomes: God blows up at the Israelites, kills some/many; and/or God solves the problem (brings water/food);
- Tells Moses that he (God) will get rid of the Israelites and will make Moses into a mighty nation;
- Moses intercedes (JSB note on Exodus 32:10): what will the Egyptians say? God calms down;
• Many of these stories contain the miraculous: manna, water from a rock, mysterious plagues, healing through a bronze (or copper) serpent, earth swallowing up Dathan and Aviram, sprouting of the staffs;
• Many of these stories are complex assemblages of material. MBS: Exodus 17:1-7 and Numbers 20:2-13 (the motif of striking the rock) are doublets (see Kugel). A story about Korah the Levite is combined with a story about the Reubenites Dathan and Aviram (see Kugel). Caleb is hero of spy story vs. Caleb and Joshua.

Why does the Torah have such stories?
• Emphasizes divine power and divine mercy; see esp. Moses pleading before God at the Golden Calf story and the spy story; God is just but merciful.
  ✦ “Thirteen attributes of God”: Exodus 34:6-7; cf. Numbers 14:18;
• The link between God and the people of Israel is not natural but constructed – God can reject his people if they sin sufficiently; he can but he doesn’t.
  ✦ In the presence of disaster the Prophets and Psalms will ask (as will later Jewish apocalypses) – has God rejected his people?
  ✦ Chosen people motif does NOT mean that Israel is immune to punishment. Just the opposite.
• Specific motifs in specific stories explain: why Moses did not enter the land of Canaan, why the Israelites wandered in the desert for forty years, and how they survived in the desert for forty years.

The golden calf is the most important of these stories:
• The story as we have it is polemic against the shrines built by Jeroboam 1 (Kings 12:25-33) (JSB note on 31:18-32:35).
  ✦ Many MBS have conjectured that lurking behind our Golden Calf story is an original story authenticating it (see Kugel). Original story distinguished between “idolatry” and image worship of YHWH. “These are your God(s) who took you out of the land of Egypt.”
• The story as we have it is polemic against Aaron (and Aaronides) in favor of Levites. (Aaron behaves badly; Levites support Moses.)
  ✦ Contrast Korah story: in favor of Aaronides against Levites.
• The story as we have it raises the interesting question whether the divine presence is, or should be, in the camp or outside it. P puts Tabernacle in the camp, E puts “tent of meeting” outside the camp. See JSB note on 33:7-11.
  ✦ Similarly, is it a good thing that God sends his angel to protect the Israelites: 23:20-23 (listen to my angel and he will bring you victory) vs. 32:34 (as explained by 33:1-3), a sign of diminished divine favor.
• Golden calf story later figures prominently in Jewish-Christian debate: for Christian interpreters Moses’ destruction of the divine tablets represents the breaking of the old covenant.
  • 32:34 (“But when I make an accounting I will bring them to account for their sins”) becomes in the Talmud something like Christian original sin. (“No divine punishment comes upon Israel that does not contain at least a little bit of the punishment for the sin of the Golden Calf.” Rashi.)

“Horned” Moses = radiant Moses; see note in JSB 34:29.

Perhaps the most intriguing story is Balaam (Numbers 22-24), famous for its talking donkey (22:28).

Story turns on the power of blessing and cursing; cf. stories in Genesis.

The seer Balaam son of Beor has a history outside the Torah (see Kugel; JSB note on 22:2-24:25). The story seems to be an independent unit, but is mentioned elsewhere in the Bible (Numbers 31:16; Deuteronomy 23:4-7; Joshua 24:9-10; Micah 6:5).

Perhaps originally a favorable story -- Balaam is the only non-Israelite prophet in the Bible – but in its current form clearly mocking and unfavorable.

Responsibility for Baal Peor episode (Numbers 25) is allotted to Balaam in 31:16.

**Lecture 12: P and Priestly Religion.**

*Reading:* Leviticus 11 (pure and impure animals);
  Leviticus 15 (impurity of sexual discharges);
  Leviticus 16 (cleansing the sanctuary; Day of Atonement);
  Leviticus 19 (Holiness code);
  Leviticus 23 (sacred calendar);
  Numbers 19 (Red Cow);
  Kugel 284-289.

*Topics:*
  • Consider:
  • Is priestly religion “a religion of law”?
  • Can you make sense of priestly religion and its rituals?
  • Can you make sense of the juxtapositions and transitions in Leviticus 19?

Points of debate among MBS:
  • How much narrative did P contain?
  • Date of P: pre-exilic or exilic?
  • P and H;
  • Relationship of P to R.
P narrative material scattered throughout Gen-Numbers; legal material concentrated in second half of Exodus, Leviticus (entire), and Numbers.

Legal material has five themes:
1. The Tabernacle
2. Sacrifices
3. The Priesthood
4. Purity and Impurity
5. Holiness

1. The Tabernacle (Heb mishkan = dwelling place, where God dwells) or Tent or Tent of Meeting: central sanctuary.
   - Temples in the ANE are regularly the “house” of the deity (Kugel) with a throne and/or footstool (in this case the ark of the covenant upon which were the cherubim)
   - God’s presence in the Tabernacle represented by cloud/fire (Exodus 40:34-38)
   - Tension between the universality of God and localization in a building evident in D/Dtr in 1 Kings 8:27 (But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built); P does not acknowledge that tension.
   - Solomon’s temple is Phoenician; tabernacle may have analogue in ANE tent shrines (Kugel).
   - not clear if the tabernacle was real or imagined (Kugel);
     ✦ D does not mention the tabernacle; striking that the narrator of Samuel-Kings does not explain clearly what happened to this Tabernacle.
     ✦ If it is priestly fantasy, perhaps its function is to offset the reality that the Jerusalem Temple was a royal foundation and always under the thumb of the king.
     ✦ striking that P does not contain a commandment to the children of Israel to build a temple when they reach the promised land.

2. Sacrifices:
   - What happens at the central shrine? Mostly animal sacrifices, that is, the slaughter, roasting and eating of cattle (ox/cow), sheep and goats, and birds; no fish, no wild animals, no “impure” animals;
   - Various kinds of sacrifices are in response to various situations and have various effects (Lev 1-7).
     ✦ distinction between communal sacrifices (e.g. Leviticus 23, sacred calendar) and individual sacrifices (e.g. thanksgiving sacrifices, sin offerings).
The most frequent sacrifice was the *tamid* (continual sacrifice, offered every morning and afternoon). This was God’s food (Numbers 28:2 My offering, the food for my offerings by fire, my pleasing odor, you shall take care to offer to me at its appointed time; cf. Genesis 8:21); otherwise P gives little information on what the sacrificial system is supposed to mean.

Much debate in anthropological literature about the meaning of animal sacrifices; common view is *substitution* (I slaughter the animal so that the deity should not slaughter me). Cf. covenant between the sections (Gen 15), Passover (Exodus 12).

1. The religious dimension of all this eludes us completely; no prayer, near silence prevails.
2. Lev 17: any slaughter of cattle, sheep, and goats is to take place at the tabernacle; that is, all slaughter is sacred slaughter, and all slaughter belongs on the altar.
   - This is a centralization of the cult, but seems thoroughly impractical; contrast D.

3. Priesthood: in the Tabernacle only the priests of the tribe of Levi (Aaron and his sons) officiate; other Levites (members of other clans from the same tribe) pack and unpack the Tabernacle but otherwise do not officiate.
   - priests officiate, Levites assist.
   - MBS: much uncertainty and debate over the origins of this two-tiered system, indeed how the Levites became a landless hieratic tribe.
   - Gen 49 (Levites are landless but no mention of their priestly function) vs. Deut. 33:8-11 (Levites instruct and serve as priests).
   - Texts like Numbers 16 (revolt of Korah) and Exodus 32 (Golden calf incident) suggest that there was real rivalry between Aaronides and non-Aaronide Levites.
   - D regularly refers to “the priests the Levites,” apparently blending the two.
   - Priesthood and Levite-hood descend through the male line; a caste.
   - Like the sacrificial victims, priests are to be blemish-free (Lev 21).

4. Purity and impurity: The sacred must be protected from impurity; no one may not enter the sacred sanctuary or partake of sacred foods when in a state of impurity.
   - Sources of Impurity: human corpse (Numbers 19); (dead) impure animals (Lev 11); childbirth (Lev 12); sexual discharges (Lev 15); skin maladies (Lev 13-14).
   - Removal of impurity can be effected by different means: wait until sunset; wait seven days; wash clothes / bathe the body; be sprinkled with the waters of the red heifer (Numbers 19).
   - This impurity (sometimes called “levitical impurity” or “ritual impurity”) has nothing to do with sin; these impurities are *inevitable* and *transient*; as long as one
does not enter upon the sacred in an impure state, the impurity does not imperil the relationship of God to the people of Israel.

✦ But some passages metaphorically associate the removal of impurity with the removal of sin.

✦ Leviticus 16: annual “wiping clean” of the central sanctuary from impurity which is here understood to be like contagion or pollution. This cultic cleansing at some point becomes “Day of Atonement” (Lev 16:30 For on this day atonement [lit. wiping clean] shall be made for you, to cleanse [lit. to purify] you; from all your sins you shall be clean [lit. pure] before the Lord.

★ An annual “cleansing the central shrine of accumulated impurity” has become an annual “cleansing the people of Israel from their sins.”

• Contrast Leviticus 18: violation of prohibited sexual unions will impurify the land and cause God to throw you out. These impurities are not inevitable (they are the product of sin) and their effects can be permanent; the impurity does imperil the relationship of God with the people of Israel.

✦ Called by MBS: danger impurities.

5. Holiness: In addition to the language of purity P also speaks of “holiness.” The holy is where God is (“I am holy,” Lev 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:26); the tabernacle is “holy” (Exodus 25:8); the holy must be protected from contact with impurity.

• MBS: P (at least the first half of Leviticus) originally an internal priestly document; its “publication” (incorporation into the Torah, a public book) implicitly makes the point that holiness is to be cultivated not just by the priesthood but by all Israel. This idea becomes explicit in “the Holiness code,” most spectacularly Lev 19.

• P (Lev 19:1) has the command “be holy” (aspirational); in Deuteronomy (14:2) the Israelites are holy (essential) (see JSB note on Deut 26:9).

Lecture 13: D and Deuteronomy.

Reading: Deuteronomy 4; 10:12-11:32; 28 (Deuteronomy’s theology of history);
Deuteronomy 12 (centralization of the cult);
Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 31:7-13 (the writing and studying of the Torah);
Kugel 296-316.

Topics:

• Contrast P and D.

• Which is earlier: P or D? What is at stake in this debate?

• What are the distinctive hallmarks of D?

D = the book of Deuteronomy;
Dtr = the Deuteronomist = the narrator of Joshua-Judges-Samuel-Kings (MBS: Deuteronomy through Kings was originally one long book).

The book of Deuteronomy: a series of farewell discourses of Moses: survey of Israelite history; sermons; laws (12-26); blessings and curses (27-28); two final poems (32-33); death of Moses (34).

Is the book a unity?  Is Moses the author of “these words” (1:1)?

MBS link D to the discovery in the temple of “the book of the Torah” (2 Kings 22:8), and the subsequent religious reform under Josiah (ca. 621 BCE) (Kugel).

The speeches are attributed to Moses → the book of Deuteronomy is attributed to Moses (Joshua 8:31 citing Deuteronomy 27:6) → the entire Torah is attributed to Moses (Nehemiah 8:1).

MBS: D has complex and diverse origins:
1. **Jerusalem priests**: centralization of sacrificial cult in “the place in which God shall cause his name to dwell” (Deut 12):
   - Permission for secular slaughter:
     ✦ Contrast with Leviticus 17 which requires that all slaughtered cattle sheep and goats must be brought to the altar, apparently for the disposition of the blood. In D: you may spill out the blood like water.
     ✦ D does not have a tabernacle in the wildnerness; only an ark of the covenant (31:9).
   - Even Pesah/Passover is to be a pilgrimage festival (16), in contrast with Exodus 12 (P) in which it is a family feast by the tent.
   - Similarly: Levitic priests (and the judge) at the central shrine are to be the chief judges in all legal disputes (17:8-13; 33:10).
   - But:
     ✦ odd that Deut nowhere mentions Jerusalem/Zion by name (a sign of northern provenance?);
     ✦ seems to have a loose and inclusive view of priesthood (the “Levitical priests”; see Kugel).

