Lecture 1: Introduction to the Course.

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is no reading assignment for Lecture 1]
Lecture 2: **What is the Hebrew Bible?**

**Reading Assignment:**
1. Jewish Study Bible (JSB) 2072–2077 (“The Canonization of the Bible” by Marc Brettler, under “Essays: Backgrounds for Reading the Bible”)

The Bible is an **anthology**

Four main **types** of books:

- history (narrative) (which in the Torah includes 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 Old Testaments (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 (on the tripartite arrangement see Brettler reading) reflects these sources.

**Date:** nominal/ostensible/fictive date for all the Biblical books is not later than the mid fifth century BCE.

- This dating is either the cause or the consequence of the idea that prophecy had ceased.
- Books that explicitly declare that they derive from a time later than the fifth century BCE (e.g. Ben Sira, the books of the Maccabees) are not in the Bible.
  - Jewish Bibles do not have apocrypha or apocryphal books
- Traditionally, the Biblical books are seen as unitary compositions from single authors.
- Modern scholars: 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, perhaps even as late as the mid second century BCE.

**Variety / diversity in genre, origin, date; but relative consistency in theme:**

**Major themes of the biblical books:**
• God is the universal God who created the world and established a universal moral order.
• This God is the God of both nature and history.
• 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.

Lecture 3: What is Judaism?

Reading Assignment:
The truth claims of Judaism cluster around three points: God, Torah, and Israel.

1. **God**: R. Moses b. Maimon (1138–1204), known as Rambam or Maimonides, Thirteen Principles of Faith: [http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/rambam13.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/rambam13.html) (Note: we are interested here only in the first page, the list of thirteen articles of faith; the rest of the webpage, an excerpt from a book by Shmuely Boteach, is of no concern to us)


3. **Torah**: [http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/bible/TO_Torah_880.htm](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/bible/TO_Torah_880.htm) (what is the Torah)

4. [http://www.myjewishlearning.com/daily_life/About_Jewish_Daily_Life/TO_Halakhah/Halakhah_Sources_Devel.htm](http://www.myjewishlearning.com/daily_life/About_Jewish_Daily_Life/TO_Halakhah/Halakhah_Sources_Devel.htm) (what is Halakhah)


How many Jews are there today? No one knows for sure; about 13–14 million worldwide; USA and Israel each have between 5–6 million

**Methodological note:**
When we describe a religion (or any -ism), what are we describing?

• People (what people say, how people behave);
• Institutions and organizations with their decrees and pronouncements;
• Books and documents;
Everywhere we are confronted by two serious methodological problems:
- does the –ism exist in the abstract or only as a social form?
- who, or what, truly represents the –ism given the facts of diversity and discord?

I’m going to focus here on the “big tradition,” the major truth claims advanced over the centuries by the “big books” that were widely accepted as authoritative by significant portions of the community.

The main truth claims of Judaism cluster around three topics: God–Torah–Israel.

1. **God**: the Bible and all classical Jewish texts are suffused with a belief in God.
   - (Belief-in = trust, confidence); no statement of propositions about God.
   - In classical texts, Jewish identity centered on the study and observance of the Torah.

Maimonides (Cordoba 1138–Cairo 1204) re–interpreted Judaism as a series of truth claims, a series of propositions about God, Prophecy, and Providence. (Belief–that statements)

- Maimonides was not the first to do this but he certainly was the most important and the most influential.

For Maimonides the thirteen principles of belief, or articles of faith (or at least the first five) were not really dogmas; they could be demonstrated by philosophical logic – they were rational. The rationality of Judaism’s articles of faith will have a long career in Jewish thought (see Altmann).

1. God exists; 2. God is a unity; 3. God has no body; 4. God is eternal; 5. God alone is to be worshipped.

**Merriam Webster Online dictionary s.v. dogma**: 1 a: something held as an established opinion; especially: a definite authoritative tenet  
   b: a code of such tenets  
   c: a point of view or tenet put forth as authoritative without adequate grounds  
   2: a doctrine or body of doctrines concerning faith or morals formally stated and authoritatively proclaimed by a church

- Virtually all post–Maimonidean Jewish theology is in dialogue with Maimonides.

Why did Maimonides redefine Judaism as a series of truth claims? To respond to Christianity and Islam.

2. **Torah**: (1) a book; (2) laws and commandments; (3) oral tradition; (4) Judaism
   - (1) Torah (“instruction”) is the collective title for the first five books of the Bible; in Jewish tradition these are the most important books of the Bible.
(2) The books consist of narratives and laws (commandments). The “Ten Commandments” are famous but there are many more than that (medieval Jews thought that the Torah contained 613 commandments).

Greek-speaking Jews in antiquity (including Paul) called the Torah “the Law.” These laws treat diverse areas:

- Theology (e.g. You shall have no other God beside me; prohibition of image-worship)
- Ethics (e.g. Love your neighbor as yourself; do not bear a grudge; do not covet)
- Ritual (e.g. Sabbath and festivals)
- Sacred (e.g. animal sacrifices at the central shrine; purity rules)
- Civil (e.g. goring oxen; torts; buying/selling land and houses; inheritance)
- Criminal (e.g. murder, theft)
- Public (e.g. king, judges, prophet)
- Marriage (and sexual relations) (e.g. incest, male homosexual intercourse, adultery)

(3) Rabbinic texts distinguish the Written Torah from the Oral Torah.

- The Oral Torah is an idea, a theory, a belief, according to which Moses at Mount Sinai received two Torahs from God, one written, and the other oral.
- After it was written (c. 200CE), the Mishnah, the first rabbinic book, came to be viewed as the earliest written expression of the Oral Torah.
- The Torah gives commandments briefly, sometimes cryptically, the Oral Torah spells out the details.
- The normative expansions, elaborations, specifications of the commandments of the Torah constitute the halakhah.

(4) As a combination of 1, 2, and 3, Torah as book, Torah as law, Torah as rabbinic tradition and customary practice, the word Torah (by metonymy) is sometimes a synonym for Judaism (a word that does not appear in Hebrew texts until the middle ages).

3. Israel:

- The Bible is by and (for the most part) about the people of Israel, a descent group or ethnus (people).
- The God of the Bible is at one and the same time the creator and upholder of the universe and also the national God of the people of Israel.
Thus in Genesis 1–11 God creates the world and all the people therein; in Genesis 12 he begins a special relationship with Abraham, patriarch of the people of Israel.

- Jews have long had a strong sense of peoplehood (sociologists call it “familism”) (in spite of the fact that gentile converts are accepted). Jewishness is an ethnicity.
- This special relationship of Israel with God (“The Chosen People”) has been understood in various ways over the centuries:
  - as a product of either essentialism (Jews are inherently different from other people) or functionalism (Jewish difference is a function of the observance of the Torah);
  - either as privilege or as obligation;
  - good survey in Silberman.
- In some formulations, the concept of the Chosen People is linked with the concept of the Chosen Land, i.e. that God has chosen a specific place in which his people are to live.

Last big point:
Jewish reflections on God–Torah–Israel show both continuity and discontinuity between the Bible and Judaism.

- Maimonides' elevation of truth claims (belief–that propositions) is not biblical, nor are his ideas about God’s unity, incorporeality and eternality.
- Idea of oral Torah, tradition, halakha, authoritative books beyond the Torah itself -- all these are unknown to the Torah.
- Israel – the chosen people idea is biblical, although medieval and modern philosophers develop it in non–biblical ways.

In spite of the fact that both Jews and Christians think that the Hebrew Bible is “Jewish,” that its characters are “Jewish,” and that its message is Judaism, historically considered this is not so; the Bible is Israelite.

Lecture 4: What is Christianity?

Reading Assignment:
If the truth claims of Judaism can be said to cluster around God–Torah–Israel, then the truth claims of Christianity can be said to cluster around God–Christ–Church.

1. God: The Nicene Creed and other creeds (http://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/Creeds.htm) and scroll down to The Creeds of Nicea and

2. If you want more info, go to the old Catholic Encyclopaedia (http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11044a.htm).


5. Church: Hedrick, “What is Christianity?”; read the sections: What is the church?

Questions to consider: In what respects do Judaism and Christianity resemble each other? Wherein do they differ? In your experience is the trilogy God–Torah–Israel a reasonable way to summarize Judaism? Is God–Christ–Church a reasonable way to summarize Christianity?

How many Christians are there in the world today? No one knows for sure. According to http://www.spiritualworld.org/christianity/how_many.htm, a website about whose reliability and orientation I know nothing:

There are eighty-five main Christian denominations. These denominations make a distinction between Catholic Christians and Protestant Christians. There are 1,026,501,000 Roman Catholics and 316,445,000 Protestants in the world. Most Catholics are Roman Catholics; there are 60,018,436 in the United States. Protestants in the U.S. number 42,513,059 as of 1997.

Methodological note:

When we describe a religion (or any –ism), what are we describing … see lecture 3 … in spite of diversity and discord.

• In Christianity there was (as in Judaism) a great rupture in the 19th century (with the rise of competing liberal and illiberal trends)

• Before the 19th century we have at least two other great ruptures in the history of Christianity:
  o Eastern (Orthodox) vs. Western (Roman Catholic) Christianity (“Great Schism” of 1054; the sack of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade in 1204)
  o the Catholic–Protestant split in early 16th century and subsequent religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries.
I am going to focus here on the “big tradition,” the major truth claims advanced over the centuries by the “big books” and the ecumenical councils that were widely accepted as authoritative by significant portions of the community.

The main truth claims of Christianity cluster around three topics: God–Christ–Church.

God and Christ:

From the earliest times Christians defined themselves as having distinctive views about God (and Jesus). Creedal formulations emerge early (beginnings already in NT).

Merriam Webster Online dictionary s.v. creed: 1: a brief authoritative formula of religious belief 2: a set of fundamental beliefs; also: a guiding principle

Creeds are belief–that propositions.

Most famous and important is the creed promulgated by the church council of Nicaea (the Nicene creed, 325 CE), the basis of many later creeds:

We believe in one God the Father Almighty,
Maker of all things visible and invisible.

This God is the God of the Bible:

• “One God” echoes [via Paul, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Ephesians 4:6] Deuteronomy 6:4, the first line of the Shema, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One.”
• God is the “Father” of the Israelites and they are his “sons”: (Exodus 4:22; Deuteronomy 8:5, 14:1)
• “Almighty” (pantokratôr) is a regular epithet for God in the Greek Bible.
• “Maker of all things visible and invisible” is a paraphrase of Genesis 1:1–2 [via Colossians 1:16].

Implicit rejection of Marcion (mid–second century) who had argued that the God of the Bible is not the God of Jesus and Christianity.

and in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only begotten of the Father,
that is, of the substance of the Father,
God of God, light of light, true God of true God,
begotten not made,
of the same substance with the Father,
through whom all things were made
both in heaven and on earth;

Jesus is God/Lord, the divine entity through which the world was created.

The specification and detail here are a response to Arians and other “heretics,” but Jews too would and did reject the idea that Jesus is God.

who for us men and our salvation descended,
was incarnate,
and was made man,
suffered and rose again the third day, 
assembled into heaven 
and cometh to judge the living and the dead.

Jesus was made flesh, and, as a human, suffered – the doctrine of Incarnation. 
The specification here again is directed against various “heretics,” but Jews too 
would and did object to the idea that God could also somehow be (or become) 
human.

And in the Holy Ghost. lit. holy spirit.

Holy spirit is how God communicates with Prophets; Holy spirit comes upon 
individuals in the NT when they are baptized; Holy Spirit infuses the Church.

Christ and the Christian message:

Full discussion in the website; Charles Hedrick seems to be a learned Protestant 
layperson, an Elder but not a Minister.

Much of Christianity revolves around the following themes: sin, forgiveness, 
justification, sanctification, faith in Christ, grace, the atoning power of Christ’s 
death, union with Christ, triumph over death.

• The details of the differences between Catholics and Protestants do not concern us 
  here.
• Important link with Judaism: resurrection, final judgment, “heaven” and “hell”

Christian books

The Christian message is contained in the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible)—the 
subject of our course—and more particularly in the New Testament, a collection of 
27 books:

• 4 Gospels, Acts, 21 letters (or epistles) (of which 13 are attributed to Paul), 
  and Revelation (also called Apocalypse)
• The formation of this collection seems to have begun, or at least to have been 
  hastened, by a need to respond to Marcion and other “heretics”; our collection 
  of 27 books is not securely attested until the middle of the fourth century CE.
• See Grant.

The Church

• Christians are God’s chosen people. Christians constitute the “True Israel,” 
  replacing the Jews (a doctrine known as Supersessionism, from the verb 
  “supersede”).
• The Church is the union of all believers in Jesus.
• The Church is the body of Christ.
• The Church, through its bishops and other leaders, who are the successors to the apostles, preserves “tradition”;
• Like Judaism, Christianity too needs community; but the Catholic idea of “the church” is far more institutional than anything in Judaism (or Protestantism, for that matter).

Last major point:
The attitudes of Christians to the Bible have varied enormously over the centuries.
• Marcion was defeated and declared a heretic in antiquity, but many/most Christians persist in seeing the God of the “Old Testament” as an angry/vengeful/bellicose God, and the God of the New Testament as the God of love and peace. Marcion would agree.
• Many Christians regard the Hebrew Bible as “Jewish” and see the biblical characters as “Jews.”
• These perspectives are much disputed by Justin Martyr, as we shall see, who argues that the entire Hebrew Bible is not Jewish but Christian, and that the God of the Hebrew Bible is the God who is the creator of the world and father of Christ.

Lecture 5: Jewish Bible Interpretation in Antiquity.
Reading Assignment:
[Remember that “the Bible” means the Old Testament, the Tanakh, the Hebrew Scriptures.]
1. JSB 1863–1875 (“Midrash and Midrashic Interpretation” by David Stern)
2. Carefully read the biblical accounts of the manna in the desert: Exodus 16; Numbers 11; Psalms 78, esp. 78:17–32. We will not have the time to disentangle the tangled skeins in this material; we are interested here in the story about the manna.
3. Some rabbinic readings of the manna tradition: Mekhilta on Exodus 16 (to be distributed).

Emergence of an authoritative book (the Bible), a process known as canonization, is a cause or consequence of the cessation of prophecy: prophet no longer delivers the word of God, the text does.
But the text needs interpretation. Inevitability of interpretation. Scripture is often:
• obscure (e.g. Do not do any manner of work on the Sabbath day)
• contradictory
  ○ E.g. How to perform the Passover – roast or boil? Discussed by Stern;
  ○ for how many days do we eat matzah on Passover – six or seven? contrast Leviticus 23:6 (seven) with Deuteronomy 16:8 (six)

Antiquity of interpretation can be seen in the Bible itself ("inner Biblical exegesis"): see Stern; nice article in JSB on this theme by Sommer if you’re interested.

Modern academic Biblical scholarship assumes that the Bible:
• Is a book like any other: created and put together by normal (i.e. fallible) human beings
• Is inconsistent because it derives from sources (written and oral) that do not always agree; individual biblical books grow over time, are multi-layered.
• Is to be interpreted in its context (biblical books as a whole, and individual verses); the “original” meaning is to be prized above all others; the Bible is a document of its time.
• Derives whatever authority it may possess from its community of believers, and not 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 (a slightly different version of this in Stern) according to which the Bible is:
• Eternally true;
• Omnisignificant;
• Revealed by God;
• Speaking to and about us.

These assumptions manifest themselves in Jewish exegesis thus:

Bible is eternally true: absolute, unconditional; not bound to the time or conditions when it was first spoken or written; its original context does not affect meaning. Truths are eternal.

Omnisignificant: every word and detail has a purpose; in rabbinic exegesis even disembodied syllables can be significant; context of individual verses can be ignored in their interpretation;

Revealed by God: hence perfect; inconsistencies and contradictions are only apparent. Since it is revealed by God it needs to be decoded, just as an oracle or a dream; like dream or oracle interpretation, this is best left to the experts. Divine
discourse is “supercharged”; polysemy (the bible has multiple meanings, all of which are true).

Speaking to and about Us: since the text is eternally true and since context does not matter, any part of the text can be thought relevant to Us and our current circumstance. Actualization of the narrative, the law, and the prophecies. Biblical episodes are paradigms that will be played out repeatedly in Jewish history: the slavery of Egypt, the Exodus, the destruction of the temple in 587 BCE, the close call under King Ahasuerus and the wicked Haman (in the book of Esther). Legal materials are, of course, always relevant.

A midrash specimen:
• Exodus 16 re the manna, seems to combine two separate stories (the miracle of the manna, the miracle of the quail), some legal material (re the Sabbath), and the motif of the complaining Israelites. Numbers 11 and Psalm 78 do not package it this way.
• Mekhilta: a rabbinic Midrash of uncertain date; the named rabbis who are cited in it are all of the second century CE

What do we see in the exegesis of the manna story of Exodus 16? A classic combination of aggadah (narrative, homiletics, non–legal interpretation) and halakhah (law, normative practice)

• An opportunity to reflect on the rival obligations of making a living (finding food) and studying Torah. (p. 104, “only to those who have manna to eat is it given to study the Torah. For behold how can a man be sitting and studying when he does not know where his food and drink will come from?” see also p. 126)

• The connection of the manna with the Sabbath prompts some reflection on the wondrous bliss of the future: p. 119, You will not find it in this world [on the Sabbath], but you will find it in the world to come; see also p. 120.

