

CLASS NOTES FOR PENTATEUCH COURSE

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What is the Pentateuch?

General description of the Pentateuch. The Pentateuch is the fundamental document of the Hebrew Bible, what we Christians call the “Old Testament.” It is comprised of five books: Genesis (Gen), Exodus (Exod), Leviticus (Lev), Numbers (Num) and Deuteronomy (Deut).¹ The name “Pentateuch” comes from the Greek and means the “five scrolls (or sheaths for these scrolls). The names of these books also come from the Greek, and describe in some way their contents. The Jews call the Pentateuch “Torah,” commonly translated (as in the Septuagint) “Law,” but which is more accurately translated “(priestly) instruction (or teaching).” In Greek, this would be *Didachē*, a word frequently used in the gospels to designate Jesus’ teaching. The phrase “the Law and the Prophets,” likewise frequent in the New Testament, means the totality of the Jewish Scriptures (although this would also include the “Writings,” that is, the Psalms and other literature; see Luke 24:44).

The Torah —let us thus call the Pentateuch— is Judaism’s fundamental Sacred Scripture. We must begin our biblical study —both of the “Old” as of the New Testament— keeping in mind the Jewish perspective on these Scriptures, since the whole “Christian Bible” is the work of Jews.² The Torah is God’s revelation *par excellence*, given to Moses on Mount Sinai. The Prophets, which for Jews start with Joshua and continue up through Malachi, must be grounded on and accommodated to the Torah, which they merely expound and do not alter, according to the Jewish tradition. So these five books are quite important, and they form as it were Judaism’s constitutional document, and they are thus to be studied. We shall see that the Torah also has a fundamental value for Christians, but this shall be better understood if we take into

¹ The names given to these books by the Jews are based on the first words of each book: *bereshit*, “in the beginning,” *shemot*, “[and these are the] names,” *wayyiqra*, “and he called,” *bemidbar*, “in the wilderness (or desert),” and *devarim*, “words.”

² Perhaps Luke alone was not a Jew, but he largely imitates the Jewish style of biblical composition.

account the way in which it came about that the Jews composed this document made up of a unit of five books.

Contents of the Torah. The Torah begins with the creation of the world, of animals and of the human being. We will see this in more detail in our study of Gen. Here we want to describe the great stages of the Torah, in order to provide a synopsis (in Spanish, *vista de conjunto*). The first human beings disobeyed God and were expelled from the Garden of Eden. Then came further sins, until God repented of having created human beings and sent the flood. Only one righteous man, Noah, with his family, is saved, and it is with these and with the animals which entered the ark that God repopulates the earth. God gives them a commandment in Gen 9:1-2, 7 very similar to the one God gave in Gen 1:28, but not exactly: it seems that now God knows that human beings cannot be as good and peaceful as God intended originally. That is why God now allows the killing of animals for food; animals will fear humans. But God establishes “an eternal covenant” with all living beings; God commits himself to never again destroy the earth as God did in the flood, and as a sign for this God gives the rainbow. It is a sign of hope.

After this, the earth is repopulated, but sin continues, culminating with the Tower of Babel episode. Human beings want to make a great name for themselves (= be famous) and reach up to the sky. As punishment, God disperses them and confounds their speech, so that they no longer understand one another. “Babel” is the same word in Hebrew as “Babylon,” and the tower is like those which existed in Babylon (called *ziggurat*).³ And here begins the story of Abraham. The “prehistory” or “primeval history” is over.

Abraham marks the beginning of God’s concrete, historical, action. God has a purpose for the people who will descend from Abraham, and for all other peoples, also, through Abraham. Notice that Abraham (or Abram, as he was known then) goes out of Ur of the Chaldeans, Gen 11:31, that is, Babylon!⁴ Jewish tradition says that Abraham left behind idolatry (his father was an idol-maker) in order to heed the call of a personal

³ Even the land of Shinar, Gen 11:2, where the Tower was built, is Babylon, 10:10.

⁴ The Chaldeans were the rulers of the Neo-Babylonian empire, that is, the empire which brought the Jews to exile in 587 B.C.E. The time of Abraham is ca. 1700 B.C.E. (time of old Babylonian empire, Hammurabi).

God, not bound to any one place, named “YHWH.”⁵ God promises great things to Abram, but they seem impossible. Abram has neither land nor offspring, and he and his wife are very old. But Abraham *believed* (or *trusted*) in God, he obeyed, and this was accounted to him as “righteousness,” that is, Abraham was “justified,” declared to be in the right with God, who became his friend, Gen 15:6 (see Isa 41:8; James 2:23).

Abraham will have to go through many trials, wandering from place to place. He is a “pilgrim” on earth.⁶ At the end of his days, he is able to obtain just a small plot in order to bury his wife, in Hebron, in the land of Canaan, the Promised Land, Gen 23:19. It is only gradually that God fulfills his promises.

Isaac, Abraham’s son, the child of the Promise, also has to go through many obstacles; he almost loses his life when the Lord puts his father to the test. Isaac’s son is Jacob, who struggles with God and is named Israel. He is the father of the twelve tribes of Israel. He is shrewd, but must flee his brother Esau’s wrath. Jacob goes to Haran, Gen 27:43, which, again, is Babylon!⁷ He settles in Canaan as his father had, but only temporarily, Gen 37:1. His sons envy Joseph, whom they sell off. Joseph winds up in Egypt, where he becomes very important. Famine comes to Canaan, and Jacob’s family must go to Egypt to buy wheat. Joseph saves their lives and the brothers are reconciled. Joseph, an “intelligent and wise” man who knows how to conduct himself in a foreign land with its temptations (Gen 41:33, 39; cf. Dan 1:17, 20) interprets what has taken place among the brothers as providential: his being sold off was part of God’s plan, Gen 45:5-8, despite his brothers’ bad intentions, 50:20. And God will “visit” (here, = will come to save; cf. Luke 1:68) them and will again take them up to Canaan, but no longer as pilgrims or sojourners, but in order to possess the Promised Land, 50:24-25. Thus ends Genesis.

Joseph had arranged it so that his brothers would be given the best land in Egypt, but a new pharaoh came who had not known Joseph, and the Israelites began to be oppressed. We are now in Exod. In some way, the divine promise, expressed as a command, to be fruitful and multiply and fill the land (Gen 1:28; 9:1; note that in Hebrew

⁵ See Exod 6:2. On the name of God, see my little article “Scripture study: the name of God,” in *The Florida Catholic*, March 20, 2003 (page A21 in, e.g., the Orlando edition).

⁶ Gen 20:13; 23:4; Heb 11:9. See my article “Welcoming the Foreigner: A Biblical Theology View,” *Josephinum. Journal of Theology* 11.2 (Summer/Fall 2004) 226-234.

⁷ The land of Abraham’s family, in Gen 11:31.

the same word, *erets*, means “land, earth, country,” etc.), has been fulfilled, Exod 1:7.⁸ The scene is ready for God’s saving action *par excellence*, the Exodus or Exit from Egypt. We are presented with the figure of Moses, raised in pharaoh’s court, of priestly stock (from the tribe of Levi), and with Aaron his brother, the great ancestor of the priests of Israel. It is to Moses that God reveals his ineffable Name YHWH. God wants his people to leave Egypt, to cease being slaves, in order to go up to worship YHWH on a holy mountain.⁹ Pharaoh refuses to let them go, but it is God who is in charge of history, it is YHWH who hardens pharaoh’s heart in order to show God’s omnipotence and make his Name be known (= be acknowledged as Lord), Exod 7:3-5. Then come the famous plagues and, with the last one, the Passover is instituted, the great feast of Israel’s liberation from slavery in order to serve (= worship) the one true God alone. And the Israelites leave Egypt to go to the mountain of God, Mount Sinai.

It is there that the covenant is made between God and Israel, represented by the Ten Commandments, although there is also other legislation. Very soon, however, the people break the covenant, worshipping the golden calf, Exod 32. Moses must intercede for the people. The project of marching to the Promised Land holds good, Exod 33:1. The high point of Exod is in its final chapter, when according to the divine instructions, the Tent of Meeting is erected with God’s Dwelling inside. God is now in the midst his people and will guide it to the Promised Land under a cloud that is both protection against the sun by day and symbol of the divine presence. During the night, the cloud was like fire in order to illuminate and warm the Israelites, Num 9:15.

Now comes the Book of Leviticus, which occupies the central place in the Torah. In the Semitic world, written works were composed with great care, and where words or phrases or books are placed may provide the key to the correct interpretation of a writing. Lev is all about the cult and sacrifices, and we may suppose that this was of great

⁸ Translation of the Bible into other languages often results in a blurring of the “linguistic markers” (the use of specific words or phrases by the biblical authors in a repeated manner in order to establish links between passages) so carefully intended by the biblical author.

⁹ In Exod 3:7, 16; 4:31; 13:19, the promise of Gen 50:24-25 that God would visit his people in order to take them out of Egypt and make them go up to the Promised Land is fulfilled. The *NRSV* translates the Hebrew “visit” variously by “come” (in Gen 50:24-25), by “give heed” (Exod 3:16; 4:31), by “take notice of” (13:19), by “looked favorably on” (in Luke 1:68, from the Greek). Other examples: “deal with” (Gen 21:1), “punish” (Hos 4:14). God’s “visit” indeed has the two meanings of “save” and “call to account.” From the Hebrew and Greek words comes our “bishop” (overseer, visitor).

importance for Israel, and certainly for its religious leaders.¹⁰ And so it was. The center of Lev is Lev 16, on the great Day of Atonement (or expiation), known today in Judaism as Yom Kippur. It was the one day in which all guilt was wiped clean, all sins were forgiven, probably even deliberate offenses (there is some debate about this). In Israel, even involuntary offenses required expiation. What was important was not just the bad intention (as *mens rea* in law, “guilty mind”); incurring ritual uncleanness (impurity), by contact with a corpse, having a nocturnal emission, menstruating, giving birth, etc. —all these things brought impurity to the holy people before their all-holy God. One must be pure in body and soul before this God, in order to be able to enter his Temple and offer sacrifices. The impurities and sins of the people accumulated in the Temple, which for some reason attracted them like a magnet; thus every year expiation had to be made, that is, these impurities must be erased and wiped clean, and this is what took place on Yom Kippur, Lev 16:16. Lev also contains other, very interesting, laws, especially those concerning feasts, which in Israel were always religious and of great importance. The Jubilee is to be noted, a liberation or manumission (emancipation of slaves and discharge of debts) that should take place every fifty years, Lev 25:8-55. We shall see that this concept of total amnesty will be of great importance in the thought of certain prophets and of Jesus himself. Finally, we should note that in Lev 26 we already witness the good and bad consequences, respectively, of either doing or violating God’s Law. We shall later learn what the curses in Lev 26:14-45 are all about; here I will give you a hint: it is a retrospective view (a looking back) from the Babylonian Exile, when Israel saw these very curses overtake her, and her leaders sought an explanation why this had befallen them and what hope there remained for them as a people.

We go on to Numbers. Its Hebrew name is significant: “in the wilderness,” or “desert,” which is not necessarily a sandy place, but rather a wild place, of beasts, where no one dwells except demons (thus the New Testament understands it, Matt 4:1; Luke 8:29). Israel is now organized as a religious assembly, by tribes arranged in symbolic order (symbolism has even been detected in the number of Israelites given in Num 1:46). At the center is God’s presence in the Tent of Meeting and the Dwelling, protected (or

¹⁰ We can be sure that Jewish priests had an important role in the formation of this book and in its being placed at the center of the Pentateuch.

buffered) by the priests and then by the Levites (lesser cultic officials). The people will march in solemn procession towards the Holy Land, as if on pilgrimage, on the one hand, and, on the other, in martial order, that is, as if for holy war. The two concepts go hand in hand; for Israel, all important actions were performed in the name of God, and every aspect of life had to do with religion (= one's relation with God). One's enemy was God's enemy, a trap for Israel, and it was God himself who fought in order to vindicate his holy Name and prevent other nations from being able to say that YHWH had not been able to save his people (Num 14:15-17).

Marching orders are given in Num 10:11; the people have not moved since Exod 19:11! They now set out as YHWH decides, Num 11:34-36. But the story of the march is one of rebellion. The people complain about the food and drink, about Moses' leadership, about everything. Worst of all is their lack of faith = trust in YHWH (unlike Abraham). They fear the inhabitants of the Promised Land whom they must conquer with God's help, Num 13:27-31. They "slander" (say malicious lies about) the Land that God was offering them, Num 13:32; 14:36-37; cf. another word in 14:31, despite the encouragement that some individuals sought to give them, Num 13:30; 14:9. But the people do not believe in YHWH, 14:11.¹¹ As punishment, God ordains that none of those rebels shall enter the Promised Land, 14:20-23. Now the remorseful people want to go on the attack, but it will not be able to, 14:39-45. And this is the story of the wilderness, a time that was lost, useless, according to some thinkers in Israel. Nevertheless, some conquests are made, and God gives instructions concerning the distribution of the land of Canaan, the Promised Land, in Num 31-34.

We now come to the last book of the Pentateuch, Deuteronomy. It is a very important work, both the conclusion of the Law, and, seen another way, the introduction to a very interesting history, the Deuteronomic (or Deuteronomistic) History ("DtrHist" or "DH"), which runs from Joshua to 2 Kings. This theological history explains how it was that Israel was taken into the Babylonian Exile, why it seemed that God had abandoned his people and Temple in 587 B.C.E. The explanation is that the people had broken the covenant and incurred the curses which God had announced beforehand and which Israel had accepted with its "amen," Deut 27. The DtrHist is one of rebellion, of

¹¹ Cf. Exod 14:31.

evil kings whom the people had asked for but who had made the people turn away from YHWH. Now, in Deut, the last book of the Torah, we find the Israel at the time of Moses, some 700 years before the exilic period: this is the fictitious setting of the Deut. Israel finds itself on the plains of Moab, at the edge of the Promised Land. We read that from Horeb —the name for Mount Sinai which the Deuteronomists (“Dtr,” the school or movement behind the writing of Deut and DtrHist and other parts of the Hebrew Bible) prefer, perhaps because “Sinai” in Hebrew sounds too much like the name of a Babylonian god¹²— to Kadesh-barnea takes (only) eleven days, Deut 1:2. Kadesh-barnea is already “the mountain of the Amorites,” 1:19-20, that is, is already the Promised Land. God had offered it to Israel, but Israel had been afraid to take it, had not had faith = trust in God, 1:21, 26, 29-33. That is why they had had to remain in Kadesh, without entering the Land, all that time, 1:45-46, having had to go back into the wilderness again, going in circles around a mountain, 2:1-3. In 2:14, it is said that they wandered for 38 years.¹³

With this fictional scenario, Deut has “Moses” remind the people who are really about to enter the Promised Land (that is, the Babylonian exiles) of the whole “way” that they (or their ancestors) had trod, interpreting for them what had happened. It is Moses’ last speech, or series of speeches, on the last day of his life. At the end of the book, although he is still healthy, Moses is ordered by God to die, for not even he shall enter the Land, despite his pleas, Deut 3:25-26. “Deuteronomy” takes its name from the Greek (Septuagint, or LXX) translation of Deut 17:18. The Hebrew text says that the king must make a copy of this book; the Greek version, which oftentimes changes or interprets things, or explains them, says here that the king must write this “deuteronomy,” that is, this “second law,” as if by the Greek period (in third century B.C.E.) this work already was known by this title, “Deuteronomy,” or “Second Law.” It is as if Israel needed an updated Law, and a Law which it would from then on fulfill with all its heart, after having broken the first covenant at Sinai, when it did not obey the Lord nor keep his Torah. This is our thesis, following great Pentateuch scholars. Deut was written in the

¹² See NORBERT LOHFINK, “The Theology of the Wilderness in the Book of Deuteronomy” (unpublished class notes for a course with the same title given in the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, Spring 1999), 3.

¹³ See LOHFINK, “Theology of the Wilderness,” 11. Cf. John 5:5, in the story of the sick man who for 38 years lay beside a healing pool claiming that he had not been able to get anyone to lower him into the pool! Jesus asks him if he *wants* to be healed, 5:6, and in 5:14 warns him to sin no more, lest something worse befall him (indicating that this apathetic man was guilty).

Babylonian Exile around 550 B.C.E.; or more accurately, Deut took a form quite similar to the one we now have around that time. It would still be some time before the Exile was over (it began 597/587 B.C.E.). The people, with its leaders, had reflected much, and deeply, on its catastrophic history, seeking reasons and hope for a new life. The Dtr movement, or school,¹⁴ whose beginnings we can perhaps find in the first years after the fall of the northern kingdom (the kingdom of Israel, whose capital Samaria fell to the Assyrians in 722/721, 2 Kgs 17:5-6), and certainly in Josiah's reform in 622, in the southern kingdom of Judah (2 Kgs 22:8-23:3), reached its peak in the Babylonian Exile, 587-538. A product of this school, as we have seen, is Deut and DtrHist (Josh-2 Kgs), although the Dtr hand reached many other parts of the Hebrew Bible, for we detect it in Gen-Num and in the final edition (the one we more or less now have) of the books of the Latter Prophets (Isa-Mal). This movement continued, so to speak, into the postexilic period, and the Pentateuch is the result of a compromise between Dtr and the Priestly School, as we shall see in more detail further on.¹⁵

Having said this, let us finish our brief preliminary overview of Deut with some important observations in accordance with our thesis. Deut presents Israel with a new Torah, an updated Torah, which takes up earlier elements (such as those of king Josiah's reform) but adds new ones. But what it is most important to keep in mind is that the setting of Deut is very significant: Israel is about to enter the Promised Land, and Moses gives them a great sermon. He reminds them of their sin of lack of faith and obedience when they did not accept God's offer of the Land, and of the consequences of this sin: the down time of wandering through the wilderness. Moses is addressing not those who died in the wilderness, that past generation who will not enter the Land, but the living, those who have repented (or "converted") and who "cling" to YHWH, 4:4.¹⁶ It is with these that the Dtr covenant is made, 5:2-3, a covenant *separate* from the one entered into at

¹⁴ See JOSEPH BLENKINSOPP, *The Pentateuch. An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 185.

¹⁵ See BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 241.

¹⁶ Deut likes to use many typical words, as we shall see. Here we begin with the verb "to cling," the same verb used in Gen 2:24 to describe the intimate union of husband and wife in marriage, which Deut applies to the intimate relation one should have with YHWH in total obedience; see also Deut 10:20; 11:22; 13:4; 30:20, etc. *NRSV* translates "hold fast" (but "cling" in Gen 2:24; you see how the connections are missed in English, when different words are used for the same Hebrew one). This verb is also used in reverse, when the punishments "cling" (thus *NRSV* in 28:21, 60) to the people after they abandon YHWH.

Sinai/Horeb, 28:69 (following the Hebrew text numbering of verses; 29:1 in the *NRSV*). It is like the “new covenant” of Jer 31:31-34, a covenant which requires a circumcised heart (which YHWH will give, Deut 30:6), so that Israel, finally converted, will love YHWH with all her heart and soul, 30:10. It is only then that Israel shall be able to—that the Lord shall give her the capacity to—faithfully obey God, 29:3 (*NRSV* 29:4). This will only take place when all those curses for not obeying the Law will have occurred, 30:1-5, and when the Lord will have decided to make the people return to the Land. But this will take place “at the end of the days,” 4:29-31 (*NRSV* “in time to come”), when, in the Exile, Israel reflects and from that place seeks YHWH “with the whole heart and the whole soul.”¹⁷

Conclusion. We have finished our brief overview of the Pentateuch or Torah. We still have to see many things. But I think we can tell that it is a very important document for both Jews and for their younger siblings, us Christians. It begins with an account of human “history” from creation to Abraham, the father of the faith/trust (Rom 4:16). He is in the first place the father of the Jewish people. I use this adjective deliberately; it is a designation for the Hebrew people which is applicable only from the Babylonian Exile onward. It designates not only the members of the tribe of Judah (hence, “Jews”), the tribe who survived the Assyrian attacks after the northern tribes (the kingdom of “Israel”) perished, and the tribe who was taken to Babylon in 587: it more specifically designates the Israelite who adopted “Judaism,” a particular form of religion which emerged in that Exile. It is a religiosity of conversion to the Law of God as it is expounded in the Torah, a religiosity that seeks to never again turn away from God, but rather, to cling to God, to keep oneself in ritual purity, distinguishing—for purposes of separation, and really, consecration (‘holy means separate’)—itself from other peoples and their temptations and uncleanness, by means of circumcision, a particular diet (*kosher*) and the strict observance of the Sabbath. We shall see that the Pentateuch is a composite document, that is, was formed in various stages and has many layers which reveal several theologies which were developed at different times. What is noteworthy is that it is a five book writing which ends in a note of waiting, in a great promise which is yet to be fulfilled: the

¹⁷ This is another expression very dear to Dtr. See its occurrence in Israel’s great credo, the *Shema* ‘= “hear,” Deut 6:4-5. On eschatology and Dtr, see BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 232.

entrance into the Promised Land. Both Judaism and Christianity see great significance in this: for Jews, all is not yet done, salvation still awaits, the Messianic era is yet to come. For Christians, the Pentateuch is fulfilled by Christ (Christ is the “end” = also the “goal” of the Law, Rom 10:4). Israel waits, in Deut, to cross the River Jordan and thus enter not only into the Promised Land, but into the (new) covenant, Deut 29:9-14 (*NRSV* 29:10-15). We Christians enter with (or better, *in*) Christ into that Promise through baptism. John the Baptist, the eschatological Elijah (of the End Time, Matt 17:10-13), baptized on the other side of the Jordan (Elijah had been taken up to heaven after crossing over to this other side from the land of Israel, 2 Kgs 2:1-13; his return in the end of time was awaited, Mal 3:23 (*NRSV* 4:5; see John 1:28). Those who were baptized by him, like Jesus, crossed the Jordan and entered into the Promised Land as a symbol of the salvation they awaited, after having repented (Mark 1:4-6; Luke 3:7-18). We can thus study the Torah not just as an ancient writing, important only to Jews, but also as being full of significance and value for Christians. For we are also called to conversion, and, although Christ has fulfilled God’s promises (2 Cor 1:20), our salvation is “in hope,” Rom 8:24-25. Thus the author of Hebrews speaks of the great Sabbath rest as something still to be fulfilled, and which we must make an effort to enter, Heb 4:8-11 (cf. Deut 12:9).