2. **Scribes**: the king’s scribe played an important role in the discovery of the book (2 Kings 22).
   - Prominence of writing the words of God or the Torah (e.g. 6:4-9. 31:9), reading the words;
• But: no mention of the scribal group in D.

3. **Laws and legal traditions**: wide range of subjects:
   • Themes:
     ✦ limit power of the king (17) and prophet (18);
     ✦ social concern for widows and orphans;
     ✦ to be merciful (e.g. not to return a runaway slave 23:15, not to take chicks from a mother bird, 22:6);
     ✦ Israelites are a holy people (14:2) but (almost) no purity rules, no detailed sacrificial rules.
   • Seems to revise some earlier laws e.g. the seventh year (Deuteronomy 15:1-11 vs. Exodus 23:10-11; cf. Leviticus 25:1-7), slavery (Deuteronomy 15:12-18 vs. Exodus 21:2-11);

4. **Wisdom traditions**: Deut 4:6 (the word of the Lord is your wisdom in the eyes of the nations); the virtue of study and knowledge (6:4-9).
   • But: emphasis on divine retribution (esp. 11) and on sacred history, God’s covenant with the ancestors, Israel’s special place in God’s eyes;
   • Importance of the theme of divine justice in D and Dtr.

5. **Traditions from the north**: most obviously prominence of Shechem in Deut 27:
   • Hosea (northern kingdom prophet 8th cent BCE): God demands exclusive worship, as a husband demands exclusive loyalty from his wife. This idea (altho not the metaphor) developed by D:
     ✦ One temple for the one God;
     ✦ God allows other nations to worship the sun moon and stars (4:19-20) but not Israel. Other Gods exist but our God is better (4:7); Israel is to worship only God (5:7).
     ★ Cf. 18 re soothsayers and necromancers: what they do is real but it is prohibited;
     ★ Contrast 4:35 “there is none else.”
   • Israel is to destroy the Canaanites (7) to preserve exclusive loyalty to God – we’ll come back to this.


**Contrast P and D** (Kugel):

P: emphasis on purity/holiness of the land and central sanctuary; proper performance of rituals in the central sanctuary keeps the Deity happy; God’s *kavod* (glory) is in the temple, but P is not concerned whether God is anywhere else.
H: a priestly school that establishes priestly holiness as an ideal for all the people (Kugel).
D: emphasis on holiness of the people of Israel; necessity of studying and observing the laws of God. In distress people should turn to God because God is everywhere; only God’s name is in the temple. Little concern about central sanctuary except as site of pilgrimage.

Kugel is concerned about competing visions of P and D all coming from God; but why is this problem worse than the different visions and themes of different prophets?

Scholarly arguments about the relative dates of P and D (summarized by Kugel) reflect some deep seated prejudices: P is “primitive,” therefore early; P is ritualistic “legalistic,” therefore late.

**Lecture 14: The Image of God and the Names of God.**

*Reading:* Genesis 32 (Jacob and the angel);
Exodus 3:13-15, 6:2 (re name of God);
Exodus 31:18 (the allure of idolatry);
Exodus 3:19 (hardening of Pharaoh’s heart);

*Topics:*
- What are the different images of God that Kugel sees in the Bible?
- Who or what are angels?
- Do humans have free will?
- Is God omnipotent?
- What are the different names of God and what do they mean?

*Who is Israel’s God?*
- Gen 1: *Elohim*, a plural form but grammatically singular (usually), translated “God,” apparently the plural of *Elwah*, which in turn is a variant of *El*, a standard ANE name for “God” and the Ugaritic name for the chief god of the pantheon.
  - Sometimes *elohim* in fact means “gods” and governs a plural verb or adjective (e.g. Exodus 20:2, Deuteronomy 5:7);
  - When the Bible is speaking universally (e.g. Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes – three “wisdom” books – and Jonah), it uses *Elohim* “the deity.”
- Gen 2-3: *YHWH* *Elohim*, translated “Lord God”; chapter 4 simply *YHWH*, “Lord.”
  - The translation “Lord” derives from the Hebrew *Adonai*, or Greek *Kyrios*, substitutions that Jews used when reading YHWH since they did not want to pronounce the name.
✦ “Lord” or Kyrios is standard Christian title for Jesus;
✦ Adonai remains the standard Hebrew name for God;
✦ The vocalization Yahweh is the work of a nineteenth century German philologist.
✦ Traditionalist Jews to this day do not use that pronunciation.
    ★ The taboo on writing the name YHWH gradually extended even to translations and substitutes and written forms of this name including G-d or L-rd. No basis in Jewish law.
    ★ Pronunciation Jehovah is the result of an error.
✦ YHWH seems to mean “the being one” or “the one who causes [things to come into] being,” but not sure.
✦ Much debate whether YHWH (the God and the name) is originally Israelite or came to the Israelites from elsewhere; YHWH is also found in inscriptions in neighboring areas, much debate how to interpret those inscriptions and their relationship with Israelite religion (Kugel 426).

- Other names too: El, El Shaddai, El Elyon, “the God of Abraham your father” (Gen 26:24, 28:13), “the God of my father Abraham and the God of my father Isaac” (32:9), “the God of your father” (46:3), etc.

How to make sense of all this:
- Traditionalists see here different aspects of God; name = essence, so different names reflect different aspects of God.
- Academic scholars see here the combination of different strata/sources, and homogenization of Gods.
  ★ Similarly, modern scholars see “name changes” as a result of the combination of different versions, sources, dialects (e.g. Abram/Abraham, Sarai/Sarah, etc.) (see Kugel);

✦ Exodus 3:13-15 13Moses said to God, “When I come to the Israelites 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?”14And God said to Moses, “Ehyeh–Asher–Ehyeh.” He continued, “Thus shall you say to the Israelites, ‘Ehyeh sent me to you.’” 15And God said further to Moses, “Thus shall you speak to the Israelites: 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.
✦ Exodus 6:2-3 2God spoke to Moses and said to him, “I am the LORD (YHWH). 3I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as El Shaddai, but I did not make Myself known to them by My name YHWH.

So who is YHWH?
MBS: a warrior God who comes to Israel from the deserts of the south; various poetic passages seem to reflect this (Kugel 216, 424):
• e.g. Deuteronomy 33:2 The LORD came from Sinai; He shone upon them from Seir; He appeared from Mount Paran, And approached from Ribeboth-kodesh, Lightning flashing at them from His right [meaning not certain].

• Habbakuk 3:3-7 3God is coming from Teman, The Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His majesty covers the skies, His splendor fills the earth; 4It is a brilliant light Which gives off rays on every side—And therein His glory is enveloped. 3Pestilence marches before Him, And plague comes forth at His heels. 4When He stands, He makes the earth shake; When He glances, He makes nations tremble. The age-old mountains are shattered, The primeval hills sink low, His are the ancient routes. 7As a scene of havoc I behold [meaning not certain] The tents of Cushan; Shaken are the pavilions Of the land of Midian!

• Are these poetic passages “real” theology or “just” poetry?
  ✦ Cf. poetic references to God’s battles with the sea monster.
  ✦ Mountain of the Lord (=Sinai =Horeb) is in the desert outside the land.
  ✦ But other poetic passages give YHWH a northern connection, most clearly Psalm 29: 1Ascribe to the LORD, O divine beings [lit. “sons of Gods”], ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. 2Ascribe to the LORD the glory of His name; bow down to the LORD, majestic in holiness. 3The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over the mighty waters. 4The voice of the LORD is power; the voice of the LORD is majesty; 5the voice of the LORD breaks cedars; the LORD shatters the cedars of Lebanon. 6He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, Sirion, like a young wild ox. 7The voice of the LORD kindles flames of fire …

Israelite poets derived inspiration from many places.

What is God like and how does God relate to the world?
The God of the philosophers: omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, without a body (because a body is finite and corruptible and according to Maimonides believing in a corporeal God is a violation of the principle of God’s unity).

• This is the God of Judaism and Christianity;

• Philosophical problem: how does this God create, and interact with, the world? How does this God hearken to prayer?

Not clear whether this conception of God can be found anywhere in the Bible.

• In the narratives of Genesis and Exodus usually attributed to J by MBS God is anthropomorphic, anthropopathic, with a body, located in time and space.

• Kugel: this is “the God of Old.”
  ✦ “Angels” are the manifestation of this God in interaction with a human;
  ✦ But the function of angels in the narratives are truly confusing, as the text flits from “man” to “angel” to God (classic examples: Gen 18; 32);
  ✦ And even the philosophers might use angels to express how God deals with the world (cf. Logos/Christ in Christianity);
  ✦ So, angel might be a sign of “the God of Old” or a sign of a philosophically sophisticated conception of God, what we might call “the God of New.”

The Torah’s unphilosophical conception of God can be seen from a consideration of the question: who or what dwells in the central sanctuary? Is God universal? If so, how can he be contained in a building?
• **God himself:** God himself took the Israelites out of Egypt and accompanies them in their wilderness encampments. Note Exodus 25:8 with reference to the Tabernacle: Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them (cf. Leviticus 26:11).

• **God’s glory** (or is it God himself?) is represented by cloud and/or pillar of fire: God’s glory fills up the Tabernacle: Exodus 40:34-35: 34Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud had settled upon it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

• **Name of God:** esp. in Deuteronomy 12: the place that God “shall choose in which to cause his name to dwell.”

• In P, God is a cosmic god who creates the whole world but who nonetheless is contained by the Tabernacle; the land is sacred.
  - Contrast D: God is everywhere; the Israelites can pray to him from wherever they may be exiled because God can hear them (Deuteronomy 4).

Is the God of the Torah/OT a god of vengeance/war/anger, as opposed to the NT God who is a god of Love?

• This contrast is famously associated with Marcion (a Christian thinker of the mid-second century CE).

• The NT side of this question is not our concern; Matthew 7:13-14, 10:34-39, 24:3-31, 25:31-46 would suggest otherwise. Cf. 1 Corinthians 13 (Paul’s sermon about love).

God suffers bad press in the Torah:

• Punishes humanity with death as a response to sin (at least this is the Christian reading of the Garden of Eden story);
• Destruction of the world in a flood;
• Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah;
• Death of the Egyptian first born;
• Repeated threatened destruction of the Israelites in the wilderness;
• Lex talionis — the principle of retaliation (Exodus 22:24-25);
• God is a warrior (Exodus 15:3);
• Visiting the sins of the fathers (parents) upon the children.

BUT:

There is another side …

• Matthew 22:34-40 greatest commandment citing Deut 6:5: *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart* (D) and Leviticus 19:18: *You shall love your neighbor as yourself* (P or H);

Visiting the sins of the fathers (parents) upon the children:
• God punishes across the generations, an aspect of divine mercy: Numbers 14:17-19;

17 Therefore, I pray, let my Lord’s forbearance be great, as You have declared, saying, 18 The LORD! slow to anger and abounding in kindness; forgiving iniquity and transgression; yet not remitting all punishment, but visiting the iniquity of fathers upon children, upon the third and fourth generations.’ 19 Pardon, I pray, the iniquity of this people according to Your great kindness, as You have forgiven this people ever since Egypt.” [Allusion to Exodus 34:6-7: 6 The LORD passed before him and proclaimed: “The LORD! the LORD! a God compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in kindness and faithfulness, 7 extending kindness to the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; yet He does not remit all punishment, but visits the iniquity of parents upon children and children’s children, upon the third and fourth generations.”]

○ Cash up front vs. a mortgage!!

• God punishes across the generations, an aspect of divine anger (softened by the presence of “those who reject me”): Exodus 20:5 5 For I the LORD your God am an impassioned God, visiting the guilt of the parents upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generations of those who reject Me, 6 but showing kindness to the thousandth generation of those who love Me and keep My commandments.

✦ Cf. lex talionis;

The mercy of the Torah’s God needs to be judged first and foremost in its historical context.

May other Gods/gods be worshiped too? (see above Lecture 2).

Images and idolatry (see above Lecture 2).

Lecture 15: Joshua and Judges; the Conquest of Canaan.

Reading: Joshua 1-2; 5-8 (Joshua at Jericho and Ai);
Judges 1-5 (The Judges);
Joshua 6:21, 8:22-26 (Treatment of Canaanites (and Amalek));
1 Samuel 15;
Kugel 368-385.