• Manna prompts reflections on the nature of miracles: p. 124, ten things were created on the Friday of creation

• The fantastic and playful character of rabbinic midrash: p. 113, the manna was sixty cubits high; p. 118, the manna could have any flavor that the consumer wanted. Note discussion (p. 125) of tzintzenet, a container that keeps things cold, is based on a pun with the root tzonen, “cold.”

• Laws of Shabbat: p. 118, how to prepare food for the Sabbath if the day before the Sabbath is a festival day, reference to eruv: p. 119, three meals on the Sabbath; p. 122, laws of 4 cubits and 2000 cubits.
Lecture 6: Christian Bible Interpretation in Antiquity.

Reading Assignment:


2. A Christian reading of the manna tradition: Gospel of John chapter 6. We will not have the time to untangle all the tangled skeins in this chapter; pay attention to the motifs of food, feeding, bread, bread of life, etc.

Questions to consider: How does the Bible become a Jewish book? How does it become a Christian book? What was the main goal (or goals) of ancient Jewish Bible exegesis? What was the main goal (or goals) of ancient Christian Bible exegesis? What is midrash? What is typology and what is allegory?

Review from lecture 5: ancient Jewish and Christian interpreters, and their medieval and modern continuators, assume that the Bible is:

- Eternally true, Omnisignificant, Revealed by God, Speaking to and about us.
  These assumptions manifest themselves in Christian exegesis thus: (Lecture 1 re Judaism in small print)

  **Bible is eternally true**: absolute, unconditional; not bound to the time or conditions when it was first spoken or written; its original context does not affect meaning. Truths are eternal. Hence, for example:
  - some contemporary Christians and Jews cite Leviticus 18 and 20 to justify the position that male homosexual intercourse is sinful;
  - some contemporary Christians and Jews oppose the doctrine of evolution because they think it is incompatible with Genesis 1.

  **Omnisignificant**: every word and detail has a purpose; in rabbinic exegesis even disembodied syllables can be significant; context of individual verses can be ignored in their interpretation.
  - This stance is not as strong in Christian exegesis [=interpretation, explanation] as in Jewish, perhaps because Christian exegesis [of the Hebrew Bible] is based on translation, but Christian exegetes too believe that the Bible does not have casual or stray details.

  **Revealed by God**: hence perfect; inconsistencies and contradictions are only apparent. Since it is revealed by God it needs to be decoded, just as an oracle or a dream; like dream or oracle interpretation, this is best left to the experts. Divine discourse is “supercharged”; polysemy (the bible has multiple meanings, all of which are true).
  - Christians would say that the Bible has levels of meaning.
Speaking to and about Us: since the text is eternally true and since context does not matter, any part of the text can be thought relevant to Us and our current circumstance. Actualization of the narrative, the law, and the prophecies. Biblical episodes are paradigms that will be played out repeatedly in Jewish history: the slavery of Egypt, the Exodus, the destruction of the temple in 587 BCE, the close call under King Ahasuerus and the wicked Haman (in the book of Esther). Legal materials are, of course, always relevant.

- Christians actualize the biblical narratives and the prophecies – they apply to Us Christians. (The law is more problematic for Christians, as we shall see).

How do Christians make the Bible refer/apply to Us Christians?

Gonzalez: Christians engaged in prophetic, allegorical and typological readings

Prophetic: Jesus’ life and death “fulfill” biblical prophecies; true meaning of the passage was not evident until Christ’s life (and death)

Allegory: treats words and text as metaphors for moral and philosophical truths; the text does not really mean what it appears to mean.

- Allegorical reading undoes the reality of the words or texts that it treats; i.e. the referents of the words are not the “physical” things or actual events to which they seem to point, but rather to some moral or philosophical truths.

- Allegorical readings either state or imply a contrast with a literal reading (letter vs. spirit, body vs. spirit, outer vs. inner, lower vs. higher): this contrast is explicit in Philo of Alexandria and in Paul (Romans 2:29, implicit in Galatians 4:24).

- Over the centuries this two-level system becomes elaborated into three-level (on Origen see Gonzalez) and ultimately four-level systems, as the spiritual/allegorical reading gets subdivided into two or three types.
  
  - The theory that scripture contains four levels of meaning was established not later than Guibert of Nogent (1053–1124) and becomes standard in medieval Latin Christianity. The levels are: historical (literal), allegorical (referring to the Church), tropological (or moral, referring to the individual soul), and the anagogical (referring to the end time).

  - Probably under Christian influence Jewish mystics in the thirteenth century began to speak of four levels of meaning in the Torah: the simple or plain meaning, the allegorical meaning, the midrashic (or rabbinic) meaning, and the mystical meaning.

Typology: various events narrated by the Bible prefigure or foreshadow or represent Christ and/or the church.

- Much debate by medieval and modern scholars how to distinguish typology from allegory, if indeed it should be distinguished.

- Gonzalez sees typology as a kind of cross between the literal and the allegorical; like the literal, the typological accepts the historical reality of the persons and events to which it refers; like the allegorical it sees the person or event as a symbol of some aspect of the life of Christ or the truth of Christianity.
• Thus John 6 is a typological reading (so I would argue) of the manna story of Exodus 16: Jesus is the bread of life, the bread that comes down from heaven (6:31–35); in contrast with the manna Jesus is the food that endures for eternal life (6:27, 52–58).
  ○ Contrast the Mekhilta which sees a direct connection between the manna and the gifts of the end time; in John there is a contrast.
  ○ In John 6:52–58 Jesus is the real food of life, clear reference to Christian Eucharist; absence of last supper and Eucharist in John.

Last big points:
• Neither Jews nor Christians read the Bible “literally”
  ○ Jews for the most part accepted the literalness of the legal categories of the Torah but derived many laws and deductions which flout a literal reading of the passage; see e.g. Stern re prohibition of eating meat and milk.
  ○ Both Jewish and Christian exegesis routinely have the text say something it did not “really” or “originally” “mean.”
• Jewish exegesis is both legal (or halakhic) and non-legal (aggadic or haggadic); Christian exegesis is mostly theological; absence of sustained exegesis even of those passages which spelled out observances that Christianity upheld.
• Christian exegesis is far more programmatic than the Jewish: the point is to prove that the NT is the key to understanding the OT.

Lecture 7: The Parting of the Ways between Judaism and Christianity.

Reading Assignment:


Several stages in the emergence of “Christianity”:
Jesus movement during the lifetime of Jesus (30s CE):
• Our sources for the sayings and doings of Jesus are mainly the four canonical gospels in our NT (Mt Mk Lk Jn) which were written 40–70 years after Jesus’ lifetime

• Every positive historical statement about Jesus is disputed by at least some modern historians

• Enslin:
  ○ Jesus was an eschatological prophet, announcing that the end of the world was at hand and demanding repentance (= John the Baptist)
  ○ Jesus was a “reformer” from within, like the prophets of old
  ○ Jesus did not, and had no intention to, found a new religion or a new “church”
  ○ Jesus did not depart from Jewish practice or society

Jesus movement becomes a sect or party of Judaism after Jesus’ death

• Described in the book of Acts (date and historicity much debated) and the letters of Paul (50s CE).

• This was an age of parties and sects in Judaism: Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, the Qumran sect (= the Dead Sea Scrolls), and others

• Enslin:
  ○ The Jesus group in Judaea continues the basic themes of “the Jesus movement.”
  ○ Outside the land of Israel (in the Diaspora) the incorporation of large numbers of gentiles (non-Jews) and the decision that they need not observe all the commandments of the Torah (Paul) inevitably will create a non-Jewish society and a non-Jewish religion.
  ○ Gentile Christianity is the wave of the Christian future, and this Christianity is responsible for the gospel stories of Jesus’ supernatural birth and miracles; calling Jesus “Lord” (kyrios); and seeing Jesus’ death as atonement for sin.
  ○ Modern scholars would emphasize much more than Enslin did the variety and diversity of earliest Christianity and of Judaism
    • Enslin also uses the mother–daughter metaphor and most modern scholars would no longer do so

By parting of the ways we mean that Jews and Christians came to occupy separate social space, with separate institutions, political structures, and social networks.

• Not a theological judgment
• A process, not an event, which unfolds differently in different places and times

• The name “Christian” was first used in Antioch (an important city in northern Syria) in the early 40s CE according to Acts 11:26; the word “Christianity” first attested in Ignatius (ca. 120 CE)

• Justin Martyr takes the separation for granted (ca. 160 CE); never uses the words “Christianity” or “Judaism” (don’t know why) but regularly uses “Christians” (e.g. Dialogue 63.5, “we are all called Christians”) and “Jews”

Social separation aided/abetted by distinctive Christian theological tenets and ritual practices:

• Theology: Divinization of Jesus: Jesus as Messiah (Christ); Jesus as atonement; Jesus as God, Son of God and Logos; Jesus as God and Man;

• Ritual: baptism and communion; principled acceptance of some laws of the Torah and rejection of others.

Developments in Judaism and Jewish Society:

• Destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 CE

• Another failed rebellion of Judaea against the Romans 132–135 CE (Bar Kokhva or Bar Kokhba or Bar Kosba rebellion)

• Emergence of rabbinic Judaism, the Judaism of “the oral Torah,” the Mishnah (ca. 200 CE), Midrash, etc.

• Disappearance of organized or named Jewish sects

• The second century CE witnesses the birth of both “Judaism” and “Christianity”

Lecture 8: Justin Martyr and Early Christianity.

Reading Assignment:
Issues in the separation of “Judaism” from “Christianity” as seen by Justin Martyr in his Dialogue with Trypho:

• The Jews curse Christ and Christians: 16.4, 93.4, 96.2, 133.6, 137.2

• The Judaeans sent out messengers: 108, 138

• The Jews say that Jesus was a magician: 69.7

• The problem of the Law: Justin 9–10; Justin’s solution: 44.2

1. A key passage: The Scriptures are ours, not yours: Justin, Dialogue 29
2. If you want more information about Justin Martyr, go to the Catholic Encyclopedia, s.v. St. Justin Martyr.

3. The Dialogue with Trypho depicts a Christianity that is diametrically opposed to that of Marcion; we have read about Marcion above (see the readings by Grant and Gonzalez)

Questions to consider: Is Christianity a kind of Judaism? If it isn’t, how did this come about? Who was Justin Martyr and why is he important? What according to Justin makes Judaism not-Christianity and Christianity not-Judaism? Why did/do Jews and Christians argue over the interpretation of the Bible?

Justin Martyr: Biographical details scarce; by the fourth century there was a tradition that he was martyred in Rome in the 160s.

• Perhaps born in Samaria (in Roman Palaestina)
• A gentile, not circumcised
• Educated in Greek philosophy; a Platonist; opening paragraphs of the Dialogue are a highly stylized educational autobiography
• An apologist, author of an Apology
• An important witness to Christianity in its formative phase

Author of Dialogue with Trypho the Jew

• Setting: right after the Bar Kokhba war of 132–135 CE; in Ephesus [?? this according to Eusebius]
• Much scholarly debate whether the Dialogue was real or fictional
• Much scholarly debate whether the Dialogue was written for Jews, Christians, or gentiles
  ○ Refers to “you who wish to become proselytes [to Judaism]”: 23.3
• Context is Christian self-definition, vis-à-vis Judaism and vis-à-vis polytheism
  ○ Two common “heresies”: not enough Judaism and too much Judaism
  ○ Classic statement of not enough Judaism was Marcion, a contemporary of Justin (see readings by Gonzalez and Grant)
  ○ Classic expression of too much Judaism were Christians who thought that they should observe the Law just as the Jews do
Justin (47) knows such Christians and believes that they will be saved as long as they do not compel other Christians to behave as they do

- Dialogue with Trypho is working out the Christian boundary with Judaism, just as his Apologies work out boundaries with Greeks and “paganism”
- Justin is aware of varieties (heresies) among Jews (80) and Christians (35) and is the first author to speak of “Christians who are right minded (orthognômones) in all things” (80.5), harbinger of “orthodoxy”

- Dialogue defends Christianity, to be sure, but not exactly the Christianity that will triumph in the fourth century; this is “proto–orthodox.” No New Testament, no trinity.

**Key points** of the Dialogue:

- The Bible is a Christian book; see esp. Dialogue 29:
  Aren’t you acquainted with them [these words], Trypho? You should be, for they are contained in your Scriptures, or rather not yours, but ours. For we believe and obey them, whereas you, though you read them, do not grasp their spirit.

- Jesus Christ is the hermeneutical key to understanding the Bible

- The Bible itself shows that the Bible does not always mean what it seems to mean

- Especially in the case of biblical laws; see Dial. 44.2:
  - For I say that some precepts [=commandments, mitzvot] were given (a) for the worship of God and practice of righteousness, whereas other commandments and customs were arranged (b) either in respect to the mystery of Christ (c) [or] the hardness of your people’s hearts.
  - The main Jewish problem with Christians is their failure to observe the Laws (9–10).

- Jews persecuted Jesus and continue to persecute Christians:

  (16.4) For you have slain the Just One, and His prophets before Him; and now you reject those who hope in Him, and in Him who sent Him—God the Almighty and Maker of all things —cursing in your synagogues those that believe on Christ... (17.1) For other nations have not inflicted on us and on Christ this wrong to such an extent as you have, who in very deed are the authors of the wicked prejudice against the Just One, and us who hold by Him. For after that you had crucified Him, the only blameless and righteous Man— through whose stripes those who approach the Father by Him are healed, —when you knew that He had risen from the dead and ascended to heaven, as the prophets foretold He would, you not only did not repent of the wickedness which you had committed, but at that time you selected and sent out from Jerusalem chosen men through all the land to tell that the godless heresy of the Christians had sprung up, and to publish
those things which all they who knew us not speak against us. So that you are the cause not only of your own unrighteousness, but in fact of that of all other men.

- The historicity of all this (which Justin repeats in many passages; see the syllabus) is hard to assess and much debated.
- Justin like many other apologists/polemicists asserts that the Jews really know that Christianity is true but refuse to allow themselves to believe it.

Two more things:
- Why do we jump around the Dialogue and not read it straight?
- No Jewish work of antiquity parallel to the Dialogue.

Lecture 9: Circumcision: the Jewish View.

Reading Assignment:
1. Passages about circumcision: Genesis 17; Exodus 12:43–50. Other passages you may want to look at: Genesis 34; Exodus 4:24–26; Leviticus 12; Joshua 5.
3. Mishnah and Talmud Nedarim (in the lecture notes)

Questions to consider: What is/are the meaning/s of Jewish circumcision?

Circumcision = circum + cidere (from caedere, to cut, cut down)
- Circumcision we are talking about is not the routine neonatal circumcision practiced in USA which became common for alleged health benefits
- We are speaking here of a ritual act, not a health measure
- Good description of the ritual of circumcision in the diary entry of Michel de Montaigne (1581) (see Cohen reading); and in the engraving La circoncision des juifs portugais (“The circumcision of Portuguese Jews”) by Bernard Picart (1673–1733), dated 1722, from volume one of his Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde (Amsterdam, 1723).
Circumcision is unique among all the commandments of the Torah:

- The only ritual commandment given to one of the patriarchs in the book of Genesis (c. 17)
- performed once in a lifetime
- on the body
- called berit, “covenant.” Only one other commandment is called a berit.
  - The notion of “covenant” binding God to his people is unique to ancient Israel [as we shall discuss in a few weeks], but circumcision is not. Numerous cultures perform circumcision of one kind or another, and as a result anthropologists, historians, etc. have attributed wide range of meanings to this ritual

What does Jewish circumcision mean? Allow for multiplicity of meanings.

Genesis 17:

- God promises fecundity and land, demands circumcision in return
- Association of circumcision with fertility and/or marriage is common in many cultures (cf. Genesis 34); but Israelite circumcision is not puberty ritual but an infant ritual endowed with covenantal value.
- Celebration of paternity: proper maternity is essential (hence Isaac is in, Ishmael is out), but circumcision trumps birth, paternity trumps maternity
- Circumcision is also a sign of the covenant (Genesis 17:11); in context this means a sign for God to see (cf. Genesis 9:12–17), but Jews and Christians [like Justin; see readings for next lecture] understood this to mean a sign of difference vis-à-vis other people.