The composition of the Pentateuch

The composite nature of the Pentateuch. Both Jewish and Christian tradition maintained or maintains that the Torah is the work of Moses, the “Law of Moses” (see, e.g., 1 Kgs 2:3; Luke 2:22). The Catholic Church held this until recently, and its scholars could find themselves in serious trouble if they put it in doubt.¹⁸ But for more than a half century now in the Catholic Church, and more than a century in many sectors of the Protestant churches, it has been maintained that the Pentateuch is a document which was composed and compiled over centuries and which underwent many additions and touch-

¹⁸ *Enchiridion Biblicum*, 181-184. See the case of Fr. Marie-Joseph Lagrange, O.P., founder of the École Biblique de Jérusalem (producers of the *Jerusalem Bible*) in PIERRE BENOIT, *El padre Lagrange. Al servicio de la Biblia. Recuerdos personales* (Trad. esp. del orig. francés; Bilbao: Desclée de Brouwer, 1970). After harsh attacks were made against him, and he was prohibited from continuing to write on biblical issues, and a cloud of doubt was placed on his orthodoxy, this pioneer of Catholic biblical studies was “rehabilitated” in the important document from the Pontifical Biblical Commission *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (Rome, 1993), III.B.3. His process of beatification is proceeding!

ups, until attaining the final form which we have today. We are here not going to cover the whole history of the study of the Pentateuch since the nineteenth century. This can be consulted in many works.¹⁹ What we are interested in stressing is that the Torah obviously manifests the presence of various hands which can be distinguished by their vocabulary, pet ideas, theological concerns, etc. We have already noted that Dtr avoids “Sinai” and uses “Horeb.” We see doublets in Gen which are hardly separate incidents, although the differences between these narratives give evidence of the tendencies of their supposed authors, editors or redactors, who put their hands to them.²⁰ The classic case is that of a patriarch and his wife in a foreign land; to avoid danger to himself from a powerful would-be adulterer, the patriarch tells the wife to say she is his sister, with varying results (Gen 12:10-20; 20:1-18; 26:1-14). Long ago it was noticed that a certain strand of the Pentateuch (e.g., Gen 4:1; 5:29, etc.) used “YHWH” from the beginning (which led to this strand or layer being attributed to the “Yahwist,” J), while another strand used *elohim*, “God,” e.g., Gen 1:1; 5:1, etc., until God revealed his name to Moses in Exod 3:13-15; this would be the work of the “Elohist,” E. With these and other notions, and distinguishing two other layers or sources (D and Q, or P), the great German Lutheran scholar Julius Wellhausen popularized the “documentary hypothesis” in its classic form. This hypothesis dominated Pentateuch exegesis from the end of the nineteenth century until very recently, and is even today followed by many professors, although it is put in serious doubt today.²¹ We here follow certain more recent and surer trends which concentrate rather on only two of the classic sources, the Deuteronomist

¹⁹ See, for example, ERNEST NICHOLSON, *The Pentateuch in the Twentieth Century. The Legacy of Julius Wellhausen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), and BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 1-30. In Spanish, see the translation of BLENKINSOPP, *op. cit.*, and JEAN LOUIS SKA, *Introducción a la lectura del Pentateuco. Claves para la interpretación de los cinco primeros libros de la Biblia* (trad del italiano; Estella [Navarra]: Editorial Verbo Divino, 2001), 135-174.

²⁰ See SKA, *Introducción*, 81-134. “To redact,” in biblical studies, means to put something into writing using earlier sources, which are greatly respected, so that the final result is less original than would be that of a true author, who really creates out of nothing. But these distinctions are often debatable and difficult to establish. The biblical interpretation method called “redaction criticism” emphasizes the creative role that redactors had (especially in the New Testament) when they shaped the prior materials which they utilized; see JOHN S. KSELMAN – RONALD D. WITHERUP, “Modern New Testament Criticism,” *New Jerome Biblical Commentary* [henceforth, *NJBC*] (R.E. Brown – J.A. Fitzmyer – R.E. Murphy, eds.; Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1990), 1144. On the Pentateuch, see AMADOR-ÁNGEL GARCÍA SANTOS, *El Pentateuco. Historia y sentido* (Salamanca: Edibesa, 1998), 195-219.

²¹ See BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 19-28; SKA, *Introducción*, 175-224; OLIVER ARTUS, *Aproximación actual al Pentateuco* (trad. del francés Pedro Barrado – M^a Pilar Salas; Estella [Navarra]: Verbo Divino, 2001), 3.

(Dtr) and the Priestly (P).²² This is a hypothesis which is clearer and simpler than the classic documentary hypothesis. We present here a simplified version of it, providing only what is necessary in order to arrive at an adequate understanding of the composition of the Pentateuch for purposes of this course. We shall concentrate on the two sources which are easily distinguishable if studied with a certain care. The study of these two sources, that is, of the texts which represent them, will lead us to understand two very interesting theologies which emerged in a very specific context in response to very concrete needs, and which at some point merged in the final form of the Pentateuch, basically the one we have now. We shall see that this type of study —combining “diachronic” elements (such as the historico-critical method, which seeks earlier layers or strata of a text through time) and “synchronic” elements (which studies the final form of the text by means of literary and redactional approaches, without seeking to arrive at earlier stages of the text, as if it all had been written at the same time)— is very adequate not only in order to understand the Pentateuch itself, but in order to train us to read the whole Bible as a library composed largely of “rereadings” of earlier texts which have been adapted by later authors, editors, redactors, etc. to make them more relevant to changed circumstances and new demands.

General observations on the two principal sources of the Pentateuch. According to our hypothesis, these sources are Dtr and P. The antiquity and separate existence of many smaller narrative and legal units used by these two principal sources is not thereby denied.²³ Until not many years ago, Dtr was considered to be absent from the first four books of the Torah, what the great German scholar Martin Noth termed the Tetrateuch. According to Noth, Deut was the prologue of the Deuteronomistic History, which ran from Josh to 2 Kgs. There is much validity to this. Dtr was a reform movement in Israel. Many have surmised that it began with Levites (the Priestly tribe) from the northern kingdom,

²² One of the principal figures of this approach to the Pentateuch, but whose works are difficult to access, is the German Erhard Blum. I more immediately follow Blenkinsopp. It should be noted that the Elohist was always a nebulous and doubtful source; it has today been pronounced dead by some. The existence and supposed characteristics of the Yahwist, so beloved of Gerhard von Rad, are much placed in doubt today; important names here are Rolf Rendtorff (von Rad’s successor in Heidelberg) and John van Seters; see BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 25, 78 (if there was a J, he may have been later than P); SKA, *Introducción*, 183-199.

²³ See SKA, *Introducción*, 225-250.

the kingdom of Israel, which fell to the Assyrian invasion in 722. These Levites would then have gone south, to the kingdom of Judah, and promoted their reformist ideals there. These represented a pure Yahwism, that is, a deep and total adherence to the unique God of Israel. The northern kingdom had been characterized by repeated slips into idolatry; in fact, it can be said that pure Yahwists were probably usually a small minority: there is a growing tendency among Hebrew Bible scholars (such as Mark Smith) to posit that orthodox Yahwism became the rule in Israel only with the Babylonian Exile. Recall Elijah's situation in 1 Kgs 17-18. He exercised his ministry in the northern kingdom in the ninth century B.C.E., under king Ahab, who had married Jezebel. Jezebel was Sidonian, from the coast to the north of Israel, and as such, worshipped Ba'al, the great Canaanite god of rain and harvests. In those days, life itself depended on the rain and harvests, and many Israelites, as many Caribbean people and others do today with the "saints" of the Yoruba religion, resorted to these nature deities, whether "just in case," or out of true belief.²⁴ Elijah confronted this cult and its leaders, and challenged Israel to choose YHWH or Ba'al, 1 Kgs 18:20-40.

Another major Dtr concern was what we call "social justice." This issue revolved around the king, and exploded with Solomon, the king who succeeded David around 970. David had been a powerful, charismatic leader who had united the twelve tribes of Israel, the northern and the southern ones, making Jerusalem the capital, more or less at the center. His son Solomon embarked on a large-scale program of imperial expansion, but this brought two great problems. One, as part of his political alliances, Solomon married foreign women, who "turned his heart aside after other gods," as the Dtr would say; see 1 Kgs 11:1-13. The second problem was an huge increase in his court, the administration of his government. He had many on his payroll, and this resulted in oppressive taxation. Many of the poor lost their land after having hypothecated or mortgaged it in order to pay debts, etc. All this violated ancient Israelite tribal traditions, where the family patrimony or heritage was sacred, and where egalitarianism had reigned. See what Dtr thinks of the institution of kingship in 1 Sam 8:1-22, and the legislation concerning the king in Deut 17:14-20 (composed precisely with Solomon's misdeeds in mind!). The narrative

²⁴ Even in times of Jeremiah (sixth century) many thought that things had gone better with worship of other gods than with YHWH, Jer 44:15-19.

regarding how it was that the ten northern tribes seceded from the south is found in 1 Kgs 12:1-19.

With these ideas and concerns, then, the Dtr Levites fled south after the fall of Samaria, the capital of Israel, in 722.²⁵ There they became attuned to the importance of kingship, that is, of the Davidic dynasty. There existed a venerable tradition regarding David, with whom God had made a particular covenant: there would always sit upon the throne of “Israel” (that is, the twelve tribes, and not just Judah) a descendant of David. The Dtr included this tradition in 2 Sam 7:1-17. The divine promise here seems to be unconditional: God may punish David’s descendant if he misbehaves, but God will not take away his throne.²⁶ Great hopes would be placed on a good king (see Ps 72). This is what occurred with Josiah some hundred years later, in 622. At that time, the “people of the land” (Yahwist farmers who held to traditional values), after Amon, the son of Manasseh, the worst king that Judah had ever had, had been assassinated,²⁷ put in his place the boy Josiah, the best king Israel ever had, according to Dtr, 2 Kgs 22:1-1; 23:24-25. What was it that Josiah did?

Josiah led (or supported) a great religious reform based on the “Book of the Law,” 2 Kgs 22:8, which most scholars believe was a primitive version of Deut. One of the principal features of this reform consisted in the elimination of all places where idolatry was practised; to achieve this, all cultic sacrifice outside the Jerusalem Temple was prohibited. The people should be united under one God who dwells only in one place; more accurately, for the devout Dtr God himself does not abide in the Temple, but rather, only his Name does.²⁸ They should be one people of God, united and living harmoniously, each one taking care of the other (hence Dtr’s social legislation and its great concern for the poor, e.g., in Deut 15:7-15; 24:10-15).

²⁵ Cf. BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 216-217; ROLF RENDTORFF, *The Old Testament. An Introduction* (ET from original 1983 German by John Bowden; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 156.

²⁶ See also Ps 89:27-38 [NRSV 89:26-37]; but after events showed that under certain circumstances the dynasty would not endure, this unconditionality of the Davidic covenant was modified: see 1 Kgs 2:4; 8:25; 9:4-5; Ps 132:12.

²⁷ It is because of him that Judah was taken into exile, according to Dtr, 2 Kgs 23:26-27.

²⁸ Reference to God’s Name instead of to his own person as a sign of great reverence is found in the Lord’s Prayer. Deut presents us with the fiction that Israel will not know exactly in which place God’s Name will dwell until God reveals it, Deut 12:5; 26:1-2; cf. 1 Kgs 8:29.

According to many scholars, the very idea of “covenant” (in Hebrew, *berith*) as a pact involving rights and obligations is a Dtr creation.²⁹ In the background most probably are ancient near eastern treaties (sometimes called “suzerainty treaties;” a suzerain is a superior, not an equal, partner) between kings and vassals (defeated kingdoms which had been conquered and who agreed under oath to submit, in exchange for continued existence, to certain conditions imposed by the conqueror). The conquering kingdom would protect its vassal in exchange for tribute, and the vassal committed to render assistance in case the suzerain were attacked. Good things (“blessings”) would occur if the vassal fulfilled the pact; very bad things (“curses”) would take place if he violated it. This mentality is reflected in 2 Kgs 22:11-13, when Josiah rends his garments upon hearing the obligations of the covenant and the consequences of breaking it.³⁰ This idea of being under a covenant with YHWH, with rights and obligations, will be used by Dtr at the time of the Babylonian Exile to explain to Israel why it found itself in such a predicament.

In order to recapitulate a bit regarding Dtr, let us keep in mind that it basically is a work that runs from Deut to 2 Kgs. Deut is like the prologue to the DtrHist. It sets forth the conditions necessary in order to be in the covenant and *merit* (“deserve”) remaining in the Promised Land. The fundamental thesis of the DtrHist is that Israel would fare well when and if it obeyed YHWH, and badly when it did not. The kingdom had been divided because of Solomon’s sins. Dtr has to take into account that this division did not take place during Solomon’s lifetime, and explains this in 1 Kgs 11:12 as due to God’s love for David. The fall of Judah to the Babylonians (or Chaldeans) in 587 is explained by the sins of Manasseh, despite Josiah’s reform, which did not last, 2 Kgs 23:24-27. Very few Judean kings get wholehearted Dtr approval: David, Hezekiah and Josiah, maybe Asa.³¹ All the northern kings are condemned. One must wait for the messianic king at the end of time, given Dtr’s ambivalence about kingship (see Judg 8:22-23; 9:7-15; 1 Sam 8). But Israel will have to repent in the Exile, and turn to the Lord with all her heart and soul. This will come to be considered a divine gift, not just the result of Israel’s efforts. But

²⁹ See BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 123.

³⁰ The curses in Deut (which can be summed up symbolically by the phrase “to go back to Egypt,” 28:68, i.e., the pre-liberation, pre-people of God stage) are explicitly found in 28:15-68; what was “discovered” in Josiah’s time is usually considered to be Deut 12-26. Cf. 17:16; Jer 42:14; 43:7; 44:8-14, 24-28.

³¹ 1 Kgs 15:11; 22:43; cf. 22:46. See Sir 49:4.

what predominates in Dtr is the insistence on scrupulous observance of the Law of Moses as the condition for entry and duration on the Land.

The other Pentateuchal source which is very influential in the Babylonian Exile is P, the Priestly source (from the German *Priester*). It emerged in priestly circles (differently from Dtr, which is more of a lay movement, although its origins were Levitical).³² P has strong links with the great prophet of the early Exile, Ezekiel, a priest. He conceives the sin of Israel which led to its exile as “impurity,” in the first place idolatry, but which includes all offenses against God. These defile the Land and the Temple, so that God can no longer dwell there because they are so unclean; see, e.g., Ezek 5:5-6, 11; 6:9-10. This Priestly movement speaks rather of the Glory of YHWH than his Name, although the latter appears quite often, too. But for Ezek and P, what is important is this glorious presence of YHWH in the midst of God’s people,³³ in the Temple, as long as it is not too contaminated. Israel defiled it horribly, and the Glory of YHWH left the Temple by grades (Ezek 8:3-4; 9:3; 10:3-4, 18); finally, YHWH abandons the Temple altogether, leaving the city to its destruction, and comes to rest upon the Mount of Olives, 11:23, to the east: the Lord is ready to accompany the Israelites into exile, where God will be a sanctuary for them, 11:16. Only with the restoration (return from Exile) will God return to Jerusalem, 43:2.

For these priests, purity came to be the most important thing. Purity, or cleanness, has to do with consecration, with that state and those dispositions in which one can be in a good relation with God, the Holy One, that is, one who is “separate.” Thus separation is important, separation from foreigners, who are impure, uncircumcised, who do not know God, who eat anything, who do not keep the Sabbath. We have said that these three things —circumcision, the kosher diet and the observance of the Sabbath— came to be, in the Babylonian Exile, the hallmarks (the distinctive signs) of what being a Jew was.

³² The great Jewish scholar JACOB MILGROM, *Leviticus 1-16. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Anchor Bible vol. 3; New York – London etc.: Doubleday, 1992), 12-13, insists that “the Priestly texts are preexilic. At most, one may allow the very last strand of the school of H [= “Holiness,” the other main Priestly school] . . . and the final redactional touches to be the product of the exile.” We shall see that during the Exile the Levites are excluded from priestly ministry, that is, they can no longer officiate at the altar, but are demoted to assistants, cantors, teachers, etc. See Ezek 48:10-11. In the background is a power struggle among priestly factions in which the “sons of Zadok” prevail, the Zadokites being more or less the future Sadducees of the New Testament period.

³³ See BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 169.

The exiles from the tribe of Judah were surrounded by a great culture which seduced and drew away many.³⁴ For the priests, these things were of an essential importance, and spiritual purity had to be accompanied by bodily purity. The one cannot exist without the other.³⁵

If Dtr saw a way for Israel to move forward from tragedy in the concept of a covenant which must be kept (and which, in the end, God would provide the ability to fulfill),³⁶ P saw things on a grander scale. For these priests, it was not a question only of Israel, however unique a people they were.³⁷ God had created the whole universe. The world had become wholly corrupt, and God had repented of having created it, Gen 6:6-7, 13. But God allowed a good man, Noah, and his family, together with a series of animals, to survive, in order to populate the globe anew. The order/blessing given in Gen 1:28 is repeated in 9:1.³⁸ And it is then that God established his first covenant, *berith*, with the whole world, Gen 9:8-11, its sign being the rainbow, 9:12-17. God will never again destroy the earth, and this is a basis of hope for all. See the important text Isa 54:1-10.

Then comes the covenant with Abraham, Gen 17:2-8. It likewise is “an everlasting (or eternal) covenant,”³⁹ it cannot be broken like the Dtr covenant.⁴⁰ It is rather a promise than a pact, for it has no conditions attached.⁴¹ That may be why P uses a different Hebrew word for the conditional covenant of Sinai, *eduth* (“testimony,” as in the “Ark of the Testimony,” e.g. Exod 25:22) instead of the Noahic and Abrahamic *berith*.⁴² Or rather, for P there is no covenant at Sinai. As Professor Blenkinsopp says:

³⁴ Indeed, many Jews remained in Babylon for many centuries, and prospered there. What is noteworthy is that most did not assimilate, but maintained their Jewish identity.

³⁵ We say even today that “Cleanliness is next to godliness.”

³⁶ Recall Deut 4:29:3 [4 in *NRSV*]; 30:6; see also Jer 24:7; 32:39-40; Ezek 11:19-20; 36:26-27. See SKA, *Introducción*, 258-260.

³⁷ See BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 88, 238-239.

³⁸ With some modifications or concessions, as we shall see.

³⁹ See also Ezek 16:60; 37:26; Isa 55:3; 61:8; BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 86, 119-121.

⁴⁰ The Dtr covenant is considered broken in Deut 31:16, 20; Jer 31:32; also in Hos 8:1; Ezek 16:59; 44:7; Lev 26:15 (but cf. 26:44). Hence a *new covenant* is spoken of in Jer 31:31-34, or a covenant separate from the one made at Sinai, Deut 28:69 [*NRSV* 29:1]; see BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 194.

⁴¹ See BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 120; SKA, *Introducción*, 208-209, 214. Circumcision is the sign of this covenant, as the rainbow was for the covenant with Noah and the whole world. Paul will make much of this “covenant” —it is rather the unconditional Promise— in Rom 4; see also Gal 3:15-18.

⁴² Cf. *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. Supplementary Volume (IDBSupp)* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976), 196; ROLAND DE VAUX, *Ancient Israel. Its Life and Institutions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Livonia: Dove, 1961), 147, 301; ARTUS, *Aproximación*, 29-30, 45.