Topics:
• Did the Israelites conquer the land of Canaan?
• Are the Israelites guilty of ethnic cleansing or genocide?
• Contrast the story of Jericho and the story of Ai – wherein is God’s power revealed?
• Is Joshua a worthy successor to Moses?

D = the book of Deuteronomy (621 BCE – reign of Josiah);
Dtr = the Deuteronomist = the narrator of Joshua-Judges-Samuel-Kings, the books known as “Former Prophets” (ends with destruction of the temple and the exile of 587 BCE, plus a few small events after that)
The thematic rhetorical connections between D and Dtr are numerous and obvious (Kugel); e.g. Joshua 1:8: This book of the law [Torah] shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful.

What is not obvious is the nature of the literary connection between them. Kugel summarizes the views of MBS. A sequence of editors and editions. Deuteronomistic school.

- The key question is how to relate the book found in the temple in 621 BCE with our narrative which extends to the destruction of the temple in 587 BCE.

Master narrative of D + Dtr:
- Farewell discourses and death of Moses (Deuteronomy);
- orderly conquest and apportionment of the land of Canaan, led by Joshua (Joshua);
- followed by period of disorder (Judges) (“there was yet no king in Israel”);
- followed by emergence of charismatic monarchy (Saul) and prophecy (Samuel);
- followed by emergence of dynastic monarchy (David and Solomon);
- followed by the story of the two kingdoms, the (illegitimate) northern kingdom of Ephraim (Israel), which comes to an end in 721 BCE, and the (legitimate but often sinful) southern kingdom of Judah, which comes to an end in 587 BCE.

Main emphasis of Dtr: reward and punishment by God, esp. punishment, esp. for the sin of worshipping other gods.

- Note remarkable programmatic statement in Judges 2;
- both D and Dtr believe in collective punishment by God:
  - synchronic (of the same time): the entire people are punished by God for the sin of a few, esp. the king (e.g. 2 Samuel 24, David’s sinful census);
  - diachronic (across time): parents and children;
- In contrast human punishment—as a rule—is to be not collective but individual (Deut 24:16 Parents shall not be put to death for children, nor children be put to death for parents; cf. 2 Kings 14:6).

Purpose of the Dtr narrative is to show divine justice (cf. Deut 4). Looks like a history but it’s not. It is ideologically motivated narrative.

Stories of Jericho and Ai show different aspects of divine control of history/providence:
- Jericho: God does miracles for his people; cf. miracles of Egypt; cf. Judges 5:20 The stars fought from heaven, from their courses they fought against Sisera. Relatively uncommon in Dtr.
- Ai: punishment for sin. Collective punishment: soldiers die because of Achan’s sin, Achan’s whole family is punished (an exception to the general pattern).
Story line of Joshua: orderly conquest of the land of Canaan and distribution among the tribes under the leadership of Joshua, successor of Moses.

This too is an ideologically motivated narrative; recall the repeated view of the Israelite covenant myth: we are not of this place.

- God chose Abraham and his descendants, and they chose God; God promised to give them the land;
- Abraham migrated to Canaan from Ur and/or Haran;
- Jacob and tribes go to Egypt where they are enslaved for 400+ years, and then return;
- Exodus; the Mountain of the Lord is in the desert outside the land;
- Israelites conquer the land in an orderly process (Joshua).

MBS do not accept the historicity of the Israelite conquest story (as they do not the narrative of Exodus):

- Contradicted by the opening chapters of Judges;
- No archaeological evidence for a large invasion of Canaan by an outside population around 1300-1200 BCE;
- Specific sites like Jericho don’t support invasion/conquest;
- MBS suggest instead: immigration model (whether from within Canaan or without), revolt model (peasants against cities), gradual emergence model.

Common denominator: the central highlands, not the coast and not the plains, is the Israelite homeland (Judges 1:19 The Lord was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain, because they had chariots of iron; cf. 4:3);

✦ In the new settlements in the central highlands the material culture is Canaanite; but no pig bones discovered (Kugel);

In D Israelites are commanded to kill all the Canaanites, esp. the Amalekites.

Deuteronomy 7:1-6: 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. \(^3\) Do not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, \(^4\) for that would turn away your children from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the Lord would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly. \(^5\) But this is how you must deal with them: break down their altars, smash their pillars, hew down their sacred poles, and burn their idols with fire. \(^6\) For you are a people holy to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession. (parallel in Exod 34)

✦ No cultural relativism vis-à-vis the Canaanites!!
• Paradoxically, here MBS defends God from the charge of genocide: it is not God who is commanding genocide, and the Israelites never committed genocide as stated explicitly in Judges 1-3.
  ♦ Note the peculiar sequence of clauses in 7:1-6.
  ♦ Exodus 23:28-30: God will wipe out the Canaanites by a plague (hornets?).

• MBS: D’s and Dtr’s attitude of intolerance towards the Canaanites is the result of closeness with them (!!)(Othering the other in order to define the Self.) We need to kill them because they are us.

• Only the Canaanites and the Amalekites (1 Sam 15) are treated in this way by the text, not non-Israelites in general (not Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Ishmaelites, perhaps because they are related; not even Philistines).

Lecture 16: Saul, Samuel, David, Solomon.

Reading:
Saul: 1 Samuel 9-12 (Samuel selects Saul as king);
    1 Samuel 15 (Saul annihilates Amalek; break between Saul and Samuel);
    1 Samuel 28 (witch of Endor);
David: 1 Samuel 16-18 (David’s youth and selection by Samuel; David and Goliath; David and Saul);
    2 Samuel 11-12 (David and Bathsheba);
    2 Samuel 21:15-22 (who really killed Goliath?);
Criticism of Solomon: 1 Samuel 8 (extravagant ways of the king; rebellion against God);
Royal ideology of Davidic kingship: 2 Samuel 7 (God builds David a house);
The glory of Solomon: 1 Kings 3 (wisdom of Solomon);
    1 Kings 5 (opulence of Solomon’s court; dealings with Hiram of Tyre);
    1 Kings 10-11 (opulence; queen of Sheba; worship of other gods and the rise of Jeroboam).
Kugel 474-505.

Topics:
• Why did Samuel reject Saul?
• Do you think that David was better than Saul?
• Why does David seem to be cut more slack than Saul?

Master narrative:
• orderly conquest and apportionment of the land of Canaan (Joshua);
• followed by period of disorder (Judges);
• followed by emergence of charismatic monarchy (Saul) and prophecy (Samuel);
• followed by emergence of dynastic monarchy (David and Solomon).

Story of Samuel, Saul, and David in 1-2 Samuel:
• Dtr incorporates pre-existing compositions and creates a narrative;
• Many bumps and inconsistencies, esp. in 1 Samuel; apparently 1 Samuel was not fully edited (e.g. 1 Sam. 17:55-58, which makes little sense after 16:14-23; see also JSB note on 1 Sam 11:1).

Samuel is a pre-literary prophet who fulfills many functions:
• a clairvoyant, a holy man: 1 Samuel 9:9; Formerly in Israel, anyone who went to inquire of God would say, “Come, let us go to the seer”; for the one who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer.” Receives gifts;
  ✦ Not a miracle worker (contrast Elijah and Elisha) but seems able to summon/predict an out-of-season thunderstorm (1 Sam 12);
  ✦ The narrative also refers to ecstatics, possessed by the spirit (1 Sam 10);
• has a priestly function: he is a servant at the central shrine of Shiloh and is commissioned there (1 Sam 3); sacrifices to God (1 Sam 7:9); no one eats of a zevah until the holy man has blessed it (1 Sam 9:13, 10:8); Saul sins by not waiting for Samuel to officiate (1 Sam 13);
• a circuit judge (1 Sam 7:15-17);
• a military man (1 Samuel 15:33);
• reproves the people (re kingship, 1 Sam 8 and 12);
• controls kings: selects and anoints Saul and David; reproves Saul (1 Sam 13 and 15), even after his own death (1 Sam 28);
  ✦ strong connection between prophecy and monarchy;
  ✦ Nathan is a court prophet (2 Sam 12); literary prophets seem to be anti-institutional figures;
• predicts the future (the destruction of the house of Eli, 1 Sam 3; Saul will not have a dynasty, 1 Sam 13 and 15; Saul’s death);

Kingship: strong anti-kingship elements in the narrative:
• Relying on king means failure to rely on God (1 Sam 8:7, 12:9) even if God accedes to the people’s wishes (1 Sam 8:22);
• People want a king like all the nations (1 Sam 8:5);
• Long list of the abuses that a king will inflict (1 Sam 8:11ff, seems to refer to Solomon);
• How to reconcile this with Deut 17:14-20 is not clear.

Saul is charismatic king: tall, strong, a military leader, an ecstatic.
David is all these plus the founder of a dynasty:
- 2 Sam 7 the charter of the Davidic dynasty: the king is God’s son; eternal kingship; God will build a house for David;
- After the failure of the Davidic monarchy biblical writers elaborate conditional character of the dynasty (1 Kings 9:4-9; Ps. 132).

Both David and Saul are flawed heroes; narrative not explain why Saul is cut so much less slack than David:
- Dtr seems interested in covering up or minimizing Davidic misdeeds (Kugel), but plenty still shines through;
- Modern historians supply explanations (Saul weak leader from a weak tribe; David is a cunning power hungry warlord; etc.).

Folkloristic elements in the story of the rise of David:
- David plus seven brothers;
- The youngest;
- a shepherd;
- David vs. Goliath!

Like other heroes, David seems to have absorbed the stories of other, lesser figures (who slew Goliath? David or Elhanan ben Yaarei orgim (2 Sam 21:19; see note of JSB).

David’s power base was always his tribe (Judah in the south): conquers Jebus/Jerusalem, makes it his capital; transfers the ark there; Solomon builds temple.
- Both temple and prophecy are appendages of monarchy;
- Prophecy would continue and develop in the north, but not the temple;
- Monarchy splits into two, probably a result of persistent tensions between the southern and the northern tribes, and maladministration by Solomon (Kugel);
  * Dtr explains the revolt as punishment for Solomon’s sin.

MBS debate the glory and power of David and Solomon (Kugel).

**Lecture 17: The Divided Monarchy; Tales of the Prophets.**

**Reading:**

The Northern kingdom:
1 Kings 12 (rebellion of Jeroboam; golden calves at Dan and Bethel);
1 Kings 13:1-10, 33-34 (man of God confronts Jeroboam);
1 Kings 14 (Ahiah the Shilonite announces doom to Mrs Jeroboam; Shishak king of Egypt attacks Rehoboam);
1 Kings 18 (confrontation between Elijah and priests of Baal on Mt Carmel);
1 Kings 21 (Naboth the Jezreelite; Elijah forecasts doom to Jezebel and Ahab);
2 Kings 2 (death of Elijah; succeeded by Elisha);
2 Kings 4 (miracles of Elisha);
2 Kings 14:23-29 (prosperous reign of Jeroboam II);
2 Kings 17:1-23 (downfall of the northern kingdom, 721 BCE; reflections of Dtr);

The Southern kingdom:
2 Kings 18:1-16 (good king Hezekiah; forced to pay tribute to Assyria);
2 Kings 18:17-19:37 (the Assyrians threaten J’lm and insult the Lord; prophecy of Isaiah, prayer of Hezekiah; deliverance of J’lm);
2 Kings 20 (illness of Hezekiah; Hezekiah and the emissaries of Babylon);
2 Kings 21 (reign and sins of Manasseh; doom for J’lm);
2 Kings 22-23 (good king Josiah; cleansing of the temple; God’s fury endures);
Kugel 519-535.

Consider:
• According to the book of Kings what caused the downfall of the northern kingdom?
• How did Jerusalem escape capture by the Assyrians – or did it?
• Why in the end did Jerusalem fall to the Babylonians?
• How would you characterize Elijah and Elisha – what kind of “prophets” are they?