Other implicit meanings:

- Tribal mark (Genesis 34)
- A purification sacrifice (Leviticus 12)
- Apotropaic sacrifice, protection against danger (Exodus 4:24–26 and 12:43–50)
  - The story in Exodus 4 is one of the most cryptic in the entire Torah: 
    
    24 At a night encampment on the way, the LORD encountered him and sought to kill him. 25 So Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin, and touched his legs with it, saying, “You are truly a bridegroom of blood to me!” 26 And when He let him alone, she added, “A bridegroom of blood because of the circumcision.”
Metaphor spun out of physical circumcision is circumcision of the heart; foreskin of the heart, lips, or ears blocks obedience to God’s will; either God (Deuteronomy 30:6) or the Israelite (Deuteronomy 10:16) will circumcise the Israelite’s heart. Rabbinic Judaism (second century CE) develops distinction between circumcision that is berit and circumcision that is not berit. Perhaps in response to Christianity, or other “free-thinking” Jews, rabbis magnify the importance of circumcision well beyond what is found in Genesis 17; see Mishnah and Talmud Nedarim.

Mishnah Nedarim chapter 3 (Soncino Talmud translation, modified)

R. Ishmael said: great is [the precept] of circumcision, since thirteen covenants were made over it.¹

R. Yosi  said: circumcision is a great precept, for it overrides [the severity of] the Sabbath…

Rabbi said: great is circumcision, for [notwithstanding] all the precepts which Abraham fulfilled he was not designated perfect until he circumcised himself, as it is written, walk before me, and be perfect (Genesis 17:1).

Another explanation: great is circumcision, since but for it, the Holy One, Blessed Be He, would not have created the universe, as it is written, but for my covenant by day and night, I would not have appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth (Jeremiah 33:25).²

Talmud (Nedarim 32a).

It was taught: Rabbi said: Great is circumcision, for none so ardently busied himself with [God’s] precepts as our Father Abraham, yet he was called perfect only in virtue of circumcision, as it is written, Walk before me and be perfect (Genesis 17:1), and it is written, And I will make my covenant between me and thee (Genesis 17:2).³

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¹ The word berit, “covenant,” appears thirteen times in Genesis 17, the chapter in which God commands Abraham to be circumcised. Hence the conclusion that circumcision has the value of thirteen covenants.

² The word “covenant” in the verse triggers a midrashic association with “circumcision”; both are called by the Hebrew word berit.

³ Genesis 17:2 shows that Abraham’s perfection (Genesis 17:1) is a function of the covenant, that is, circumcision.
Another version [of Rabbi’s teaching] is this: Great is circumcision, for it
counterbalances all the [other] precepts of the Torah, as it is written, For in
accordance with these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel
(Exodus 34:27).⁴

Another version is: Great is circumcision, since but for it heaven and earth
would not endure, as it is written, [Thus says the Lord,] But for my covenant by
day and night, I would not have appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth
(Jeremiah 33:25).

Lecture 10: **From Circumcision to Baptism.**

**Reading Assignment:**

2. Justin, Dialogue with Trypho 15 (end) –16, 18, 19, 23, 28–29. Other passages you
may want to look at: 41.4, 43.1–2, 92, 113.6–7, 114.4, 137.1.
3. Questions to consider: What does circumcision mean for Paul, and why must
Christians cease to observe it? Are Justin’s anti-circumcision arguments the
same as those of Paul? If the Bible commands the circumcision of the foreskin,
why don’t Christians do it?

Paul and Christians emphasize:

- **circumcision’s status as sign:** Romans 4:9–12, Galatians 3:6–14, a sign of
faith. Based on Genesis 17:11.
  - Romans 4:9 Is this blessedness, then, pronounced only on the circumcised, or also on
the uncircumcised? We say, ‘Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness’ (Genesis
15:6). ¹⁰How then was it reckoned to him? Was it before or after he had been
circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. ¹¹He received the sign of
circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still
uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the ancestor of all who believe without
being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them, ¹²and likewise
the ancestor of the circumcised who are not only circumcised but who also follow the
example of the faith that our ancestor Abraham had before he was circumcised.

- **circumcision of the heart:** Romans 2:28–29, outward vs. inward, literal vs.
spiritual; the metaphor is the real meaning

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⁴ This verse suggests that the covenant (berit, circumcision) equals all these words, the words of the Torah.
Romans 2:28 For a person is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. Rather, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart—it is spiritual and not literal. Such a person receives praise not from others but from God.

- We are the true circumcision, not relying on the flesh (Philippians 3:2ff)
- There are to be no distinctions between Jew and gentile (Galatians 3 end There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus; Ephesians 2:11–13)

For Paul circumcision is synonymous with the observance of the Law (= non-Christian Judaism); in Roman times circumcision was one of the practices that made Jews distinctive. Ritual of conversion to Judaism.

A follower of Paul: Christians are circumcised through the circumcision of Christ (Colossians 2:11); circumcision of Christ (Luke 2:21) is popular scene in European Christian art

Philo (Jewish philosopher of the first century CE) knows allegorists who allegorize circumcision, but neither Justin nor Paul adopts that approach

Justin’s arguments:

The Bible itself shows that one can be righteous before God without physical circumcision:

- 19.3–5 our circumcision is superior to Jewish circumcision; Adam, Abel, Enoch, Lot, Noah, Melchizedek were just before God without corporeal circumcision (and without observing the Sabbath)

Logic too:

- 23.5 women can be righteous before God without circumcision.
- 28.4 other nations are circumcised
- 29 to be just and righteous before God has nothing to do with circumcision
- 23.1–2; 92.5 God is immutable; therefore God cannot have found Enoch just by one criteria and then introduced a new set of criteria by which to find later generations just

What kind of circumcision does God really want?

- 43.2; 92.4 through Jesus we have a spiritual circumcision
- 113.6–7: Joshua’s circumcision of the people with stone knives is the spiritual circumcision through Jesus; typological exegesis. Second circumcision is spiritual circumcision
Why did Abraham receive the commandment of circumcision?

- 23.4 Abraham’s circumcision is a sign of the faith that he had while not yet circumcised; seems to be citation of Romans 4

Why, then, did God command Abraham’s descendants (= the Jews) to be circumcised?

- Justin distinguishes the circumcision of Abraham, which was good (sign of faith; sign of membership in God’s people), from the circumcision of the Jews, which was/is bad (a punishment)
- 16.2–3; 19.2; 92.2–3: circumcision makes Jews distinctive from other men; marks Jews for punishment (aftermath of the Bar Kokhba war of 132–135 CE)
  - Christian authors develop a variety of ways of understanding circumcision as sign (see Cohen reading)
- 18: circumcision, Sabbath and all the festivals were given to Israelites because of their sins and hardness of heart
  - We will see this argument again in Justin; in one form or another it also recurs in several other ancient Christian documents (usually in connection with Sabbath, circumcision, or food laws). It was not a popular argument, however, among the proto-orthodox and the orthodox, because it turns the God of the Bible into a “bad” God, just as the Marcionites and other “heretics” claimed.

Christian baptism replaces circumcision; by baptism a Christian receives spiritual circumcision (14.1; 43.2; 86.6). This baptism is superior to the washings prescribed by the Jewish law (29.1).

Lecture 11: The Food Laws: the Jewish View.

Reading Assignment:

1. Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14; Exodus 23:19, 34:26, and Deuteronomy 14:21; Exodus 22:30; Genesis 9:1–4 and Leviticus 17:10–16 and Deuteronomy 12:16, 23–25
If you want to know more about the Epistle of Barnabas, go to the Catholic Encyclopedia s.v. Epistle of Barnabas.

All cultures have food taboos

- The system of Jewish food rules is kashrut. Food that may be eaten is kasher (in common parlance kosher) (these are not biblical terms).

Main statement of food laws is Leviticus 11

Two inter-related ideas here: holiness (holy vs. profane) and purity (pure vs. impure).

- You may want to read the essay by Jonathan Klawans, “Concepts of Purity in the Bible,” JSB 2041ff;
- The Hebrew terms are qodesh (holy) and hol (profane, that is, not holy); tahor (pure, also translated clean) and tamê (impure, not pure, unclean)

**Holiness:**

- God is the source of holiness; God is holy.
- In Bible, not only is God holy, so are:
  - places (tabernacle, Temple, land of Israel);
  - objects (appurtenances of the tabernacle and temple, temple offerings)
  - times (Sabbath, festivals)
  - people (priests, people of Israel)
- Holiness is a numinous and charged state; whatever is not holy is profane
- The holy, the domain of the divine, is to be protected from impurity: Leviticus 15:31, you shall put the Israelites on guard against their uncleanness [= impurity], lest they die through their uncleanness [=impurity] by defiling my Tabernacle which is among them.
- Leviticus 11 ends with You shall be holy for I am holy (Leviticus 11:45). Human “holiness” is universally understood to involve some degree of self-renunciation

**Impurity:**

For the most part impurity in the Torah is not a moral judgment or a moral state; rather it is a quality inherent (as Tomson explains) in some objects and actions
• Leviticus 11: impure animals; Leviticus 12: childbirth; Leviticus 13–14 “leprosy” in persons, clothing, or buildings; Leviticus 15 sexual discharges; Numbers 19 human corpse

• Nothing to do with cleanliness or dirt in our sense (e.g. absence of urine and feces; blood from a wound); not moral categories.

• Impurity is a numinous and charged state; whatever is not impure is pure.

• By contacting a source of impurity a non–impure person/object can become impure; this impurity is temporary and can be removed through purification (waiting a certain period of time and/or washing and/or bringing a purification sacrifice and/or performing other rituals).  Purification must take place before coming into proximity to the holy (see Tomson)
  ○ In Leviticus 11 impure animals may not be eaten (11:1–23, 41–45); they also confer impurity by contact with their corpse (11:24–40).

In contrast elsewhere impurity can be the result of moral failure, esp. sexual sin, which causes danger to the community (Leviticus 18) (moral impurity, danger in and of itself).

Some animals are pure (may be eaten), some are impure (may not be eaten); what is the distinction?

• On the macro level the logic is clear:
  ○ nations of the world : Israel : priests
  ○ countries of the world : Israel : temple
  ○ animals : animals that may be eaten : animals fit for the altar
    ▪ Of the animals that may be eaten only a subset is used in the sacrificial cult of the tabernacle/temple:
      • Only livestock (cattle, sheep, goats), not deer or any other undomesticated ruminants;
      • no fish
      • of birds, only pigeons and doves
      • No winged creeping things
  ○ The mystery of kosher animals mirrors the mystery of the election of Israel
  ○ The distinction between pure animals and impure animals was already known to Noah (Genesis 7) but only Israelites are obligated to put that distinction into practice; cf. the Sabbath.

• On the micro level the logic is elusive:
○ Land animals that have split hooves and chew cud are permitted; those with only one of these criteria (four such animals are listed) are prohibited (11:2–8)

○ Water animals that have fins and scales are permitted; no examples listed. (11:9–12)

○ Birds: no criteria given; list of prohibited birds (11:13–19)

○ Winged creeping things are prohibited except those with jointed legs above their feet, four examples listed (11:20–23)

○ Swarming things: all are prohibited (11:41–43)

How to explain:

• medical explanations popular among medievals and moderns, but these seem unlikely
  ○ medical explanations are popular too in modern period re circumcision

• numerous others (see notes in JSB)

• allegorical explanation in Epistle of Barnabas; Moses never intended the food laws to be taken literally since their “real” meaning is the allegorical.
  ○ Greek–speaking Jews before Barnabas had also interpreted the food laws allegorically, not in order to do away with their observance (as in Barnabas) but to defend them.

Four more food prohibitions:

1. Genesis 32:32 Israelites do not eat sciatic nerve (in the hindquarters)

2. Deuteronomy 14:21 moves Exodus 23:19 and 34:26, You shall not boil a kid in its mother’s milk from a context of cultic/ritual regulations to a context of prohibited foods; provides basis for rabbinic idea of separation of meat from milk. Good example of:
  • Non literal rabbinic exegesis
  • Expansive exegesis
  • See discussion in JSB article on Midrash, 1867–1869

3. Prohibition of eating blood; this prohibition is repeated more often in the Torah than any other (Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:10–16; Deuteronomy 12:16, 23–25). Blood must be drained from animals before they can be eaten:
  • kosher slaughter is designed to drain as much blood as possible as quickly as possible from the animal
• The prohibition of eating blood was given to Noah (Genesis 9:1–4), hence rabbinic thinkers thought it to be binding upon non-Israelites too (in contrast with the food laws as a whole or the Sabbath).
  
  ◦ Persistence of the prohibition of the consumption of blood in early Christianity (see Tomson and next lecture)

4. Exodus 22:30: prohibition of eating carrion – probably to be connected with the prohibition of eating blood (see Leviticus 17:15).

  • Food that may not be eaten is colloquially known by the Yiddish word treif, which derives from Hebrew terefa, an animal “torn” or “ripped” by a predator, hence forbidden to be eaten by Israelites (Exodus 22:30).
  
  • An animal that is to be eaten must be killed by human artifice (culture), not nature.


Reading Assignment:
1. Rabbinic texts (see below)
2. Mark 7; Acts 10 and 15; 1 Corinthians 8
3. Justin, Dialogue with Trypho 20

Questions to consider: Did Christianity do away with all of the Jewish food laws? How does Barnabas understand the biblical food laws? Would Paul have approved Barnabas’ interpretation? What was the social function of the food laws in Jewish and/or Christian communities? How do the two rabbinic texts understand the function and effect of the Jewish food laws? If the Bible commands abstention from pork, why don’t Christians abstain?

Social consequences of food laws (and purity rules): strengthen group identity, group boundaries, distinguish insiders from outsiders

  • Cause, unintended effect, or intended effect of the food laws?
  
  • Prohibitions were extended by ancient Jews to other foodstuffs either out of fear of idolatry or to discourage intercourse with gentiles (see Tomson)
  
  • Some Jews would not dine with gentiles for fear of supporting, or deriving benefit from, idolatry.

Two rabbinic texts on forbidden food; food as separator
1. Sifra on Leviticus 20 (end):

R. Eleazar ben Azariah said:

A person should not say “I have no desire to wear shaatnez⁵, I have no desire to eat pork, I have no desire to have forbidden sex.” Rather a person should say “I would like to, but what can I do? My father in heaven has decreed that such behavior is forbidden for me.” What is the scriptural basis for this? Scripture says I have separated you from the nations that you should be mine.⁶ The result is that he separates from sin and accepts upon himself the kingdom of heaven.


When R. Aqiva went to Rome he was slandered before a certain official.⁷ He (the official) sent two beautiful women to him. They were bathed and anointed and outfitted like brides. And all night they kept descending upon him, this one saying “Turn to me,” and that one saying “Turn to me.” But he sat between them and spat and did not face them. In the morning they went off and complained to the official and said to him, “We would rather die than be given to this man!” The official sent for him and asked, “Why did you not do with these women as men generally do with women? Are they not beautiful? Are they not human beings like you? Did not he who created them create you?” “What could I do?” R. Aqiva answered. “I was overcome by their breath from carrion, pork, and other forbidden meats.”

**Early Christianity**

The logic of Christianity: God’s grace is now available to all humanity equally, not just ethnic Israel. Therefore Christianity sets aside circumcision (a sign of difference) and the food laws (social separation).

- Justin says that the food rules were instituted to give the rebellious Jews constant reminders of God’s presence (20.1) – this is a variation on his punishment theme
  - Justin also seems to allude to an allegorical understanding of the prohibited animals who are said to be “unclean, harmful, and violent” (20.4) – the first of these three adjectives of course comes from Leviticus, but the latter two come from an interpretation like that of Barnabas.
  - Remarkable how little Justin has to say about the food laws
- Barnabas: allegorical explanation.

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⁵ *Sshaatnez* is clothing made from a mixture of wool and linen, which may not be worn (Deuteronomy 22:11).

⁶ Leviticus 20:25-26: *You shall therefore separate between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean birds and clean: and you shall not make yourselves abominable by beast or by bird or by any manner of living thing that creeps on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. And you shall be holy to me; for I the Lord am holy, and I have separated you from the nations that you should be mine.*

⁷ The content of this slander is not given, hence its narrative function is not clear (unless this line is meant to serve as a heading for the story).
• Common Christian explanation: under the new covenant these laws have been set aside. See esp. Mark 7 and Acts 10 (both of which discussed by Tomson):

**Mark 7**: original focus of story is impurity and washing to remove impurity:

7Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, 2they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled [lit. common] hands, that is, without washing them. 3(For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; 4and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) 5So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, ‘Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?’ 14 Then he called the crowd again and said to them, ‘Listen to me, all of you, and understand: 15there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.’ 17 When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. 18He said to them, ‘Then do you also fail to understand? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, 19since it enters, not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?’ (Thus he declared all foods clean.) 20And he said, ‘It is what comes out of a person that defiles. 21For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, 22adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. 23All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.’

But whoever added the parenthetical phrase at vs. 19 clearly is trying to broaden the focus from “impurity” to “prohibited foods”:

• Here clean = permitted to be eaten. [I disagree with Tomson.]

**Acts 10**: prohibited animals are declared by God in a vision to be pure = Peter may welcome gentiles into the community of believers. But the implication is that Peter may also kill and eat the prohibited animals:

9About noon the next day ...Peter went up on the roof to pray. 10He became hungry and wanted something to eat; and while it was being prepared, he fell into a trance. 11He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. 12In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. 13Then he heard a voice saying, ‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat.’ 14But Peter said, ‘By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane [lit. common] or unclean.’ 15The voice said to him again, a second time, ‘What God has made clean [pure], you must not call profane [common].’ 16This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven.