According to this source, then, Israel arrived at the mountain in the wilderness of Sinai (Ex 19:1-2; cf. Num 33:15), whereupon Moses immediately entered the cloud blanketing the mountain in order to receive instructions for the setting up of the sanctuary and its cult (Ex 24:15-18^a). There is therefore no theophany, apart from the vision vouchsafed to Moses, and no covenant.⁴³

Summary. What we have seen so far should make us realize that the Pentateuch is a composite work in which two sources stand out, Dtr and P. Each one has a different perspective on such fundamental concepts as “covenant.” We have also briefly touched on the fundamental historical context of the Pentateuch, the Babylonian Exile, a crucial time for Israel, when it had to reflect upon what had occurred, why such a tragedy had come upon it (namely, the destruction of the holy city of Jerusalem, considered by many sacred scriptures to be inviolable, together with the Temple, God’s very dwelling, and the loss of the Promised Land and being taken into exile, where it was not so clear in the beginning even that their God would be there with them). It seems that both sources at first, to begin with, explained the catastrophe as the ineluctable consequence of Israel’s faults, seen as a violation of a conditional covenant (imposing obligations) by Dtr, as impurities and abominations which drove away the holy God, by P (or, at least, by Ezek, closely connected to P). Afterwards, each source or movement sought a hopeful way out. For Dtr, the Torah itself predicted repentance, conversion, as if it were part of God’s plan. “At the end of the days,” Israel would *return* and would be able to keep the Law, and thus *return* to the Land. It would be as if it were the first time it entered the Land, for in the Exile the return, leaving Babylon, was spoken of as a second exodus which would far surpass the first, the prototypical one out of Egypt (see Second Isaiah, Isa 49:8-12). “Conversion,” “return from exile,” “restoration”: these three things came to be designated by the same Hebrew verb *shuv*, “to turn, return, make return, etc.” (according to the

⁴³ *Pentateuch*, 185. On 225 (endnote 2), Blenkinsopp briefly discusses Henri Cazelles’ position that there is indeed such a covenant in P. G.I. DAVIES, “Introduction to the Pentateuch,” in *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (John Barton – John Muddiman, eds.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 28, speaking of P’s theology, says that “it used to be customary to speak of P as the Book of the Four Covenants, leading to the use (for example, in Wellhausen’s early work) of the symbol Q (for *quattuor*, Latin for ‘four’). But in only two of the cases (Noah and Abraham) does P actually speak of the making a ‘covenant’ (*bērit*).” DAVID NOEL FREEDMAN, *Divine Commitment and Human Obligation. Selected Writings of David Noel Freedman. Volume 1, Ancient Israelite History and Religion* (John R. Huddleston, ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 170, concerning the type of covenant which consists in a divine commitment (which he states is a main concern of the P document in the Pentateuch), gives three examples: the covenants of Noah, Abraham and Pinchas (Num 25).

various form of the verb).⁴⁴ Dtr is a source that emphasizes conversion and the careful observance of the Law as the condition for possession of the Land. But already in Deut 9:4-6 Israel is warned not to think that it is out of merit that it shall enter the Land; here we have a development of Dtr theology towards a possession of the Land based rather on God's love for the Fathers (the "Patriarchs," Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) and not of Israel's righteousness.⁴⁵ And this assimilates these late Dtr strands to the other source, P, which emphasizes the eternal, unconditional "covenant" (promise) with the whole world and with Abraham.⁴⁶ which is eternal and which gives Israel the hope that it will never be abandoned by God. And thus with these thoughts we conclude our brief look at the composition of the Pentateuch. We now have to see in more detail the actual texts which are representative of these two sources, along with some other important passages of the Pentateuch.

Brief commentary to the readings for the course

Genesis

Gen 1:1-2:4^a. The Pentateuch, and thus, the Bible, begins with the "Priestly" (P) account of creation.⁴⁷ We leave aside here the well-known narrative regarding Adam and

⁴⁴ See, e.g., Deut 30:1-4; Jer 29:14; 33:26; Ps 126:1; Job 42:10.

⁴⁵ According to Norbert Lohfink, S.J., the great contemporary Deut scholar, the passages in Deut which speak of God's unconditional love for the Fathers (such as Deut 4:29; 9:4-6) are late (from the latter part of the Exile or later); see his "Theology of the Wilderness," 16, 31; "The theology of justification by grace becomes more explicit in Dt 9. Israel cannot count on observance of the Law as a guarantee for God's gifts but must rather count on the grace of God. This layer probably dates from the late Exile period as Dt 4 which presupposes these texts still knows nothing of the actual return to the Land." For Lohfink, *ibid.*, 41, Deut 9:1-6 prefigures the Pauline theology of justification by faith and not by works; cf. Rom 10:3. See Gal 2:16; Rom 3:28.

⁴⁶ For Paul also the "gifts and call of God are irrevocable," Rom 11:29, which means that God can never reject Israel. God has only to "recall" this eternal "covenant," which need not be renewed; BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 86; see Gen 9:14-16; Lev 26:42-45. In Deut, "to recall" is always Israel's obligation, not God's, but cf. Deut 9:27.

⁴⁷ Some scholars posit two priestly sources, P and H; Israel Knohl refers to them as "Priestly Torah," PT, and as "Holiness School," HS; see his *The Sanctuary of Silence. The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), including a response to Jacob Milgrom, who deals with Knohl's earlier work in MILGROM, *Leviticus 1-16*, 13-35; Milgrom discusses P at length in *ibid.*, 3-51, and H in vol. 2 of that three-volume commentary, *Leviticus 17-22* (Anchor Bible vol. 3A; New York – London etc.: Doubleday, 2000), 1319-1443 (ending with a discussion of Knohl). Briefer but excellent treatment is found in his one-volume *Leviticus. A Book of Ritual and Ethics* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 8-16 (P), 175-183 (H). Keeping this very complicated subject as simple as possible, it would appear that H is an

Eve and the serpent, as picturesque as it is and usually (especially in the past) attributed to “J.” Let us rather note at once the abstract, orderly and symmetric character of Gen 1-2:4^a. It is thus that we initiate ourselves into P’s way of thinking and writing, and into its favorite themes.

Notice how God creates simply with his Word, without need of dust or clay, etc. From the beginning, God *separated* light and darkness, and the waters above the firmament from those below. The theme of *separation*, of the right order between things and even persons, is of the highest importance for these priests-authors-redactors. At bottom, what the P school is interested in is the total separation which should exist between purity and impurity, since what is essential in order to live and not perish is to have the presence of God in the midst of Israel, and this presence cannot be where there is sin, idolatry and impurity. When God leaves, what comes is chaos, destruction.⁴⁸

Next God made the waters come together in one place so that dry land could appear, another type of separation. And on the central day, the fourth day (our Wednesday), God created the luminaries, “to separate day from night,” similar to the separation God made on the first day between light and darkness (what kind of light was that?). These luminaries will serve as signs for “solemnities, days and years,” that is, for the establishment of the religious feasts of Judaism, the liturgical calendar being a matter of extreme importance for the Jewish priests. The “solemnities” (*NRSV* “seasons”, in Hebrew *mo’adim*), are, e.g., those of Lev 23:4; the “days” are like the one in Num 9:2 (Passover). A great luminary (“light”) illuminated the day; this is the sun, but it is not named, and neither is the moon: for these priests, these celestial bodies that the pagans

exilic editor of P with more social and ethical concerns and a “democratizing” tendency (the need for purity is extended to the people even in non-ritual settings and is not confined to presence in the sanctuary, something akin to the Pharisees’ extension of priestly purity regulations to the laity). H is connected with the famous Holiness Code of Lev 17-26; specifically, Lev 23, which we will discuss below, is attributed to H. Knohl believes that HS is responsible for the final editing of the Torah; Milgrom calls H P’s redactor. In a word, P limited itself to intra-Temple concerns, while HS sought to transcend these limits and integrate ethics and ritual. For MILGROM, *Leviticus 1-16, 26-27*, H is a priestly response to the eighth-century prophets’ social critique of the cult, “a comprehensive program of social rehabilitation in sacral terms” (quoting Knohl, who, however, dates things later than Milgrom), and P itself cannot be later than the mid-eighth century (28).

⁴⁸ See PAUL D. HANSON, *The People Called. The Growth of Community in the Bible* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), 226. The concrete image of this chaos was the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple by the Chaldeans in 587 B.C.E.

and idolatrous Israelites worshipped under their names are not to be called by name. Such was the religious pudency (modesty, *pudor* in Spanish) of these devout priests.

On the fifth day, animals to populate the waters and the skies are created, and the following day, the land animals together with “Adam,” which means “human being;” the plural verb in Gen 1:26 (“so that they rule”) indicates that the meaning is collective (as opposed to individual). When God speaks in the plural (“let us make the human being etc.”), most scholars believe that this reflects the idea that “God,” the supreme deity, is addressing the celestial court (including, in more primitive stages of this concept, lesser deities, the “sons of God” of Job 1:6, etc.), his divine council of intimates, somewhat like the U.S. president’s cabinet. This concept is quite important for understanding Israelite prophecy. The verb “rule” (or “have dominion”) is strong; it can also be translated as “submit, trample upon” (those poor little animals!), and may strike us as anti-ecological. But the idea behind it is of great importance. It establishes that the order willed by God from the beginning is that the beings created in his own image and likeness, human beings, should rule over the beasts that destroy and bring chaos upon the earth. The “beasts,” in the Bible, represent the pagan nations which oppress Israel. The classic use of this image is found in the apocalyptic section of Daniel, regarding the final unfolding of world history. In this book, the order originally willed by God according to our Genesis passage has been inverted, such that it is the beasts who have dominion over mankind, until God takes away this dominion from them and gives it to “one like a son of man” (Adam, or “human being”), Dan 7.⁴⁹ Cf. Pss 9:20-21; 10:18^b. In fact, the world

⁴⁹ The Priestly source was generally much less eschatologically or apocalyptically oriented. In the Priestly history, it is Josh 18:1 which corresponds to Gen 1:26, 28; it is there stated that with the conquest of the Promised Land, the whole earth (or land, since it is the same word in Hebrew) was already in subjection to Israel, using the same verb (“rule, have dominion”) as in Gen 1:26, 28. For some scholars, such as Joseph Blenkinsopp, Josh 18-19 is the end of the Priestly History. Note that for P, then, relevant history, or the history they are interested in recounting, ends with the conquest of the Promised Land, and not as our Pentateuch ends, which is with Deut and Israel being only at the *threshold* of entry into the Land, not yet in possession of it. Gerhard von Rad, based on ways of looking at these texts which now seem antiquated, spoke of a “Hexateuch,” consisting of the first *six* books of the Bible. If one views these books in this fashion, the story does have an ending, and a happy one: Israel gets the Land and presumably lives happily ever after! But it was decided to end the Pentateuch on the note of waiting which it has, and which allows for it to have an eschatological dimension of ‘promise awaiting fulfillment which will finally arrive’. Dtr circles would be much more inclined toward this view, and JAMES A. SANDERS, in “Canon,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (D.N. Freedman, ed. in chief; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1.840, attributes the cutting-off of the story at Deut the “triumph” of this school of thinkers. For NORBERT LOHFINK “El escrito sacerdotal y la historia,” in *Las tradiciones del Pentateuco en la época del exilio* (Cuadernos bíblicos 97; trad. esp. de José Luis Sicre; Estella [Navarra]: Verbo Divino, 1999), 20-25, the P source is not at all eschatological;

envisaged by God in the beginning is vegetarian, killing is not allowed; God gives as food, both to humans and other animals, plants and fruits, Gen 1:29-30. It is the sixth day. God has finished his work of creation, and pauses, or rests (*shabat*) on the seventh day (seven is a number associated with perfection or fullness in Hebrew), which is thus sanctified = consecrated, that is, dedicated to God. The priestly author finishes his account saying in Gen 2:4^a (the second part of the “verse” —these verse divisions were made about 2000 years later!— belongs to the following passage): “This is the *toledot* (= account) of the heavens and of the earth in their creation” (= when they were created). P divides his contributions to Gen into ten, using as a marker the word *toledot*, whose meaning can vary.⁵⁰ P is very orderly and meticulous (e.g., indicating exact dates). Let us note the order and symmetry he provides in his account of creation in six days. The first day, when God separated light from darkness, corresponds to the fourth day, the central (middle) day (this is of importance for Semitic authors), in which God made the luminaries which separate times and distinguish feast days. The second day, in which God separated the waters which are above the firmament from those below, corresponds to the fifth day, on which God creates the animals which live in the heavens (same word as for “skies” in Hebrew) and in the sea. The third day, when God created dry land, corresponds to the sixth day, in which God created land animals and human beings, who live on the dry land.

Gen 9:1-17. The *Jerusalem Bible* titles this passage “The new world order.” It is a P narrative. What has taken place is that, after God’s good creation, the earth became corrupt and was filled with violence, Gen 6:11-12. God repents (that’s the word in Hebrew, Gen 6:6, “was sorry” *NRSV*) of having created living beings. Only Noah is righteous, and he and his family are saved, along with certain pairs of animals, from the global flood which comes upon the earth. What emerges thereafter is a new creation. The

although there are punishments and catastrophes, there is no postponed salvation at the end of time, but rather always a return to the same thing, “to the stable and definitive structure of the world.” For PAUL HANSON, *The People Called*, 224, 230-232, however, there is some eschatology in the P source. This issue is important, because it is very relevant to the understanding of Judaism in the first century of the common area (that of Jesus and Paul). The Qumranites or Essenes, contemporaneous to earliest Christianity, were both priestly and eschatological/apocalyptic, and Paul, who was also eschatological and apocalyptic, will go behind (overpass) the Dtr legislation to the Priestly unconditional Promise of Genesis.

⁵⁰ *Toledot*, translated by *NRSV* almost always as “descendants,” is used in two series of accounts, first in Gen 2:4^a (*NRSV* “generations”); 5:1; 6:9; 10:1 and 11:10. Secondly, in 11:27; 25:12, 19; 36:1; 37:2 (*NRSV* “story”).

passage begins with the same divine blessing/command given to Noah and his sons, Gen 9:1-3, which God gave in Gen 1:28-29. But in this “new order” there is a sad difference. Instead of the peaceful, non-violent garden, it seems that now God is disillusioned about his creatures’ potential. God makes concessions reflecting a greater realism: “fear and dread” of human beings will weigh upon the animals, which can now kill and be killed for food.⁵¹ The pristine period of vegetarianism has ended, at least until the End Time.⁵² What must never be consumed is blood, one of the great Jewish taboos, Gen 9:4; blood is for purposes of expiation (or atonement) on the altar, Lev 17:10-12, a priestly function.⁵³ Homicide is also prohibited both for humans and for animals, Gen 9:5-6. The blessing of Gen 9:1 is repeated in 9:7, thus forming an *inclusio*, that is, a closing or bracketing of the unit (let us recall that the Bible originally was not divided in chapters or verses; its divisions are marked by literary devices such as *inclusiones* (plural) within the text itself.⁵⁴

What follows, Gen 9:8-17, is very important for P. After setting forth how God, extremely disappointed by human behavior (and perhaps also animal behavior!, 6:12-13), decided to finish with all creation, P now introduces one of its fundamental themes, that of the eternal (or everlasting) covenant (*berith ‘olam*), which is unbreakable, between God and all creation. Never again will God destroy the earth, a promise which gives Israel great hope after the catastrophe of the Exile. Cf. Isa 54:1-10. It is a universal covenant going way beyond Israel. God puts a sign of this covenant, the rainbow. When God sees it, God will remember this covenant. “To remember,” with God as subject, is a great P theme; for Dtr, “to remember” is rather what Israel should do. This eternal, P, “covenant” is really a unilateral promise, it is not conditioned on humans fulfilling any obligations, it is God who binds himself to act or forbear. For Dtr, the covenant, entered

⁵¹ We have seen that the beasts represent the pagan nations which oppressed Israel. Perhaps the (eschatological?) fulfillment of Gen 9:2, understood in this way, is proclaimed as a blessing in Deut 28:10.

⁵² Daniel and his companions eat a kosher diet of vegetables and water, Dan 1:12-16. Cf. Isa 11:5-7. In order to avoid problems to conscience (that of others’, not his own), Paul avoids eating meat “for ever always,” 1 Cor 8:7-13. See the eschatological return to vegetarianism Isa 11:6-9; cf. 2:1-5 || Mic 4:1-3..

⁵³ In Lev 3:17, eating fat is also prohibited as belonging to YHWH. Fat, when it was burned in a holocaust, produced that pleasing (or soothing) aroma which YHWH was so fond of, e.g., in Gen 8:20-21; Exod 29:18; Lev 1:9; Num 15:3 (but not in Deut!). Hanson tells us that the Levites, with whom Dtr is associated, and who were excluded from the ministerial priesthood (no altar service) by the Zadokites during the Exile, questioned the whole priestly program; *The People Called*, 232.

⁵⁴ These indications are called “linguistic markers;” see SKA, *Introducción*, 118.

into at Sinai (called “Horeb” by Dtr), imposes grave obligations on Israel (this is more of a true “covenant,” which comes from the Latin *convenire*, to come together in an agreement, a pact or compact). P does not speak of a “covenant” in this sense, or at least, does not use *berith* for it, but *’eduth* (“testimony”), as in “Ark of the Testimony” (Exod 25:22; cf. Num 10:33, a Dtr text; Deut 10:8; 31:9, etc.).

Gen 12:1-3. This text has traditionally been attributed to J. It is the famous passage of the call of Abram. “Abram” means the same as “Abraham,” “the father is exalted (or great),” despite Gen 17:5. Abram has left his land, Ur of the Chaldeans, which is Babylon. He has gone off to an unknown land by divine command. Jewish tradition has it that Abraham left Ur because he was disgusted with the idolatry there (his father was an idol maker). God promises Abram that he will make of him a “great nation,” and will bless him and make his name great (unlike the men of the Tower of Babel, who on their own wanted to make a great name for themselves = be famous, Gen 11:4). Abram will be a blessing; all the families or “tribes” of the earth will bless themselves by Abram, Gen 12:3, that is, Abram will become synonymous with “blessed person,” so that in order to bless someone it will be said “may you be as happy (or blessed, etc.) as Abram.”⁵⁵

Gen 15:1-21. Traditionally, this passage was seen as composed of J and E. Visions are supposedly an “E thing.” In this passage, we are told of Abram’s anguish: he is going to die without sons despite the above Promise. YHWH now shows him the heavens and tells him that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars. And Abram believed or trusted YHWH, who reckoned (like entering it into a bookkeeping ledger) it to him as “righteousness,” *tsedaqah*, the state of one who is on right terms with God.⁵⁶ Along with the promise of innumerable descendants, YHWH now promises Abram the Holy Land, showing him its borders (in Gen 15:5; in 15:18, the promise is to Abram’s

⁵⁵ Based on the Greek (LXX) version, which reads “in you shall be blessed all the tribes of the earth,” but using the word “nations” (= Gentiles) from Gen 22:18, Paul applies this phrase to all the Gentiles who believe in Christ, Gal 3:8. Acts 3:25 will employ yet another word, “families” (*patriai*).

⁵⁶ On “believed,” see footnote 99 below. A central biblical theme, and for Christians probably the most important, is that of “justification,” how to be in the right relationship with God. For Paul, Gen 15:6 is perhaps the key passage of the Old Testament; see Rom 4. Paul’s most important declaration on justification is found in Rom 3:21-26. *Tsedaqah* (“righteousness, justice”) is closely linked to, and often identified with, “salvation;” see Isa 56:1; 59:17.

descendants), as in ancient Near Eastern land grants.⁵⁷ Abram prepares a sacrifice, cutting the animals down the middle (to signify the making of a covenant, which in Hebrew is literally “cutting a covenant,” which also indicates the terrible consequences of breaking it).⁵⁸ YHWH makes a covenant with Abraham, the other great P “covenant,” after the one with Noah: another eternal covenant, unbreakable and without conditions, as we shall more clearly see in Gen 17.

It is noteworthy that already in this passage we have a reference to the Exile, Gen 15:13-16.⁵⁹ The reference is to the stay in Egypt, some four hundred years of slavery (see Exod 12:40).⁶⁰ Like the “Patriarchs,” or better, Fathers, Israel shall also be a pilgrim (or “stranger”) in a strange (foreign) land, but God will finally save them and they shall come out well-off from their oppression. Gen 15:16 is commonly understood as a reference to four patriarchal generations each consisting of one hundred years; this is not wholly clear. The Amorites are the inhabitants of Canaan, that is, the Canaanites, especially in Dtr.

Gen 17:1-27. We are again in a clearly P passage. This is the account of the other great P covenant, this time with Abram, who here receives the name Abraham. This variant of Abram is used by the author, via the popular (i.e., non-scientific) etymologies common in the Bible, to signify that Abraham will be the “father of a multitude of

⁵⁷ These are the ideal borders of the land of Israel, which it enjoyed under David and Solomon. See Josh 1:4; 1 Kgs 5:1 [NRSV 4:21] and the note to Gen 15:18 in *New Oxford Annotated Bible. Third Edition (NOAB)* (M.D. Coogan, ed.; Oxford – New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 32.

⁵⁸ See *NOAB* note to Gen 15:9-17, page 32.

⁵⁹ See reference to a Priestly editor (from the Exile period) in the *NOAB* note to Gen 15:9-17, page 32. The time of slavery in Egypt is the prototype for all exile, but especially the Babylonian Exile, as leaving Babylon will be considered a new Exodus; Jesus’ passage from this world to the next in the Paschal mystery which saves us (and which, in a way, thus becomes our exodus) is called his “exodus” in the Greek text of Luke 9:31 (see *NOAB* note here).