Two topics today:
• Divided monarchy; the historiography of Dtr;
• Tales of the Prophets;

The divided monarchy; the historiography of Dtr.
The Deuteronomic narrative:
• David founded a divinely approved royal dynasty; his son Solomon built the divinely approved temple;
• Reign of Solomon: height of fame, power, glory, wisdom (marries daughter of Pharaoh; Queen of Sheba; “cut the baby in half!”);
• After Solomon’s death the kingdom split in two: Jeroboam in the north (chief tribe is Ephraim), Rehoboam continuing the Davidic dynasty in the south (chief tribe is Judah);
• The narrator explains the split on both theological and sociological grounds: punishment for sin of idolatry and result of the foolish policy of Rehoboam;
  ♦ Modern scholars argue that the split was caused by a host of political /social factors; not clear how united the monarchy ever was;
Even under David there were rebellions and unrest; Absalom;
Solomon: oppressive taxation, corvée, maladministration;
Northerners resist dynastic pretensions; northerners never establish a dynasty;
longest dynastic reign in northern kingdom is only four generations (house of Yehu) (southern kingdom 16+);
Northerners resist idea of temple; Bethel and Dan seem to have been altar shrines, rather than temples;
Although the split was divinely ordained and is punishment for Solomon’s sin, according to Dtr the northern kingdom was inherently sinful (“sin of Jeroboam”), when Jeroboam set up two altars and golden calves in Bethel and Dan, thus rejecting the Deuteronomic ideal of one temple for the one God;
in addition Dtr frequently accuses the northern kingdom of idolatry (worship of foreign gods, notably Baal), thus rejecting the Deuteronomic ideal of monolatry.
MBS: Jeroboam and his successors did not see themselves as sinners;
Dtr applying criteria that are either anachronistic or debated within the Israelite community;
Deuteronomic cover-up! long and prosperous reign of Jeroboam II (786-746).

Southern kingdom:
Some kings were righteous (notably Hezekiah and Josiah), but most were not, because “the high places were not removed.” Worst idolater was Manasseh (687-642) (although he also reigned the longest!!);
God protects his city, king, and temple: Hezekiah:
2 Kings 18:14-16 Hezekiah must pay tribute to the king of Assyria (confirmed by Assyrian records);
miraculous story (historicity much debated by MBS) that follows explains why Jerusalem did not fall to the Assyrians;
Arrogance of the Assyrians explains why God has to see to it that they fail (Isaiah); cf. Isaiah 10;
Manasseh idolatry might perhaps be explained as Assyrian loyalty (cf. Ahaz 2 Kings 16:10-18) or perhaps seeking more divine protection against the Assyrians (cf. Jeremiah 44:15ff);
Remember: Assyrian treaty forms in Deuteronomy.

Dtr: in both kingdoms the effects of sin carry through the generations:
The northern kingdom falls because of the sin of Jeroboam;
The southern kingdom falls because of the sin of Manasseh;

Tales of the prophets: Elijah and Elisha.
• Cycle of prophet stories squeezed awkwardly in the narrative;
• Elijah and Elisha: non-literary prophets, primarily holy men, miracle-workers;
• Some duplication in Elijah/Elisha stories; model for some Jesus stories;
• There are prophets everywhere in society, both of God (1 Kings 18:4) and of Baal at court (1 Kings 18:19);
• *Bene ha neviim*, “the sons of the prophets”, better “members of prophetic guilds” (2 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 4:1,38 etc.);
• Elisha just a miracle worker; no moral or ethical content (except Naaman story 2 K 5:15 “now I know that there is no God in all the land except in Israel”);
• In contrast Elijah anticipates literary prophecy in two dramatic stories:
  ✦ 1 Kings 18: YHWH vs Baal:
    ★ Which god can send fire and rain?
    ★ Contest of gods also in Exodus narrative.
  ✦ 1 Kings 21: Naboth: social justice;
  ✦ In both stories Elijah speaks truth to power like the literary prophets: confronts the king, the queen, the priests of Baal (all 450 of them!).

Lectures 18 and 19: Prophecy I; Prophecy II.

Reading:

Hosea 2-3; 6:6;
Isaiah 1; 10;
Amos 4; 5:18-27; 6;
Isaiah 40; 44-45; 52:13-53:12; 58;
Jeremiah 7; 25; 26; 29; 31;
Ezekiel 6; 18; 33; 37.

JSB pp. 455-461 (Introduction to Nevi’im, beginning with “The Latter Prophets and their Order”);
JSB pp. 780-784 (Introduction to Isaiah);
Kugel 438-442 (What is prophecy?);
Kugel 618-626 (Hosea and Amos);
Kugel 538-555 (Isaiah’s);
Kugel 555-568 (suffering servant)/

The Latter Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, The Twelve).

Prophet: human intermediary between God and society; Hebrew word is *navi* (plural *nevi’im*), of uncertain etymology.
Prophetic state:
- Ecstatic (or charismatic) possession: Saul and the prophets; priests of Baal in 1 K 18;
- Trance: Balaam (Numbers 24:16);
- Dreams – only Moses speaks to God face to face (Numbers 12:6-8);
- Modern view: prophecy is a paranormal state; society accepts and validates these experiences.

Social function:
- close connection with kingship (Kugel), whether alliance or, more commonly, opposition;
- holy man, seer, miracle worker;
- analogous to diviners and necromancers (Deut 18) (Kugel);
- classic function of literary prophets: to criticize, to warn, to protest; speak truth to power (classic example: Amos 7:10-17);
- literary prophets do NOT foretell the future; “forthteller” rather than “foreteller”;
- no dynastic succession among the prophets; some are priests (Jeremiah, Ezekiel);
  guilds of prophets (“sons of prophets”).

The figure of the literary prophet as it emerges in ancient Israel has no precise analogues in ANE (Kugel); mystery of the first literary prophets (Hosea, Amos) writing such poetry.

The emergence of prophetic books:
- transmission and collection, either by the prophet himself (notably Jeremiah and his scroll, Jeremiah 36; cf. Isaiah 30:8-11) or his disciples/audience;
- Editors assemble the collection(s), add superscriptions, add “biographical material” (when they have it) (e.g. Amos 7:10-17) and create a book;
  ✦ These collections are selective;
  ✦ “minor” vs. “major” prophets (depends on length of text);
  ✦ Use various sources, e.g. Hosea 3:1 in first person, 1:2 third person; seams are evident in the book of Jeremiah;
  ✦ The book of Jeremiah contains poetic prophecies, prose sermons, and biographical narratives that are arranged differently in the Septuagint and in Dead Sea scrolls than in our Hebrew text (cf. 1 Samuel).
- Tension between original oracles and later “updates”; according to MBS all of our prophetic books have interpolations, additions long and short; none is a single organic composition.
- Prophets sound different one from the other, thus supporting the notion of “authorship”: 
Amos’ language and concerns differ from those of Hosea although they are contemporaries;

Jeremiah and Ezekiel are very different although they are near contemporaries;
- Jeremiah has numerous close connections with D, Ezekiel with P;
- The Talmud notes that the throne vision of Ezekiel 1 is similar to Isaiah 6, but they differ in that “one is written by a city dweller (Isaiah) who sees the king all the time, while the other is written by a rustic (Ezekiel) who sees the king only rarely”.

Three main periods of activity of literary prophets.
1. Period of Assyrian domination: eighth century BCE: (key date: 721 BCE fall of northern kingdom).
   - Amos and Hosea, the earliest literary prophets, both active in the north during the reign of King Jeroboam II (r. 786-746);
   - End of eighth century BCE: Isaiah of Jerusalem, contemporary with King Hezekiah;
2. Period of Babylonian domination: late seventh – early sixth century BCE (key date: 587 BCE destruction of the temple of Jerusalem).
   - Jeremiah (in the land of Israel), Ezekiel (in Babylon);
   - Second (and Third) Isaiah; How do we know that Isaiah 40-66 is the work of an anonymous prophet of the Persian period?
   - First Isaiah or Isaiah of Jerusalem: Isaiah 1-39; second half of the 8th cent BCE.
     - Biographical material: Isaiah 36-39; Judah and Assyria; Isaiah is in contact with monarchy.
   - Second (and Third) Isaiah: an anonymous prophet(s) whose work is preserved in Isaiah 40-66. Mid sixth century BCE. Cyrus king of Persia, conqueror of Babylon, mentioned by name in 44:28 and 45:1. No Assyrians anywhere. No Judaean king.
   - Second Isaiah has thematic and literary connections with Isaiah I: centrality of Zion; God is the “holy one of Israel”; divine punishment for pride. We understand why the two collections were juxtaposed.
   - Did the editor try to deceive us (Kugel) or is this innocent?
   - Anonymous/additional materials collect at the end of the prophetic books [elsewhere too!]:
     - Isaiah 34-35 may also be the work of Second Isaiah; Isaiah 36-39, parallel to passages from Kings;
     - Jeremiah 50-51 [if indeed they are additions to Jeremiah]; Jeremiah 52 a passage from Kings;
     - Ezekiel 40-48 [if indeed they are additions];
The end of the 12 minor prophets: additions to Zachariah and [Malachi].

Five main themes in literary prophets:
1. Divine exclusivity, monolatry, monotheism;
2. Ritual and ethics, social justice;
3. Israel and the nations;
4. Reward and punishment;
5. The future, wonderful and dreadful.

1. Divine exclusivity, monolatry, monotheism.
Dtr shows a clash in ancient Israel between a “YHWH-alone” theology and a theology that permits combining the worship of YHWH with other gods.

The YHWH-alone theology triumphed. Both the Torah and Dtr endorse the “YHWH alone” position and see the other approach as sinful (“idolatry”). Israel is not to worship any God other than YHWH. But many Israelites for a long time were not convinced.

MBS: the literary prophets led the push to monolatry and monotheism.
- Monolatry: the worship of the one God alone without necessarily denying the existence or efficacy of other Gods (cf. Deut 18 re necromancy and soothsaying);
- Monotheism: the belief in, and worship of, the one God, accompanied by the denial of the existence of efficacy of other Gods (= cosmic monism);
- The distinction between the two is clear conceptually even if not always clear textually.

Hosea has classic exposition of the marriage metaphor (Hosea 2-3); like a husband, God demands exclusivity of his “wife” Israel; but if Israel is an adulterous wife, how does God take her back? Jeremiah 3.
- Hosea attacks Baal worship; God is not to be Israel’s baal but her husband (a pun, 2:18).
- Israel is to put aside her harlotries = worship of other Gods.

Jeremiah complains the Judeans abandon God in two senses: they worship Baal and other gods, and they seek foreign political alliances (see esp. Jeremiah 2) (akin to Samuel’s critique of Israel’s request for a king: it shows lack of reliance on God).

The great prophet of cosmic monism is Second Isaiah:
- “I am the Lord and there is no other” (Isaiah 45:5) - a common theme in Isaiah II; God’s universal power; anti-dualistic statement in 45:7:
  - Isaiah 45:1-7 ’Thus said the LORD to Cyrus, His anointed one— Whose right hand He has grasped, Treading down nations before him, Ungirding the loins of kings, Opening doors before him And letting no gate stay
shut:

2 I will march before you And level the hills that loom up; I will shatter doors of bronze And cut down iron bars. 3 I will give you treasures concealed in the dark And secret hoards—So that you may know that it is I the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by name. 4 For the sake of My servant Jacob, Israel My chosen one, I call you by name, I hail you by title, though you have not known Me. 5 I am the LORD and there is none else; Beside Me, there is no god. I engird you, though you have not known Me; 6 So that they may know, from east to west, That there is none but Me. I am the LORD and there is none else; 7 I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe—I the LORD do all these things.

- God is the only god; brilliant satire of idolatry (Isaiah 44); the stupidity and uselessness of image worship.
- The Babylonian deities cower before God; they are nothing (Isaiah 46).

Paradox: as Israel’s political power diminishes, the power of Israel’s God increases.

2. Ritual and ethics, social justice.

Amos is the great prophet of social justice; God demands justice in society; criticism of the well-to-do (Amos 4:1-2; 6).

Literary prophets (not Ezekiel) regularly contrast ritual and ethics/social justice. Some verses are more radical than others. Here are the main passages:

- Amos 5:21-25: 21 I loathe, I spurn your festivals, I am not appeased by your solemn assemblies. 22 If you offer Me burnt offerings—or your meal offerings—I will not accept them; I will pay no heed To your gifts of fatlings. 23 Spare Me the sound of your hymns, And let Me not hear the music of your lutes. 24 But let justice well up like water, Righteousness like an unfailing stream. 25 Did you offer sacrifice and oblation to Me Those forty years in the wilderness, O House of Israel?

- Hosea 6:6: For I desire goodness, not sacrifice; Obedience to God, rather than burnt offerings.