17 Now while Peter was greatly puzzled about what to make of the vision that he had seen, suddenly the men sent by Cornelius appeared... 19While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, ‘Look, three men are searching for you. 20Now get up, go down, and go with them without hesitation; for I have sent them.’ 21So Peter went down to the men ... The next day he got up and went with them ... , Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends... [Peter] said to them, ‘You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean. 29So when I was sent for, I came without objection...

Two food prohibitions in early Christianity (see Tomson):

• Not to eat blood;
Not to eat meat sacrificed to idols;

In “the apostolic decree” the council of Jerusalem decides that:

(Acts 15) We should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood.

- Even Justin seems to endorse the prohibition of blood (20.1).

Paul has a different take on meat sacrificed to idols:

- 1 Corinthians 8: in theory Christians, who possess true knowledge, should be able to eat anything they want, but they should refrain nonetheless from eating meat sacrificed to idols because it might negatively affect some weaker brethren.

Lecture 13: The Sabbath.

Reading Assignment:


Questions to consider: Why do Jews abstain from work on the seventh day (the Sabbath)?

Uniqueness of seven day week in antiquity

Seven day astrological week

Indications of the unusual importance of the Sabbath in the Bible:

- Very rich and variegated biblical legacy
- Built into the nature of the cosmos: at the creation God rested on the seventh day (Genesis 2:1–4), therefore Israelites are to rest as well (Exodus 20:11, 31:17)
In the Deuteronomic version of the Decalogue (5:16) Sabbath is connected with the Exodus (theme of “rest”) rather than creation, therefore it is not universal but Israelite-specific

- Shabbat, like Israel and like God, is holy (Genesis 2:3; Exodus 20:8, 31:14, 35:2; Deuteronomy 5:12; Jeremiah 17:22, Isaiah 58:13, Ezekiel 20:20)
- Sabbath is a “sign” between Israel and God (Exodus 31:13, 17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20), an eternal covenant (Exodus 31:16), a covenant (Isaiah 56:4).
  - Note similarity to circumcision
  - As punishment for rejecting the Sabbath God punished the Israelites in the wilderness (Ezekiel 20)

Some modern scholars argue that circumcision and Sabbath (and perhaps the food laws) became prominent only in the period of exile (post 587 BCE)

Do not do any manner of work on the Sabbath day – what does this mean?

- Inevitability of exegesis
- Exodus 35:3 not to kindle a fire
- Numbers 15:32–36 the story of the wood-chopper (wood-gatherer?)
- Exodus 16 re manna in the desert: prepare food on Friday for the morrow; gather manna on Friday (16:22); bake and cook on Friday (16:23); do not leave your tent on the seventh day (16:29)
- Jeremiah 17:19–25: not to conduct business on Shabbat by carrying a burden or removing a burden from one’s house: 19 Thus said the Lord to me: Go and stand in the People’s Gate, by which the kings of Judah enter and by which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem, and say to them: Hear the word of the Lord, you kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who enter by these gates. 20 Thus says the Lord: For the sake of your lives, take care that you do not bear a burden on the Sabbath day or bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. 21 And do not carry a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath or do any work, but keep the Sabbath day holy, as I commanded your ancestors. 22 Yet they did not listen or incline their ear; they stiffened their necks and would not hear or receive instruction. 24 But if you listen to me, says the Lord, and bring in no burden by the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but keep the Sabbath day holy and do no work on it, 25 then there shall enter by the gates of this city kings who sit on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall be inhabited for ever.

- Isaiah 58:13: series of broad and obscure generalizations (“if on account of the Sabbath you turn back your foot from doing your own desires on my holy day; if you call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it by not going your own ways, finding your own interests, or speaking words” – then you will be rewarded)

- M. Shabbat 7:2 the creation of 39 prohibited labors; shows rabbinic creativity; Sabbath as inversion of the temple. Goldenberg: the list as a statement of rabbinic vision of “culture”
Cf. Matthew 12:5, Or have you not read in the law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here.

Tension between Sabbath as a day of restriction/prohibition and Sabbath as a day of joy, both spiritual and carnal (Goldenberg)

- Spiritual: gather in synagogue, study the Torah (assumed by NT, Philo and Josephus)
- Carnal: Sabbath is “a delight” (Isaiah 58:13): food, clothing, sex
  - According to some ancient non-Jewish authors, the Sabbath was a day of fasting and half-mourning; medieval Jewish sectarians

Mishnah Shabbat 7:2.

7:2 The primary labors⁸ [prohibited on the Sabbath] are forty save one:

(1) sowing⁹, (2) plowing, (3) reaping, (4) binding sheaves, (5) threshing, (6) winnowing, (7) selecting, (8) grinding, (9) sifting, (10) kneading, (11) baking;

(12) shearing wool, (13) bleaching it, (14) hackling it, (15) dyeing it, (16) spinning, (17) stretching the threads, (18) making two meshes, (19) weaving two threads, (20) dividing two threads, (21) tying, (22) untying, (23) sewing two stitches, (24) tearing in order to sew two stitches;

(25) hunting a deer, (26) slaughtering it, (27) flaying it, (28) salting it, (29) curing its hide, (30) scraping it, (31) slicing it, (32) writing two letters, (33) erasing in order to write two letters;

(34) building, (35) pulling down;

(36) extinguishing, (37) kindling;

(38) striking with a hammer;

(39) taking out from one domain to another.

These, then, are the primary labors: forty save one.

Primary labors: these labors are “primary” in the sense that there are secondary and tertiary labors that unfold under each of them. Each, then, is an archetype (or “father”). So, for example, labor 11, “baking,” includes cooking food and boiling water. Labors 1–11 are the steps required to get wheat in order to bake bread;

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⁸ Lit. “labor-fathers”; Danby translates “main classes of work.”

⁹ Lit. the sower, the plower, etc. In mss. “plowing” is listed before “sowing.”
labors 12–24 are the steps required to get wool in order to sew a garment; labors 25–33 are the steps required to get leather in order to write something; the remaining six belong to diverse categories. This list provides the framework for most of the rest of the tractate. The Mishnah devotes more attention to the prohibition of carrying (no. 39) than to any of the other labors.

(39) taking out from one domain to another: i.e. from the private domain to the public, or from the public to the private.

Lecture 14: From Shabbat to Sunday.

Reading Assignment:
2. Do Christians observe the Sabbath? Justin 12.3, 19.5, 21.1, 26–27, 41.4

Questions to consider: Is the Christian Sunday the same as the Jewish Sabbath? How did the Jewish Sabbath become the Christian Sunday? If the Bible commands abstention from work on the seventh day, why don’t Christians abstain?

Jesus and the Sabbath:

Jesus performs exorcisms/healings on the Sabbath (Mark 1:21–34) and therefore is opposed by the Pharisees (Mk 3:1–6; Lk 14:1–6) or “the Jews” (John 5:1–18)
- Not clear what legal violation, if any, is involved
- Jesus defends himself by saying that the Pharisees themselves would rescue an animal from the pit (Mt 12:11; Lk 14:5; cf. Lk 13:15) – no principled rejection of the Sabbath here
- General Sabbath observance is assumed by the story:
  - John 5:10, the Jews say to the man who was cured, “It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat”
  - Mark 1:32, “That evening, at sunset, they brought him all who were sick”
  - (Lk 13:14, The ruler of the synagogue says to the people, “There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the Sabbath day”)

Jesus defends his disciples who pluck grain on the Sabbath (Mk 2:23–28): 23 One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. 24 The Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?” 25 He answered, “Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? 26 In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions.” 27 Then he said to them,
"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. 28So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

- More radical; were they starving to death?
- “The Sabbath was made for humanity, and not humanity for the Sabbath” (Mk 2:27) is an appeal for the lessening of Sabbath severity; cf. Mekhilta on Exodus 30:14: “R. Simeon b. Menasyah says: Scripture says And you shall keep the Sabbath for it is holy unto you. The Sabbath is given to you; but you are not given to the Sabbath” the context is a discussion of the principle that saving a life takes precedence over the Sabbath
- 2:28 might be a principled rejection of the Sabbath (“so the son of man is lord even of the Sabbath”)

**Sunday/Saturday – two aspects: day of worship; day of rest**

**Sunday as “the Lord’s day,” a day of worship:**
- Sunday (Lord’s Day) supplements and gradually replaces Saturday (seventh day) for gentile Christians because first day of the week is the day of Christ’s resurrection:
  - Acts 20:7 Paul met with some Christians “on the first day of the week”
  - 1 Corinthians 16:2 on the first day of the week collect alms
  - Revelation 1:10 Lord’s Day
  - Christians meet on Sunday (Didache 14; Justin Apology 67)
- Rise of Sunday connected with rise of Easter:
  - Redemption from Egypt becomes redemption from sin, hence Passover is replaced by Easter and Sabbath by Sunday

**God does not want rest on Saturday**
- Sabbath as a day of rest: the only one of the ten commandments not confirmed by NT

Barnabas c. 15:
- God never intended the Sabbath commandment to be taken literally
- An eschatological symbol of the perfect Sabbath that follows the six thousand years of this world
- The Eighth day is a prolongation of the seventh, and is also the day on which Christ was resurrected.
- Later Christian writers frequently refer to Sunday as the Eighth day. Justin 41:4: circumcision on the eighth day is a type for our salvation through Christ (who rose on the eighth day).

Justin:
- Ancient worthies found favor in God’s eyes without observing the Sabbath (19.5, 27.5)
- Sabbath like circumcision is a sign to mark out the Jews (21.1)
- Given by Moses and reaffirmed by Isaiah because of the hardness of heart (27.2–4)
• God wants a perpetual Sabbath (12.1) The new law requires you to keep perpetual sabbath, and you, because you are idle for one day, suppose you are pious, not discerning why this has been commanded you. This will become a standard Christian idea.

• If God really wanted observance of the Sabbath, he would not have had the temple function on that day, or have allowed circumcisions to take place on that day (27.5): For, tell me, did God wish the priests to sin when they offer the sacrifices on the Sabbaths? or those to sin, who are circumcised and do circumcise on the Sabbaths; since He commands that on the eighth day--even though it happen to be a Sabbath--those who are born shall be always circumcised? or could not the infants be operated upon one day previous or one day subsequent to the Sabbath, if He knew that it is a sinful act upon the Sabbaths? Or why did He not teach those--who are called righteous and pleasing to Him, who lived before Moses and Abraham, who were not circumcised in their foreskin, and observed no Sabbaths--to keep these institutions?

**Sunday as a day of rest, “Christian Sabbath”**

• Two strategies in the history of Christianity:
  ○ Sunday as a day of worship; abolition of the day of rest (Barnabas, Justin)
    ▪ Nice discussion by Craig Blomberg
  ○ Sunday as a day of worship and a day of rest (a Christian Sabbath)

• Emperor Constantine passed a law in 321 CE requiring rest from work on Sunday in order to facilitate attendance at church

• Rigorous transfer of notion of “Sabbath” to Sunday becomes common only under Puritans; Christian Sabbatarianism;
  ○ Seventh Day Adventists argue that Sabbath was meant by God to be observed at all times by all peoples, including gentile Christians, as day of rest
  ○ Chariots of Fire
  ○ Sunday “blue laws”

**Lecture 15: Pesah / Passover.**

**Reading Assignment:**


**Definitions:**

• pesah, root meaning “pass over” (or “skip” or “limp”) or, more likely, “protect”: see note in JSB on Exodus 12:13 and 23

• matzah, “unleavened bread”
The Torah sometimes conflates, sometimes distinguishes, a one day pesah festival with/from a seven day matzah festival:

- Exodus 12: on the 14th of the first month in the evening is pesah; followed directly by seven day matzah festival, from the 15th to the 21st; eaten by family units
  - Brief digression on lunar calendar, solar calendar, soli-lunar calendar]
- Exodus 23:14–19 and 34:17–26: festival calendar, three pilgrimage festivals, seven day matzah festival, no pesah mentioned (although the reference in 23:18=34:25 is not clear), and no specific dates in the spring month.
- Leviticus 23:4–8: 14th day of the first month is the pesah, on the 15th day and following is the seven–day matzah festival; same in Numbers 28:16–25.
- Deuteronomy 16:1–8: the pesah and the matzah festival are apparently one and the same: a seven day festival; the pesah is offered on the first day, followed by six days of eating matzah, for a total of seven; no specific date in the spring month; pesah is to be slaughtered and eaten at the central shrine.
- These variations show the inevitability of exegesis!
- Modern scholars committed to documentary hypothesis explain evolution and eventual conflation of the two festivals:
  - Pesah sacrifice is pastoral in origin and apotropaic, to protect flocks, firstborn, etc., matzah festival is agrarian, celebration of cycle of planting–harvesting [function of unleavened bread is disputed] (see JSB note on Exodus 12:14–20)
  - Pesah sacrifice was home and family based, matzah festival was pilgrimage festival. Deuteronomy moved pesah from the home to the central shrine. But it never fully lost its domestic character.
  - Both pesah and matzah get “historicized” by being associated with the exodus from Egypt.

The ritual according to Exodus 12–13:

- First month (see note in JSB on Exodus 12:2)
- Slaughter of goat or lamb, blood manipulation
  - Blood manipulation does not carry forward in the history of Judaism
- Real food (the paschal lamb) and symbolic food: bitter herbs (12:8; cf. Exodus 1:14).
- Eaten in family or clan units, apparently in family tents
- Matzah gets a historical explanation: they were in a hurry (12:39)
• The only festival in the Torah accompanied by a commandment to respond to children’s question:
  ○ 12:25–27: When you enter the land that the LORD will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony. 26 And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' 27 then tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.'
  ○ 13:6–9: 6 For seven days eat bread made without yeast and on the seventh day hold a festival to the LORD. 7 Eat unleavened bread during those seven days; nothing with yeast in it is to be seen among you, nor shall any yeast be seen anywhere within your borders. 8 On that day tell your son, 'I do this because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.' 9 This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that the law of the LORD is to be on your lips. For the LORD brought you out of Egypt with his mighty hand.
  ○ cf. Exodus 10:1–2: 1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his officials so that I may perform these miraculous signs of mine among them 2 that you may tell your children and grandchildren how I dealt harshly with the Egyptians and how I performed my signs among them, and that you may know that I am the LORD."
  ○ Exodus 13:14–16 presents children’s question in connection with the dedication of the first born, a paschal theme
  ○ Deuteronomy 6:20–23 has a child ask in reference to the commandments in general, and the reply focuses on exodus from Egypt: 20 In the future, when your son asks you, "What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the LORD our God has commanded you?" 21 tell him: "We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. 22 Before our eyes the LORD sent miraculous signs and wonders—great and terrible—upon Egypt and Pharaoh and his whole household. 23 But he brought us out from there to bring us in and give us the land that he promised on oath to our forefathers.

These verses are the scriptural origins of the seder (the “four sons”). The Torah does not know a seder, but provides the basis for its later development.

Define seder (lit. “order”):
  • A meal eaten and a ritual performed on the first night of Passover, consisting of symbolic food, real food, ritualized gestures, and ritualized speech (questions and answers, benedictions, praise, scriptural exegesis, narrative).
  • The prescribed text is known as the haggadah (lit. “response,” hence “narrative”).
Lecture 16: The Seder.

Reading Assignment:

1. M. Pesahim 10 (to be distributed)

   1. “Eucharistic words” are the words that Jesus said at the Last Supper “This is my body … this is my blood”

3. If you don’t know what these terms means check their entries in Wikipedia: “Passover,” “Passover Seder,” “Afikoman,” “Maror,” and “Haggadah,”

Some questions to consider: What is a seder and what is the Haggadah? Does the Torah envision either? How does the Paschal meal envisioned by the Torah contrast with the ritualized festive meal of a Seder?

Define seder (lit. “order”):

- A meal eaten and a ritual performed on the first night of Passover (15th of Nisan), consisting of symbolic food, real food, ritualized gestures, and ritualized speech (questions and answers, benedictions, praise, scriptural exegesis, narrative).
- The prescribed text is known as the haggadah (lit. “response,” hence “narrative”).

Mishnah has the basic outlines of a seder:

- Four cups of wine
- Appetizers (matzah, lettuce, haroset [a kind of salad dressing or dipping sauce])
- Instruction (three/four questions), scriptural exegesis;
  - (a) According to the son's intelligence his father instructs him.
  - (b) one commences with shame and concludes with praise;
  - (c) and expounds from a wandering Aramean was my father (Deuteronomy 26:5) until he completes the whole section.