⁶⁰ “Four hundred years” may be a round-off of the more “exact” 430 years, as in Acts 7:6. This may or may not jibe well with the notion of a Priestly editor referred to in the above footnote (the editor may be reproducing an ancient tradition, as in Acts). But note the Priestly exactness of Exod 12:41: the Exodus takes place the very same day that the 430 years comes to an end! Other examples of P’s preoccupation with exact dates of significance are: creation takes place, of course, the first day of the year, New Year’s Day, Gen 1:1-5; the post-flood world also begins on New Year’s Day, 8:13; and —of the highest importance for P— the erection of the sanctuary also takes place on the first day of the year, Exod 40:2, 17. On the importance of dates for the biblical writers much more could be said; see BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 35, 48-50, 186. Cf. Lohfink, *Las tradiciones*, 18; LUIS-FERNANDO GIRÓN BLANC, *Seder ‘Olam Rabbah. El gran orden del universo. Una cronología judía* (Biblioteca midrásica; Estella [Navarra]: Ed. Verbo Divino, 1996). There is an interesting book by JACK FINNEGAN, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology. Revised Edition* (Peabody, MA: Hendrikson: 1964, 1998).

nations,” meaning Gentiles (in Hebrew, *goyim* = pagans, non-Jews).⁶¹ This covenant between God and Abraham, more intimate than the one with Noah (“between us two,” Gen 17:2, 7), is also “everlasting,” from generation to generation. It consists in God being the God of Abraham and his descendants, “your God,” a favorite P theme,⁶² and God’s granting of the Land on which Abraham now walks merely as a “pilgrim,” which can be translated as exile, foreigner, refugee.⁶³ This eternal covenant also has a sign, circumcision, 17:11, like the rainbow in 9:12, 17.⁶⁴ Circumcision will become a great obligation—it is the only one the passage speaks of—for Jews.⁶⁵ Note that Sarai’s name is also changed (to Sarah); this may be another instance of P’s taste for pairings and symmetry (the blessing Sarah gets is the same as Abraham’s).⁶⁶ On account of Abraham,⁶⁷ Gen 17:20, God will bless his son Ishmael, whom he had with the slave woman Hagar, but the eternal covenant shall be with the “legitimate” heir Isaac. Abraham is circumcised at ninety-nine years of age; in the Jewish tradition, this is considered to be one of his ten trials (cf. Jud 8:26; 1 Macc 2:52; Heb 11:17). That same day all who were with Abraham were also circumcised.

Gen 37:2-36; 39:1-48:22; 50:1-26. “The Story of Joseph”: this is how it’s called, but the author or final redactor called it the *toledot* or story of *Jacob*, that is, Israel (see Gen 32:29), for he is interested in recounting how Israel came to be in Egypt, and in what

⁶¹ Actually, “father of a multitude” would be *ab-hamôn*, as the *Jerusalem Bible* note d to Gen 17:5 explains.

⁶² This is part of a formula found only in P; see Exod 29:45; Deut 29:12 [*NRSV* 29:13], a P text. See the very similar expression of Ezekiel, priest in the Exile, Ezek 37:26-27.

⁶³ See my article ““Welcoming the Foreigner: A Biblical Theology View,” *Josephinum. Journal of Theology* 11.2 (Summer/Fall 2004) 226-234.

⁶⁴ “So that my covenant be in your flesh as an eternal covenant,” Gen 17:13. In the Exile, the issues of population and procreation became very important for the survival of the people, and circumcision serves as a very apt reminder of this promise which is reiterated in Gen 17:2, 4-7, 16 (although circumcision is an older rite, and population concerns were common to most ancient peoples and periods). See RENDTORFF, *Old Testament*, 162, regarding the Priestly tradition and the signs of circumcision (Gen 17:11), Passover (Exod 12:13) and the Sabbath (31:13, 17); circumcision and the Sabbath are also called “eternal covenant,” Gen 17:13 (see above), Exod 31:16).

⁶⁵ During the Babylonian Exile, the Jews protected their newfound identity as the chosen people being purified and renewed amidst of all the temptations of the pagan environment by means of three characteristic practices: circumcision, Sabbath observance and keeping a kosher diet. P puts a special emphasis on these three things. We have seen here the origin of circumcision, Gen 1 establishes the Sabbath, and the dietary laws are found in Lev, the Priestly book par excellence placed at the center of the Pentateuch.

⁶⁶ Luke the evangelist often places a man and a woman in tandem, e.g., Zechariah and Elizabeth, Simeon and Anna, the man who lost a sheep and the woman who lost a coin, etc.

⁶⁷ See Gen 16:11.

conditions, and how Joseph behaved in a foreign land surrounded by temptations, and how it is God who is in control of all events, so that even the evil intentions of human beings cannot frustrate God's divine plan of salvation. This account has been called a *novella* by many scholars.⁶⁸ Let us read it with pleasure and care.

Joseph incurs the envy of his brothers. He seems haughty and conceited, speaks ill of his brothers, and even tells of a dream he's had in which everyone, including his father Jacob and his mother Rachel,⁶⁹ bow down before him.⁷⁰ Joseph is given to dreams and to their interpretation; this is an important topic in the sapiential literature—proper to the wise—something which was always very much esteemed by Israel as having great importance for living properly and well. Let us call to mind a great model of wisdom, Daniel, a figure who already appears in the Ugaritic literature (before Israel came to Canaan; Ugarit was a city on the coast of Syria) with the name Danel, a just man whose name means “God judges.”⁷¹ Daniel, according to the book in the Bible which has his name, found himself in exile in Babylon, and there had to overcome his own trials, but in everything he was victorious due to his right conduct and fidelity to the God of Israel. Like Joseph, Daniel interpreted dreams.⁷² They are models for Jews in exile. The prototypical exile was the sojourn in Egypt, but what the biblical authors, especially those of the Pentateuch, have in mind is the Babylonian Exile, which was a punishment which should never happen again.⁷³

⁶⁸ “A story with a compact and pointed plot,” *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* (“*Webster's*”) (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1990), 809.

⁶⁹ See *Jerusalem Bible* note e to Gen 37:10, or the *NOAB* note to 37:9-11 on page 62.

⁷⁰ Ironically, it is Joseph who in the end will prostrate himself before Jacob, Gen 48:12; cf. 47:31. The biblical accounts are full of this type of literary gem which are discovered through careful reading and rereading.

⁷¹ This personage is mentioned in Ezek 14:14, 20; 28:3, in association with other ancient, legendary men, Noah and Job.

⁷² Joseph and Daniel are described with the same expression, as men of “wisdom and understanding,” Gen 41:33, 39; Dan 1:20, much abler than the “magicians and diviners” of Babylon, 2:27, who were impressive and had a great reputation (recall the Magi of Matt 2). The Israelites in exile have nothing to ask these foreigners. Joseph is superior to the “magicians and all the wise men of Egypt,” Gen 41:8, 14-40. God himself is the one who bestows wisdom to those who are his, Gen 41:16, 25, 28; cf. 44:15; Dan 2:20-23, 27-30. Both Joseph and Daniel are humble despite the wisdom that God has given them, and both are placed in high positions, Gen 41:40; Dan 2:48, and both “prospered,” Gen 39:23; Dan 6:29. This is the lot of the person who is faithful to God, even if he is in exile.

⁷³ The expression “to go back to Egypt” refers to exile, considered as a place of punishment where one must never return, that is, Israel must avoid incurring in such cursed guilt; see Deut 17:16; Hos 8:13; 9:3. In fact, some Jews fled to Egypt in order to avoid the Babylonian invasion, taking the prophet Jeremiah with them, Jer 43:1-7; 44:1-30.

In Egypt—that land which is not Israel’s place to be, but rather exile,⁷⁴ God *is with* Joseph, Gen 39:2, as God had been with the Fathers.⁷⁵ Israel can count on God’s presence. Joseph is successful due to God’s help, Gen 39:2-3. On account of God’s love for Joseph, Potiphar the Egyptian, in whose house Joseph lived, is blessed. But temptation soon comes, in the form of a foreign woman, Potiphar’s wife. Joseph resists it, but is falsely accused. He now finds himself in jail, but YHWH remains with him (notice that this becomes like a refrain or *leitmotif*) and extends his *hesed*, “love, grace, mercy,” to him, Gen 39:20-23. Joseph continues to prosper: he is now in charge of the whole jail!

The *novella* continues in Gen 40-41 with the account of the dreams, full of word plays which are a joy to read. Joseph states that the one who gives wisdom is God, 41:16; he now seems more humble than at the beginning. Pharaoh realizes that Joseph has the Spirit of God, and puts him in charge of everything, 41:38-40.⁷⁶ Then comes famine to all the lands, and the wise and provident (= who sees ahead) Joseph is prepared to provide food for everyone, 41:56-57. His brothers now come from Canaan, knowing nothing of what happened to the one they had sold, and now they need him. Joseph’s dream is fulfilled—at least partially—when his brothers bow down before him, 42:6 (also in 43:26; 44:14; 50:18).

The name “Joseph” came to designate the important tribes of the north of Israel, Ephraim and Manasseh.⁷⁷ But what is emphasized here is that “we are twelve brothers, sons of one man,” 42:13. The *reconciliation* is being prepared, while Joseph weeps out of their view, 42:24. The brothers discern that what is occurring is God’s doing, 42:28.⁷⁸ The plot thickens in Gen 43: the famine continues, and now Joseph asks that they bring Benjamin, Jacob’s youngest son, and the only brother born of the same mother (Rachel) as Joseph. Joseph cannot hold back his emotions upon seeing him, and gives him a portion five times as great as the others’, 43:29-34.⁷⁹ No doubt, this story brought tears to

⁷⁴ Note the expression “Joseph was taken down to Egypt,” Gen 39:2. To go to the Promised Land is to *go up*, Gen 46:3-4; 50:24.

⁷⁵ God was a shield for Abraham, Gen 15:1, and was with Isaac, 26:3, on account of the oath made to Abraham, 26:24, and God was with Jacob, 31:13, and with Moses, Exod 3:12.

⁷⁶ Cf. Exod 8:15-16.

⁷⁷ See JOHN L. MCKENZIE, *Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 456.

⁷⁸ The steward tells them to fear not, that the money which is in their sacks was put there by God, 43:23.

⁷⁹ Benjamin also receives more in Gen 45:22. Note the *separation* which must take place between Jews and non-Jews when eating, 43:32, attributed here to the Egyptian’s aversion; see also 46:34.

those who heard or read it, especially in the original Hebrew.

Now Joseph does a trick (Gen 44) whose purpose seems to be that Jacob come, too. He causes to be hidden in his brothers' sacks not only the money used to buy the grain they are taking to Canaan, but also his own silver cup in Benjamin's sack. When the steward overtakes and accuses them, the brothers offers themselves as slaves of Joseph, which is yet another way of bowing down before him, 44:9, 14. Now Joseph's brothers fully acknowledge their guilt and its well-deserved punishment (becoming his slaves, finally validating the dream he had), 44:16; see also 50:18.⁸⁰

Joseph can hold out no longer, and sobs so much and so loudly that *all* the Egyptians heard it, 45:1-2, as the LXX says. And he now identifies himself: "I am your brother, Joseph," 45:4. All that has occurred is given a theological interpretation:

and now do not be distressed or angry at yourselves for having sold me here, for in order to preserve life did God send me before you . . . , and God sent me before you in order to leave you a *remnant* (*she'erit*) in the Land, and so that a great *group of escapees* (*peleitah*) survive you, 45:5, 7-8.

It is a message of hope, using key words recognized by the survivors of God's catastrophic judgment.⁸¹

Joseph orders his brothers to tell Jacob that God has made him "lord" of all Egypt, and that they will live in the best part of the country, where Joseph will maintain them, 45:9-11, 18, 20; 50:21.⁸² With tears and kisses comes perfect reconciliation between the brothers, 45:14-15. An emotional encounter also takes place between Joseph and his father Jacob, who can now die in peace, 46:28-30. Jacob had not even dreamed that all this would be possible, 48:11, but God is always greater than what we had hoped.⁸³ Everything turns out for the best.

Thus Israel-Jacob goes down to Egypt. God, in a night vision, tells him to not fear *going down* to Egypt, because there God will make of him a great nation (*goy gadol*, Gen

⁸⁰ Recall 37:8.

⁸¹ As was the Babylonian Exile. The classic "faithful remnant" passage is Zeph 3:12-13 (using the verbal form of *she'erit* also); another form of the noun (*she'ar*), together with *peleitah*, is found in Isa 10:20. *Peleitah* means a group that has escaped ruin, refugees; classic passages, referring to the Babylonian Exile, are Ezek 6:8-10 (cf. Lev 26:36, 39); 7:16; 24:25-27; 33:21-22. On the theological aspects of the Joseph Story, see NORMAN WHYBRAY, *Introduction to the Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 57.

⁸² A decision ratified by Pharaoh himself in 47:6, 11.

⁸³ "*Deus semper maior.*"

46:3-4, as in Gen 12:2 and Deut 4:7). God himself will *go down with him* and will also *make him go up*, that is, enter the Promised Land.⁸⁴ Jacob makes a beautiful profession of faith in 48:15-16.⁸⁵ God will do the same with his sons the Israelites, 48:21 (see also 28:3). The list of names in 46:8-27 prepares us for the Book of Exodus, which the Jews call “Names.” They were seventy persons, 46:27; Exod 1:5, keepers of livestock, Gen 46:32-33.⁸⁶ They have pharaoh’s permission to practise their occupation, 47:1-6, and the great patriarch Jacob blesses pharaoh.⁸⁷ Note the wretchedness of the wanderer, who has no land of his own: Jacob tells pharaoh that the years of his life of “sojournings” have been wretched and few, 47:9. But because of the divine blessing, Israel multiplies much in Egypt, 47:27; the Promise is being fulfilled, 48:3-4.

But it is not in Egypt where Israel should remain. Jacob wants to be buried with his fathers, in that cave of Machpelah which Abraham purchased (Gen 25:9; 49:29-50:13). So all *go up* to Canaan to bury Jacob, 50:4-9. Once more, the issue of the evil done to Joseph by his brothers resurfaces; the latter tell Joseph that Jacob their father had commanded him before he died, “please, pardon their transgression and the sin of your brothers,” 50:16-17. Joseph cries (all is forgiven), and he repeats his theological view, full of faith and spiritual discernment: all had gone according to God’s plan, 50:19-21. Genesis ends with a great promise which links up with Exodus: “God *will surely visit you and will make you go up* from this land to the Land that he swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. . . . God *will surely visit you*, and you *will make my bones go up* from here,” 50:24-25.⁸⁸ The book concludes, then, like the Pentateuch, on a note of waiting and hoping.

⁸⁴ See footnote 6 above. One always *goes up* to the Promised Land, and *goes down* into Egypt.

⁸⁵ Recall Gen 31:3; 26:3 (Isaac).

⁸⁶ See *Jerusalem Bible* note f to Gen 46:34.

⁸⁷ The greater blesses the lesser, Heb 7:7. These good relations will change when another pharaoh enters the picture, Exod 1:8-14.

⁸⁸ Exod 3:16 (Hebrew text); 4:31; 13:19. In other instances in Exod and other parts of the Bible, “to visit” has the sense of “calling to account, punish.” For RENDTORFF, *Old Testament*, 143 (see also 137, 144, 162), the concept of the promise or the sworn oath to grant the Land to Abraham’s descendants is Dtr.

Exodus

Exod 1:1-7:7. This book begins by giving the names of the sons of Jacob, that is, of the twelve tribes of Israel. By the end of the Pentateuch, these seventy persons will be as numerous as the stars of the sky, Deut 10:22, thus fulfilling part of the divine Promise to Abraham, Gen 15:5 (possession of the Land yet remains to be accomplished). What is more, in Exod 1:7, a P text, if we translate “filled the earth” —it is the same word in Hebrew that is usually here translated as “land”— the promise-command-blessing of Gen 1:28 is fulfilled.

Adversity arrives with a change of pharaoh, and the Israelites are oppressed with labor that is very hard for shepherds. They have become slaves. The reason is ironic: it’s because they have multiplied so much!, Exod 1:8-10. But the very oppression itself makes them multiply even more!, 1:12. The Egyptians fear, which is as it should be; cf. Deut 2:25; 11:25.⁸⁹

A Levite, handsome like Joseph (Gen 39:6) and David (1 Sam 16:12), is born, and in order to save him, he is put in the river, where pharaoh’s daughter recovers him, Exod 2:1-5. He is recognized as a Hebrew, and is nursed by his own mother. Pharaoh’s daughter adopts him and names him Moses.⁹⁰ When Moses was grown, he went out to visit (as Acts 7:23 puts it) see his countrymen, 2:11, and sees that they are mistreated. Moses kills an Egyptian and flees to Midian, in what is today Saudi Arabia. Moses’ role is that of a *savior*, which is how he is described in 2:17, 19, using two different words which have to do with freeing someone from a predicament (really, a “tight spot,” where “anguish” comes from); this is the etymological meaning of “to save” in Hebrew.⁹¹ Moses ends up marrying the daughter of the priest of Midian; being an alien far from his own land, he thus names his first son, 2:21-22.⁹²

In a moving P text, Exod 2:23-25 says that God heard the groans of the Israelites and *remembered* his covenant with the Fathers. Exod 2:25, if read according to the LXX, would say, “and [God] made himself known to them,” which, according to professor

⁸⁹ Recall Gen 9:2; Dan 7:1-8, and see page 21 and footnote 51 above. Cf. Deut 7:22; 32:24.

⁹⁰ The name is Egyptian; see the *NOAB* note to Exod 2:10 on page 86.

⁹¹ Cf. Acts 7:35, which seeks to establish a link with Jesus, 5:31 (the word parallel is almost exact in Greek, but not in the *NRSV*).

⁹² The *King James Version* translation in Exod 2:22, “stranger in a strange land” became the title of a popular sixties’ book by Robert A. Heinlein.

Blenkinsopp “is the focal point of the narrative.”⁹³ Note the literary change in 3:1: Moses is introduced again, and his father-in-law’s name is different. Traditionally, this episode of the burning bush was attributed to a combination of J and E; the “angel of YHWH” would be typical of E, as is the fear of God in 3:6. “Horeb” is the name preferred by Dtr for Mount Sinai. It is “the mountain of God,” 3:2. The call of Moses follows a common pattern; see Gen 22:1; 1 Sam 3:4.

YHWH calls Israel *his* people, whose affliction he has seen, 3:7. God says he has *come down* to deliver (same salvation-verb as in 2:19, where *NRSV* has “helped”) them from the hand of the Egyptians in order to *make them go up* to a good Land etc., 3:8. God *sends* Moses to Pharaoh to let his people go, 3:10.⁹⁴ Moses’ hesitancy is typical; it seems he stutters, but it is YHWH who will speak for him, 4:10-12.⁹⁵ When Moses doubts his own abilities, God replies: “I am (or will be) with you,” *ehyeh ‘immak*, 3:11-12, which seems to prepare the revelation of the divine Name which follows (see footnote 5 above). Moses says that the Israelites will want to know God’s name, for it will not be enough to tell them that he is “the God of your fathers.” God responds, “*ehyeh asher ehyeh*, and thus shall you say to the sons of Israel, *ehyeh* has sent me to you,” 3:14. “*ehyeh*” is the first person singular Qal imperfect form of the Hebrew verb “to be” (in Spanish, “*ser o estar*”), and can be translated “I am” (in Spanish, “*yo soy o estoy*”) or “I will be” (in Spanish, “*yo seré o estaré*”), since the Hebrew imperfect allows for such indeterminacy. *ehyeh asher ehyeh* is usually translated “I am who I am,” but this is only one possibility, and is marked by a metaphysical orientation (thus, the LXX renders it *ho ōn*, something like saying “Being”) which is pretty unHebraic. The name of God, given as YHWH in 3:15 (the famous Tetragrammaton = having [the ineffable] Four Letters, but how is this to be pronounced?), appears as *ehyeh* in an early passage (eighth century B.C.E.), Hos 1:9, “I (am) not *ehyeh* to you,” as if *ehyeh* were the name of Israel’s God. This leads us to think that the name of God is really a *verb*, the verb “to be” in the sense of “being *with*,”

⁹³ *Pentateuch*, 150. Cf. Exod 6:3.

⁹⁴ When God “sends” someone in the Bible, it is an official commission. Joseph was sent, Gen 45:5, 7-8. The true prophets were sent, Jer 7:25; 26:12, but not the false ones, 14:14. From the Greek translation of the Hebrew comes the word “apostle.”

⁹⁵ Cf. Jer 1:6-9. In the P (or perhaps H) text, Exod 7:1-2, the high priest Aaron will speak for Moses; note the parity in 7:6. In the P-school texts 6:12, 30 the expression for stutterer is “I am uncircumcised of lips.”

evoking an accompanying presence which saves.⁹⁶ One could then translate *ehyeh asher ehyeh* as “I am the one who is [with you].” Or, retaining a bit more of the mystery, “I am/will be *ehyeh* = the one who is/will be with you, etc.” YHWH God does not have a concrete or static (unmoving) name, but rather an elusive, dynamic, one.

God’s promised visit is fulfilled, 3:16; recall Gen 50:24-25. Moses and the elders of Israel must go ask Pharaoh for permission to go out in order to sacrifice to God in the wilderness, but God already knows that the “king of Egypt” will only let them go if he is forced, Exod 3:16-20. But when they do leave, they shall take precious gifts with them, 3:21-22.⁹⁷

In Exod 4, Moses returns to Egypt. We are now told that it is YHWH himself who will harden Pharaoh’s heart so that he not let the people leave. The tenth and last plague is prepared, the one which will force Pharaoh’s hand: Israel is YHWH’s firstborn son; since Pharaoh will not allow him to go to worship YHWH, YHWH will kill Pharaoh’s firstborn, 4:22-23; see 12:29. Note the mysterious passage 4:24-26, where it appears that Moses is not circumcised, and his wife Zipporah saves him from YHWH’s wrath with a bit of “sympathetic” magic.⁹⁸ The topic of *faith* as necessary for the people is important; it was already prepared for in 4:5, 8-9. In 4:31 (and 14:31), we are told that the people *believed*.⁹⁹ It is of the highest importance to the final redactors of the Pentateuch that Israel believe or trust in Moses’ mediation, and in the Law which God gives through him. The great sin of the Exodus generation will be this lack of “faith,” which is rather a trust in God which leads to obedience, as in Abraham’s case.¹⁰⁰ See Exod 19:9; cf. John 5:46.