- Isaiah 1:10-17: 10 Hear the word of the LORD, You chieftains of Sodom; Give ear to our God’s instruction, You folk of Gomorrah! 11 “What need have I of all your sacrifices?” Says the LORD. “I am sated with burnt offerings of rams, And suit of fatlings, And blood of bulls; And I have no delight In lambs and he-goats. 12 That you come to appear before Me—Who asked that of you? Trample My courts 13 no more; Bringing oblations is futile, Incense is offensive to Me. New moon and sabbath, Proclaiming of solemnities, Assemblies with iniquity I cannot abide. 14 Your new moons and fixed seasons Fill Me with loathing; They are become a burden to Me, I cannot endure them. 15 And when you lift up your hands, I will turn My eyes away from you; Though you pray at length, I will not listen. Your hands are stained with crime— 16 Wash yourselves clean; Put your evil doings Away from My sight. Cease to do evil; 17 Learn to do good. Devote yourselves to justice: Aid the wronged. Uphold the rights of the orphan; Defend the cause of the widow.

- Jeremiah 7: 1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD: 2 Stand at the gate of the House of the LORD, and there proclaim this word: Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah who enter these gates to worship the LORD! 3 Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Mend your ways and your actions, and I will let you dwell in this place. 4 Don’t put your trust in illusions and say, “The Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD are these [buildings].” 5 No, if you really mend your ways and your actions; if you execute justice between one man and another; 6 if you do not oppress the stranger, the orphan, and the widow; if you do not shed the blood of the innocent in this place; if you do not follow other gods, to your own hurt— 7 then only will I let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers for all time. 8—See, you are relying on illusions that are of no avail. 9 Will you steal and murder and commit adultery and swear falsely, and sacrifice to Baal, and follow other gods whom you have not experienced, 10 and then come and stand before Me in this House which bears My name and say, “We are safe”?—[Safe] to do all these abhorrent things! 11 Do you consider this House, which bears My name, to be a den of thieves? As for Me, I have been watching—declares the LORD. 12 Just go to My place at Shiloh, where I had established My name formerly, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. 13 And now, because you do all these things—declares the LORD—and though I spoke to you persistently, you would not listen; and though I called to you, you would not respond— 14 therefore I will do to the House which bears My name, on which you rely, and to the place which I gave you and your fathers, just what I did to Shiloh. 15 And I will cast you out of My presence as I cast out your fathers, the whole brood of Ephraim.
People are relying on inviolability of the temple, God’s house [such a theology is often imputed by modern scholars to Isaiah 1] but they’re wrong; God destroyed Shiloh, and God can destroy Jerusalem – just as he destroyed the northern kingdom.

Perhaps a more radical formulation in 7:21-26: 21Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat! 22For when I freed your fathers from the land of Egypt, I did not speak with them or command them concerning burnt offerings or sacrifice. 23But this is what I commanded them: Do My bidding, that I may be your God and you may be My people; walk only in the way that I enjoin upon you, that it may go well with you. 24Yet they did not listen or give ear; they followed their own counsels, the willfulness of their evil hearts. They have gone backward, not forward, 25from the day your fathers left the land of Egypt until today. And though I kept sending all My servants, the prophets, to them daily and persistently, 26they would not listen to Me or give ear. They stiffened their necks, they acted worse than their fathers.

Isaiah 58: 3Why, when we fasted, did You not see? When we starved our bodies, did You pay no heed? Because on your fast day You see to your business And oppress all your laborers! 4Because you fast in strife and contention, And you strike with a wicked fist! Your fasting today is not such As to make your voice heard on high. Is such the fast I desire, A day for men to starve their bodies? Is it bowing the head like a bulrush And lying in sackcloth and ashes? Do you call that a fast, A day when the LORD is favorable? 6No, this is the fast I desire: To unlock fetters of wickedness, And untie the cords of the yoke To let the oppressed go free; To break off every yoke. 7It is to share your bread with the hungry, And to take the wretched poor into your home; When you see the naked, to clothe him, And not to ignore your own kin.… 11If you refrain from trampling the sabbath, From pursuing your affairs on My holy day; If you call the sabbath “delight,” The LORD’s holy day “honored”; And if you honor it and go not your ways Nor look to your affairs, nor strike bargains— 12Then you can seek the favor of the LORD. I will set you astride the heights of the earth, And let you enjoy the heritage of your father Jacob—For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Classic Jewish interpretation of all these is that God is rejecting not ritual/sacrifices but the attitude that ritual/sacrifices alone, even without righteousness, suffice. But some of these verses seem more radical than that.

3. Israel and the nations.

God is a universal god enforcing a universal moral code (cf. Gen. 1-11).

Oracles against nations Amos 1-2; Isaiah 13-23; Jeremiah 46-51; Ezekiel 26-33.

Amos reflects on the meaning of “the election of Israel”:

- (3:2) You alone have I singled out Of all the families of the earth— That is why I will call you to account For all your iniquities.
- (9:7-8) 7To Me, O Israelites, you are Just like the Ethiopians —declares the LORD. True, I brought Israel up From the land of Egypt, But also the Philistines from Caphtor And the Arameans from Kir. 8Behold, the Lord GOD has His eye Upon the sinful kingdom: I will wipe it off The face of the earth…
- Israelites seem to have thought that they were immune to disaster because they are God’s people. Cf. Jeremiah 7 re the temple.

God uses the nations to punish/benefit Israel:

- Most striking in Isaiah 10: Assyria is God’s staff of anger but Assyria will in turn be punished; same point Deuteronomy 32:27ff;
- Jeremiah 25: 8Assuredly, thus said the LORD of Hosts: Because you would not listen to My words, 9I am going to send for all the peoples of the north—declares the LORD—and for My
servant, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all those nations roundabout. I will exterminate them and make them a desolation, an object of hissing—ruins for all time. 10 And I will banish from them the sound of mirth and gladness, the voice of bridegroom and bride, and the sound of the mill and the light of the lamp. 11 This whole land shall be a desolate ruin. And those nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 When the seventy years are over, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation and the land of the Chaldeans for their sins—declares the LORD—and I will make it a desolation for all time. 13 And I will bring upon that land all that I have decreed against it, all that is recorded in this book—that which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. 14 For they too shall be enslaved by many nations and great kings; and I will requite them according to their acts and according to their conduct.

✦ God is using Nebuchadrezzar for his own ends – to punish Israel (cf. Isaiah 10 re Assyrians);
✦ In order to allow this to happen God is giving Nebuchadrezzar, who is “my servant” or “my subject” (25.9, 27:6), an empire of 70 years (25:11, 29:10); the states to be subjugated by the Babylonians are listed in 25:19-26;
✦ Therefore “put your necks in the yoke” of Babylon; resisting Babylonia is not only foolish it is also against God; those who claim that God will protect us are false prophets (27-28);
✦ In Babylon do not resist the government; live quietly and normally, and wait (29:4-9);
  ★ This is the charter of Jewish diasporism.
✦ After 70 years God will punish the Babylonians “according to their deeds” – their sin is not stated – and Israel can be restored (29:10).
  ★ This is proto-apocalyptic thinking: scripted history; rise and fall of empires; tenuous connection with notion of sin and punishment; pre-determined periods.

Isaiah II: God gave Cyrus an empire, so that he can benefit Israel (45:4); Cyrus is “my shepherd” (44:28), the “anointed one” (45:1).

4. Reward and punishment.
Nexus of sin and punishment is central to the prophets; God’s ways are just and comprehensible. (Why was the temple destroyed? See Jeremiah and Ezekiel.)

Prophets have much more to say about sin and punishment than about virtue and reward.

Prophet is a warning figure; he does not predict disaster so much as he (in the name of God) warns people of impending disaster in the hope that they will repent (Ezekiel 33; Jeremiah 7 and 26; see esp. Isaiah 1-5 (see JSB note on 6:1).
Doctrine of individual responsibility and repentance: people complain that “the parents have eaten sour grapes but it is the children whose teeth are set on edge.” (Ezek 18:2, Jeremiah 31:28-29) For Jeremiah, a day will come when people will see that this is not true; for Ezekiel it simply is not true. “Each person dies for his own sin.”

[Judaism and Christianity: punishment and reward in the hereafter, a doctrine not yet known to the Bible.]

The suffering servant songs of II Isaiah, most famously Isaiah 53, depict someone who suffers for the sins of others, who “takes away the sins of the many.” Endless debate about who this figure is and his significance (see Kugel). Probably not a Davidic king since Isaiah II (unlike Isaiah I) has nothing to say about future ideal Davidic king. The people of Israel? The prophet?

5. The future, wonderful and dreadful.
Prophets routinely speak of the future, either the near term (Babylon is coming! The Temple will be destroyed!) or some indefinite future (“end of days,” “coming days”).

Prophecies of (immediate) gloom and doom are offset by prophecies of (ultimate) restoration and “golden age.”

The great prophet of end-time prophecies is Isaiah, both I and II.

Gloom and doom:

Isaiah 13 4 Howl! For the day of the LORD is near; it shall come like havoc from Shaddai. 5 Therefore all hands shall grow limp, and all men’s hearts shall sink; 6 And, overcome by terror, they shall be seized by pangs and throes, with fright. 7 Lo! The day of the LORD is coming With pitiless fury and wrath, To make the earth a desolation, To wipe out the sinners upon it. 8 The stars and constellations of heaven Shall not give off their light; The sun shall be dark when it rises, And the moon shall diffuse no glow. 9 And I will requite to the world its evil, And to the wicked their iniquity; I will put an end to the pride of the arrogant And humble the haughtiness of tyrants. 10 I will make people scarcer than fine gold, And men than gold of Ophir. 11 Therefore shall heaven be shaken, And earth leap out of its place, At the fury of the LORD of Hosts On the day of His burning wrath.

See note of JSB on Joel 1:15 for other “Day of the Lord” passages, day of judgment for the wicked, cosmic upheaval.

Tribulations/wars remove the wicked, a righteous remnant endures: Isaiah 24-27. Modern MBS debate whether these chapters are real Isaiah. Later Jews and Christians read Ezekiel 38-39 Battle with Gog of Magog as another version of this.
Isaiah is also the prophet of restoration:

Ideal Davidic king: 9:1-6 (9:2-7) 1 The people that walked in darkness Have seen a brilliant light; On those who dwelt in a land of gloom Light has dawned. 2 You have magnified that nation, Have given it great joy; They have rejoiced before You As they rejoice at reaping time, As they exult When dividing spoil. 3 For the yoke that they bore And the stick on their back— The rod of their taskmaster— You have broken as on the day of Midian. 4 Truly, all the boots put on to stamp with And all the garments donned in infamy Have been fed to the flames, Devoured by fire. 5 For a child has been born to us, A son has been given us. And authority has settled on his shoulders. He has been named “The Mighty God is planning grace; The Eternal Father, a peaceable ruler”— 6 In token of abundant authority And of peace without limit Upon David’s throne and kingdom, That it may be firmly established In justice and in equity Now and evermore. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts Shall bring this to pass.

- Who is this mysterious child? Has he already been born? Or is he yet to be born?
  If so, in the immediate future (Hezekiah), or in the distant future?

- The name of the king is praise of God (see note in JSB); punctuation of vs. 6 is debated.

- Another mysterious child in 7:14:
  10 The LORD spoke further to Ahaz: 11 “Ask for a sign from the LORD your God, anywhere down to Sheol or up to the sky.” 12 But Ahaz replied, “I will not ask, and I will not test the LORD.” 13 “Listen, House of David,” [Isaiah] retorted, “is it not enough for you to treat men as helpless that you also treat my God as helpless? 14 Assuredly, my Lord will give you a sign of His own accord! Look, the young woman is with child and about to give birth to a son. Let her name him Immanuel. 15 (By the time he learns to reject the bad and choose the good, people will be feeding on curds and honey.) 16 For before the lad knows to reject the bad and choose the good, the ground whose two kings you dread shall be abandoned.

- Discussion in Kugel. The “young woman” (not “virgin”) is probably Mrs Ahaz, and the child is Hezekiah, unless it be Mrs Isaiah.

- What exactly is “the sign” is not clear (see note in JSB).