1 When you enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a heritage, and you possess it and settle in it, 2 you shall take some of every first fruit of the soil, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, put it in a basket and go to the place where the LORD your God will choose to establish His name. 3 You shall go to the priest in charge at that time and say to him, “I acknowledge this day before the LORD your God that I have entered the land that the LORD swore to our fathers to assign us.” 4 The priest shall take the basket from your hand and set it down in front of the altar of the LORD your God. 5 You shall then recite as follows before the LORD your God: “My father was a fugitive Aramean. He went down to Egypt with meager numbers and sojourned there; but there he became a great and very populous nation. 6 The Egyptians dealt harshly with us and oppressed us; they imposed heavy labor upon us. 7 We cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our plea and saw our plight, our misery, and our oppression. 8 The LORD freed us
from Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents. He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. Wherefore I now bring the first fruits of the soil which You, O LORD, have given me.” You shall leave it before the LORD your God and bow low before the LORD your God. And you shall enjoy, together with the Levite and the stranger in your midst, all the bounty that the LORD your God has bestowed upon you and your household.

○ R. Gamaliel used to say: whoever does not mention these three things on Passover does not fulfill his obligation, and these are they: the Passover-sacrifice; unleavened bread; and bitter herb. The Passover-sacrifice, because the Omnipresent passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt. The unleavened bread, because our fathers were redeemed from Egypt. The bitter herb, because the Egyptians embittered the lives of our fathers in Egypt.

• Meal [although not clear in the Mishnah when exactly the lamb is eaten]
• Hymns of praise

The outlines of this meal follow the basic outlines of a standard Roman feast: appetizer; main course; dessert; dipping sauces; cups of wine. See Bahr, Seder of Passover.

Mishnah also has two key theological ideas:

• Vicarious experience: In every generation one is bound to regard himself as if he personally had gone forth from Egypt ...
• Redemption from Egypt prefigures our future redemption. (Passover as paradigm of redemption, analogous to Christian typology.)

Some post-Mishnaic additions to the seder and haggadah:

• Additional symbolic foods: salt-water and the seder plate; haroset understood symbolically
• “The four sons” and much of our text of the haggadah; Mishnah not yet have standardized liturgy
• Cup of Elijah (medieval)
• Songs at the end (medieval)

Major historical question: does the Mishnaic seder predate 70 CE, or not?

• Pre-70 sources: eat Paschal lamb; drink wine; sing hymns; presume the idea that past redemption prefigures future redemption; but no evidence for ritualized instruction or symbolic foods
• Likely that the Mishnaic seder is a rabbinic response to the destruction of the temple; transfer the Passover ritual back to the home from the central shrine.
• Is the Last Supper a seder? (See Bahr)
The mysterious afiqoman:

- In the Mishnah it is something we don’t do: “We do not bid farewell to the paschal meal with afiqoman.”
  - Traditional explanations of this rule: no after dinner treats; no after dinner entertainment, revelry.
- In the post-Mishnaic seder the afiqoman is something that we do: a piece of matzah that is broken off at the beginning of the seder, put aside, and then eaten after the meal; this is first attested in the mid 13th century. This piece of matzah represents the Paschal lamb.
  - This piece of matzah, broken off at the beginning, hidden away, returning at end of the meal, symbolizing the paschal lamb, is in fact a symbol for redemption = messiah.

Mishnah Pesahim 10

1. On the eve of Passover close to minhah [mid afternoon] a person must not eat until nightfall.

Even the poorest in Israel must not eat [on the night of Passover] unless reclining [on a sofa or divan]; and they [the disbursers of communal charity] should give him not less than four cups [of wine], even [if he receives relief] from the charity plate.

2. They [the attendants] fill the first cup [of wine] for him.

The House of Shammai say: he [the householder] recites a blessing for the day [first], and then recites a blessing over the wine;

But the House of Hillel say: he recites a blessing over the wine [first], and then recites a blessing for the day.

3. They then set [food] before him.

He dips the lettuce before he has yet reached the parperet [condiment? course?] of the bread.

They set before him unleavened bread (matzah), lettuce, and haroset [a dipping sauce] and two cooked foods [manuscripts omit “and two cooked foods”] though the haroset is not compulsory [lit. a commandment]. R. Eleazar son of R. Zadok said: it is compulsory [lit. a commandment].

And in the temple they would bring the body of the Passover-sacrifice before him.

4. They filled a second cup for him.
Here [or: rightly] the son questions his father; if the son is unintelligent, his father instructs him [to ask]: how is this night different from all [other] nights.

- For on all [other] nights we eat leavened and unleavened bread, whereas on this night [we eat] only unleavened bread;
- on all other nights we eat all kinds of herbs, on this night bitter herbs [this line is omitted in many sources];
- on all other nights we eat meat roast, stewed or boiled, on this night, roast only;
- on all other nights we dip once, but on this night we dip twice.

According to the son's intelligence his father instructs him.

He commences with shame and concludes with praise;

and expounds from a wandering Aramean was my father (Deuteronomy 26:5) until he completes the whole section (Deuteronomy 26:5–9, or perhaps 26:5–11).

5. R. Gamaliel used to say: whoever does not mention these three things on Passover does not fulfill his obligation, and these are they: the Passover–sacrifice; unleavened bread; and bitter herb.

- The Passover–sacrifice, because the Omnipresent passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt.
- The unleavened bread, because our forefathers were redeemed from Egypt.
- The bitter herb, because the Egyptians embittered the lives of our fathers in Egypt.

In every generation one is bound to regard himself as if he personally had gone forth from Egypt, because it is said, and you shall tell your son on that day, saying: it is because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth out of Egypt (Exodus 13:8).

Therefore it is our duty to thank, praise, laud, glorify, exalt, honor, bless, extol, and adore the one who wrought all these miracles for our fathers and ourselves; he brought us forth from bondage into freedom, from sorrow into joy, from mourning into festivity, from darkness into great light, and from servitude into redemption. Therefore let us say before him, hallelujah! [That is, let us recite Psalm 113.]

6. How far does one recite? The House of Shammai say: until as a joyous mother of children [end of Psalm 113] while the House of Hillel say: until the flint into a fountain of waters [end of Psalm 114].

And he concludes with [a blessing–formula of] redemption. R. Tarfon used to say “who redeemed us and redeemed our fathers from Egypt,” but did not conclude [with a blessing].
R. Akiba said [that we should indeed conclude with a blessing, as follows] “so may the Lord our God and the God of our fathers allow us to reach other seasons and festivals which come towards us in peace, rejoicing in the building of your city (and glad in your service), and there we will partake of the [festival] sacrifices and the Passover–sacrifices whose blood will reach the wall of your altar with favor. And let us thank you for our redemption. Blessed are you, Lord, redeemer of Israel.”

7. They fill the third cup for him. He then recites grace after meals.

Over the fourth [cup] he concludes the Hallel [Psalms 113–118], and recites the grace of song [a prayer].

Between these [the earlier] cups he may drink if he wishes; between the third and the fourth he may not drink.

8. We do not bid farewell to the paschal meal with afigoman [word of uncertain origin and meaning].

If some of them fell asleep, they may eat [when they awake]; if all of them fell asleep they must not eat. R. Yosi said: if they fell into a light sleep, they may eat; if they fell fast asleep, they must not eat.

9. The Passover–sacrifice defiles one’s hands after midnight ...

Lecture 17: From Pesah to Pascha.

Reading Assignment:
1. Matthew 26:2, 17–30; Luke 22:7–23; John 13:1; 19:14, 31–37. We will not have time to deal with these texts in detail. Two key questions for our purposes: What is the date of the crucifixion? Is the last supper a Passover meal?

2. 1 Corinthians 5:7 (Christ as Paschal sacrifice) and 11:23–26 (Last supper); John 1:29, 36 (Behold the Lamb of God); John 6:52–58

3. Justin 40.1–3 and 111.3, Paschal lamb as type of Christ


Define:

• Nisan: the non–biblical name of the first month (in the spring) in the Jewish calendar; the Pesah sacrifice is on the afternoon of Nisan 14 into the evening (which is the beginning of
Nisan 15); the seven day matzah festival (colloquially known as Pesah or Passover) begins on Nisan 15.

• Easter: the Christian feast of the resurrection of Jesus (name apparently derives from the Saxon goddess Eostre, whose festival had been celebrated in the spring)
  ○ There is a pagan side to Easter (bunnies, eggs, etc) which is not our concern
• Pascha: the name for Easter in Greek and Latin and with slight variation in Romance languages (Pâque, Pasqua) (pascha from Greek paschein = passion = suffering, fortuitous homophony with Hebrew Pesah)
• Eucharist (lit. “thanksgiving” in Greek): the Christian ritual of eating bread and drinking wine instituted by Jesus during the “Last Supper”; also called Communion.

Quick review of chronology:
• Letters of Paul: 50s CE
• Gospel of Mark: ca. 70 CE
• Gospels of Matthew and Luke: ca. 80–90 CE [Mk Mt Lk together known as the synoptic gospels]
• Gospel of John: ca. 100 CE
• Epistle of Barnabas: ca. 130 CE
• Justin Martyr: ca. 160 CE
• Melito of Sardis: ca. 180 CE
• The Mishnah, including Mishnah Pesahim: ca. 200 CE

Two Christian trajectories:
• from Pesah sacrifice to Last Supper to the Passion to Easter
• from Pesah sacrifice to Last Supper to the Words of Institution (“this is my body … this is my blood”) to Eucharist (wine and bread)

First trajectory:
All four Gospels connect Jesus’ execution/resurrection with Passover, but do so in different ways, the synoptics vs. John:

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Matthew 26:2, 17–30 (closely follows Mark):
• Th is 14 Nisan [though note confusion of Mt 26:17, where the first day of the feast of unleavened bread seems to refer to 14 Nisan; cf. Mark 14:12], F day of crucifixion is 15 Nisan.
• The Last Supper is a paschal meal; not quite a seder. Sequence: meal (including dipping), presumably the Paschal lamb; bread; blessing (in Greek eulogia); wine; give thanks (in Greek eucharistia); hymn. [but no bitter herbs]
Matthew 26:23 Jesus replied, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me..."

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, pronounced a blessing, and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom." When they had sung a hymn...

- This sequence does not agree with the Mishnah: bread followed by wine, presumably at the beginning of the meal.

Luke 22:14–20:

- Same chronology as Matthew
- The Last Supper is a paschal meal; not quite a seder. Recline; wine; give thanks (in Greek eucharistia); bread; give thanks; meal, presumably the Paschal sacrifice; wine. [but no bitter herbs]

Luke 22:14When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And he took bread, gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes. And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you..."

- This sequence agrees with the Mishnah: wine followed by bread at the beginning of the meal; “give thanks” presumably means “blessed God.” Words of institution recited over wine after the meal [=third cup in the rabbinic seder]

Last Supper not a rabbinic seder: no storytelling, no scriptural exegesis, no scripted speech

Contrast John 13:1; 19:14, 31–37:

- crucifixion is on F 14 Nisan
- No last supper in John, ceremonial or otherwise; no institution of Eucharist [but note Jn 6:52–58 Jesus is the bread of life, "he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life"; commentators have long understood this as reference to Eucharist]

- John 1:29 Jesus is the (Paschal) lamb of God The next day John [the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!
  * Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, an offering and sacrifice of sweet savor to God (Ephesians 5:2)

- “This is my body... this is my blood” for John means that Christ is the paschal lamb. John has shifted chronology for theological reasons [this is the usual explanation]

- Christ the (Paschal) lamb is everywhere in later Christian theology, liturgy and art.
  * Justin, Dialogue with Trypho 40 and 111.3: Paschal lamb is the type of Christ, with whose blood believers anoint themselves (and attain salvation)

It is truly right and good, always and everywhere, with our whole heart and mind and voice, to praise you, the invisible, almighty, and eternal God, and your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who at the feast of the Passover paid for us the debt of Adam's sin, and by his blood delivered your faithful people.

This is the night, when you brought our fathers, the children of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt, and led them through the Red Sea on dry land.

This is the night, when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life.

This is the night, when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave.

As in the rabbinic seder, the redemption from Egypt prefigures future redemption.

**Second trajectory:** from Last Supper to Eucharist

Earliest account of the last supper is Paul 1 Corinthians 11:23–26:

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

- Sequence: bread; give thanks; meal; wine
- "On the night of his betrayal," but no Pesah mentioned. The ritual commemoration of Christ's death is not dependent on Passover, even though elsewhere Paul knows that Christ is our pascha (1 Corinthians 5:7) Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Leaven = sin; unleavened bread symbolizes spiritual cleansing.
  - Therefore western churches use unleavened bread (wafers) for communion; Greek Orthodox use leavened
- Disassociation of Eucharist from Pesah clear in Paul; disassociation of Eucharist from a meal clear in Justin, Apology 40 and 111 [not the Dialogue with Trypho], earliest extant description of Eucharist;
• There is then [after the baptism of the newest members of the group] brought to the president of the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands. And when he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people present express their assent by saying Amen.

• And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each.

• Note importance of Sunday.

Later Christian theology: by ingesting body and blood of Christ we partake of his life, death, and most particularly his resurrection.

The ritual is transformative, as is the rabbinic seder; the vehicle for that transformation in both cases is bread/matzah and wine.

• How the bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ was much debated by medieval Christians; see the What is Christianity reading.

From the Eucharistic liturgy (Book of Common Prayer; http://www.bcponline.org/ page 316):

• Beloved in the Lord: Our Savior Christ, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood as a sign and pledge of his love, for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of his death, and for a spiritual sharing in his risen life. For in these holy Mysteries we are made one with Christ, and Christ with us; we are made one body in him, and members one of another.

Lecture 18: Melito of Sardis and the Christian Passover.

Reading Assignment:
For helpful information re Melito, see “Melito of Sardis” and “Quartodecimanism” in Wikipedia; Catholic Encyclopaedia s.v. *Easter Controversy* (First Phase and Second Phase)

Questions to consider: Did/do Christians celebrate the Passover? How would you compare the Jewish festival of Pesah/Passover, with the Christian festival of Easter? Who were Quartodecimans? Who was Melito and what is his significance? Do you see similarities between Melito and the Haggadah?

On the trajectory from Pesah sacrifice to Last Supper to the Passion to Easter, one group of Christians maintained strong link between Easter and Pesah: the Quartodecimans (“the Fourteenthers”) whose best representative is Melito of Sardis: [Sardis is a town in Western Asia Minor, modern Turkey]

- perhaps of Jewish origin, biography very sketchy
- a generation or so after Justin (ca. 180 CE)
- Quartodeciman: Easter celebrated on 14 Nisan either late afternoon or early evening.
  - Easter on Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection; Easter on 14 Nisan is a celebration of the crucifixion
- Highly rhetorical, loves paradoxical expression

**Major themes of the On Pascha:**

**Jesus is the Paschal sacrifice.**

- Same idea in Paul and Justin; Justin even says that the Paschal lamb on a spit has the shape of the cross
- “This is the Pascha of our salvation” §69–72
- “So come all families of people ... and receive forgiveness of sins. For I am your forgiveness, I am the Pascha of salvation, I am the lamb slaughtered for you, I am your ransom, I am your life, I am your resurrection, I am your light, I am your salvation, I am your king.” §103

**Exodus 12 provides the type, the crucifixion is the fulfillment**

- Theory of typology §35–45, a preliminary sketch, a draft, a model
- The fulfillment cancels the type which no longer has meaning: the people, the law, the slaughter of sheep, the temple, Jerusalem §40–45: 44. For at one time the slaughter of sheep was valuable, but now it is without value because of the life of the Lord. The death of sheep once was valuable, but now it is without value because of the salvation of the Lord. The blood of sheep once was valuable, but now it is without value because of the Spirit of the Lord. The
silent lamb once was valuable, but now it has no value because of the blameless Son. The temple here below once was valuable, but now it is without value because of the Christ from above. 45. The Jerusalem here below once had value, but now it is without value because of the Jerusalem above. The meager inheritance once had value; now it is without value because of the abundant grace.

**Christ, God, son, and lamb**
- Should not be read in the light of later Christian Christological controversies
- Christ was all things: Father, Son, Logos, Lamb, God, Man §9: He is everything: in that he judges he is law, in that he teaches he is Logos, in that he saves he is grace, in that he begets he is Father, in that he is begotten he is Son, in that he suffers he is sheep, in that he is buried he is man, in that he comes to life again he is God.
- The Lord is present on earth surrounded by the suffering one §46
- God put on a suffering one and comes forth a man §66: This is the one who came (aphikomenos) from heaven to earth for the sake of the one who suffers, and has clothed himself with that very one through the womb of a virgin, and having come forth as human, he accepted the sufferings of the sufferer through his body which was capable of suffering. And he destroyed those human sufferings by his spirit which was incapable of dying. He killed death which had put man to death.
- The Lord clothed himself with humanity §100
- As in Justin the Holy Spirit is barely mentioned

**Israel slaughters the Paschal lamb = Christ = God**
- While Israel was celebrating the Pesah, Christ is on the cross: §80 (chronology of John)
- Jesus was murdered “in the middle of Jerusalem” §72, 93, 94
- Israel bears moral responsibility for its act of murder §74–77: 73. Why, O Israel did you do this strange injustice? You dishonored the one who had honored you. You held in contempt the one who held you in esteem. You denied the one who publicly acknowledged you. You renounced the one who proclaimed you his own. You killed the one who made you to live. Why did you do this, O Israel? 74. Hast it not been written for your benefit: "Do not shed innocent blood lest you die a terrible death"? Nevertheless, Israel admits, I killed the Lord! Why? Because it was necessary for him to die. You have deceived yourself, O Israel, rationalizing thus about the death of the Lord. 75. It was necessary for him to suffer, yes, but not by you; it was necessary for him to be dishonored, but not by you; it was necessary for him to be judged, but not by you; it was necessary for him to be crucified, but not by you, nor by your right hand. 76. O Israel! You ought to have cried aloud to God with this
voice: "O Lord, if it was necessary for your Son to suffer, and if this was your will, let him suffer indeed, but not at my hands. Let him suffer at the hands of strangers. Let him be judged by the uncircumcised. Let him be crucified by the tyrannical right hand, but not by mine." [Same argument in Justin Dialogue 95:2–3]

- Israel’s ingratitude to God §78–92
- Deicide: God has been murdered §96: The one who hung the earth in space, is himself hanged; the one who fixed the heavens in place, is himself impaled; the one who firmly fixed all things, is himself firmly fixed to the tree. The Lord is insulted, God has been murdered, the King of Israel has been destroyed by the right hand of Israel.
- Israel’s punishment: Israel lies dead §99:
- Anti-Judaism in Melito? The closeness to Judaism brings along anti-Judaism.