⁹⁶ See BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 149. Recall the passages in which God promises to be with the Fathers, and with Joseph. “YHWH” is a little-understood form of the same Hebrew verb “to be.” See the note to Exod 3:14-15 in *NOAB* pages 87-88, and *Jerusalem Bible* note h to Exod 3:14; cf. RICHARD J. CLIFFORD, “Exodus,” *NJBC*, 47.

⁹⁷ It is a common theme in the Bible that Israel, who suffered many invasions and despoilments, gets the better of foreigners and their property in its encounters with them; see, e.g., Gen 12:15-16; 20:14; in the End Time, Isa 60.

⁹⁸ “Sympathetic magic” seeks to cause an effect by like actions, such as pouring water on the ground in order to make it rain. Here, Moses is circumcised vicariously. Circumcision in antiquity is considered by many to have been an apotropaic act (to ward off evil); see BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 152.

⁹⁹ In Hebrew, what we translate as “believe” comes from the verb *aman*, whence comes “amen.” It is a verb whose different forms can mean “be firm, trust, be constant, faithful.” From a noun derived from this verbal root comes *emet* and *emunah*, “fidelity,” but at times translated “truth.” Dtr describes in 2 Kgs 17:7-14 the causes of the catastrophe which befell Israel (“they did not believe in YHWH their God”).

¹⁰⁰ See Deut 1:20-21, 26, 29-35; 9:23-24. Moses’ mediation is due to the request of the people, who feared direct dealings with God, 5:23-31; 18:16; this is a great Dtr theme. Cf. Exod 33:11; Num 12:6-8; Deut 34:10-12.

Moses and Aaron (the joint presence as equals makes one think of a priestly redactor) go to Pharaoh and ask for permission to go “celebrate a pilgrimage feast.”¹⁰¹ What Pharaoh does, however, is increase their load; he does not acknowledge YHWH, 5:1-9. The people begin to complain,¹⁰² a theme which dominates the Book of Numbers. The complaints are against Moses and Aaron, and the accusation is serious, 5:19-21. We have dissidents here, who will fall under great reproach in the Pentateuch.¹⁰³

In Exod 6:2-8, we have what some consider the most authentic account of Moses’ call (more so than the better-known passage 3:1-12). It is a P text. YHWH identifies himself as the ‘God of the Fathers’, to whom he was known as *ēl shadday*.¹⁰⁴ There is reference to the covenant-Promise made to the Fathers that God would give them the land of Canaan, in which they have been mere sojourners. God has heard the groaning of the Israelites and has *remembered* his covenant. “I YHWH” begins and ends the pericope (literary unit) as an *inclusio* (which we have seen).¹⁰⁵ The genealogy in Exod 6:14-25 is a very “P thing” (other examples, headed by the word *toledot*, are in Gen 5:1-32; 11:10-32).

In Exod 7:1-7 (we are still in P texts), we have another instance of parity (equality) between Moses and his brother Aaron, from whom descends the Jewish priesthood. Here it is said that YHWH will harden Pharaoh’s heart and perform many “signs and wonders” in Egypt, so that the Egyptians will acknowledge that “I [am]

¹⁰¹ Using the verb *ḥagag*, from which *ḥag* comes, the word for the three great pilgrimage feasts of Israel (Passover, Weeks/Pentecost, Huts/Tabernacles); cf. Arabic *ḥajj*, as in the pilgrimage to Mecca. The verb is also used in 12:14 for Passover and in 23:14 for the three great feasts, although these are called by other names there.

¹⁰² Or their “taskmasters and foremen” (*RSV*) complain, 5:10, 15, 19, etc. The LXX has “taskmasters and scribes.”

¹⁰³ Examples are found in Num 12:1-10; 16:1-35; 17:6-15.

¹⁰⁴ *ēl* = “God.” *shadday* occurs in Aramaic in the plural as synonymous with “gods;” CONRAD L’HEUREUX, “Numbers,” *NJBC*, 89. For some, it may be one of the epithets of *ēl*, the great god of the Canaanite pantheon; RICHARD J. CLIFFORD, “Genesis,” *NJBC*, 19. We should here note that Canaanite religion had enormous influence on Israelite religion. See instances of *ēl shadday* in Gen 17:1; 28:3; 35:11, etc. Other appellations of God are *ēl ‘olam* (“Eternal God,” 21:33), *ēl berith* (Judg 9:46 [cf. 9:4]) and the important *ēl ‘elyon*, “God Most High,” which is very frequent, e.g., Gen 14:18, 19, 20, 22; Deut 32:8; Ps 91:1; in Aramaic, *‘elyonin*, Dan 7:18, 22, 25, 27, which could be behind Mark 5:7. See CLIFFORD, “Genesis,” *NJBC*, 19.

¹⁰⁵ This expression (*NRSV* “I am the LORD”) is also found in Ezek 37:6, 13-14, 28, important exilic texts with a close link to P. Note the formula “my Dwelling will be with (or among) them, I shall be their God and they shall be my people,” 37:27, which summarizes the whole of P theology. Exod 29:42^b-46 is called by Hanson “the heart of P,” *The People Called*, 225.

YHWH,” 7:5.¹⁰⁶ Note the holy war language, of great importance in the Bible (7:4, “my armies”). YHWH was first of all a warrior deity who led Israel in battle. In later periods, this idea was spiritualized, so that there would indeed be warfare before the final saving victory, but God would wage it, not human beings.¹⁰⁷ Israel, according to P, marches through the wilderness as a holy army, with the ark of God in the center (Num 2:17).¹⁰⁸

Exod 19:1-24:18. Let us immediately note the exact P date given in 19:1. For this meticulous author, the march through the wilderness takes place in twelve stages or steps, each one signaled by a “rubric,”¹⁰⁹ beginning with 12:37.¹¹⁰ In 19:1-2, we are in the seventh step, very important, but for P, once Israel arrives at Sinai, what is important is not the covenant to be made there, but rather the glorious presence of God which covered the mountain, 24:15^a-18^a. If we wanted to follow just the P narrative, we should jump from 19:2 right to 24:15 (note that 19:3 says that Moses went up to God, which is duplicated in 24:15^a). For P, there is no covenant at Sinai; for Dtr, this is the all-important covenant, with its obligations.

But let us look at the narrative as it is found in the present text of our Bible. God calls Moses from the mountain, reminds him of God’s exploits in Egypt and of God’s parental care for Israel, 19:4. God exhorts Israel to obey him and keep his covenant; this is a Dtr text. The people commit to do what YHWH has said through the mouth of Moses. Notice Moses’ intermediary role: he conveys to the people what YHWH has said, and transmits to YHWH the people’s response, 19:7-8. The author (or redactor, etc.) is

¹⁰⁶ The same formula is found in 6:6, 8. The verb “to be” is implied, but not written, and I have thus put it in brackets. The Spanish king would sign off his edicts “Yo el Rey.”

¹⁰⁷ Zech 4:6; 14:3, 5; Isa 63:1-6, but see already Josh 24:11-13; 1 Sam 17:45-47. Jericho fell to Joshua’s forces as a result of a liturgical procession, Josh 6:1-21 (the Qumran Essenes had the same idea about how the final victory would occur; see R.E. BROWN, “Apocrypha; Dead Sea Scrolls; other Jewish literature,” *NJBC*, 1071); YHWH does not want Gideon’s army to be too numerous, lest it be thought that human prowess obtained the victory, Judg 7. In the later Second temple period (from the fifth century B.C.E. on), it is common to call God YHWH *tsebaot* (“of the armies,” understood to be angels), Zech 14:16; Mal 2:8; 3:1, 7, 10, 14, etc.

¹⁰⁸ See Exod 12:41; 14:13-14; Num 1:48-2:34; 10:11-28 (note the exact P date), 35-36, etc.

¹⁰⁹ So to speak. *Webster’s*, 1028, defines “rubric,” which comes from the Latin word for red ocher, as “a heading of a part of a book or manuscript done or underlined in a color (as red) different from the rest.” What we have here are literary markers, usually “they set out,” or the like.

¹¹⁰ The stages are: second, 13:20; third, 14:2; fourth, 15:22; fifth, 16:1; sixth, 17:1; seventh, 19:2; eighth, Num 10:11; ninth, 20:1; tenth, 20:22; eleventh, 21:10; twelfth, 22:1.

very interested in accrediting Moses (giving him credentials), so that he be forever believed and obeyed in everything he says, 19:9.¹¹¹

The people prepare for the meeting with God on the *third day*, 19:10-11.¹¹² They wash their clothes and abstain from sexual activity. God will come down in a thick cloud over the mountain, making it holy, so that whoever touches it must die, 19:12-13. The Sinai theophany is tremendous, it will never be forgotten, 19:16-18. It is then that the Lord gives the “Ten Commandments.”

Exod 20:1-21 used to be attributed to E; the thinking now is that it is Dtr. Indicia of this are the following pet Dtr terms: “other gods,” “idol or likeness,” “jealous God,” “who love me and keep my commandments,” “the resident alien (in Hebrew, this is the same word translated at times as “pilgrim, stranger;” “foreigner” is best used for another Hebrew word) who dwells in your cities,” “so that your days may be prolonged on the Land,” and perhaps others. But it is a composite text. The reason for keeping the Sabbath sounds like P (Gen 2:2-3. The fear in Exod 20:18, 20 was considered to be an E theme, but it is incorporated into Dtr in texts such as Deut 6:2, and it is found here in function of Moses’ mediation: it is necessary because the people, who could have heard God directly, did not want to, because they feared to die of fright, Exod 20:18-21.

What follows, 20:22-23:13 is usually called the “Book of the Covenant,” an expression taken from 24:7. It is the Bible’s oldest legal code, later “replaced” by Deut 12:1-26:15, the “Book of the Law.” Notice the *inclusio* formed by Exod 20:23 and 23:13 (the reference to idols). Note that 20:24 allows ritual sacrifices in multiple places, something Deut will prohibit, centralizing the cult in the Jerusalem Temple alone. The *lex talionis*, the “law of talion” (‘such [in Latin, *talis*] a penalty for such a like crime,’ “an eye for an eye”) in Exod 21:23-25 is meant to put limits on vengeance.¹¹³ The thirty sheqels of silver in 21:32 is the legal value (“damages”) of a slave gored by an ox. This sum of money is cited in Zech 11:12-13 to denote the poor esteem in which God’s prophet, and YHWH himself, is held. It is the price for which Judas sells Jesus, Matt 27:3. The obligation of double restitution in Exod 22:3 is doubled again by Zacchaeus in

¹¹¹ Ultimately, what is to be believed and obeyed through Moses are “the words of this Torah,” Deut 31:24, that is, the whole Pentateuch.

¹¹² The third day is often an important one, a day of salvation, as in Gen 22:4; 2 Kgs 20:5; Hos 6:2.

¹¹³ See the *NOAB* note to Exod 21:22-25 on page 113, and *Jerusalem Bible* note f to Exod 21:25.

Luke 19:8 (“I will pay back four times as much”). Also of interest is the verb “to seduce, deceive” a virgin in Exod 22:15; Jeremiah will apply the same verb to what YHWH did with him in Jer 20:7.

Exod 22:17-26 shows clear Dtr traits: prohibition of witchcraft and idolatry, concern for the widow, the orphan and the “resident alien,” and for the poor, that is, for social justice (see also 23:9-12). One’s fellow Israelite cannot be charged interest. If a poor person’s clothing is taken as a pledge for a loan, it must be returned before nightfall so that he or she may cover themselves in the night chill and sleep. The situation denounced in Amos 2:8 is thus all the more horrible: the oppressors not only do not return these pledged garments at night, they use them to lie down next to their altars drinking the wine they have bought with unjust fines, 5:7, 10-11.

We must say something about the great feasts of Israel, Exod 23:14-17. This passage is earlier than the P version of the feasts in Lev 23. The “Feast of Unleavened Bread” is mentioned without linking it to Passover, as was done later. The “Feast of the Harvest” will be called “Weeks” (in Greek it will be known as “Pentecost”), and that of the Gathering will be called “Huts” (traditionally, “Tabernacles”). The calendar which is used is also more ancient: Unleavened Bread is celebrated in “Aviv,” later called “Nisan.” We shall say more about these feasts later, when we look at Lev 23. From the prohibition in Exod 23:19^b will derive Jewish care to never mix meat and dairy products, or even to use the same utensils for them. Exod 23:20-33 is a clearly Dtr text; signs of this are expressions such as (following the *NRSV*) “the place that I have prepared. Be attentive to [YHWH’s angel] and listen to his voice, do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him;” “Amorites;” “I will drive them out;” “You shall make no covenant with them and their gods . . . it will surely be a snare to you.” Note the exhortative tone of Dtr, the insistence that Israel have great care to obey God, for—at least at this stage of Dtr— Israel cannot count on any free, unconditional Promise.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ According to LOHFINK, “Theology of the Wilderness,” 43, in the last stage of Dtr (in the late Babylonian Exile, towards 550 B.C.E.), Israel need not fret if it cannot be blameless in the scrupulous observance of the Law that characterizes Dtr preaching, for God is merciful and forgives; “The message (kerygma) to the Exilic reader is: Observe the Law, but even if you are unable to observe it fully, have confidence that God will bring you back [to the Land] because of the promises God made to your ancestors.”

Now comes the important moment when the covenant is “ratified,” Exod 24, considered to be a quite composite text. Today, clear Dtr elements are detected in the first part, especially the commitment of all the people to obey everything, 24:3, 7. Moses informs the people of all that YHWH has said, and writes down all of God’s words. Moses then takes the blood of the young bulls which had been sacrificed and pours half over the altar, and with the other half splashed the people.¹¹⁵ Thus is established the covenant relationship between God and the people of Israel. Moses says “this is the blood of the covenant which YHWH cuts with you upon all these words,” 24:8.¹¹⁶ Then something extraordinary occurs: Moses and his companions go up to the mountain and behold the God of Israel, and eat and drink with him without anything happening to them, 24:9-11.

Note the duplicate command to go up in 24:12 (Moses was already on the mountain, according to 24:9, but of course, there are other ways to view this, as the *NOAB* note suggests). Also in 24:15, 18 it is said that Moses went up the mountain; this probably indicates both the multiple hands involved in compiling these texts as well as the great respect the authors and redactors had for earlier traditions. Notice that 24:12 refers to “stone tablets,” while 24:7 spoke of the “book of the covenant.”¹¹⁷ The passage ends with a P text which speaks of the Presence of God, a topic of great importance for these priests in charge of the Temple. The Presence of God shows itself by the cloud and by the Glory, and also by the fire. It is this Presence of God which will guide Israel to the Promised Land, in the P passage that is the culmination of the Book of Exodus, Exod 40:34-38.

Exod 32:1-35. This is the famous “Golden Calf” episode. The scene is the foot of the mountain (Sinai or Horeb), which is unnamed. When the people realize that Moses is delayed in coming down, they ask Aaron to make them “gods who will walk before us,” for they have no idea what happened to Moses. Note the plural.¹¹⁸ Aaron assents and

¹¹⁵ The verb used for “splashed, sprinkled” is used, the same verb used in Ezek 36:25, as opposed to the one used in Lev 16:15, “sprinkled,” as also in Isa 52:15.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Jesus’ words in the Last Supper, Mark 14:24, “this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.”

¹¹⁷ See CLIFFORD, “Exodus,” *NJBC*, 55-56, regarding the composite nature of the text.

¹¹⁸ Both the verb and its subject are in plural in Exod 32:1, 4, 8 (only “calf” is in the singular), 23.

casts them a golden calf, but when he presents it to the people, he says “these are your gods, Israel, who made you go up from the land of Egypt.” Aaron even builds an altar, and the people “had fun,” 32:6.¹¹⁹ We are interested in situating the text in the theological tradition which composed it. Behind it is Dtr, the movement or school responsible for the history of Israel called the Deuteronomic History, which runs from Josh to 2 Kgs. It is a “theological history,” not a scientific or socio-political one; its premise is that the catastrophe which came upon Israel—first, to the northern kingdom of Israel, then also to the southern kingdom of Judah—was due to their turning away from YHWH, the only true God, in order to “go after other gods.”¹²⁰ Specifically, behind this passage is 1 Kgs 12:28-33, part of the Dtr History. Let’s see what happened. The twelve tribes of Israel had confederated under the great, charismatic leadership of king David, who moved the capital from the south (he was from Bethlehem of Judah), that is, from Hebron, to the center, Jerusalem.¹²¹ The differences between north and south did not just vanish; witness what occurs in nations with regional problems, such as Spain, the former Yugoslavia or Iraq. But the situation became ugly with Solomon, who became very rich and greatly increased his court and its expenses, which meant oppressive taxation.¹²² When Solomon died, the northern tribes asked his son Rehoboam to lighten the heavy yoke that his father had imposed on them, 1 Kgs 12:1-4. Against the good advice that the elders gave him, he listened to his young pals, and replied insolently to the northerners, 12:1-15. The north then rebelled and seceded from Judah, 12:6-20. The capital of Israel for a time was Shechem (12:25); it would later be Samaria, 16:24. Now, in addition to a political capital, what the new kingdom in the north wanted was a cultic place comparable to Jerusalem, so that the people would have no need to look there in order to worship God, 12:26-27. The solution adopted by king Jeroboam was to make two golden calves and place them in the geographical limits of his kingdom, one at the extreme north, in Dan, and another in the extreme south, Bethel, 12:28-30. These were already venerable, established cult

¹¹⁹ The verb is *tsahaq*, “to laugh, frolic (“party”), caress;” from it comes *yitshaq*, “Isaac,” meaning “he laughed,” Gen 17:17; 18:12-15 (in the feminine, for Sarah); 21:6. Jewish tradition saw sexual immorality in Exod 32:6; see 1 Cor 10:7-8.

¹²⁰ This is reflected in the fact that the “other gods” in Exod 32 will “go before” the people.

¹²¹ 2 Sam 2:1-4; 5:1-10.

¹²² See 1 Kgs 9:26-11:13; cf. 1 Sam 8; Deut 17:14-20 (composed with this king in mind).

places.¹²³ The calf or young bull was a powerful symbol of divine strength in the ancient Near East. It is debatable whether the calves represented God (as they represented Ba‘al, the Canaanite god), or if they merely served as God’s footstools; what is certain is that the orthodox iconography for YHWH was the ark with its cherubim and the tabernacle (the Tent of Meeting containing the Ark of the Covenant etc.).¹²⁴ Jeroboam also instituted his own priests. For Dtr, the cult could take place only in Jerusalem, and priests must be from the tribe of Levi. Therefore Jeroboam’s act was the “mother of all sins,”¹²⁵ followed by all his successors in the northern kingdom: all these kings are condemned by the Dtr historian.¹²⁶

Let us return to our Exod 32 passage. It is an *etiological* account, that is, it explains the *cause* or origin of something, and paradigmatic: it serves as an example. In this Dtr text, Aaron is not portrayed in a good light. The people break the first commandment literally (Exod 20:1-6) shortly after committing to keeping it in 24:7.¹²⁷ YHWH complains to Moses that the people have “turned away from the way” which YHWH had commanded them, and that they are a stiff-necked people; these are favorite Dtr terms. Moses’ figure is ennobled at Aaron’s cost; YHWH proposes to make a “great nation” out of Moses, 32:10.¹²⁸ But Moses intercedes for the people before YHWH,¹²⁹ alleging that if YHWH wipes out the people he got out of Egypt, the Egyptians will say that it was with malice, 32:11-12.¹³⁰ However, 32:13 seems to incorporate the P idea of the covenant-Promise-oath to the Fathers.¹³¹ YHWH repents of the evil that he had thought to do to the people.¹³² But nevertheless, upon coming down from the mountain

¹²³ See Judg 18:27-31 for Dan, Gen 12:8 etc. for Bethel.

¹²⁴ P. KYLE MCCARTER, JR., “Exodus,” *The HarperCollins Bible Commentary* (James L. Mays, gen. ed.; HarperSan Francisco, 1988, revised edition, 2000), 142.

¹²⁵ See, e.g., 1 Kgs 13:34; 15:34; 16:19, etc.

¹²⁶ Few southern kings are praised without qualification: Asa, 1 Kgs 15:11; Hezekiah, 2 Kgs 18:3-7, Josiah, the one who set in motion the Dtr reform, 23:25.

¹²⁷ We could jump from 24:7 to 32:1 if we wanted to just follow the Dtr account, since what is in-between, dealing with the sanctuary, is P’s.

¹²⁸ *goy gadol*, as in Deut 4:7-8; 26:5.

¹²⁹ Intercession is a great prophetic function, more than a priestly one; for Dtr, Moses is the greatest of the prophets, Deut 34:10-12.

¹³⁰ See also Deut 9:25-29.

¹³¹ This would be Lohfink’s view; see what he calls late passages in Deut 4:31, 37; 7:7-8; cf. 7:12; 8:17-18. Rendtorff has a different view (see footnote 88 above).