Another portrait of ideal Davidic king: 11:1-9 1 But a shoot shall grow out of the stump of Jesse, A twig shall sprout from his stock. 2 The spirit of the LORD shall alight upon him: A spirit of wisdom and insight, A spirit of counsel and valor, A spirit of devotion and reverence for the LORD. 3 He shall sense the truth, by his reverence for the LORD: He shall not judge by what his eyes behold, Nor decide by what his ears perceive. 4 –Thus he shall judge the poor with equity And decide with justice for the lowly of the land. He shall strike down a land with the rod of his mouth And slay the wicked with the breath of his lips. 5 Justice shall be the girdle of his loins, And faithfulness the girdle of his waist. 6 The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard lie down with the kid; The calf, the beast of prey, and the fatling together, With a little boy to herd them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze, Their young shall lie down together; And the lion, like the ox, shall eat straw. 8 A babe shall play Over a viper's hole, And an infant pass Over an adder's den. 9 In all of My sacred mount Nothing evil or vile shall be done; For the land shall be filled with devotion to the LORD As water covers the sea.

- Either a depiction of an ideal, utopian future, when nature itself is at peace, or an allegorical vision of Judah at peace with its neighbors (Kugel);

- The universalism of verse 9 appears elsewhere, notably Isaiah 2:2-4 (=Micah 4:1-4): 2 In the days to come, The Mount of the LORD's House Shall stand firm above the mountains And tower above the hills; And all the nations Shall gaze on it with joy. 3 And the many peoples shall go and say: “Come, Let us go up to the Mount of the LORD. To the House
of the God of Jacob; That He may instruct us in His ways, And that we may walk in His paths.”
For instruction shall come forth from Zion, The word of the LORD from Jerusalem. Thus He will judge among the nations And arbitrate for the many peoples, And they shall beat their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not take up Sword against nation; They shall never again know war.

This universal ideal will be spectacularly developed in Third Isaiah (the anonymous author of the last chapters).

II Isaiah esp. is the prophet of restoration; God will restore Israel;
• beautiful image Isaiah 54, God will take Israel back as wife;
• Isaiah 56: God’s house will be a house of prayer for all nations, including eunuchs and foreigners (56:3-4);
• Isaiah 60, all the nations shall serve you and bring back your exiles to Zion;
• Isaiah 66:21 God selects from the nations people to be his priests (!)

Jeremiah and Ezekiel too have prophecies of restoration:

Jeremiah 31: ultimate restoration by God, and a new covenant (discussion in Kugel):
27See, a time is coming—declares the LORD—when I will sow the House of Israel and the House of Judah with seed of men and seed of cattle; 28and just as I was watchful over them to uproot and to pull down, to overthrow and to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will be watchful over them to build and to plant—declares the LORD. 29In those days, they shall no longer say, “Parents have eaten sour grapes and children's teeth are blunted.” 30But every one shall die for his own sins: whosoever eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be blunted. 31See, a time is coming—declares the LORD—when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. 32It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers, when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, a covenant which they broke, though I espoused them—declares the LORD. 33But such is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel after these days—declares the LORD: I will put My Teaching into their inmost being and inscribe it upon their hearts. Then I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34No longer will they need to teach one another and say to one another, “Heed the LORD”; for all of them, from the least of them to the greatest, shall heed Me—declares the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquities, And remember their sins no more.

• In the future, unlike now, God’s justice will be manifest;
• In the future, unlike now, the Israelites will have a covenant that is inscribed in their hearts so that they automatically and naturally observe it;
  ✦ The content of this new covenant is not the issue here; rather the obedience of the covenanters.

Restoration of Judah and Ephraim: Ezekiel 36:24-28 I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. 25I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and
you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. Same idea in Jeremiah 31.

Ezekiel 40-48: Restored temple and temple city.

Lecture 20: Ketuvim, Wisdom Literature and Psalms
[Thanks to Eric Fredrickson, Yonatan Miller, and Matthew Rasure for their help.]

*Ketuvim*, part three of the Hebrew Bible, an overview:

- Literally “Writings”; also called Hagiographa (*hagios* sacred + *grapha* writings)
- There is no single thread that binds the eleven books in this collection;
  - The Ketuvim are subdivided by ancient Jews:
    - Psalms, Proverbs, Job;
    - Five Scrolls: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther;
    - Everything else: Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Daniel.
  - The Christian canons are four-part, not three-part, and do not have *Ketuvim*; they have:
    - Law (or Torah, not our concern at the moment);
    - Historical books, which include: Ruth [an appendix to Judges], Chronicles [known as *Paraleipomena*, “the left-overs,” “the things omitted”], Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther;
    - Wisdom literature: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs;
    - Prophecy: which includes Lamentations [an appendix to Jeremiah], Daniel.
- The relationship between the Jewish and Christian arrangements is much debated. Christian bibles also contain many books not found in the Jewish Hebrew Bible.

The presence of three of the *Ketuvim* books in the Bible is particularly problematic: Job, Ecclesiastes or Qohelet (see next lecture), and Song of Songs.

**Song of Songs:** A collection of love poems sung by him to her and her to him:
- While authorship is ascribed to Solomon in its first verse and by traditionalists, MBS argues that while the book may contain ancient material, there is no evidence that Solomon wrote it. Dated by MBS to the 4th or 3rd centuries BCE.
- What is a collection of erotic poems doing in the Hebrew Bible? Indeed, some ancient rabbis were uneasy about the book’s inclusion in the canon.
- Allegory (male = God; woman = Israel) for both Jews and Christians; liturgical use; wedding song.
Other bits to Ketuvim that we won’t have time to pursue:

- Ruth: A short tale about the virtues of family loyalty and commitment. Set during the period of the Judges (see verse 1:1). Traditionalists ascribe authorship to Samuel (whom they also credit with composing Judges and Samuel). MBS is not able to identify an author, and the book is very tentatively dated to the 5th century BCE.
  - Notable features: (1) The book ends with a genealogy which asserts that David descended from Ruth. (2) The book has no qualms with Ruth being a Moabite and marrying an Israelite; Deut. 23:4-9 prohibits the “admission” of Moabites into the Israelite people. In contrast Ezra and Nehemiah rail against marriage with Moabites.

- Lamentations: Laments the destruction of the First Temple in 586/7 BCE. Graphic portrayal of the aftermath of the destruction. The Israelites brought the destruction upon themselves because of sin; God, not the Babylonians, is the agent of punishment.
  - “The eternal lament for all Jewish catastrophes, past, present, and future.” (S.J.D. Cohen)

- Esther: Set in the Persian diaspora. The book is read by traditionalists as a historical account of a near-genocide that was foiled by a Jewish woman, Esther. The book very much wants its reader to believe that it was produced in Persia, but for MBS, it has all the hallmarks of legend and etiology (to explain the origins of the festival of Purim).
  - Notable features: (1) No mention of God or religious observance; (2) Esther marries the king, a non-Jew.

- Chronicles: Much of Chronicles is a retelling and reworking of Samuel and Kings. The book begins with nine chapters of genealogical tables, from Adam through Saul. There is almost no narrative in these chapters which, significantly, omit mention of the Exodus, revelation at Sinai, and the conquest of Canaan. Pivotal to Chronicles are the Davidic covenant and the Temple cult.
  - Likely composed during the 4th century BCE. Traditionalists ascribe authorship to Ezra (and for a long time MBS did as well), but scholars are now more skeptical of this idea.

- Ezra-Nehemiah: A “continuation” of Chronicles; the book begins with the proclamation of Cyrus calling for the Judean exiles to return and rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. Ezra arrives on the scene almost one century later, in 458. The books narrate the resettlement of the Judeans, the rebuilding of the Temple and the wall around Jerusalem (and their attendant trials and tribulations), and ritual instruction.

**Wisdom Literature**

- Common designation for those biblical books that focus on “wisdom” (skill, insight; Heb. *hokhmah*).
- Similar texts found in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, and elsewhere.
• Generally lacks references to Israelite history, covenant, law, ritual, other distinctive themes of Israelite religion. Elohim normally used instead of YHWH in Job and Qohelet.

Standard/Positive (Proverbs) vs. Speculative/Negative Wisdom Texts (Job, Qohelet) (Kugel uses the term “orthodox” rather than “standard” here).

**Book of Proverbs:**

• Sample proverbs:
  ✦ “Hatred stirs up strife/But love covers up all faults.” (Prov 10:12)
  ✦ “As a dog returns to his vomit/So a dullard repeats his folly.” (Prov 26:11).
  ✦ “A soft answer turns away wrath/But a harsh word stirs up anger.” (Prov 15:1).
  ✦ “Like a gold ring in the snout of a pig/Is a beautiful woman bereft of sense.” (Prov 11:22).
  ✦ “A friend is devoted at all times; A brother is born to share adversity.” (Prov 17:17)
• Collected by and for the royal court (Prov 25:1) “These too are the proverbs of Solomon, which the men of King Hezekiah of Judah copied.”

The main message: the wise prosper, fools suffer.

• The wise person (hakham) uses prudence and good judgment to make everyday decisions and lives a prosperous life as a result.
• The fool lacks wisdom and his life comes to ruin.
• Topics: greed, proper speech, generosity, diligence, humility, anger, many more.
• Reward/Punishment:
  ✦ Right living is its own reward and unethical living its own punishment:
  ✦* “Better is a little with righteousness than a large income with injustice.” (Prov 16:8)
  ✦* “The righteousness of the blameless man smooths his way/But the wicked man is felled by his wickedness.” (Prov 11:5)
  ✦* “He who digs a pit will fall in it/And whoever rolls a stone, it will roll back on him.” (Prov 26:27)
  ✦ But there also many other expected blessings—long life, children, “good name” after death, others—and curses, e.g.:
  ✦* “The eye that mocks a father/And disdains the homage due a mother/The ravens of the brook will gouge it out/Young eagles will devour it.” (Prov 30:17)
• This is not exactly the same as the doctrine of divine providence that is found throughout the Bible; the two views are assimilated in many passages such as 1:7 “The beginning of wisdom is fear of the LORD.”

**Psalms.**
Psalms (the book of Psalms is sometimes called the Psalter): anthology of hymns and prayers to God.
All the Psalms are to or about God.

Traditional view: David is the author of the Psalms; many Psalms bear the ascription “To David” – some ambiguity in what that means.
MBS: Psalms range in date from early (pre-Davidic? Psalm 29 with its numerous Ugaritic echoes; Kugel) to exilic (Psalm 137; discussed by Kugel) to late (Hellenistic? Psalm 119 and others).

Two basic types of Psalms: hymns of praise (including thank you) and prayers (please);
• Wide variety of types propounded by H. Gunkel (Kugel).

Hymns of Praise:
• Overwhelming sense of trust in God, of God’s reality and presence, not only in the temple but also in the life of the Psalmist (Kugel)
• Psalm 23 (trans. KJV) 1The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his names sake. 4Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.
• Psalm 146: 1Hallelujah. Praise the LORD, O my soul! 2I will praise the LORD all my life, sing hymns to my God while I exist. 3Put not your trust in the great, in mortal man who cannot save. 4His breath departs; he returns to the dust; on that day his plans come to nothing. 5Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God, 6maker of heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; 7who secures justice for those who are wronged, gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free; 8The LORD restores sight to the blind; the LORD makes those who are bent stand straight; the LORD loves the righteous; 9The LORD watches over the stranger; He gives courage to the orphan and widow, but makes the path of the wicked tortuous. 10The LORD shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Hallelujah.

Psalms of Lament (prayers):
• God the Creator can do anything, even deliver the pray-er from death. Hence the passion and pathos of psalms of lament
• Psalm 79: A psalm of Asaph. 1O God, heathens have entered Your domain, defiled Your holy temple, and turned Jerusalem into ruins. 2They have left Your servants' corpses as food for the fowl of heaven, and the flesh of Your faithful for the wild beasts. 3Their blood was shed like water around Jerusalem, with none to bury them. 4We have become the butt of our neighbors, the scorn and derision of those around us. 5How long, O LORD, will You be angry forever, will Your indignation blaze like fire? 6Pour out Your fury on the nations that do not know You, upon the kingdoms that do not invoke Your name, 7for they have devoured Jacob and desolated his home. 8Do not hold our former iniquities against us; let Your compassion come swiftly toward us, for we have sunk very low. 9Help us, O God, our deliverer, for the sake of the glory of Your name. Save us and forgive our sin, for the sake of Your name. 10Let the nations not say, “Where is their God?” Before our eyes let it be known among the nations that You avenge the spilled blood of Your servants. 11Let the groans of the prisoners reach You; reprove those condemned to death, as befits Your great strength. 12Pay back our neighbors sevenfold for the abuse they have flung at You, O LORD. 13Then we, Your people, the flock You shepherd, shall glorify You forever; for all time we
shall tell Your praises.