A Christian Paschal Haggadah?

Pro:
- This appears to be a liturgical text: §1 and §11: Exodus was just read; §12–31 midrashic retelling of Exodus 12
- Follows the Mishnaic prescription to begin with lowly state and to end with glory: from sin to redemption, from Adam’s fall to triumph of Christ §46–71
- §68 sounds like M. Pesahim 10.5
  - §68 This is the one who delivered us from slavery into freedom, from darkness into light, from death into life, from tyranny into an eternal kingdom, and who made us a new priesthood, and a special people forever.
  - Mishnah:[God] brought us forth from bondage into freedom, from sorrow into joy, from mourning into festivity, from darkness into great light, and from servitude into redemption.
- §83–85 and 87–88 sound like an inverted dayyenu.
  - 87. O ungrateful Israel, come here and be judged before me for your ingratitude. How high a price did you place on being created by him? How high a price did you place on the discovery of your fathers? How high a price did you place on the descent into Egypt, and the provision made for you there through the noble Joseph? 88. How high a price did you place on the ten plagues? How high a price did you place on the nightly column of fire, and the daily cloud, and the crossing of the Red Sea? How high a price did you place on the gift of manna from heaven, and the gift of water from the rock, and the gift of law in Horeb, and the land as an inheritance, and the benefits accorded you there?
Haggadah: If He had brought us out from Egypt, and had not carried out judgments against them Dayyenu, it would have sufficed us! If He had carried out judgments against them, and not against their idols Dayyenu, it would have sufficed us! If He had destroyed their idols, and had not smitten their first-born Dayyenu, it would have sufficed us! [and so on for 14 verses in all]

Origins of dayyenu (“It would have been sufficient for us”) not clear; not in Mishnah Pesahim 10

Jewish influence on Christians, or Christian influence on Jews?

In any case liturgical summaries of sacred history are common

- Aphikomenos in §66 and §86 (This is the one who came to you, the one who healed your suffering ones and who resurrected your dead).

Con:

- No references to bread (matzah) or wine or bitter herbs except with reference to the Israelite celebration of the Pesah in § 80 and 93.
- No reference to Eucharist or to any other ritual.
- No reference to the last supper (of course according to the Johannine chronology, which he is following, there was no last supper!)

Lecture 19: The One God, Torah, and Logos.

Reading Assignment:

[Warning: this material is dense and difficult. If you do it in a rush, you won’t understand it.]

1. Genesis 1 (How does God create the world? Is anyone or anything else present when God creates the world? Does anyone or anything assist God in creation (note the mysterious plural in 1:26)? Are angels mentioned?

2. God and angels: Genesis 18:1–19:1 (you may also want to look at Genesis 21:17; 22:1, 11–18) – note how easily and mysteriously these texts seem to bounce back and forth from “man/men” to “angel(s)” to “God.”

3. Who or what “dwells” in the temple (or tabernacle) and/or among the Israelites:
   a) God himself: Exodus 25:8; 29:44–46; other passages you might want to look at: Leviticus 26:11–12; Deuteronomy 23:15
   b) Name of God: Exodus 20:21; Deuteronomy 12:11; other passages you might want to look at: Deuteronomy 14:23; 16:2,6,11; 26:2; 1 Kings 9:3; cf. Exodus 23:20–21
   c) Glory (or “Presence”) of God: Exodus 16:10; 24:16–17 (see note in the JSB); 40:34–38; other passages you might want to look at: Exodus; Leviticus 9:6, 23; Numbers 16:19: 17:7; 1 Kings 8:10–11, contrast 1 Kings 8:16.
   d) Combination of Name and Glory: Ezekiel 43:1–9
   e) Many of these passages are discussed or at least mentioned by Middleton.
Ancient Jews loudly and insistently proclaimed the worship of the one true God, in contrast with the false gods of polytheism.

- **polytheism**: the belief in (worship of) many Gods (paganism is politically incorrect)
- **monotheism**: the belief in (worship of) one God alone
  - The Bible has absolute affirmations of God’s existence (there is none else, Deuteronomy 4:35) as well as relative affirmations (who is like you among the gods?, Exodus 15:11)
  - The biblical stance might better be called monolatry

**Radical monotheism**: the belief in only one divine or supra-human being (Maimonides)

But radical monotheism hard to accept:

1. As the Jews attribute greater and greater majesty to God, as the Jews understand God as more and more of a transcendent being, they felt a need to make God more accessible, so as to allow humans to communicate with him and him to communicate with humans and the material world. Leads to:
   - Belief in complementary intermediaries: associates, companions, emanations, qualities, attributes, angels, spirits, forces, powers, etc. that assist God in the creation and running of the world. This is our topic.
2. The problem of evil. How can one God be just and merciful and at the same time preside over an unjust world? Leads to:

   - Belief in antagonistic intermediaries: adversaries of all kinds, enemies of the good, demons, the devil, Satan, Samael, etc. This is not our topic.

All ancient Jews and Christians believed in complementary intermediaries and antagonistic intermediaries; whether or not we should call this belief monotheism, is not a useful question

Re complementary intermediaries, the Bible itself will provide abundant material for Jews and Christians to chew on; in particular: (1) angels; (2) temple/tabernacle; (3) creation of Adam.

(1) Angels (lit. angeloi in Greek, “messengers”): What are they?

- The narratives of the Bible frequently mention angels; they lack individuality, names, or rank.
• Relationship of angel to God not clear. Note how we flit back and forth mysteriously between angel and God in Genesis 18–19: 18:1 The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre … 2 He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them … 3 He said, 'My lord[s], if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant… 9 They said to him … 10 Then he [one of the men] said … 13 The Lord said to Abraham … 16 Then the men set out from there, and they looked towards Sodom … 17 The Lord said … 20 Then the Lord said …, 22 So the men turned from there, and went towards Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the Lord…. 33 And the Lord went his way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place. 19:1 The two angels came to Sodom in the evening …

• In the later books, notably Daniel, chief angels receive names (Michael and Gabriel) and functions (national guardian angels), the doctrine of angels (angelology) is elaborated

Questions that post-biblical Jews and Christians will ask: what is the relationship between the messenger (angel) and the sender? Is “angel of God” another way of saying “God”? Do the angels have independence of mind and action? Are they created beings? (And, if so, when were they created – they are not mentioned in the creation account.)

(2) Who or what dwells in the central sanctuary?

• **God himself:** God himself took the Israelites out of Egypt and accompanies them in their camp. 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).
  ○ Verb for dwell is sh–k–n which is the root of mishkan, usually translated “Tabernacle,” and of Shekhinah, the rabbinic [not biblical] term for “divine presence”

• **Name of God:** esp. in Deuteronomy: the place that God “shall choose in which to cause his name to dwell.” [see syllabus for passages]

• **Glory of God:** Heb. kavod, Aramaic yeqara, trans. in JSB “presence,” esp. in priestly texts, manifested as a cloud
  ○ God’s glory fills up the tabernacle in the wilderness: Exodus 40:34–35 Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35 Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud had settled upon it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.
  ○ Cf. 1 Kings 8:10 When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the LORD. 11 And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled his temple... 12 Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said ...
[until now] I have not chosen a city in any tribe of Israel to have a
temple built for my Name to be there.”

Is “name of God” another way of saying “God”?
Is “glory of God” another way of saying “God”?
Cf. “His Holiness,” “His Excellency” “Her Majesty”

Or is this hypostatization (=reification) – treating a quality or concept as a
substance or real (Greek hypostasis = Latin substance)?
Do God’s Name and Glory have an existence (“personality”) independent of God?
Christians (like Justin) will say yes, ancient Jews will say no, but (some) medieval Jews
will say yes.

In medieval Jewish theology God’s attributes (e.g. Wisdom, Power, Mercy, Justice) will
come to have the same problematic status as God’s glory and name.

From dictionary.com:
hy·pós·ta·zé
verb (used with object), –zized, –ziz·ing.
to treat or regard (a concept, idea, etc.) as a distinct substance or reality.
re·ify
verb (used with object), –fied, –fy·ing.
to convert into or regard as a concrete thing: to reify a concept.

We can see this problem in connection with Philo’s theory of the Logos.

(3) Creation. God in the singular creates the world in Gen 1, but all of a sudden Gen
1:26 has the plural: And God said, Let us make Adam in our image and after our
likeness.
Did another power assist God in the creation of the world, or at least in the creation
of Adam?
• Plain meaning probably: God speaking with his divine council (what will later be called
“angels”); see JSB
This problem part of a larger problem:
• How does an Ineffable, Transcendent, Immutable, and Immovable God
create the world? How does such a God exercise Providence over this
world?
• Creation implies Movement (change) but God is immovable
• The world of matter is corruptible, but God is incorruptible
[Real answer: The Torah is not Aristotelian; the Torah believes that God is
Mutable, just as the Torah believes that God has a body; anthropomorphism,
anthropopathism.]
Philo solves both of these problems by his theory of the Logos = Speech, Reason, often mistranslated “Word”

- The Logos for Philo is an aspect of God, and yet separate from God, at the same time.
- The Immutable God did not create the world, it was his Logos, or God acting through the Logos, that created the world. Hence the plural of Gen 1:26 God + Logos
  - Genesis 1 lends itself to this philosophical speculation, since the main verb in that chapter is “God said.”
  - Mysterious verb bara “create” in Gen 1, used only of God in the Bible.

Lecture 20: **The One God who is Two.**

**Reading Assignment:**

1. Logos/wisdom theology: Proverbs 8:22–31; Gospel of John 1
   - Some Hebrew and Greek phrases appear in Middleton’s article but do not get scared. All the Hebrew and Greek phrases are translated. Before reading Middleton, you should know something about: Philo (the Jewish philosopher); Logos; Targum; anthropomorphism; hypostatization.
3. Justin on the name and glory of God: 75, 126–129
4. Justin on the pre-existing Christ, Christ as angel, God and Lord: 55–65. Other passages you may want to look at: 45.4 (from “Since those who did that which is universally, naturally, and eternally good are pleasing to God” to the end of the paragraph), 48.1–2 (up to “and was born a man by the Virgin.”), 50.1 (up to “that He submitted to be born of the Virgin.”), 68
5. Questions to consider: Does Jewish monotheism necessarily exclude belief in other divine figures? What is the Logos of God? the name of God? the glory of God? Are angels “God”? Can you be a good Jew and believe that God is two? Did Christ pre-exist the world? Did the Torah?

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Christians, like Jews, loudly proclaim that they worship the one true God, and deny the false gods of polytheism. But Christians also said that this one true God was really two (or three).
Name/Glory of God

- For Justin: scriptural references to name and glory of God all refer to Christ; hypostatization of aspects of God that are God.
- Justin 75: the name of God is Jesus; Jesus is the name that God put in the angel (Exodus 23:21)
- Justin 126.1: a catalogue of biblical words/figures/images that refer to Jesus

Wisdom of God/ Logos of God

- Proverbs 8:22-31: Wisdom (personified as a woman) declares that God created/acquired her first. She was God’s plaything/architect/craftsman, *amon*. See notes in JSB. The LORD brought me forth [or: acquired me] as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; 23 I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. 24 When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water 25 before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth ... 30 Then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence
- Both Jews and Christian understood that Wisdom pre-existed the world and aided God in creating the world.
- For Jews Wisdom = Torah; for Christians Wisdom = Logos = Christ.
- John 1 is a midrash on Proverbs 8: In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God. 2 It [the Logos] was with God in the beginning.3 Through it all things were made; without it nothing was made that has been made.
- Middleton: Behind John 1 is not only speculation about Wisdom = Logos of God, but also about divine Glory (kavod in Hebrew, yeqara in Aramaic) and divine presence that “dwells” in the temple or community (whence the post-biblical Hebrew word shekhinah)
- Justin too connects the Wisdom of Proverbs 8 with the Logos = Christ. Justin 61.1: I shall now show from the Scriptures that God has begotten of himself a certain rational power as a beginning before all creatures. Justin 62: hence the plural of Genesis 1:26 and 3:22.
  - Note that Justin does not cite John 1; apparently does not know it.

For Justin Christ is: God, Lord, Son (of God), Angel, and Logos of God:

- Christ is the divine power/aspect/person that interacts with the world:
  - Colossians 1:15 *He [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation;* for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. *He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*
56.11: He who is said to have appeared to Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, and is called God, is distinct from God the creator; distinct, that is, in number, but not in mind. (Justin 128.4: distinct in number)

Genesis 18 refers to the appearance of God=Christ with two angels; 56.5 Trypho argues that the three men of Genesis 18:2 are all angels, separate from the Lord in Genesis 18:1.

- Four views of the relationship of Gen 18:1 to 18:2 and the identity of the “three men”:
  - Most modern Bible scholarship (and JSB): God appeared in human form, accompanied by two angels
  - Justin agrees, except that for Justin this is not (the unbegotten) God (the Father), but (the begotten) God, the Son = Christ
  - Medieval Christian interpretation: the triune God appeared to Abraham, as God in 18:1 and as the three persons of the trinity in 18:2. Who is the first to say this?
  - Trypho and most medieval Jewish Bible commentary: God appeared to Abraham in 18:1, and three angels appeared to Abraham in 18:2.
- Abraham and his three visitors is a common scene in Christian art. Usually the three visitors are depicted as equals, whether as angels or as the three persons of the trinity:
  -- Christian catacomb of Via Latina (Rome), fourth century, perhaps the earliest extant depiction of the scene;
  -- Mosaic of San Vitale (Ravenna, sixth century);
  -- Famous icon of Andrey Rublev (early fifteenth century).
  -- Note in contrast the mosaic from the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome (ca. 400 CE) which might have a Justin–like understanding of the scene.

127 the Unbegotten God did not go down to speak with the patriarchs or with Moses, it was the God Christ.

60.2 No one with even the slightest intelligence would dare to assert that the Creator of all things left his super-celestial realms to make himself visible in a little spot on earth.

128 counter argument: the power sent by God was called angel or glory or appeared as a man because of the function that the power is performing or because of the way that the power was perceived; so the power of God is not separate from God. 128.4 Justin replies: scripture shows that angels have a permanent existence, and the power of God is distinct in number from God himself.

Hence for Justin there are two Gods:

- 48.1 Christ existed as God before all ages; 50.1 another God besides the Creator of the World
- 56.14: prooftexts that God (Christ) calls another God (the ineffable Creator)
  - God: Psalms 45 and 110
- 126.2 Jesus is God, son of the unbegotten God; Jesus is the “first–begotten of all creation” (85.2, 100.2, 125.3)

Christian binitarianism vs. Jewish binitarianism:
• Christians believe in an incarnate God, Jews do not.
• Jewish monolatry; Christian poly-latr y – Christians worship the Logos=Jesus=the Lord. Even Jews who believed in the Logos, Angels, Name of God, etc. never worshiped them, [except in magical rituals, and in some strands of medieval Judaism.]
• Christians solved the problem of a transcendent creator God by positing an intermediary Being. Philo aside, Jews did not. [wait until medieval Jewish mysticism!]
• Christian binitarianism gives way to trinitarianism (Father, Son, Spirit).


Reading Assignment:
1. Davidic king and messiah: 2 Samuel 7; Isaiah 9:1–6, 11:1–10; Jeremiah 23:5–6; 33:14–22; Psalms 110, 132. Other passages you may want to look at: Ezekiel 34; Psalms 2, 45, 89
2. http://www.livius.org/men-mh/messiah/messiah00.html#overview (read sections 1–2 and browse 3–18)

Questions to consider: What is the role of the Jewish messiah? Was the Messiah to be human, superhuman, or divine? Was the messianic age to be a continuation of normal history or something qualitatively different? Did God grant monarchy to the house of David unconditionally and forever?