¹³² As in, e.g., Gen 6:6-7; Jonah 3:9-10; cf. Num 23:19.

and seeing the spectacle, Moses breaks the tablets of the “testimony,”¹³³ and pulverizes the molten calf, 32:19-20. Moses scolds Aaron, and the author blames Aaron for allowing the people to lapse into idolatry, 32:21-25. Then Moses incites the Levites (members of his own tribe) to kill all the idolaters, without regard to family ties, 32:26-29. Moses pronounces them priests, using an expression which we translate as “(priestly) ordination,” but which in Hebrew is literally “fill the hands.”¹³⁴ Our passage ends with Moses interceding again, with the promise of an angel to guide the people on their way, and with a parting shot at Aaron, 32:30-35.¹³⁵

Leviticus

Preliminary observations. Lev is the priestly book *par excellence*, a good portion of it being all P’s work.¹³⁶ The book’s Greco-Latin name, Leviticus, from the LXX, is not

¹³³ *’edut* is the P term for the tablets of the Decalogue, Exod 16:34; 25:16, 21-22; 26:34; 27:21; see the respective notes in the *Biblia de Jerusalén* (much better than in the English edition). The *NRSV* avoids translating this word as “testimony” in 25:16, 21-22; 26:33 etc., and the footnote to 25:16 in *NOAB* page 119 seems to completely sidestep this point. Let us recall that P does not speak of a covenant at Sinai, or, at least, does not employ this word (*berith*) for it, reserving it for the unconditional covenant-Promise with Noah, Abraham, etc. This point is important for understanding Pauline theology.

¹³⁴ See *Jerusalem Bible* note 1 to 32:29, with reference to 28:41. For P, the Levites cannot serve at the altar; see the reasons given in Ezek 44:10-14. The postexilic priesthood was limited to the Aaronids, especially Zadokites (the dominant priestly group, the other being the sons of Ithamar), 1 Chr 24; cf. Ezek 44:15-31; 48:11. For JOSEPH BLENKINSOPP, *A History of Prophecy in Israel. Revised and Enlarged* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 179-180, these passages in Ezek are Zadokite glosses (notes added later) promoting this position, and do not go back to Ezekiel himself, who was very critical of the Jerusalem priesthood for neglecting their responsibilities. See the *NOAB* note to Exod 32:25-29, page 130; the “rivalry between two priestly groups” is that of the Zadokites, who “usurped” the priesthood for themselves during the Babylonian Exile, and the thus demoted Levites. Cf. FRANK MOORE CROSS, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic. Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA – London: Harvard University Press, 1973), 195-215.

¹³⁵ The angel was already announced in 23:20-33, a Dtr text. It seems that the Deuteronomists, who edited the *corpus propheticum* (the books of the Prophets), used the idea of the angel-messenger in Mal 3:1 (“angel” and “messenger” are the same word in Hebrew and Greek), and identified this “messenger” as Elijah, a personage from the DtrHist (1 Kgs 17-19, etc.), in Mal 3:22-23 [*NRSV* 4:5-6]. There he is placed alongside the Law of Moses given in Horeb, thus conjoining the “Torah and the Prophets” at the end of the collection of these two, principal (and for a time, sole) parts of Sacred Scripture. See BLENKINSOPP, *A History of Prophecy*, 12 (the “eschatological prophet” of Deut 18:15-18 continues Moses’ work, exhorting to the observance of the Law, but [50] all other prophets are inferior to Moses).

¹³⁶ Actually, it would be more accurate to say “priestly” rather than “P,” since the two main priestly sources are meant here by “P.” See footnote 47 above. Milgrom attributes almost all of Lev 1-16 to P, and almost all of the rest to H. P’s and H’s theology is very similar; see the treatment in MILGROM, *Leviticus 1-16*, 42-57; see 35-37 for their different terminologies. One noteworthy difference is that for P, “the sanctuary is polluted by Israel’s moral and ritual violations ([Lev] 4:2) committed anywhere in the camp [the Land of Israel] (but not outside) H, however, concentrates on the polluting force of Israel’s violation of the covenant (26:15) Pollution for H is nonritualistic . . . the polluted land cannot be expiated by ritual,

the most apt, since legislation concerning the Levites, who were demoted to mere cult assistants and other functions (such as “catechists” and cantors), is rather to be found in the Book of Numbers.¹³⁷ Lev occupies the central place in the Pentateuch. For the Priestly school or movement (including its subgroups etc.), it was extremely important that God be present in the midst of his people. Israel’s very existence depended on enjoying this glorious Presence of YHWH. Their sins and impurities defiled or contaminated the Holy Land, to the point where God would have to leave, which absence brought disaster and destruction.¹³⁸ The same went for the Temple: if God left this place of his dwelling, it would be destroyed.¹³⁹ God’s absence brought chaos. We saw how the Pentateuch, and the Bible itself, begins with the P creation account (again, “P” standing broadly for the “priestly movement with its subgroups”), at a time when the earth was “a formless void” (*NRSV* and other versions).¹⁴⁰ The author (or authors, redactors, etc.) of

and, hence, the expulsion of its inhabitants is inevitable (18:24-29; 20:2);” *ibid.*, 48-49; see also MILGROM, *Leviticus 17-22*, 1326; MILGROM, *Leviticus*, 211. Unlike H, P “has no doctrine of the Land;” MILGROM, *Leviticus 17-22*, 1328; with D (or Dtr), P can say that YHWH gave the Land to Israel as an inheritance (*nahala*); for H, Israel holds the Land conditionally, as an *ahuzza*; *ibid.*, 1326; see Lev 25:23.

¹³⁷ Leviticus is “known more appropriately in the Jewish tradition as *tôrât kohânîm*, the law concerning priests;” see BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 220. Milgrom translates it as “the manual of the Priests,” *Leviticus 1-16*, 1.

¹³⁸ The Land would then have to purge itself of such inhabitants by vomiting them, Lev 18:28; 20:22. This is the theologico-priestly reason for the Babylonian Exile; see Tikva Frymer-Kensky’s unpublished presentation at the 2001 annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, “Pollution and Sacrifice: An Homage to Jacob Milgrom,” pages 4-5. In Frymer-Kensky’s view, there are “three possible causes of land defilement: sexual sins, bloodshed, and idolatry,” footnote omitted, as set forth in JONATHAN KLAWANS, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Israel* (Oxford – New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 16. The notion of Land-defilement, and consequent need for purging, however, is an H, not P, idea; see footnote 47 above. Our view of H is that it is exilic and has the catastrophe of the Exile in mind.

¹³⁹ Jacob Milgrom, a great Jewish expert on these matters, emphasizes the effect that sin and impurity have on the sanctuary. KLAWANS, *Impurity and Sin*, 14-15, explains this view: “On the first level, the inadvertent sins of individual Israelites defile the outer altar [of burnt offering, Exod 40:6, 29; Lev 4:27-35]. . . . The inadvertent sins of the high priest, or of the entire community . . . defiles the shrine [= *hekal*, “sanctuary,” separated from the Holy of Holies by the curtain, Exod 26:33; Lev 4:3-21].” (P normally calls the “shrine” “the Holy [place],” but in Lev 16, which is not P’s, but H’s, this “Holy [place]” refers to what P normally calls the “Holy of Holies;” see MILGROM, *Leviticus 1-16*, 1013, 1035). Finally, “wanton, unrepented sin” penetrates “into the Holy of Holies, where the ark of the Lord is kept.” This contamination could only be wiped clean on Yom Kippur, Lev 16:15-16. See the extensive notes in *NOAB* page 146 and *The Jewish Study Bible* (A. Berlin – M.Z. Brettler, eds.; Oxford – New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 212. The classic study of the important concept of “purity” as a key theme in every society, and including discussion of Lev, is that of Oxford anthropologist MARY DOUGLAS, *Purity and Danger. An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. 2nd impression with corrections (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969). In Ezek, YHWH leaves the Temple by grades, and goes off with the exiles to Babylon.

¹⁴⁰ The Spanish *Biblia de Jerusalén* has “*caos y confusión*.” The Hebrew reads *tohu wabohu*. *The Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament. Study Edition, Volume One א – v* (L. Koehler – W. Baumgartner, etc.; ET M.E.J. Richardson; Leiden – Boston – Köln: Brill, 2001), 111, translates *böhu* as “emptiness, wasteness,” while *Volume Two ז – ת | Aramaic*, 1689, translating *tohu* as “wilderness, wasteland,

Leviticus likewise stresses the separations that God has established in order to put the world in good order. If the Law is violated, God cannot remain, and chaos and destruction will ensue, that is, everything will again be a “formless void.”¹⁴¹ Avoidance of this is the great priestly concern and task,¹⁴² and the principal priestly work is Lev.

Let us note that impurity is not the same thing as “sin;” at least, what we translate as “sin” is often an involuntary act in the Priestly program.¹⁴³ Some actually think that voluntary or deliberate offenses were unforgivable, based on Num 15:30-31 (see the note in *NOAB*, but better, in *Jerusalem Bible*).¹⁴⁴ The “sins” mentioned in Lev 4:2 are by “inadvertence,” thus involuntary.

emptiness,” says that *tohu wabohu* is “an example of hendiadys [according to Speiser’s 1964 Anchor Bible Genesis commentary, page 5]; it signifies the terrible, eerie, deserted wilderness.” “Hendiadys” is a reference to a totality by way of two aspects of it, such as saying “nice and warm” as opposed to saying “nicely warm,” *Webster’s*, 565. This “empty wasteland” might also be associated with the Exodus desert or wilderness and with the Babylonian Exile.

¹⁴¹ The same words of Gen 1:2, *tohu wabohu*, are repeated in Jer 4:23, in a divine threat to make things return to *uncreation*, the chaotic state they were in before creation; cf. 4:27. Jeremiah ministered as a prophet until 587, the date of the great deportation to the Babylonian Exile.

¹⁴² HANSON, *The People Called*, 216, calls Ezekiel’s program (Ezekiel was the great prophet of the early Exile, and very akin to P), “a program for the restoration of purity.” In the mind of these priestly circles, the Exile occurred because the people and the Land became defiled. The world, for God, is divided into two realms, the pure and the impure, and chaos accompanies impurity, *id.*, 226. On this affinity between Ezek and P, see BLENKINSOPP, *A History of Prophecy*, 171. For Milgrom, it is really a matter of a moral choice, between life and death (which depend on being obedient or disobedient to God). Holiness stands for life, impurity for death; *Leviticus*, 12.

¹⁴³ For P, “sin” (whether it is a moral offense or a ritual offense not properly dealt with) is primarily pollution of the sanctuary, which drives God away (resulting in death and destruction); see MILGROM, *Leviticus 1-16*, 43. According to Milgrom, ritual impurity in itself is not sinful, and is remedied by ritual purification; “moral impurity is irremediable,” *Leviticus 17-22*, 1326. For H, the only “remedy” for moral impurity is, for the individual, “being cut off” (*karet*); for the community, it is exile.

¹⁴⁴ See the example of such an offense in 15:32-36 (gathering wood on the Sabbath). “Defiant, willful violation of the ritual law cannot be expiated in the manner of an inadvertent sin;” NILI S. FOX, commentary to Numbers 15:30-31, in *The Jewish Study Bible* (A. Berlin – M.Z. Brettler, eds.; Oxford – New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 314. Cf. ROLAND J. FARLEY, “Leviticus,” *NJBC*, 63, states that the “sin offering or *hattā’t*” only expiates inadvertent failures (*hattā’t* signifies the sin, its consequences and the offering for it; there are other types of offenses and offerings); JOHN L. MCKENZIE, “Aspects of Old Testament Thought,” *NJBC*, 1306, agrees; but JACOB MILGROM, “Atonement in the OT,” *IDBSupp*,

79, states that in Lev, even voluntary sins are wiped clean on Yom Kippur, the great Day of Atonement; he interprets *pesha’im* (“transgressions, crimes, rebellions”) in Lev 16:16, 21, as precisely those deliberate offenses which Num 15:30-31 seems to put beyond the pale. TERENCE E. FRETHEIM, “Numbers,” *Oxford Bible Commentary*, 121, opines that Num 15:30-31 only has the old generation (that will not enter the Promised Land) of Num 11-14 in view. ARTUS, *Aproximación actual*, 50-51, distinguishes between a more lenient legislation in Lev 5 and a more severe one in Num 15. I think the best explanations are found in MILGROM, *Leviticus*, 14-15. He states that intentional sins can become “inadvertent” by repentance, making them “eligible for sacrificial expiation” (15); see also *Leviticus 17-22*, 1425. In *Leviticus 1-16*, 24-25, Milgrom distinguishes between the Lev 4 sacrifices (*hattā’t*) for inadvertent (*bišēgāgā*) offenses accompanied by remorse (*wē’āšēm*) which purge the sanctuary, and the strong word “transgressions”

The following chapters of Lev discuss offerings for various types of “sin.” Lev 8-10 discuss priestly ordination and other rules for priests. Lev 11 deals with the *kashrut* rules, i.e, what is kosher (= “suitable”), regarding pure and impure animals.¹⁴⁵ Then there is treatment of the purification of the woman who has given birth, of the “leper” and of sexual impurities: this has to do with involuntary defilement which must be atoned for or expiated as soon as possible with baths and ritual sacrifices, in order to avoid contaminating the Temple, 15:31.¹⁴⁶ One of the worst consequences of “sin” (including failure to purify oneself) is that it brings impurity to the Temple, and to the Holy of Holies in particular, the place where YHWH is, called the “sanctuary” in the *NRSV*, Lev 16:2, etc.¹⁴⁷ It was from there that YHWH spoke to Moses, Num 7:89. The sanctuary was

(*pěšā ‘im*) to cover all sins, even brazen ones, on Yom Kippur (Lev 16:16). These are the sins which penetrate into the Holy of Holies, contaminating it.

¹⁴⁵ The kosher diet was one of the three typical characteristics (“hallmarks”) of the Israelite religiosity (or even religion) which developed during the Babylonian Exile (what would come to be known as “Judaism,” since the part of Israel most involved in this experience was from the tribe of Judah, “Jews.” The other two characteristics, as we have seen, were circumcision and observance of the Sabbath rest. P is the school (with subgroups, etc.) who seems to have led this development, using earlier traditions no doubt, but emphasizing them now in order to create very definite boundaries between Jew and non-Jew. Israel’s mixing with pagan foreigners had led to idolatry and catastrophe. Regarding the classification of pure and impure animals, BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 223, says that “The general idea behind this taxonomic system seems to be to preserve the order and distinctness of the original creation, the importance of which can be gauged from the tenfold occurrence of the phrase ‘according to its/their kind’ in Genesis 1. An important corollary was therefore the exclusion of the anomalous. Thus the bat is unclean since, though equipped with wings, it has fur instead of feathers . . . Whatever the explanation, these distinctions helped to keep alive a reverent regard for the created order and a discriminating ethical attitude to the taking of life for food, a possibility granted only as a concession in the new dispensation following the deluge [cites of Milgrom and Douglas omitted].” See the interesting work of the Jewish Harvard scholar JAMES L. KUGEL, *The Bible as it was* (Cambridge, MA - London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1997), 445-448. Separation of unlikes is reflected in the prohibition in Deut 22:11 on mixing wool and linen in the same garment; see also Lev 19:19. MILGROM, *Leviticus*, 12, 102-121, emphasizes the small number of animals that Jews are allowed to eat and the humane view of how they are to be slaughtered.

¹⁴⁶ “Impurity” has been thought to occur as a result of vital acts (having to do with life) which involve blood, Lev 17:11, such as childbirth, or the transmission of life (nocturnal emissions or intercourse), or because of disease or corruption (likened, or a prelude, to death), such as what the Bible calls “leprosy,” which is not Hansen’s disease, but can affect houses and clothes, or because of connection with idolatry (such as the pig; it was not prohibited for hygienic reasons —trichinosis was unknown until the nineteenth century); see BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 223. Milgrom, who notes that the diseases which render one impure are not all contagious, and that certain bodily secretions, such as mucus, perspiration and urine and feces are not impure, finds a common denominator underlying the three sources of impurity (corpse/carcass, scale disease and genital discharges) in the priestly rationale: death. Semen and blood represent life; their loss represents death. “Scale disease” (like “leprosy,” which can strike houses and clothes) gives the appearance of disease and death (see Num 12:9-12); *Leviticus*, 12.

¹⁴⁷ Another bad consequence, as developed by H, is Land-defilement, requiring purgation, and which meant banishment (exile) or death for its inhabitants. The automatic ejection of its residents by the Land when defiled in H corresponds to the automatic ejection of its Resident (YHWH) by the sanctuary in P; MILGROM, *Leviticus* 17-22, 1346.

like a magnet for impurity.¹⁴⁸ There was a day in Judaism in which the sanctuary was purified and sins (probably including intentional ones) were expiated (wiped clean): it is the Great Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, still solemnly celebrated by Jews today.¹⁴⁹ We are now going to look at the ritual in place during biblical times for this day; it is found in Lev 16, which is placed at the center of the central book of the Pentateuch. It thus holds the most important position in the whole Torah.¹⁵⁰

*Lev 16.*¹⁵¹ This was the only day in which the high priest, and he alone, could enter the sanctuary.¹⁵² It takes place on the tenth day of the seventh month, Tishri (our September-October). It is a day of fasting and no one may work, 16:29. The high priest dresses solemnly,¹⁵³ in order to make expiation (Hebrew verb *kipper*) for the sanctuary, the Tent of Meeting, the altar, and, *also* (but way down the list!) for the priests and the people, 16:33. He offers a young bull for sin and a ram for the holocaust (= a whole-burnt-offering). The congregation (*'edah* for P, Dtr prefers *qahal*, “assembly;” both refer

¹⁴⁸ This impurity or contamination is referred to with the Greek word *miasma*. On this, and on expiation, see MILGROM, “Atonement in the OT,” *IDBSupp*, 79-82.

¹⁴⁹ In 2005, 5765-5766 in the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur begins on the evening of October 12. The High Holidays, in Jewish tradition called *yamim nora'im* (“days of fear, reverence or awe”), begin with the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah, which in 2005 begins on the evening of October 3. This begins a ten day period of introspection and repentance, ending with the fast of Yom Kippur. See *The Oxford Dictionary of the Jewish Religion* (R.J.Z. Werblowsky – G. Wigoder, eds.; New York – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 734.

¹⁵⁰ Milgrom disagrees, however, that this is the case in the present text of Lev, where he thinks that “the central turning point” or “mid-term” is ch. 19; *Leviticus*, 7; however, he believes that Lev 11-15 are a later insert which, if removed, would make Lev 16 “closer to the center,” *ibid.*, 167; MILGROM, *Leviticus 17-22*, 1320.

¹⁵¹ On the Day of Atonement, see JACOB MILGROM, “Atonement, Day of,” in *IDBSupp*, 82-83. Milgrom states that “purgation” is a better translation than “expiation or atonement;” *Leviticus 1-16*, 1079-1084.

¹⁵² The “sanctuary,” normally called the “Holy of Holies,” is referred to by scholars as the “adytum,” meaning a place reserved for priests (from the Greek *ádu-ton* = “not to be entered”). According to a tradition reflected in Sir 50:20, Yom Kippur was the only day in which the ineffable name of YHWH could be pronounced. This day for Judaism was *the day, yoma*; thus are named the respective tractates in the Mishna (early rabbinic legal code) and the Talmud (collection of Jewish knowledge, constituting as it were something very close to our Tradition, only all written down). But this day is not mentioned until the Babylonian Exile.

¹⁵³ See the enthusiastic description in Sir 50:5-11. As Tikva Frymer-Kensky describes it, what the high priest puts on is a “holiness-hazard suit,” to protect himself from extreme sanctity, as if it were radioactive (powerful and useful, but dangerous!), like Rudolf Otto’s description of the divine as “*mysterium tremendum et fascinans*.” This indicates its two aspects, the wonderful and the dangerous, and the high risk which the high priest takes for the sake of the people.

to the community gathered together for the cult)¹⁵⁴ presents him with two he-goats, and the high priest throws lots: one he-goat will be for YHWH, and the other for Azazel, a desert demon.¹⁵⁵ This is the famous “scapegoat,” on whose head Aaron puts his hands and confesses all of Israel’s sins, “putting them on the head of the he-goat,” who must be led off to the wilderness, 16:21-22.¹⁵⁶ Both the young bull and the he-goat which were sacrificed for sin must be taken out of Israel’s camp, and those who performed this task must wash their clothes before reentering.¹⁵⁷

It is interesting to look at how purgation (or “expiation or at-one-ment”) is made with the blood of the bullock and the he-goat. The high priest sprinkles the “mercy seat” or “propitiatory” in order to cleanse the sanctuary of the Israelites’ impurities, and of all their sins, 16:14-16. The “propitiatory” in Hebrew is called *kapporet*, and it is simply the cover of the Ark of the Covenant (Dtr term; “Ark of the Testimony” according to P). *Kapporet* basically means “cover,” and the verb *kipper* already mentioned, is translated “to expiate,” but first of all, it means “to cover,” or “to rub or wipe.” What the high priest may have done, then, was to place blood on this gold cover and to wipe or rub it until it disappeared;¹⁵⁸ in any case, the blood was sprinkled seven times, to purify the Holy of Holies of all the pollution and impurity which had accumulated there through the sins and

¹⁵⁴ *Qahal* also appears in Lev 16:33. LXX translates *qahal* as *ekklēsia*, *edah* as *synagogē*. See the *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 3 (E. Jenni – C. Westermann, eds.; Peabody, MA: Hendrikson, 1997), 1122-1126.

¹⁵⁵ In Hebrew, the same word designates “he-goat, hairy demon, satyr.” Cf. note d to Lev 17:7 in *Jerusalem Bible*, and the note in *NOAB*, page 167. Azazel seems to be a hairy demon; he is sent off to the desert with Israel’s sins. The desert is the dwelling-place of demons, Matt 12:43.

¹⁵⁶ Harmut Gese would emphasize not so much the transference of the sins to the animal as Israel’s identification with the animal; HANSON, *The People Called*, 228.