Common image: kingship of God, God enthroned, God above all other gods (82)

Bible has two good examples of the use of pre-existing psalm-like texts:
- Hannah, mother of Samuel, in 1 Samuel 2 (at the central shrine):
  1. My heart exults in the LORD: I have triumphed through the LORD. I gloat over my enemies; I rejoice in Your deliverance. 2. There is no holy one like the LORD, Truly, there is none beside You; There is no rock like our God. 3. Talk no more with lofty pride, Let no arrogance cross your lips! For the LORD is an all knowing God; By Him actions are measured. 4. The bows of the mighty are broken, And the faltering are girded with strength. 5. Men once sated must hire out for bread; Men once hungry hunger no more. While the barren woman bears seven, The mother of many is forlorn. 6. The LORD deals death and gives life, Casts down into Sheol and raises up. 7. The LORD makes poor and makes rich; He casts down, He also lifts high. 8. He raises the poor from the dust, Lifts up the needy from the dunghill, Setting them with nobles, Granting them seats of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's; He has set the world upon them. 9. He guards the steps of His faithful, But the wicked perish in darkness— For not by strength shall man prevail. 10. The foes of the LORD shall be shattered; He will thunder against them in the heavens. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth. He will give power to His king, And triumph to His anointed one.
- Jonah from the belly of the fish in Jonah 2 (Psalms are becoming fixed prayers, phenomenon discussed by Kugel)

Book of Psalms became a prayer book:
- When the Psalms were gathered into a single book [we don’t know when that happened] many of them were thought to have originated in specific historical circumstances, and headings were added to make these circumstances clear (e.g. 3: “when David fled from before Absalom his son,”; 51: “when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had had intercourse with Bathsheba”);
- Pious Jews and Christians recite the Psalms and don’t care about their real or imagined original setting. (Is this a problem? Kugel thinks so.)

Lecture 21: Job (and Ecclesiastes = Qoheleth).

Reading:
Kugel 635-643;
JSB intro to Job;
Job 1-3, 28, 38-42;
Some biblical texts that mention satan or the satan:
  • 1 Kings 11:14, 23, 25;
  • Psalm 109:6; Zechariah 3:1-2;
  • Numbers 22:22, 32.

http://onpoint.wbur.org/2013/10/10/book-of-job

Standard/Positive (or Orthodox as Kugel calls it) Wisdom (Proverbs; many Psalms) vs. Speculative/Negative Wisdom (Qoheleth and Job).
Standard Wisdom: Virtue is rewarded, a life of virtue is a good life. Folly is punished, a life of folly is a bad life.

Qoheleth and Job share many characteristics of Wisdom lit:
- International, cosmopolitan:
  - Job and friends are all non-Israelite;
  - No references to Israelite history (contrast Qoheleth 9:14-15), practices, or figures; the virtues that are mentioned (e.g. alms, industry, self-control) are not Israelite specific;
  - Job’s piety is generic piety (Job 31);
- The literature is upper class: by and about the wealthy; Job is wealthy, Qoheleth talks about the transfer of wealth (2:18-19);
- praise of Wisdom (Job 28).

Negative (speculative) wisdom: rejects classic wisdom teaching. There are some analogues to this in ANE, but nothing quite like Qohelet or Job.

Qoheleth is about death, Job is about suffering.

**Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes):**
- Traditionally assigned to Solomon, but his name nowhere appears in the book and the Hebrew is clearly “late” (Kugel).
Themes:
- all is vanity or vapor or futility; no apparent plan or purpose; futility of toil and the accumulation of wealth;
- death the great leveler; rich and poor, righteous and wicked, humans and animals;
- enjoy the life that you have; enjoy your youth while you have it.
Qoheleth often called “pessimistic”; perhaps “realistic” is better.
Amazing that Qoheleth is in the canon!

Like Qoheleth, Job too is ambiguous
- Date and setting much debated (see intro)
- Narrative frame (1,2, 42) reflects a prior-existing folk-tale (“patience of Job” James 5:11)(we call it a folk-tale because of the ending)
- Structure of the central portion of the book (Job and each of his three friends gives a speech in turn, with Job responding to each) shows signs of growth (Elihu, Lord of the Whirlwind) and omission (dialogue cycle not complete); place of chapters 27-28 in the argument is not clear (see JSB intro)
Why do the righteous suffer?

First answer: suffering as a test
- Bet of God with Satan?! Satan not mentioned anywhere in the body of the book or the epilogue.
- Who is Satan?
- Some biblical texts that mention satan or the satan:
  - 1 Kings 11:14, 23, 25: God raised up an adversary/trouble-maker against Solomon;
  - Psalm 109:6; Zechariah 3:1-2: an accuser stands at his right side;
  - Numbers 22:22, 32: an adversary, to be an adversary.
- In Job “the adversary” (ha-satan) is not yet a proper name; he is a member of the divine court; the prosecuting attorney;
- Not yet cosmic dualism; Satan/Beliar/Mastema/the Dragon will emerge in later second temple Judaism, and find a home in some apocalyptic works, some brands of Judaism, and especially Christianity;
- Job and the three friends agree that God is somehow responsible for Job’s suffering.
  - This is unusual in Wisdom lit. which does not as a rule appeal to divine providence in spite of the fact that in Job as in Proverbs there is melding of Wisdom with theodicy (Job 28:28 “Fear of the Lord is Wisdom; to shun evil is understanding”).

Second answer: Job must have done something wrong – this is the argument of the three friends.
- Job protests his innocence (esp. Job 31). God is a bully and unfair.
- No one seems to wonder about the death of his children! Death of children part of punishment of parents.
- Job’s three friends, who uphold traditional wisdom teaching, are in the end declared to be wrong – Job must intercede with God on their behalf (Job 42:7-10).
  - Job as intercessor: Ezekiel 14:14.

Third answer: there is no answer; Lord’s two speeches out of the whirlwind/tempest:
God created the world (Job 38-39), including the primordial monsters (40-41), and can do with his creation as he sees fit. Who does Job think he is? In response Job concedes that he understands nothing (42:1-6).
- Wisdom lit. as a rule has no divine revelation; human reason or wisdom is supreme. But here God appears to Job and Job concedes limits of Wisdom.
- Seems to be the point of Job 28: Job says that only God knows where true wisdom is to be found.
Fourth answer: in the end all will be well; God rewards Job and doubles his wealth.
- In Job the final reward is in this world. No hereafter.
- Ignores the individuality of Job’s children; seems to ignore Ezekiel 18.
- Similarly Qohelet rejects any notion of reward/punishment in the hereafter (3:19-21).
- Later Jews and Christians elaborate theories of reward and punishment in the hereafter.

Job is an anti-wisdom book.

**Lecture 22: Daniel.**

*Reading:* Daniel 1, 3, 7, 10-12.

Daniel is the latest book in the Bible:
- At the cusp between biblical and post-biblical periods (parts of the Book of Enoch and some Qumran texts are older than Daniel)
- About half the book in Aramaic (Dan 2-7)
- Its date probably explains why it’s not in the Neviim (Prophets)
- Court tales: Daniel 1-6; presumably had a long history before achieving their current form; other Daniel tales found in the Apocrypha and at Qumran
- Visions: Daniel 7-12 clearly refer to the events of the 160s BCE
- Tension between real date and fictive date (6th century BCE: Babylonian and Persian kings)

**Court tales:** Daniel (and his three friends) is a courtier (parallel in Joseph, Mordecai); is a dream interpreter (parallel in Joseph).

**Model Jew:**
- Eats vegetarian food rather than the rations provided by the king (Daniel 1)
- Prepared for martyrdom: Daniel 3 (refusal to worship an image; fiery furnace); likewise Daniel 6 (Daniel persists in praying to his God in spite of a royal decree; lions’ den).

Two of the tales (Daniel 2 [Nebuchadnezzar’s dream] and 5 [writing on the wall, Belshazzar’s feast]) concern the rise and fall of empires; parallel in Daniel 7-12
- Daniel 2 (and Daniel 7): sequence of four empires: Babylon, Media, Persia, Greece.
  ✦ Presence of Media implies that this scheme came from Mesopotamia, and is not native to Judaea
  ✦ Scripted history; the fourth empire is wicked, but is not said to be in league with Satan (who is absent from Daniel)
Daniel 7-12 contain a series of visions by Daniel all provoked by the events of the 160s BCE; numerous references to end time, final battles and cataclysms, secrecy and mystery:

- Dan 7: vision of four beasts (including Ancient of Days and One Like a Son of Man):

> As I looked on, Thrones were set in place, And the Ancient of Days took His seat. His garment was like white snow, And the hair of His head was like lamb’s wool. His throne was tongues of flame; Its wheels were blazing fire. A river of fire streamed forth before Him; Thousands upon thousands served Him; Myriads upon myriads attended Him; The court sat and the books were opened.

> I looked on. Then, because of the arrogant words that the horn spoke, the beast was killed as I looked on; its body was destroyed and it was consigned to the flames. The dominion of the other beasts was taken away, but an extension of life was given to them for a time and season.

- Jews and Christians argue the identity of the One Like a Son of Man (notes in JSB): is this a reference to a/the Messiah?
- Daniel 8: vision of ram and he-goat
- Daniel 9: meditation on the 70 years of Jeremiah; interpretation of dreams and visions; parallel in the interpretation of written prophecies
- Daniel 10-12: long report by angelic intermediary

✦ No fantastic images here, but all in code
✦ At approx 11:40 the prophecy becomes real and wrong: the king of the south (=Ptolemy) did not lock horns with the king of the north (Antiochus IV Epiphanes); approx. 165 BCE
✦ 12:1-4: At that time, the great prince, Michael, who stands beside the sons of your people, will appear. It will be a time of trouble, the like of which has never been since the nation came into being. At that time, your people will be rescued, all who are found inscribed in the book. Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life, others to reproaches, to everlasting abhorrence. And the knowledgeable will be radiant like the bright expanse of sky, and those who lead the many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever.

★ Note: angelology (each nation has a heavenly prince [Daniel 10]; named angels); resurrection of many, for the purpose of reward and punishment; astral immortality for the righteous; all this part of the end time; secrecy of the revelation
★ Dan 12:3 inscribed in Latin above the stage in Sanders Theater
Daniel provides evidence for Judaism in the second century BCE
Development from Israelite religion → Judaism
• a process, not an event
• some key moments in the transition:
  ✦ 587 BCE Babylonian exile
  ✦ restoration under the Persians (516 BCE temple rebuilt)
  ✦ emergence of the Torah book (5th century BCE)
  ✦ Synagogues appear in Egypt (3rd century BCE)
  ✦ Hasmonean revolt against the Greek kings of Syria (Seleucids) 167-164 BCE
  ✦ Arrival of the Romans 63 BCE
  ✦ Destruction of the second temple in 70 CE

Israelite society and religion: king, prophet, temple, sacrifices, land;
Jewish society and religion:
• priests and sages instead of a king;
  ✦ after 70 CE priests become marginal.
• scripture and scriptural interpretation instead of prophecy
  ✦ Literary prophecy (with the infusion of motifs from wisdom literature) becomes apocalyptic (Kugel):
    ★ Symbolic visions intermediated by angels (see Zechariah 3-4; Daniel);
    ★ Scripted history (as in Jeremiah);
    ★ Remythologization of Judaism, esp. true in Daniel 7;
    ★ Revealing the secrets of history, esp. the end time;
    ★ pseudepigraphy.
• synagogues and portable piety instead of the temple
  ✦ prayer, torah study, and entire regimen of observing the Torah instead of sacrifices
• diaspora and political quietism instead of land
  ✦ Emergence of communal markers: refusal to worship other gods, eat other foods, circumcision, Sabbath, conversion to Judaism, prohibition of intermarriage

Reward and punishment in the hereafter.

Lecture 23: The Hebrew Bible in Judaism.
Reading:
JSB 1863-1875 (“Midrash and Midrashic Interpretation” by David Stern);
JSB 1929-1937 (The Bible in the Synagogue” by Avigdor Shinan).