Three main political authorities in the Hebrew Bible who will figure in our discussion:
• King: head of government: warrior; in charge of justice; presides over the cult – in first temple times the temple was built and maintained by the Davidic king
• Prophet: “forthteller” more than “foreteller”; charismatic miracle worker [Elijah, Elisha] vs. literary prophet [Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel]; part of the royal establishment or opposed to it; a warning figure; no dynastic succession
• Priest: in charge of the temple cult; dynastic succession, line of Aaron; institutional authority;

Messiah: Hebrew for “the anointed one”; in Greek Christos.
• Persons (kings, prophets, priests) and sacred objects (altars, tabernacle); see livius.org website

• Function of anointing not clear.

Different kinds of kings in the Bible:

• Charismatic: classic example is Saul who is also a prophet; authority depends on success in battle. No dynastic succession

• By election or acclaim: classic example is Deuteronomy 17:14–20 When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, "Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us," 15 be sure to appoint over you the king the Lord your God chooses. Not clear if dynastic succession is implied.

• Dynastic kingship: classic example is the house of David, 2 Samuel 7

  ○ Dynastic kingship is like priesthood: note the conflation of the two in Ps 110:4 The Lord has sworn, and will not change his mind: "You [apparently the king] are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

Is the divine grant of a dynasty to the house of David conditional or unconditional?

• Conditional covenant of God with David and Davidic house (1 Kings 9:4–9 and Psalm 132:11–12): depends on kings’ righteousness

• Unconditional covenant of God with David and Davidic house (2 Samuel 7; Psalm 89).

  ○ Why then did the Davidic house fail in 587/6 BCE? Only three possible conclusions:

    ▪ God is faithless – an impossible conclusion
    ▪ Bewilderment, lament (Psalm 89)
    ▪ Davidic monarchy will return.

  ○ This idea facilitated by prophetic speculations of the arrival of an ideal future, the day of the Lord, sometimes featuring Davidic king (Isaiah 9 and 11) or perhaps David himself (Ezekiel 34), when nature will be at peace and all will be right with the world.

King as Son of God:

• Psalm 2:7: I will proclaim the decree of the Lord; He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you.

• Psalm 89:27-28: He will call out to me, 'You are my Father, my God, the Rock of my deliverance.' I will also appoint him my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth.
• 2 Samuel 7:14: I will be his father, and he will be my son.
  ○ Probably a marker of status, not a statement of how the king was begotten or that king was actually divine.
  ○ Jesus as “son of God” in a literal sense is a Christian development [Note that the Christian reading of these passages is more literal than the Jewish one!]
  ○ Psalm 45:7 and Isaiah 9:6 might suggest that the king is divine, but not likely; see note in JSB

In Judaism:
• With destruction and exile of 587 BCE Davidic monarchy disappears; no Davidides, no pretenders; beginning of dreams and expectations that the Davidic king would return.
• Many different messianic scenarios in Judaism; some apocalyptic texts of the last centuries BCE have priestly messiahs and/or prophetic messiahs, apparently instead of Davidic messiah see livius website
• Rabbinic Judaism understood messiah as Davidic king: warrior, judge, rebuilder of temple
• Much debate in medieval Jewish texts about the nature and identity of this figure and whether the reign of the messianic king is other-worldly or this-worldly; and how it relates to such ideas as “the world to come” and “the resurrection of the dead”
• In 19th century reform Jews reinterpreted “the messiah” as an era of peace and progress rather than an individual redeemer.
• Jews are still waiting

• From the daily amidah (the central prayer of the liturgy):
  Speedily cause the sprout of David your servant to sprout, and let his horn be exalted by your salvation, for we wait for your salvation every day. Praised are you, Lord, who causes the horn of salvation to sprout.
  Cf. Luke 1:69 (prayer of Zechariah the father of John the Baptist) Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people. 69He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.
Lecture 22: Christ as King and Messiah.

Reading Assignment:

1. The “virgin birth”:
   a) Isaiah 7:10–17
   c) Justin Martyr, Dialogue 43.3–8 (from “But since the mystery of His birth now demands our attention” to the end of the chapter), 66.1–67.3 (up to “the demonstration of what I have stated along with the testimony of the Scriptures.”), 71, 77–78, 84.

2. The two comings of Christ according to Justin: 52–54, 83, 109–110. Other passages you may want to look at: 14.8 (end of the chapter, beginning with “Of these and such like words written by the prophets”), 31, 36–39, 45.4 (the end of the chapter beginning with “Since those who did that which is universally, naturally, and eternally good”), 49.

3. Questions to consider: What does “Son of God” mean? What are the two comings of Christ according to Justin?

King in the Bible is sometimes called son of God; in Christianity this becomes literal

- Matthew and Luke report virgin birth of Jesus; for Matthew this is fulfillment of scripture (“All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, ‘Behold a Virgin shall conceive’” (Mt 1:22–23); for Luke this is proof of divine power (“For with God nothing will be impossible,” Luke 1:37).
  - Mt and Lk also have genealogies back to David through Joseph
- Mark does not report the virgin birth (although the Spirit of God hails Jesus as “my son” Mk 1:11)
- John does not (since Jesus is Logos/God incarnate)

Behold a virgin shall conceive: Isaiah 7:14 according to the LXX; see notes in JSB.

Two prime candidates: Mrs. Ahaz [the wife of the reigning king] or Mrs. Isaiah (8:3).

Plain meaning of passage

Trypho has three arguments:

- The passage says “young woman” (almah), not “virgin” (betulah)
• “A son” refers to King Hezekiah, son of King Ahaz, not to a figure centuries thence; similarly in Justin 83, Jewish teachers argue that Psalm 110 refers to Hezekiah
• The Christian story sounds like Greek myths (67.2)

Justin responds:
• The passage says virgin; the Jews have tampered with Scripture (71.2)
• Isaiah 8:4 shows that Isaiah 7:10–17 cannot be talking about Hezekiah (Justin 77); this requires some exegetical work from Justin in 78 to show how Christ fulfilled the prophecy he received the power of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria in the presence of the king of Assyria.
• Devil has placed anticipations of Christian truth among the pagans in order to mislead the faithful (67.2; see also 69.1–3, 70.1, 70.5).

In this case Jews and Christians argue over whether Isaiah 7:14 is a “messianic” verse or not; other cases they disagree over the application of a messianic verse.

The two comings of Christ according to Justin: It has been foretold in scripture (Justin 52.1) that “(a) there would be two comings of Christ, and (b) that in the first he had to suffer, and (c) that after this coming your people [the Jews] would have neither prophet nor king, and (d) that the gentiles who believe in the suffering Christ (e) would look forward to his second coming”

(a) Two comings of Christ: one in suffering, the other in glory (Justin 14.8, 31.1, 36.1, 110.2). This belief allows Justin to combine the historical experience of Jesus with the glorious prophecies of the Bible.

(b) Christ had to suffer: the suffering servant of Isaiah, Christ as sacrifice

(c) After his coming Jews would have neither prophet nor king: Justin 49.3, 52–54. Prooftext: Genesis 49:10 The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs [or: until Schiloh comes] [Justin: until those things that are reserved for him shall have come] and the obedience of the nations is his. Jews had prophets and kings straight through to the time of Jesus. After that kingship and prophecy stopped.

[Adolf Posnanski, Schiloh:: Die Auslegung von Genesis 49, 10 im Altertume bis zu Ende des Mittelalters 1904]

(d) Gentiles will believe in Christ and repent of their sins (Justin 109). Prooftext: Micah 4:1–7 (//Isaiah 2:1–4) In days to come the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills. Peoples shall stream to it, 

and many nations shall come and say: ‘Come, let us go
up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 3He shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

(e) Second coming: in glory, on the clouds (prooftext: Daniel 7), announced by Elijah, fulfilling biblical predictions of a wonderful future. Death will not have power over those who believe in him.

Christianity:

• Christ is “King of the Jews” (INRI = Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum) of the line of David but is also priest, prophet, God, son of God, who existed before the world, the Logos
• Christ’s battle is against sin and death; the resurrection represents triumph over death
• Justin believes that at the second coming there would be a general resurrection of the dead followed by a thousand year reign in the restored city of Jerusalem (Justin 80.1), a doctrine known as millennialism.
  ○ This doctrine rejected by later Christians as too Jewish
• Suffering and dying and resurrecting messiah has no precedent in history of Judaism; Justin connects these ideas to the “suffering servant” passages of Isaiah, esp. Isaiah 53 (which do not refer either to anointed king or to David) and to Psalm 22 (which seems to be a psalm of lament for a king)
• Second coming: just as the cessation of the Davidic house suggested a belief that the house would return, so too the death of Jesus suggested the belief in his return.
• Christians are waiting.

Lecture 23: Atonement through Sacrifice and its Surrogates.

Reading Assignment:
2. Atonement through the sacrifice of animals: Leviticus 16
3. Critique of sacrificial religion: Hosea 6:6; Isaiah 1 and 58; Jeremiah 7; you may also want to read Psalm 51
4. The suffering servant, vicarious atonement: Isaiah 52:13–53:12
5. Rabbinic text (to be distributed)

Sacrifices: well known anthropological problem.

What do we mean by “sacrifices”?

Torah narratives have patriarchs building altars, offering sacrifices.

Different types of sacrifices (Leviticus 1–7, 12–16):

• Public sacrifices: tamid (continual); Sabbath and festivals; special occasions

• Private sacrifices:
  • Obligatory: pilgrimage, Passover, special occasions (including various kinds of “sin offerings”)
  • Private free-will sacrifices

• NB: not all sacrifices are for “atonement”

Purification/”wiping clean” (Hebrew root kpr)/restitution sacrifices in Leviticus 16

• Original focus of Yom Kippur (day of Atonement) liturgy is to wipe the altar clean of the contagion (“pollution”) of sin (Leviticus 16:16; note esp. 16:30, “For on this day the Lord will wipe you clean to purify you; from all your sins … you will be purified”)

• Transfer of sins to the scape–goat: When Aaron has finished making atonement for the Most Holy Place, the Tent of Meeting and the altar, he shall bring forward the live goat. 21 He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins—and put them on the goat’s head. He shall send the goat away into the desert in the care of a man appointed for the task. 22 The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a solitary place; and the man shall release it in the desert.

• Note confession of high priest (16:21); this is not an unburdening of the soul as much as it is a vehicle for transferring sin; this is not the “repentance” as it would develop later.

• Anticipation of idea of vicarious atonement; but note that the scape–goat is not said by Leviticus 16 to be killed (analogy with Leviticus 14:7 suggests that it was not meant to be killed).

Classic statement of vicarious atonement: Isaiah 52:13–53:12

• Who is Isaiah?

• One of the “servant songs” of Isaiah
This is the “suffering servant” who suffers for the sins of others: He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

The servant is depicted as a sheep led to slaughter (53:7); sacrificial language is not prominent here, but later readers inevitably associated the servant’s death with sacrifice.

Who is the suffering servant?
- Perhaps the prophet himself.
- Christians: this is Christ, who bears the sins of the world.
- Jews: this is the people of Israel, which atones for the sins of the world.

Prophetic critique of sacrificial religion: Hosea 6:6; Isaiah 1 and 58; Jeremiah 7; Psalm 51

Are these rejections of sacrifices, indeed of ritual, in favor of “spirituality” and “social justice”? Hosea and Isaiah 1 seem to say this.

No ancient Jewish group known that on principle rejected sacrifices

Traditional Jewish exegesis answers no. The issue here is misplaced emphasis: God desires righteousness AND ritual.

Isaiah 58: God wants righteousness as well as the Sabbath (and apparently fasting rituals)

Jeremiah 7: critique of those who think that the presence of the temple is a guarantee of their safety; not so, says the prophet; I redeemed Israel from Egypt without sacrifices (7:21–22)

Psalm 51: prayer more efficacious than sacrifices; but ends with plea for rebuilding the temple (!!!)

In Judaism after 70 CE:

Prayer, Torah study, charity, and other pious acts are said to be as good as or better than the sacrifices. (Many rabbinic parallels to Mark 12:33, To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.) (see B. Menahot 110a.)

Importance of repentance (see passage from B. Yoma)
• Development of an alternative religious system that is different from (better than?) the sacrifices: rabbis replace priests, synagogues replace the temple, prayer, study, and good deeds replace the sacrifices

• Nevertheless hope/expectation that temple will be rebuilt and sacrifices will be restored. Logically rabbinic Judaism supplanted the sacrifices, but emotionally and theologically it couldn’t.

Babylonian Talmud Yoma 86a–b (Soncino Press translation, slightly modified)

R. Hama b. Hanina said: Great is repentance, for it brings healing to the world ...

R. Levi said: Great is repentance, for it reaches up to the Throne of Glory ...

R. Yohanan said: Great is repentance, for it overrides a prohibition of the Torah ...

R. Yonathan said: Great is repentance, because it brings about redemption, as it is said And a redeemer will come to Zion and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob (Isaiah 59:20), i.e., why will a redeemer come to Zion? Because of those that turn from transgression in Jacob.

R. Yonathan said: Great is repentance, because it brings about redemption, as it is said And a redeemer will come to Zion and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob (Isaiah 59:20), i.e., why will a redeemer come to Zion? Because of those that turn from transgression in Jacob.

Resh Lakish said: Great is repentance, for because of it premeditated sins are accounted as errors ...

R. Samuel b. Nahmani said in the name of R. Yonathan: Great is repentance, because it prolongs the [days and] years of man ...

R. Isaac said: In the West [the land of Israel] they said in the name of Rabbah b. Mari: Come and see how different from the character of one of flesh and blood is the action of the Holy One, blessed be He. As to the character of one of flesh and blood, if one angers his fellow, it is doubtful whether he [the latter] will be pacified or not by him. And even if you would say, he can be pacified, it is doubtful whether he will be pacified by mere words. But with the Holy One, blessed be He, if a man commits a sin in secret, He is pacified by mere words, as it is said: Take with you words, and return unto the Lord (Hosea 14:3).

Still more: He even accounts it to him as a good deed, as it is said: And accept that which is good (Hosea 14:3).

Still more: Scripture accounts it to him as if he had offered up bullocks, as it is said: So will we render for bullocks the offerings of our lips (Hosea 14:3).
It was taught: R. Meir used to say: Great is repentance, for on account of an individual who repents, the sins of all the world are forgiven, as it is said: I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him (Hosea 14:5) – from them it is not said, but from him.

Babylonian Talmud Menahot 110a (Soncino Press translation, modified)

For from where the sun rises to where it sets My name is honored among the nations; and everywhere incense and pure oblations are burnt and offered to My name (Malachi 1:11).\(^10\)

Everywhere -- is this possible?

R. Samuel b. Nahmani said in the name of R. Yonathan: This refers to the scholars who devote themselves to the study of the Torah in whatever place they are: [God says,] I account it unto them as though they burnt and presented offerings to My name.

*Pure oblations:* this refers to one who studies the Torah in purity; that is, one who marries a wife and afterwards studies the Torah.\(^11\)

A song of Ascents. Behold, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who stand nightly in the house of the Lord (Psalm 134:1). What is the meaning of nightly? R. Yohanan said: This refers to the scholars who devote themselves to the study of the Torah at nights: Holy Writ accounts it to them as though they were occupied with the Temple service.

Resh Lakish said: What is the significance of the verse, This is the law [Torah] for the burnt-offering, for the meal-offering, for the sin-offering, and for the guilt-offering (Leviticus 7:37)? It teaches that whosoever occupies himself with the study of the Torah is as though he were offering a burnt-offering, a meal-offering, a sin-offering, and a guilt-offering.

Rava asked, Why then does the verse say *for the burnt*–offering, for the meal–offering? [If indeed Torah study is the equivalent of these sacrifices,] the verse should have said [This is the Torah:] *a burnt*–offering, a meal–offering! Rather, said Rava, the verse means that whosoever occupies himself with the study of the Torah

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\(^{10}\) This verse is quoted and discussed several times in the Dialogue with Trypho. For Trypho’s interpretation of the verse see Dialogue 117:4.

\(^{11}\) Since he has a wife, he is “pure,” that is, free of sexual sin.
needs neither burnt-offering, nor meal-offering, nor sin-offering, nor guilt-offering.\textsuperscript{12}

R. Isaac said, What is the significance of the verses, This is the law of the sin-offering (Leviticus 6:18) and This is the law of the guilt-offering (Leviticus 7:1)? They teach that whosoever occupies himself with the study of the laws of the sin-offering is as though he were offering a sin-offering, and whosoever occupies himself with the study of the laws of the guilt-offering is as though he were offering a guilt-offering.

Lecture 24: Atonement through the Sacrifice of Christ.

Reading Assignment:
1. Christ as high priest and atonement sacrifice: Letter to the Hebrews 7–9 (to understand this reading you will need to read Psalms 110); Justin 13, 41.1–3 (up to “affirming both that we glorify His name, and that you profane [it].”), 115–117
2. Why did God demand animal sacrifices? Justin 19.6 (from “wherefore God, accommodating Himself to that nation” to the end of the chapter), 22.1 (up to “Amos, one of the twelve”), 22.11 (from “Accordingly He neither takes sacrifices from you nor commanded them at first to be offered” to end of the chapter)
3. The two goats of the Day of Atonement: Justin 40.4 (“And the two goats which were ordered to be offered during the fast ... which those believing in Jesus do”) and 111.1 (up to “Jesus (Joshua), led the fight, and Israel conquered”).
4. Christ suffers for the sins of humanity: Justin 94–96

Questions to consider: Is the Christian critique of the animal sacrifices demanded by the Torah the same as the prophetic critique as recorded in the Bible? Has Christianity fulfilled, replaced, or cancelled the biblical sacrifices? Has Judaism? Is atonement possible without blood?