¹⁵⁷ “Camp” has a military sense, as we saw with regard to Exod 7:4. “Contamination,” or becoming “unclean,” does not just occur when something filthy is touched, but also something holy, which, as was stated, is thus akin to being radioactive. The Jews, in order to designate holy books (whether these are the same as those which became part of the biblical canon or not), say that they “make the hands unclean” (thus, e.g., Qohelet, at Yavneh); they thus have to wash their hands after handling holy books. The image of a sin-offering (applied to the aforementioned animals here) which must be taken out of the camp is used in Heb 13:11-13. The Epistle of Barnabas, chap. 7, saw in the scapegoat an image (or type) of Christ, which the Jews would be astonished to see when he returns looking very much like that goat.

¹⁵⁸ See MILGROM, “Atonement,” *IDBSupp*, 78 (citing Benno Landsberger) In his commentary *Leviticus*, 167, Milgrom states that “The term *kapporet* is untranslatable, so far. It refers to the solid gold slab (3.75 feet by 2.25 feet) atop the ark, at the edges of which were two cherubim, of one piece with it and made of hammered gold, kneeling and facing each other with bowed heads and outstretched wings so as to touch in the middle. It can hardly be rendered “mercy seat/throne” or “cover.” In this more recent commentary, Milgrom says nothing about the interpretation of *kippur* as “rubbing,” but deals with this rubbing out, or smearing (which are so close as to sometimes make it difficult to distinguish between them) in *Leviticus 1-16*, 1079-1084.

impurities of the Israelites. In this way also expiation was made for the Tent of Meeting and for the altar; the atonement cleanses all the Israelites, 16:16-19.¹⁵⁹ “To sprinkle,” then, was a ritual act characteristic of Yom Kippur. Ezek 36:25 may be in the background, although there another verb is used which might indicate a more abundant “splashing.” Mysteriously, the same verb “to sprinkle” found in Lev 16 is used in Isa 52:15 for the Servant.¹⁶⁰ In his most important passage on justification (a principal accomplishment of the Servant, Isa 53:11), Paul writes that God put forth Christ as “propitiation” (*NRSV* “sacrifice [or place] of atonement”), Rom 3:25. The Greek word used is *hilastérion*; it is the LXX word used to translate *kapporet*. Paul, then, assimilates Christ to the place where the high priest sprinkled blood —and where God was— in order to expiate for sins (this is the principal theme of the Letter to the Hebrews).

*Lev 23.*¹⁶¹ We here have the priestly legislation concerning the “solemnities,” the great Jewish feasts, using the same word as in Gen 1:14.¹⁶² Firstly, the Sabbath, which is also mentioned in the P creation account. The three principal feasts of Israel begin with Passover-Unleavened Bread, which have at this time become united (previously they were separate); unleavened bread was to be eaten for seven days, Lev 23:6.¹⁶³ Passover is celebrated the fourteenth day of Nisan, using the Babylonian lunar calendar. It falls on

¹⁵⁹ Exactly what altar it is is not entirely clear; according to MILGROM, *Leviticus*, 171, “uniquely in this chapter ‘the tent of meeting’ does not refer to the entire tent of meeting, as everywhere else in P, but only to the outer room, the shrine [*NRSV* “sanctuary,” Hebrew “the holy (place)”. On which altar is meant, cf. *NOAB* note to Lev 16:18-19, page 166 (“the open-air altar”); MILGROM, *ibidem* (“the incense altar;” see his diagram on page 19); “the incense altar located in the inner sanctum [*hekal*],” *Jewish Study Bible*, note to Lev 18-19^a, page 245; FARLEY, “Leviticus,” *NJBC*, 71, says it is “probably the altar of holocausts” located outside.

¹⁶⁰ See the note in *Biblia de Jerusalén* (not in the 1966 English version). The Vulgate, the King James Version and the (*New*) *American Standard Version* read “sprinkle,” not “startle;” the New Vulgate here unhappily translates “disperse” (Jerome was consistent). The Qumranites understood it as “sprinkle,” and the reference was to Yom Kippur; see EMILIO G. CHÁVEZ, *The Theological Significance of Jesus’ Temple Action in Mark’s Gospel* (Lewiston, NY – Ontario: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 28-29, footnote 78.

¹⁶¹ Lev 17-26 is known as the “Holiness Code,” because in 19-22 we find the refrain “you shall be holy because I YHWH am holy.” Lev 27 is an appendix, but Milgrom believes that (by the design of the H redactor in the Exile) it forms an inclusio with Lev 1;

¹⁶² Lev 23 is an H text, according to Milgrom, and based on (thus, later than) Num 28-29, which is P. H here reflects the time of the Babylonian Exile, when the Sabbath sacrifices of Num 28:7-10 are not possible, but the Sabbath itself, which in the Exile has assumed tremendous importance, is elevated in Lev 23:2^b to the high status of “solemnity” (*NRSV* “appointed festival,” Hebrew *mo‘ed*; cf. Gen 1:14); see *Leviticus 1-16*, 27.

¹⁶³ Unleavened bread is *matsah*, the wafers that Jews eat during Passover. Cf. Exod 23:15.

the first full moon after the Spring equinox.¹⁶⁴ It is a *ḥag*, a pilgrimage feast, as are the other principal feasts, namely, Weeks (in Greek, Pentecost, referring to the fiftieth day, since fifty days were counted from the beginning of the barley harvest until the end of the wheat harvest, Lev 23:15-16, and the feast of Booths (or Tabernacles, really, huts), 23:33-44.

“Huts,” *sukkot*, is *the* feast par excellence (see Lev 23:39). It celebrated not just the harvest of cereals (as Weeks did), but of all agricultural products, especially the olive and grapes for wine. It was a drinking feast, and the merriest one. It was the occasion in which to seek a spouse, and the rabbis said that whoever had not celebrated Sukkoth had never known true joy. There was dancing on the threshing floors and one lived in huts. Joy was great, and a procession with the branches several trees (including palm branches) was added, 23:40. This feast acquired a strong eschatological aspect, as evidenced by Zech 14:16, where it is associated with the final Day of YHWH, when God will at last be the only king over the whole world, after combating the pagan nations from the Mount of Olives, 14:3-5. Living waters shall go forth from Jerusalem, 14:8; the feast was associated with rainfall, 14:17, and will be celebrated also by the all the survivors of the nations, that is, the Gentiles, 14:16. Jesus celebrated it, John 7:2, 14, and, on the last day of the feast, the most solemn one, he identified himself as the one who gives the living waters, 7:37-39. It is thus a feast which should have great significance for us, and much more could be said about it . . .

Lev 26. This is the conclusion of the Holiness Code. Like Deut, it ends with blessings (few in number) and curses (many). It has been called a concluding homily. The exhortation in Lev 26:3 is like the one in Deut 28:1-2. Lev 26:9 has been considered to be the highest kind of P blessing, reminding one of the P blessing in Gen 1:22, 28.¹⁶⁵ Lev 26:11-12 is the promise of divine presence with election formula typical of the priestly

¹⁶⁴ 14 Nisan usually falls in March-April, but in 2005 the eighth day of Passover (as with Sukkot, Jewish tradition at times adds an extra day to certain feasts) fell on May 1, due to the duplication of the month of Adar as part of the periodic adjustment of the Jewish lunar calendar to synchronize it with the solar calendar. “Equinox” refers to one of the two times a year when the sun crosses the equator and days and nights are of equal length in all the earth. According to John 18:28; 19:14, 31-37, Jesus died at the hour in which the Paschal lambs were slaughtered, before nightfall, when 14 Nisan began.

¹⁶⁵ For some scholars, like Blenkinsopp, we have D and P mixed in now in this late stage of the formation of the Pentateuch; for others, like Milgrom and Knohl, Lev 26 is H, prior to D or Dtr.

writers; see Exod 29:45, Ezek 37:26-28.¹⁶⁶ Notice how important harvests are for an agricultural people, Lev 26:4-5, 10; Milgrom distinguishes between this aspect of Lev 26 (H) and the similar ending in Deut (more city-based). The “evil beasts” (*NRSV* “dangerous animals”), along with the sword (= war) in 26:6 make one think of the nations (Gentiles) who have so oppressed Israel. God’s promise to walk amidst his people, 26:12, reminds us of the paradisiacal state in Gen 3:8. Milgrom remarks that this means that if Israel keeps the commandments, it can regain the conditions of Eden.¹⁶⁷

Let us look at the curses. As with Deut, they have already taken place! The reader or hearer is in exile, not really in the desert with Moses. The author recites all the evils (punishments) that have already overtaken the people of Israel for having disobeyed YHWH; it is an explanation and a justification (theodicy) of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple,¹⁶⁸ retrojected to the time of Moses, that is, so as to depict Israel as having been warned from way back then. Here the breaking of the covenant is spoken about, a rather Dtr concept (although those who posit the existence of the Holiness School or source would attribute this concept to it), Lev 26:14-16^a, although nuanced in Lev 26:44-45, a passage with clear priestly flavor.¹⁶⁹ Note how terrible the curses are in 26:16^b-17, and they are multiplied seven times in what follows. The people’s hunger will reach the point of cannibalism, 26:29, common in war situations, when a city would be besieged until all the food and water ran out, or when there was a drought.¹⁷⁰ YHWH then will not smell the soothing aromas of their sacrifices, 26:31^b, a priestly theme.¹⁷¹ The Land will be destroyed together with its sanctuaries —or, better, the Temple, and the Israelites will be dispersed among the Gentiles, 26:31-33. Then the Land will pay (or

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Deut 16:11; 26:2; for Dtr, only the “Name” of YHWH dwells in the Temple. Pious Jews do not say “God,” but “the Name” (*ha-Shem*), as is done in the Lord’s Prayer. On the important topic of desecration of YHWH’s Name in H, see MILGROM, *Leviticus 17-22*, 1326, 1346, 1367. This concept (sometimes using the same Hebrew verb for “desecrate or profane” as H) is important in Ezek 20; 36; 39; 43.

¹⁶⁷ In eschatological thinking, the final state of salvation is a restoration of the primitive order desired and intended by God in the beginning. A good example of this type of thinking is Jesus’ teaching concerning divorce and remarriage in Mark 10:2-9.

¹⁶⁸ “Theodicy,” the theological effort to make compatible the existence of evil with an all-good and all-powerful God, literally means “the justification of God.”

¹⁶⁹ Remember, P and H (or HS) are priestly sources. There are many similarities between the Holiness School or source and Dtr. Milgrom notes that the repentance verb *shuv*, common in the prophets and having an importance role in Deut 30:1-10, is not found in Lev 26. Cf. Deut 4:29-31, a good mixture of Dtr and P, according to some scholars.

¹⁷⁰ See 2 Kgs 6:24-31.

¹⁷¹ Recall Noah’s sacrifice in Gen 8:21; see also Exod 29:18; Lev 1:9, etc.

enjoy) its Sabbaths, all the years which it should have rested (according to Lev 25:1-7), a commandment violated by the preexilic generations, 26:43. The Land shall rest all the time (period) of the “desolation” (exile), 26:35.¹⁷² Those who survive the catastrophic punishment will go mad with panic, and will rot in the foreign land to which they will be taken, 26:36-39. It is then that they will confess their iniquity and that of their ancestors, for having walked (behaved, conducted themselves, a term found often in Dtr) contrary to YHWH, 26:40. Then their uncircumcised heart (a Dtr term) will be humbled.¹⁷³

But then YHWH will *remember* his covenant with Abraham and YHWH’s Land, 26:42, and will not completely reject them to the point of utter destruction, nor will YHWH break his covenant with them, for YHWH will remember the first (or former) covenant with the Fathers, whom he brought out of Egypt *in order to be their God*, 26:44-45. We see that Lev ends with a beautiful priestly formula, which gives assurance that God will remember the eternal covenant, unbreakable, made with Abraham in Gen 17, and God will also remember his purpose when he brought Israel out of Egypt: to be their God, Exod 6:2-8. These are both priestly texts.

An appendix (Lev 27) follows, attributed by Milgrom to H_R, an exilic redactor of H.

Numbers

Preliminary observations. The Hebrew name for this book is apt, *bemidbar*, “in the wilderness (or desert),”¹⁷⁴ for that is its setting. It is said to be difficult to identify the sources of Num, which seems to be a quite heterogeneous work.¹⁷⁵ After depicting the

¹⁷² See Jer 25:12. This concept of the Land’s sabbatical joined to how long the period of Babylonian Exile will last is found in 2 Chr 36:17-21 (near the very end of the Jewish Bible), and will figure in apocalyptic calculations on how long the Exile will last, “exile” understood as the total period of Israel’s oppression and desolation, as in Dan 9:1-2. Daniel’s, or rather, the angel Gabriel’s, mathematico-exegetical “solution” is found in 9:20-24: Jeremiah’s “seventy years” (Jer 25:11-12; 29:10) are really to be read and understood as “seventy weeks of years,” that is, 490 years (70 x 7). See *NOAB*, page 471 of the Essays. The key for this reading is the Sabbath rest mandated for the Land every seven years (for Milgrom and others, an H concept).

¹⁷³ See Deut 29:6; Jeremiah is the prophet very akin to Dtr (as Ezek is akin to P and/or H); see Jer 4:4; 9:24-25. We are in the realm of the new heart of flesh of Ezek 36:26-27, which will enable Israel to obey, and also of the Torah written in the heart, and of the New Covenant, of Jer 31:31-34. Cf. Rom 2:29; Phil 3:3; 2 Cor 3:3-8.

¹⁷⁴ “Numbers,” in the LXX *arithmoi*, comes from the census in 1:2.

¹⁷⁵ See RENDTORFF, *Old Testament*, 147. Rendtorff is one of the main contemporary critics of the documentary hypothesis. “The head-on attack against the Yahwist comes from him,” SKA, *Introducción*, 183, ironically, for the Yahwist was the cornerstone of von Rad’s OT theology, and Rendtorff succeeded

people's fidelity in Num 1-10 (all is P until 10:28), there is an abrupt change: from Num 11 on what is related are the repeated rebellions of the people.¹⁷⁶ This is what we will focus on hereinbelow.

But first, let us note some things typical of P, and his linguistic markers: in Num 1:1, the "Tent of Meeting," along with the precise dates, as we have seen. In 1:5-19, a list of names; genealogies are of great interest to P (see Gen 5; 10; 11, e.g.). The list continues in Num 1:20-46. In Num 2, the bellic-liturgical camp (combining features of warfare and liturgy) is carefully ordered; the tribe of Judah has a place of honor to the east of the Tent, 2:2, which is in the *center* surrounded by Levites, 2:17.¹⁷⁷ Note the Levites' modest role in 3:7-8; the sons of Aaron are mentioned first. But the passage does not reflect the acrimony which we encounter among priestly and levitical groups in Ezek 44:11-16. Note the exact chronology in Num 7 on the offerings of the tribes (a topic dear to priests everywhere!).

We have two types of trumpet blasts in 10:1-10: one is liturgical, the other is for war, as suggested above. Now the camp is ready to *march*: in 10:11, with its P date, we have Israel's first movement (eighth stage) since Exod 19:1. There follows another detailed P list on the order of the camps. Notice Num 10:33, which uses Dtr terms, such as "the Ark of the Covenant of YHWH" instead of "the Tent of Meeting;" also significant is the expression "to seek out for them a *place of rest*;" this last term is found in Deut 12:9.¹⁷⁸ The language in Num 10:35-36 is very ancient, or mimics ancient orthography.¹⁷⁹ It is pure holy war language.

Num 11. Let us note from the start the pattern that the author himself presents us with in 11:1-2: the people grumble against YHWH, YHWH is angry and exterminates some of them, the people cry out to Moses, the great intercessor, who intercedes, and

him in the chair at the University of Heidelberg. Rendtorff's student, Erhard Blum, could be the new Wellhausen, according to Ska; see "Un nouveau Wellhausen?," *Biblica* 72 (1991), 253-263.

¹⁷⁶ See DENNIS T. OLSON, "Numbers," *HarperCollins Bible Commentary*, 172.

¹⁷⁷ In P, God dwells amidst his people. Dtr has another idea in texts such as Num 10:33; Deut 1:33; Josh 3:3, 6 (God leads the way); cf. Exod 13:21. In Exod 33:7, the Tent of Meeting is outside the camp (the older view); in more recent P texts, Exod 25:8; Num 2:2, it is inside. In Num 2:17, it is in the center, what is very important for P.

¹⁷⁸ The use of the one Hebrew word *menuḥah*, a favorite Dtr term, in both passages is lost even in the *NRSV*.

¹⁷⁹ That is, is "archaizing," pretending to be ancient.

YHWH's wrath is appeased. The narrative in Num 11 reproaches the *desire* or craving (such as covetousness or lust) of the people,¹⁸⁰ using the same word that describes the forbidden fruit in Gen 3:6. What the Israelites want is to fill their bellies, and they long for the foods of the land of slavery, Egypt.¹⁸¹ They are tired of the nourishment God is giving them, the manna, Num 11:4-9. This theme appears to be related to the P reproach for disdain the Land in 13:32, as we shall see. *What Israel is rejecting are God's gifts and God's liberation from slavery; that is, the people reject God and want the undoing of the Exodus, its reversal.*¹⁸² This is the people's first murmuring in Num. According to Rendtorff, Num 11:11-15 is linked to Dtr;¹⁸³ indications of this would be presenting Moses as servant, charged with the heavy burden of this people (cf. Deut 3:26), and the maternal image of God as a wet-nurse carrying the people (cf. Deut 1:31; 8:3-5; 32:10-11, 18). We might therefore see a mixture of P and Dtr in these passages.

Num 14. The people's rebellion worsens. But first, let's take a look at Num 13:25-33. The scouts (or spies) which had been sent out to explore the Promised Land came back after forty days and gave their report on what they saw: the Land did indeed flow with milk and honey, but Israel could not *go up* against its inhabitants, because these were more powerful, Num 13:25-31.¹⁸⁴ Then the spies spread among the Israelites a calumny (or slander, that is, a false, malicious statement damaging another's reputation or good standing) about the Land, 13:32,¹⁸⁵ saying that it was a land that devoured its inhabitants, 13:32.¹⁸⁶ This amounts to the people's rejection of the Promised Land.¹⁸⁷

In Num 14, "all the Israelites" murmured against Moses and Aaron (P). They say that they would have preferred to die in Egypt or in the desert, they complain about

¹⁸⁰ See Ps 78:17-25, 29-35; 106:14-15.

¹⁸¹ That is why the name which is given to the place in Num 11:34 is so significant, "graves of desire," or "desirable sepulchers." Something like what is observed in Prov 26:11; 2 Pet 2:22, "the dog returns to his vomit."

¹⁸² See FRETHERM, "Numbers," *Oxford Bible Commentary*, 119.

¹⁸³ See SKA, *Introducción*, 272.

¹⁸⁴ "To explore" in Num 13:17, 25 (NRSV "spy out") is the same verb used in Num 10:33 (NRSV "seek out").

¹⁸⁵ See LOHFINK, "El escrito sacerdotal," 18-19.

¹⁸⁶ Links have been noted between this priestly passage and Ezek 36:3, 13; see ARTUS, *Aproximación*, 41.

¹⁸⁷ "This report is exaggerated for effect; it succeeds. The people are seduced by the negative report (14:36) [and] despise God's promise of land (14:31);" FRETHERM, "Numbers," *Oxford Bible Commentary*, 120.

YHWH and want to return to Egypt,¹⁸⁸ for which purpose they also want someone other than Moses as their leader, 14:1-4. Only Joshua and Caleb speak well of the Land, and they are almost stoned, 14:6-10.¹⁸⁹ The Glory of YHWH appears at the Tent of Meeting (P); YHWH threatens to finish with this people (cf. Exod 32:10), but Moses intercedes, 14:13-16, with the same arguments as in Exod 32:11-12 and Deut 9:25-29, Dtr texts.

YHWH forgives them, but they shall not remain unpunished. No one from that generation which left Egypt and was in the desert, who so put YHWH to the test (“tempted YHWH”), shall see the Promised Land, 14:20-23. Everyone twenty years and up will die, 14:29-30. The youngest ones will “graze [like sheep in the field] forty years in the desert, and will bear their prostitutions,”¹⁹⁰ until everyone else has died, 14:33. The “forty years” is one year for each day the Land was explored: thus “shall you know [what it means to arouse] my enmity (or estrangement),” 14:34. Here “*pagan justos por pecadores*” (everyone suffers, good and bad alike), that is, the children bear the guilt of their parents.¹⁹¹ YHWH is holy and, although kind and patient, punishes rebellion until the third and fourth generation.¹⁹² Notice the number “forty” in 13:25; 14:33-34; 32:13. It is the time span of one generation; it is the time that is left before the exile ends: only the new generation will enter the Land. Their rebellious ancestors will all perish.

¹⁸⁸ This is a big no-no which must never happen: Deut 17:16; 28:68; cf. Exod 14:13. But YHWH does at times threaten to take them back there (e.g., Hos 8:13; 11:5).

¹⁸⁹ Note the great confession of faith of these two at the end of 14:9, “YHWH is with us.” See the opposite, as a punishment, in 14:42.