Daniel provides evidence for Judaism in the second century BCE.
Development from Israelite religion → Judaism:
- a process, not an event
- some key moments in the transition:
  ✦ 587 BCE Babylonian exile
  ✦ Restoration under the Persians (516 BCE temple rebuilt)
  ✦ Emergence of the Torah book (5th century BCE)
  ✦ Septuagint, Torah translated into Greek in Egypt (3rd century BCE)
  ✦ Synagogues appear in Egypt (3rd century BCE)
  ✦ Hasmonean revolt against the Greek kings of Syria (Seleucids) 167-164 BCE
  ✦ Arrival of the Romans 63 BCE
  ✦ Activity of Jesus c. 30s CE
  ✦ Destruction of the second temple in 70 CE
  ✦ Second century CE: emergence of Rabbinic Judaism
  ✦ Ca. 200 CE: the appearance of the Mishnah

Continuity and discontinuity:
Israelite society and religion: king, prophet, temple, sacrifices, land;
Jewish society and religion:
- priests and sages instead of a king;
  ✦ after 70 CE priests become marginal;
  ✦ after 70 CE emergence of sages (also known as rabbis);
- scripture and scriptural interpretation instead of adding or modifying the text
  ✦ abundance of non-canonical literature last centuries BCE;
    ★ apocalypses, pseudepigraphy, apocryphal books;
    ★ biblical interpretation: translations, commentaries, paraphrases;
    ★ but no more literary prophecy;
  ✦ emergence of the Torah book;
  ✦ growth of midrash, legal interpretation and non-legal interpretation (Stern);
  ✦ importance of the Torah;
  ✦ post-70: doctrine of the Oral Torah.
- synagogues and portable piety in addition to, and then instead of, the temple
  ✦ prayer and scriptural study, and entire regimen of observing the Torah instead of sacrifices.
  ✦ Scriptural study and reading in synagogue (Shinan):
    ★ Lections, lectionary cycle, Targum.
    ★ Use of Greek and Aramaic alongside Hebrew.
  ✦ Use of Bible, esp. Psalms, in prayers (if you’re interested, essay in JSB).
- diaspora and political quietism instead of land and independence.
  ✦ Emergence of communal identity markers: refusal to worship other gods, forbidden foods (including “food sacrificed to idols”), circumcision, Sabbath, conversion to Judaism, prohibition of intermarriage.
• Reward and punishment in the hereafter instead of this world: after death, end of
days, resurrection, messiah.
  ✦ Philosophically minded people like Philo believed in immortality of the soul
rather than resurrection of the body.
  ✦ Not all Jewish texts have a messiah in their end of days scenario e.g. Daniel
does not.
• Instead of the cosmic monism of the Bible, some apocalypticists have a cosmic
dualism; rabbinic piety reasserts monism.
  ✦ Cosmic dualists posit the existence of some force (e.g. the Devil) antagonistic to
YHWH which currently and temporarily controls the world but which will
ultimately be overthrown.
  ✦ Cosmic dualism more characteristic of Christianity than Judaism in post 70
period.

In spite of these discontinuities, elision of distance between the readers and the text:
Jews, Israelites, Hebrews

Some notes on rabbinic Judaism:
• Rabbinic texts, esp. Mishnah and its derivatives, is scholastic
• Rabbis engage in very selective reading of the Hebrew Bible
• “Literal” reading of many biblical laws, even if very unliteral in interpretation of
details (see Stern; classic example: prohibition of boiling a kid in its mother’s milk)
  ✦ Allegory (seeing biblical laws as representing moral qualities, undoing the
literal meaning completely) more characteristic of Christianity than Judaism
• The Bible esp. the Torah is the source of ultimate authority, but intermediated
through tradition, exegesis, midrash, supplemented by Mishnah. Similarly, the
American constitution.

Lecture 24: The Hebrew Bible in Christianity.

Reading:
Oxford Companion to Christian Thought s.v. “Old Testament” (by Hugh S.
Pyper);
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lection (somewhat technical, get the gist);
http://www.vocationnetwork.org/ask_alice/53 (very untechnical).

Some important dates:
  early 30’s career of Jesus
  early and mid 50’s letters and travels of Paul (seven genuine letters of Paul: 1 Thessalonians,
Galatians, Philippians, Romans, Philemon, 1 and 2 Corinthians)
70 Jerusalem temple destroyed by the Romans
80’s Gospels of Matthew and Luke
ca. 90-100 gospel of John
90’s the book of Revelation
ca. 100 beginnings of Christian literature that will not find its way into the NT (the “apostolic fathers” like the Epistle to the Corinthians by Clement of Rome or the Didache)
112 the Roman government takes notice of the Christians: letter of Pliny the Younger, governor of Pontus and Bithynia, to the emperor Trajan concerning Christians
ca. 120 the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, first appearance of the term “Christianity”
ca. 130 Letter of Barnabas, allegory of Torah Law
ca. 160 Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho, argues that OT is a Christian book
ca. 160 Marcion in Rome, who upholds the God of Love (NT) against the God of Law (OT)
ca. 178 Irenaeus of Lyon, Against the Heresies, speaks of a New Testament similar to ours with our four gospels
ca. 200 the appearance of the Mishnah

Christianity begins as a kind of Judaism; a sect; strongly imbued with apocalyptic spirit (a sense of living at the end time).

The Jewish foundations of Christianity are evident (many of them still evident):
- Belief in the one God, creator of heaven and earth
- Denial of polytheism/paganism
- Affirmation of divine providence, including afterlife, resurrection, final judgment, messiah
- Covenantal relationship with God
- Affirmation of the truth and divine origin of the Hebrew Bible (Ten commandments, the greatest commandment), esp. the prophets
- Lection in church, lectionary cycle, juxtaposition of OT with NT
  - The biblical liturgical year, modified: Sabbath/Sunday, Easter/Passover
  - Psalms as a book of Christian liturgy
- Possession of “Jewish” books:
  - the Hebrew bible (altho Christians quickly lose Hebrew),
  - the apocryphal books (these are Jewish books but many of them not written in Hebrew or not hiding the fact of their origin in post-Persian period, hence not in Hebrew canon),
  - general Jewish literature (e.g. Philo, Josephus)
- and much else!

So, Christianity as it emerges in the second century derives from second temple Judaism, just as rabbinic Judaism does.
Rabbinic Judaism reads the Bible through the lens of midrash/Oral Torah/inherited custom/scholasticism, the Mishnah; Christianity reads the Bible through the lens of belief in Christ, the NT.

Rabbis : Mishnah :: Christians : NT.

But Christians develop quickly (by the second century CE) a not-Judaism:

In population: gentile
In theology: worship of Jesus as Lord,
  c  cosmic dualism
In approach to the laws of the Torah: self-consciously critical
In self-identity: sense of newness; replacement (supersession) of the old.

  • Appeal to the prophecies esp. Second Isaiah, universal knowledge of God.

Theology: worship of Jesus as Lord and ultimately as (part of) God; identification of Jesus with divine figure “Son of Man” from Daniel 7 (Mark 13:24-27) or with some other divine intermediary, e.g. the Logos (John 1); cf. Christ hymn in the Letter to the Philippians 2:5-11.

[hard to find logos theology in post-70 Judaism]

Cosmic dualism: overwhelming sense of sin (Original Sin), of this world being under the control of evil forces antagonistic to God (Satan, the devil, the great dragon: Revelation 12:9), of the necessity of salvation to escape the dominion of sin and the torments of the final judgment, of a great battle with the forces of evil. This dualism good/evil, next world/this world, ultimately in Christianity becomes identified with body (bad)/spirit (good). Hard to find any of this in the Judaism that develops after 70 CE.

Self-consciously critical approach to the laws of the Torah:
Endless debate in Christianity, ancient and modern, about the status of the Old Testament (see nice survey by Pyper).
Of the four parts of the Old Testament, Christians have no trouble with narratives (histories), prophecies, or wisdom.
They have trouble with the laws (the Law) and develop various approaches:
  • Laws are valid only if confirmed by NT: e.g. Paul in Romans 1 confirms Leviticus’ prohibition of male homosexuality in Leviticus 18 and 20
  • Laws are valid only if they are not suspended by the NT (e.g. Mark 7 seems to set aside food laws; Paul in Galatians sets aside circumcision)
• Laws are valid only if they are “moral,” not ritual

Justin Martyr (ca. 160 CE) argues that the laws of the Torah are of three sorts:
• Those that are true and are to be observed by Christians (Love the Lord your God; Love your neighbor as yourself)
• Those that are true only in a metaphorical sense, as allegory or typology. Christians are not to observe their literal sense. (Sacrificial goat of the Day of Atonement represents Christ.)
• Those that have no moral value, were intended for the Jews solely, in recognition of their wickedness and obstinacy

Self-identity:
Sense that a new covenant has superseded the old (doctrine of supersessionism). Letter to the Hebrews 8:13, In speaking of a new covenant he treats the first as obsolete; and what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away, commenting on Jeremiah 31:31-34.

Christians sometimes see themselves in the Torah, sometimes not. As a rule, when Israelites are sinning, Christians posit distance between themselves and the text; when the Israelites enjoy divine favor, Christians see themselves in the text.

This self-conscious newness is characteristically Christian throughout the centuries.

Lecture 25: Conclusions and Reflections.
Reading: Kugel 662-689.

Why study the Bible?
1. It’s fun/interesting/intriguing;
2. It’s a classic! Part of a good humanistic education;
3. A/the foundation document of Judaism;
4. A/the foundation document of Christianity, hence of western culture (stories, art, theology, philosophy, etc.);
5. Ultimate source for various traditions in Quran and in Islam;
6. For guidance how to be a good person / how to lead a good life / inspiration / knowledge of God.

The first two reasons apply to many books/subjects.
The next three also apply mutatis mutandis to many books/subjects.

Merriam Webster Online Dictionary: mu-ta-tis mu-tan-dis
1: with the necessary changes having been made
2: with the respective differences having been considered
#6 is what makes the Bible the Bible.
The people who canonized the Bible, its earliest interpreters, did so because they accepted reason #6 (Kugel).

Modern scholars began with an attempt (Protestant in origin) to get back to the original word of God = the original biblical text (Briggs, discussed by Kugel), but that is not how it turned out.

• MBS are functional atheists, treat the book like any other human artifact, looking for signs of redactional activity, contradictions, etc.
• Attempt to recover original (= contextual) meaning of texts
• Attempt to recover the historical “facts”; hermeneutics of suspicion
• Ancient Israelites were simply one of the peoples of the ANE
• No attempt to use the Bible to get closer to God (except in epilogues!)

“Has biblical scholarship destroyed the Bible?” For traditional Jews and Christians, according to Kugel, the answer is yes (see esp. 681)

• Kugel never states clearly whether he believes biblical scholarship to be true
• Kugel has a narrow definition of Judaism; self-defined as Orthodox
• In defense of MBS: what scholars reject is sometimes, at least, what later generations said about the Bible, rather than what the Bible says about itself; for Kugel this distinction may not matter but it is worth noting nonetheless
  ✫ Mosaic authorship of the Torah, Davidic authorship of the Psalms
  ✫ The divine origin of the Bible is (for Christians at least) a given because of 2 Timothy 3:15-17: from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. But important to note that many books in the Bible do not claim divine inspiration or authorship (e.g. narratives. Wisdom lit., Psalms).
  ✫ Even traditionalists have to concede that prophetic books have a large human component in their composition (inspiration rather than revelation);
  ✫ Maimonides says that the Torah is written in human language, hence its unphilosophical images of God.

• Modern Bible Scholarship is based on sola scriptura;
• For Jews and Christians the meaning of the Bible is circumscribed by its place within a community of believers.
• For traditional Jews and Christians (Catholics) the meaning of the Bible is circumscribed by tradition but liberal Jews and Christians can live with scriptural polyphony.
For me (sjdc) it is certainly preferable if the ugly/troubling parts of Scripture have human, rather than divine, origins:

- Command to exterminate the Canaanites and Amaleqites;
- Low status of women in society and law (women as objects rather than subjects);
- Adultery and male homosexual intercourse are punished capitally (Lev 18 and 20);
- Validation of slavery (nota bene: NT too validates slavery);
- Execution of juvenile delinquents (Deuteronomy 21:18-21).