Christ as high priest and atonement sacrifice:

- Hebrews 7–8 is a Midrash on Psalm 110: Christ is a high priest in the order of Melchizedeq: eternal, without human paternity, superior to Abraham (ancestor of Levi, therefore Christ is superior to temple priests)

\textsuperscript{12} Rava argues that the preposition “for” (Hebrew le-) should be understood as a negation (Hebrew lo). A homiletical tour de force.
• Just as God replaced the imperfect first law with a second one, he has replaced the imperfect high priest of the Law with a perfect one.
  ○ 7:26–27 For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this he did once for all when he offered up himself.
  ○ 9:11–12 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, he entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, he entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.
  ○ 9:24–25 For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one [cf. 8:5], but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor was it to offer himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place yearly with blood that is not his own.

• Justin Martyr:
  ○ For Justin, as for Hebrews, Christ is a priest (96.1, 115.4, cf. 116.3)
  ○ Influence of Isaiah 53 evident in Hebrews 9:28 (“to bear the sins of many”) and Justin 13 (which transcribes the whole chapter).
  ○ Eucharist, that is the bread and the cup, is the sacrifice that we Christians offer (41.1–3, 117.1); Jews say that their prayers are reckoned as sacrifices that are pleasing to God (117.2): Accordingly, God, anticipating all the sacrifices which we offer through this name, and which Jesus the Christ enjoined us to offer, i.e., in the Eucharist of the bread and the cup, and which are presented by Christians in all places throughout the world, bears witness that they are well-pleasing to him. But he utterly rejects those presented by you and by those priests of yours, saying, And I will not accept your sacrifices at your hands; for from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is glorified among the Gentiles (He says) but ye profane it (Malachi 1:11–12). Yet even now, in your love of contention, you assert that God does not accept the sacrifices of those who dwelt then in Jerusalem, and were called Israelites; but says that he is pleased with the prayers of the individuals of that nation then dispersed, and calls their prayers sacrifices. Now, that prayers and giving of thanks, when offered by worthy men, are the only perfect and well-pleasing sacrifices to God, I also admit...

**Why did God demand animal sacrifices?**

• Justin 19.6, 22.1, 22.11: to save Jews from idolatry. [Analogous rabbinic views based on Leviticus 17:7, They shall no longer sacrifice their sacrifices to the demons after whom they go whoring.]
22.11 The same can be said of the Temple in Jerusalem: God called it his house to save you from idolatry.

Some sacrificial rituals, however, are types of Christ:

- 41.1–3: flour offering is type of bread of Eucharist
- 40.1 Paschal lamb is a type of Christ
- 40.4 and 111.1 Two goats symbolize the two comings of Christ: the first is the scapegoat put to death; the second is the atonement sacrifice recognized by the Jews: And the two goats which were ordered to be offered during the fast, of which one was sent away as the scapegoat, and the other sacrificed, were similarly declarative of the two appearances of Christ: the first, in which the elders of your people, and the priests, having laid hands on him and put him to death, sent him away as the scapegoat; and his second appearance, because in the same place in Jerusalem you shall recognize him whom you have dishonored, and who was an offering for all sinners willing to repent ... and further, you are aware that the offering of the two goats, which were enjoined to be sacrificed at the fast, was not permitted to take place similarly anywhere else, but only in Jerusalem.

Christ suffers for the sins of humanity:

- 95 The entire human race is under a curse Cursed be everyone that abides not in the words of the book of the Law so as to do them (Deuteronomy 27:26). Same argument in Galatians 3. Christ has removed this curse.
- 95.2–3 And let none of you say in self-defense, ‘If the Father willed him to suffer these things, in order that by his wounds humankind might be healed [cf. Isaiah 53:5], then we did no wrong.’ ...Although he suffered for humankind according to the will of the Father himself, it was not in obedience to the will of God that you made him suffer... esp. when you curse him and persecute his followers. Similar argument in Melito 74.

In Christianity:

- Christ takes away the sins of the world; pervasive influence of Isaiah 53
- Sacrificial language is common in Christianity in connection with Eucharist (note too priest, altar, purity rules; in Orthodox Christianity the host is called the lamb)
- Christ’s sacrifice fulfills/replaces the biblical sacrifices
- Sanctity no longer inheres in the Temple of Jerusalem [ancient Christians showed little interest in the site of the Jerusalem temple]; rather it inheres in the body of Christ and his saints and therefore in the Church and in churches.
“Zion” and “Jerusalem” are metaphorical or typological names for the Church, either of the present or of the future.

• The Christian community is the true temple (just as it is the true Israel).

Lecture 25: **Israel, the People of God.**

**Reading Assignment:**

1. Biblical passages re chosen people: Deuteronomy 7; 26:16–19; 28; Amos 3:1–2
3. Gentiles at the end of days: Isaiah 2:1–5 (Micah 4:1–5); 42; 49; 56:1–8; 60; 65–66
4. God’s eternal love for Israel: Ahava Rabbah from the prayer–book (to be distributed)
5. Review the reading from the beginning of the course about the Chosen People.

**Questions to consider:** What is the function of the new creation and the new covenant prophesied by Jeremiah and Ezekiel? What is the relationship of the gentiles to the Israelites in the end of days according to Isaiah?

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**Israel as God’s Chosen People**

• God stands in special relationship with the people of Israel: Israel chose God and God chose Israel (Deut 26:16–19); recipients of the covenant, the exodus from Egypt, the ten commandments/Torah

• Nevertheless this God is a universal God who applies single standard of morality on Israel and the nations; oracles against the nations are common in the prophets

• Special disdain for the Canaanites who are Other; Israel is God’s chosen people (Deut 7:6–8): 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. It was not because you were more numerous than any other people that the Lord set his heart on you and chose you—for you were the fewest of all peoples. It was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath that he swore to your ancestors, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.
• Being God’s special people is not always a good thing – higher expectations, greater reason for punishment (Deut 28; Amos 3). Israel sins before God – common motif in biblical narratives and prophecies.

Old and new covenant, old and new creation:

• Prophets look forward to a time when Israel will sin no more. A new creation.

• Jeremiah 31:31–34: The time is coming … when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers, when I took them … out of the land of Egypt, a covenant which they broke … but I will put my Torah into their innermost being and inscribe it upon their hearts.
  ◦ Christians understand this to refer to the New Testament = New Covenant
  ◦ Jewish interpretation: The content of the two covenants is the same; the difference between them is that Israel shall sin no more. Cf. Jeremiah 32:37–41

• Same idea in Ezekiel 11:14–21: I will give them [the Israelites who have returned from Exile to the land of Israel] one heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove the heart of stone from their bodies and give them a heart of flesh, so that they may follow my laws and faithfully observe my rules. Same conception in Ezekiel 36:16–36.

Gentiles at the end of days:

Gentiles are non-Israel by descent and religion

Israel is to be “light of nations” (all in second Isaiah): Isaiah 42:6; 49:6, 51:4–5 – meaning not clear

Different typologies:

• Gentiles will serve the Israelites:
  ◦ Isaiah 49: kings and queens shall return Israelites from captivity 49:22–23;
  ◦ Isaiah 60: nations shall bring their wealth to you, serve you. The children of those who tormented you shall bow to you (60:14).

• Gentiles remain gentiles but recognize the authority of God at Zion.
  ◦ Isaiah 2:2–4 (Micah 4:1–5): Gentiles will stream to Zion to worship the Lord: In the last days the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the
hills, and peoples will stream to it. 2 Many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 3 He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. 4 Every man will sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the Lord Almighty has spoken. 5 All the nations may walk in the name of their gods; we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever. [Note that Isaiah lacks verses 4–5.]

- Isaiah 42:1–8: God's treatment of his servant Israel will demonstrate to the nations God's existence and power.
- Bible has many stories of individual gentiles who praise or recognize the God of Israel; this becomes the ideal for the future.

• Gentiles attach themselves to God
  - Isaiah 56:1–8: gentiles who “attach themselves to God to serve him”; temple shall be a house of prayer for all peoples
  - Isaiah 65–66: the prophet preaches to a people who do not listen; 66:19ff all flesh will come to worship me and to be priests (?). God will reject some of his people who have rejected him and will bring in pious gentiles. They [the gentiles who have beheld the might of God] will proclaim my glory among the nations. 20 And they will bring all your brothers, from all the nations, to my holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the Lord ... They will bring them, as the Israelites bring their grain offerings, to the temple of the Lord in ceremonially clean vessels. 21 And I will select some of them also to be priests and Levites," says the Lord.

In Judaism:

• Jews have long had a strong sense of peoplehood (sociologists call it familism). Jewishness is an ethnicity, a descent group. Common self-definition in minority groups.
  - Ethnic self-conception is oxymoronically combined with a religious self-conception that allows gentiles to convert to Judaism
The special relationship of Israel with God (“The Chosen People”) has been understood in various ways over the centuries:

- as essentialism or ascription (Jews are inherently different from other people, because of their descent); more commonly understood as functionalism or achievement (Jewish difference is a function of the observance of the Torah, their culture or religion; see attached prayer); either as privilege or as obligation

- Numerous affirmations in liturgy and classical rabbinic literature of God’s eternal love for Israel and of the eternal authority of the Torah and the commandments; see attached

- Good survey in Silberman (see lecture 4).

In some formulations the concept of the Chosen People is linked with the concept of the Chosen Land, i.e. that God has chosen a specific place in which his people are to live.

Gentiles are not obligated to accept the Torah in order to find favor in God’s eyes

- Concept of seven Noahide laws: Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 56a: Our Rabbis taught: seven precepts were the children of Noah commanded: (1) to establish and follow civil law; (2) to refrain from blasphemy, (3) idolatry, (4) adultery, (5) bloodshed, (6) robbery, and (7) eating flesh cut from a living animal.

  - Cf. the great council of Acts 15

- This liberalism aside, some classical Jewish texts have decidedly hostile statements/attitudes towards gentiles

- Some authorities viewed Christianity as idolatry (a violation of number 3), others not.

In classical Jewish philosophy Jewish universalism is expressed either by the validation of conversion to Judaism or by seeing the purpose of the diaspora as facilitating the spread of monotheism

Lecture 26: **Who is the True Israel?**

**Reading Assignment:**
1. Romans 9–11; Galatians 4:21–5:1
2. Christians are the true people of God: Justin 26, 80–81, 119–125, 130–136
Questions to consider: According to Romans 9–11, what is the status of “Israel according to the flesh” (=the Jews) in the theological order now that Christ has come? How does Justin try to prove that Christians are the new people of God?

Jesus:

• In all four Gospels Jesus interacts primarily, if not exclusively, with Jews (aside, of course, from the soldiers and officials of the Roman government); his opponents and supporters alike are Jews.

• No sign in any of the Gospels that Jesus founded, or intended to found, a new religion or a new people (see Enslin_)

• Closest that Jesus comes to indicating divine rejection of the Jewish people is in the Parable of the Vineyard (Matthew 21:33–46) and the Parable of the Marriage Feast (Matthew 22:1–10). These parables are probably about God’s rejection of Jewish leadership groups (Pharisees, priests, etc.), but they were understood by Christian exegetes to refer to the rejection of the Jews.

Paul:

• “The apostle to the gentiles” (Romans 11:13) – the apostle who argued that the new people of God was no longer a descent group. It was to consist of Jews and gentiles alike; the distinction between Jews and gentiles no longer matters (Romans 10:12)
  ○ Famous line in Galatians 3:28–29 There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. 29And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise.

• This leads to two large questions:
  ○ What is the status of the Torah (the Law)? This is the major subject of Galatians.
  ○ What is the status of the Jews who do not believe in Christ? This is the major subject of Roman 9–11.
  ○ Paul: God no longer wants the “works of the Law” (Galatians) even though God has not rejected his people (Romans)

• Two poles of the discussion are stated at the beginning of Romans 9:
  ○ Descent (ascription): They are Israelites; theirs are the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the Law, the worship, and the promises; theirs are the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, is the Christ. (Romans 9:4–5).
Faith (achievement): Not all who are from Israel are Israel, and not all of Abraham’s children are seed, but through Isaac shall your seed be called (Genesis 21:12). This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as seed. (Romans 9:6–8). Hence gentiles who have faith have taken the place of Israelites who do not have faith (Romans 9:30–32). Achievement trumps ascription.

- Paul twists and turns:
  - Has God rejected his people? By no means … Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened … Have they stumbled so as to fall? By no means! But through their stumbling salvation has come to the gentiles so as to make Israel jealous … Some of the branches were broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in their place … And even the others [i.e. of Israel], if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again… a hardening has come upon part of Israel until the full number of gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved. (Romans 11)

Justin: Christians are the true people of God:

• By faith we Christians are children of Abraham; we are God’s holy people (119.3), God’s chosen people (119.4).
• 121–122: Isaiah 49:6 and 42:6–7 refer to us Christians, not as you say to converts [light of the nations].
• 123.9 [cf. 130]: Therefore, as your whole people was called after that one, Jacob, surnamed Israel, so we who obey the precepts of Christ are … both called and in reality are Jacob and Israel and Judah and Joseph and David and true children of God.
• 125.5 all who come to the father through him [Christ] are part of this blessed Israel.
• 135.3 As Christ is called Israel and Jacob, so we, hewn out of the side of Christ, are the true people of Israel.
• For Justin Christians are a “people”: his eschatological expectations are similar to that of many Jews.
  - 80–81: there will be resurrection of the righteous Christians, followed by 1000 years in the rebuilt city of Jerusalem with Christ and all the saints, followed by everlasting resurrection and judgment.
• Biblical typologies for the rejection of the Jews and their replacement by the gentiles:
  ○ Romans 9:9–13: Isaac is chosen and Ishmael is rejected, Jacob is chosen and Esau is rejected
  ○ Galatians 4:21–5:1 Hagar and Ishmael are rejected
  ○ [Barnabas 13: Esau and Manasseh are rejected]
  ○ Justin 134: Leah represents Jews, Rachel is the figure of the church

**Christianity vs. Judaism**

• Jewish view of the world: Jews vs. gentiles (non–Jews);
  Christian view of the world: Christians vs. non–Christians (pagans/polytheists and Jews)

• Christians saw (see?) themselves as the new chosen people, the heirs to the covenant, replacing Judaism, a doctrine known as supersessionism (from the verb supersede, NOT supercede)

• Who is Verus Israel, the true Israel? A topic of Jewish–Christian disputations in the Middle ages. The question is not biological continuity with ancient Israel but with theological or covenantal continuity. Who is the heir to the covenant?
  ○ In Christian terms: Ecclesia triumphs over Synagoga.

• Christians constitute a non–ethnic people (a “religion”) with exclusive universal claims and aspirations; in history Christian universalism has manifested itself by a concern for the Other and the imperative to save souls, colonize, and persecute
  ○ Extra ecclesiam nulla salus (“outside the church there is no salvation”) a doctrine assumed by many church documents, ancient, medieval, and modern, and given canonical expression at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215). Actual phrase originates with Cyprian, a church writer of the third century
  ○ There is a universalist strand in Christianity, going back to Origen (3rd century) and Gregory of Nyssa (4th century), according to which a time will come when all creatures will be saved; the fires of hell are purgative, not punitive, temporary, not eternal. This doctrine, known as apokatastasis (“restoration”), was combated by Augustine (5th century), because it seemed to minimize the need of divine grace for salvation, and was ultimately declared heretical. It was reclaimed by various protestant churches.

• Jews constitute an ethnos, without universal claims or aspirations; in history Jewish particularism (abetted by its minority status) has manifested itself by a concern with the Self and tolerance (lack of concern) for the Other.

(1) With a great love you have loved us, Lord our God; great and abundant mercy have you bestowed upon us.  
(2) Our Father, our King, for the sake of our ancestors who trusted in you, whom you taught the laws of life, be gracious to us and teach us likewise.  
(3) Our Father, merciful Father, you who are ever compassionate, have pity on us and inspire us to understand and discern, to perceive, learn and teach, to observe, do, and fulfill all the teachings of your Torah with love.  
(4) Enlighten our eyes in your Torah; attach our heart to your commandments; unite our heart to love and revere your name, so that we may never be put to shame.  
(5) In your holy, great and revered name we trust – may we thrill with joy at your salvation.  
(6) Bring us in peace from the four corners of the earth, and make us walk upright to our land, for you are a God who performs deeds of salvation.  
(7) You have chosen us from all peoples and nations, and have forever brought us near to your truly great name, so that we may praise you and acclaim your oneness with love.  
(8) Blessed/praised are you, Lord, who has chosen his people Israel with love.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One (Deuteronomy 6:4).