¹⁹⁰ Literally translating. “Prostitutions” means idolatry, in the first place, but also all kinds of unfaithfulness to YHWH. The relation between YHWH and Israel is viewed by the prophets as a marriage. Hosea is the classic place for this. This prophet condemns the cult of Ba‘al, a Canaanite god whose name means “lord, husband.” As symbolic of Israel’s infidelity, YHWH commands the prophet to marry a “woman of prostitutions,” using almost the same word as in Num 14:33. See Hos 2:18-19, 21-22. “To know” in the Bible can mean “have sexual relations;” applied to YHWH as object, it means to have an intimate relationship with God. A point of interest: the Hebrew word *zenut*, used in the plural in Num 14:33, is probably behind the Greek word *porneia* in Matt 19:9, often translated as “fornication, adultery,” and seems to be refer to prohibited unions between too-close kins, as the note in *Biblia de Jerusalén* (but not quite so the *NOAB* or the *Jerusalem Bible*) states. The *NAB* simply gives an “interpretative translation” (“unless the marriage is unlawful”).

¹⁹¹ Cf. Jer 31:29-30; Ezek 18:1-4; Deut 24:16. In a later stage of the Exile, it will be proclaimed that no one shall pay for another’s fault, but only for his own. It is part of the message of hope that develops. But Milgrom stresses that sin must be expiated, even if the offender has died or otherwise does not expiate, and in fact this kind of collective responsibility (or “horizontal retribution”) is a fact of life. We all bear the scars of others’ wrongdoing and oftentimes must clean up another’s mess (Paul calls this the “Law of Christ” in Gal 6:2).

¹⁹² Recall Gen 15:13-16, regarding the Babylonian Exile.

God, ironically, will grant the rebels their desires. They wanted to die in the desert, 14:2, and they will, 14:32-33. They rejected the Land, 14:3; well, they shall not enter it, 14:30. They had feared for their children, 14:3, and their children will suffer along with them, 14:33.¹⁹³ The war they proposed to wage shall not be holy, for YHWH will not be with them, and they are miserably defeated, 14:39-45.

Num 20. Most of this chapter is attributed to P. Miriam dies.¹⁹⁴ The people now complain against Moses and Aaron about lack of water. These two leaders now pray to YHWH, who orders Moses to speak to the “cliff” (big rock, *sela*’),¹⁹⁵ which will then give forth water, 20:8. Moses strikes the rock twice with his staff, and abundant waters springs forth. YHWH then reproaches Moses and Aaron for not having believed or trusted him, sanctifying him in the presence of the Israelites, 20:12.¹⁹⁶ So neither will they enter the Promised Land. The waters are called Meriba = “quarrel, dispute,” because the Israelites contended with YHWH, who sanctified himself in (or against) them.¹⁹⁷ According to one commentator, this narrative is meant to indicate that the leaders of the old generation will not lead Israel out of exile back to the Promised Land.¹⁹⁸ Moses’ and Aaron’s disobedience consists, it seems, in striking the rock —twice— instead of speaking to it: this underscores how meticulous one must be in keeping what YHWH has commanded. Pride has also been detected in 20:10, where Moses appears to arrogate to himself a divine power or prerogative.¹⁹⁹

Something must be said about Num 20:14-21. Israel asks his brother Edom to allow simple passage through its territory on the way to the Promised Land; the Edomites know all the hardship that Israel has been through.²⁰⁰ Edom does not allow it, and Israel has to go around Edom. Edom was Israel’s neighbor (see the first map in the back of the

¹⁹³ These correspondences, and others, are found in FRETHEIM, “Numbers,” *Oxford Bible Commentary*, 120-121.

¹⁹⁴ *miryam* (Mary) in Hebrew has been construed as meaning “excellence.”

¹⁹⁵ YHWH is *sela*’ in Ps 18:3; 31:3; 42:9; 71:3.

¹⁹⁶ As in the Lord’s Prayer, “hallowed by thy Name.” Cf. John 12:28.

¹⁹⁷ Meriba comes from the verb “to contend, start legal proceedings.”

¹⁹⁸ OLSON, “Numbers,” *Harper Collins Bible Commentary*, 178.

¹⁹⁹ Note the contrast between ‘you did not sanctify me’ in 20:12 and ‘YHWH sanctifies himself’ in 20:13. Olson makes the following interesting observation: the careful order of the holy camp in Num 1-10 progressively disordered. In Num 13-14, the tribes of the outer circle rebel, then the Levites (who surround the Tent which is in the middle) rebel in Nm 16-17, and finally, in Num 20, even the leaders who are closest to God, Moses and Aaron the priest, rebel.

²⁰⁰ The Hebrew word rendered here “hardship” (*NRSV* “adversity”) is also found in Exod 18:8; Neh 9:32.

NOAB). The name means “red,” as was its land (note that biblical names usually denote an individual “founder-ancestor,” the people he engenders, and also the land they occupy). Edom’s ancestor was Esau, Jacob/Israel’s twin brother, Gen 25:19-34; Esau was as red (or ruddy) as the land which would bear his name, 25:30, and he even had a knack for red food (!), so much so, that for it he sold his rights as first-born (primogeniture), 25:29-34.²⁰¹ Israel will have great hatred for Edom, especially when Edom supported Babylon’s conquest of Israel.²⁰²

In the passage concerning Aaron’s death, Num 20:22-29, one should note the parallelism with Moses’ death: both are ordered to die, on a mountain, since they are not to enter the Promised Land, for having been contentious (plural) at the waters of Meriba, and both are mourned for thirty days.²⁰³ Both Moses and Aaron name successors when they are about to die.

Num 25. We have now come to the account of the final rebellion. The scene is in Moab, another one of Israel’s neighbors. Like Edom, Moab also had less than prestigious origins: they descended from the incestuous union of Lot and his eldest daughter, Gen 19:30-38.²⁰⁴ Israel joined itself to the Moabites and adored their gods.²⁰⁵ YHWH’s wrath was enkindled, and he commanded that the people’s leaders be killed. Num 25:6-18 is a P account which narrates the priest Pinehas good deed, the killing of two fornicators caught

²⁰¹ Blenkinsopp opines that the “red stuff” might be something similar to borscht, “a soup made primarily of beets” still so enjoyed among Jews that “the theaters and nightclubs associated with the Jewish summer resorts in the Catskills” are known as the “borscht belt” (*Webster’s*, 170).

²⁰² See Ps 137:7. Even YHWH hates Esau/Edom, Mal 1:2-5.

²⁰³ Cf. Num 20:12; 27:12-14 (P text). Moses’ death and the mourning for it are narrated in Deut 34.

²⁰⁴ The Hebrew Bible is given to this type of etiology, mythological accounts that explain why persons or nations etc. are as they are (or as Israel perceived them!). The Canaanites, for example, are lascivious because their father Cam also was, Gen 9:20-25.

²⁰⁵ The great danger in having relations or marrying foreign women is that it led to idolatry: Exod 34:14-16; Deut 7:1-6. The classic case is that of Solomon, 1 Kgs 11:1-13. After the Exile, Ezra will try to compel the Jews (the persons who had returned from the Exile) to divorce the women they had married from among the “people of the land,” that is, those who had remained and not gone off into the Exile and become “Jews” (adherents of the particular development of the religion of Israel that arose in the Babylonian Exile, and in whose more or less orthodox crystallization Ezra had a leading role). In Ezra 9-10, such divorce and sending away also of the children born of such unions is sought to be enforced under pain of excommunication and confiscation of property. This reform measure is widely believed to have been unsuccessful. “Dissidents” had other views, and the Book of Ruth is precisely about a Moabite woman who joins Israel (cf. Deut 23:4) and adheres to YHWH and becomes the mother of Obed, Jesse’s father, and thus, King David’s great-grandmother!

in the act, thus warding off the plague that YHWH had sent. YHWH then establishes his “covenant of peace,” or of “eternal priesthood,” with Pinehas and his descendants.

As a conclusion to our study of Num, we quote the words of Dennis T. Olson:

The narrative of Israel’s apostasy in Numbers brings to a close the life of the first generation of Israelites out of Egypt. The twenty-four thousand people who died (v. 9) are presumably the last contingent of the old generation. They have been taken off the stage to make room for the coming of *a new generation of Israelites who again stand on the edge of the promised land* [my italics]. The advent of this new generation of hope and promise is signaled by the second census list of the twelve tribes of Israel in Num 26.²⁰⁶

Deuteronomy

Preliminary observations. We have arrived at the fifth and last book of the Torah, which begins, as we saw, with a P text (Gen 1), and in whose first four books P is well-represented. Now the Torah will be finished with Dtr’s classic production, Deut.²⁰⁷ This fact suggests to us that the hypothesis that the Pentateuch is a compromise between these two schools (P and D or Dtr) is well-founded.²⁰⁸ We shall see, however, that in Deut we not only find P texts, but that the Dtr movement underwent developments which assimilate it to fundamental P ideas, so that the “compromise” is in several aspects also a convergence (a coming together).²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ “Numbers,” *HarperCollins Bible Commentary*, 182.

²⁰⁷ The great scholar Martin Noth, classmate of Gerhard von Rad under Albrecht Alt, spoke of a Tetrateuch (Gen-Num), followed by Deut as the prologue of the Deuteronomic History (Josh-2 Kgs). Von Rad preferred to speak of a Hexateuch (six books), ending with Josh, since the promise of the Land begs to be fulfilled, and this only occurs in Josh. However, as the great scholar of the canon, James A. Sanders, stresses in his *Anchor Bible Dictionary* article, “Canon” (Hebrew Bible), 1.840, “The Pentateuch (and not the Hexateuch or even [Enneateuch] —that is, Genesis to Deuteronomy and not Genesis to Joshua or even Kings) became the Torah for Judaism for all time because of the triumph of the book of Deuteronomy and the school of thinkers, writers, and editors which its triumph spawned in the exilic sixth-century period.”

²⁰⁸ See BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 241; ARTUS, *Aproximación*, 4; SKA, *Introducción*, 305, 313, and, actually, the whole discussion in 295-315.

²⁰⁹ Seeing P texts in Deut, and two basic moments in the development of the Dtr movement (a more “legalistic, law-observance oriented stage, and a more election-by-grace and love stage) is the position of the great Deut scholar Norbert Lohfink, S.J. Jacob Milgrom would attribute the theme of YHWH’s love of the Fathers simply to D/Dtr itself. In many ways, the notion of a priestly “Holiness School” incorporating prophetic social justice concerns, upheld by Milgrom and Israel Knohl, is very similar to an evolved Dtr such as Lohfink posits, and would also account for what Blenkinsopp and others would attribute to Dtr insertions in the Tetrateuch (such as Lev 26:3-46). There are indeed links between the Holiness School and Levitical circles, as there are between Dtr and Levitical circles.

The name “Deuteronomy” comes from the Greek; specifically, from the LXX “translation” of Deut 17:18. The Hebrew says that “when the king shall sit upon the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy (*mishne*) of this Torah.” The LXX says that “when he shall have sat upon his rule, he shall write for himself this deuteronomy,” a word which means “second law” (not “copy of the Law”). So the LXX does not give an exact translation here; rather, it seems that by the third century B.C.E. (the time of the Greek translation of the Torah), this book already was known by this title, “Second Torah or Law” = “Deuteronomy” (it is the LXX which translates “Torah” as *nomos*, “Law;” Torah rather means “Priestly Teaching” or “Priestly Decision”). What is this “second Law”? Getting a bit ahead of ourselves, we would say that it is the legislation contained in this book, especially in Deut 12:1-26:15, which replaces (or at least updates) the Covenant Code of Exod 20:22-23:19.²¹⁰ But there is more: Deut describes itself in 28:69 (*NRSV* 29:1) as the words (the Hebrew title of Deut in fact is “Words”) of the *other covenant* which YHWH commanded Moses to “cut” (make) in the land of Moab, a covenant different from the one made in Sinai (Exod 19). Deut, then, is the Other Covenant, the one Jer 31:31 calls the New Covenant.²¹¹ We shall attempt to expound this hereinbelow.

Situation of Deut. Israel has finally arrived at the border of the Promised Land, to the plains (or steppes) of Moab, Deut 1:1.²¹² There is not much left to wait, but *they are still on the other side* of the River Jordan. Moses will now speak to Israel for the last time, in one long speech, or a long series of speeches,²¹³ which will all take place on the last day of his life. He will remind Israel of all that has happened during all those years of wandering in the desert, and will point out the lessons that Israel should have learned, and

²¹⁰ LOHFINK, “Theology of the Wilderness,” 55, says that of the different “law-givings” in the Pentateuch, the “juridically decisive one” is “the Deuteronomic one, for it is the final and decisive covenantal obligation towards [*sic*, = “as regards”] God’s Law from Sinai.”

²¹¹ There are great affinities between Jer and Deut; see the appendix of some of their parallel passages in the back of these notes.

²¹² According to the P itinerary, this is the twelfth (last) stage, Num 22:1.

²¹³ Lohfink counts twenty-two, a significant number based on the number of letters in the Hebrew “alephbet;” “Theology of the Wilderness,” 3, 44. Cf. the acrostic psalms, such as 25, or 119, where each verse or strophe begins with successive letters of the alephbet. Ancient versions of the Jewish canon (such as those known to Josephus and Jerome) count twenty-two books. Normally, the Jews count twenty-four books (= the thirty-nine books of the Protestants): the books of Sam, Kgs, Chr, Ezra-Neh and each one book, the Twelve (“Minor”) prophets is one book; these twenty-four books can be reduced to twenty-two either by excluding Qoh and Esth or by including Ruth with Judg and Lam with Jer; see SANDERS, “Canon,” *ABD*, 840.

the theological consequences which it should draw. We shall see the typical Dtr: repetitive, with the use of a very characteristic vocabulary, all of it exhortative (this is shared in common with the Holiness School). Deut exhorts to conversion, “turning to YHWH,” but even more, it will speak of the profound change which must take place in the *heart* (another key Dtr word) of Israel; ultimately, this will be change wrought by YHWH himself.

Deut 1. Several traditions have been brought together in the first verse, overloading it with names of quite mysterious locales. We are told that the journey from Horeb (recall that Dtr loathes the name “Sinai”)²¹⁴ to Kadesh Barnea takes eleven days. Lohfink, probably the greatest contemporary Deut scholar, says that in the first part of this book, Kadesh Barnea is already the Promised Land.²¹⁵ That is to say, Israel made the eleven-day trek from Mount Horeb/Sinai to the beginning of the Promised Land, but there, in Kadesh Barnea, it sinned against YHWH. YHWH had commanded them to go from Mount Horeb to the “Mountain of the Amorites” (the Dtr name for “Canaanites”), that is to the Promised Land, 1:6-7.²¹⁶ YHWH wanted Israel to take possession of the Land that he had sworn to their Fathers and their descendants. God had already fulfilled the promise of making them numerous, 1:10. So the people had set off on their march and arrived at Kadesh Barnea, 1:19. Moses tells them that “you have arrived at the Mountain of the Amorites, which YHWH your God is giving you,” 1:20. YHWH had determined to give Israel this Land: Israel, then, must *go up* and take it, without fear. We here remember what we saw in Num 13-14: the spies defamed the Land and the Israelites refused to go up, rebelling against “[what had come out of] the mouth of YHWH your God,” Deut 1:26.²¹⁷ Moses exhorted them: have no fear, it is YHWH himself who “goes before you, he will fight for you, as you saw him do in Egypt,” 1:29. Moses describes the journey through the desert as the time when YHWH (always “your” or “our” God, etc.) carried Israel as a father does with his son, until they arrived where they are. But not even

²¹⁴ Lohfink says that “Sinai” could be confused with “Sin,” the Assyro-Babylonian moon god; “Theology of the Wilderness,” 3.

²¹⁵ Not thus in Num or Deut 9; LOHFINK, “Theology of the Wilderness,” 5, 20.

²¹⁶ It is thus depicted as going from one holy mountain (Horeb) to another (the “Mountain [NRSV “hill country”] of the Amorites”); LOHFINK, “Theology of the Wilderness,” 4.

²¹⁷ See the note to 1:22 in *Biblia de Jerusalén* and the note to 1:19-46 in the *NOAB*, page 244..

thus did they trust/believe in YHWH, who watched over them night and day along the way, 1:32-33. That is why YHWH swore that not one person of that wicked generation would see the good Land; not even Moses, 1:34-37. Only the little ones who have yet to know good and evil will enter. But now, they will all have to turn around and go back to the desert, 1:40.²¹⁸ Num 14:39-45 is then recalled: the Israelites repent and now want to follow YHWH's command, but it is too late, and they are defeated. Now YHWH does not listen to them; "and they dwelt many days in Kadesh, according to the days they dwelt," 1:46.

Deut 2:1 says that they turned and went back to the desert, going around the Mountain of Seir (in Edom) "many days" = "a long time."²¹⁹ They then crossed over to the Wadi Zered, 2:13, the eleventh stage of the journey (Num 21:12).²²⁰ From Kadesh Barnea up to their arrival in Moab now, they had wandered thirty eight years,²²¹ while the whole rebellious generation died off, Deut 2:14-15.

Deut 4. We are here in a part of Deut which comes from (according to Lohfink) a later editor from the late Exile period.²²² There is hope of returning to the Land. From the first words, let us note the homiletic, exhortative language of Dtr: "and now Israel *hear* (*shema* ') the 'statutes and the judgments'²²³ which I teach you to do so that you live and

²¹⁸ To return to the wilderness "by the way of the Suf Sea" (= the "Sea of Reeds," in the LXX the "Red Sea;") cf. the note to Exod 13:18 in *Biblia de Jerusalén*, or in *NOAB*, page 102) is to return to Egypt, Num 14:20-25, where they should never go, Deut 17:16. According to Lohfink, in the view of this part of Deut, the desert only ends on the other side of the Jordan. That is, it is not a geographical term, but temporal: the whole time that Israel is not (yet) in the Promised Land it is in the "wilderness." Also, if Horeb and the Mountain of the Amorites are holy, what is in-between them, the desert, is not holy; or if it is holy, it is so only because it reveals the dark side of God, what is revealed of God to those who do not love him; "Theology of the Wilderness," 4-6. Lohfink (10) says that the coordination of 1:19 and 2:1 serves to show how absurd it was for Israel to have been so long in the desert, for the desert is only a time of waiting and dying, it is a vacuum in which nothing happens (12). The desert is the symbol of the Babylonian Exile. But we will see, with Lohfink, that in Deut there are positive aspects to what Israel experienced in the wilderness.

²¹⁹ This is the third mountain that Deut mentions (along with the two "holy mountains" we have discussed). Lohfink notes that this is strange, since the whole region is mountainous; "Theology of the Wilderness," 4.

²²⁰ The twelfth is Moab, Num 22:1.

²²¹ These "thirty eight years" may reflect a different tradition, earlier than the one of "forty years" in Deut 1:3, 2:7, etc.). Forty years represents a generation; LOHFINK, "Theology of the Wilderness," 5. According to Lohfink, in Deut, Israel's time in the desert (forty years) is divided as follows: one year in Kadesh Barnea, thirty eight years wandering (because of their lack of faith) and another year edging towards the border of the Land; *ibid.*, 11, 20. Cf. the paralytic ill-disposed to be cured (and to forsake sin) in John 5:5.

²²² LOHFINK, "Theology of the Wilderness," 16. That is to say, towards the end of the Exile, but without yet knowing anything about an actual return to the Land (31).

²²³ The Hebrew word are translated in various different ways.

enter and possess/inherit the Land which YHWH the God of your Fathers is giving you.” ‘Do not subtract or add anything. You have seen how YHWH punished the rebels; on the other hand, you yourselves have remained clinging to YHWH your God,²²⁴ and are all alive today! Note the highly conditional character of entry into the Land, and the frequency of the verb “to teach” in this passage; the keep (or observe) YHWH’s “precepts and norms” will be Israel’s “wisdom and understanding.”²²⁵ Note how often the word “today” (or “this day”) appears in Deut.

Deut 4:9 is pure Deuteronomism, chockfull (crammed) with warnings, applicable now and in the future. Moses “reminds” the people of everything that has occurred, what they experienced, in Horeb. Keep in mind that this is a fiction: the Dtr author or redactor is actually presenting his fellow exiles with a paradigmatic scenario, a model for their “today” in Babylon.²²⁶ It had been very terrifying to hear YHWH speak at Sinai in the midst of the fire, but the Israelites *had not seen any “representation”* (NRSV “form,” Deut 4:12, same word as for idols in the first commandment; Exod 20:4; Deut 5:8): they had only hear the sound of the *words* of YHWH, Deut 4:10-14. Therefore, they should guard against making for themselves idolatrous images!, 4:15-18. These are for other peoples; Israel is YHWH’s, 4:19-20.²²⁷

Moses continues: it was the fault of the Israelites that he was not able to enter the good Land, whereas they would cross the Jordan, 4:21-22.²²⁸ Again —Dtr never tires of repeating!— watch out for idols: YHWH is a “jealous” (or “impassioned”) God, a devouring fire. The author now tells Israel “what will take place” if they do in fact make for themselves images and anger YHWH: they will lose the Land and will be destroyed and YHWH will disperse (this verb in the Greek LXX gives rise to “Diaspora,” the Dispersion of the Jews among other nations, beginning with Babylon). Only a few will be

²²⁴ Dtr likes to use the same verb (“to cling,” NRSV “held fast” here) for faithful union with God as is used in Gen 2:24, when the spouses become one flesh. See note 257 below.

²²⁵ These words in Deut 4:6 call to mind what was said of the exile Joseph in Gen 41:39, and of Daniel and his exile companions in Dan 1:20.

²²⁶ See TERENCE E. FRETHERM, *The Pentateuch* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), especially 39-43, 56-62, 154.

²²⁷ According to Dtr, it was because they worshipped the “armies of the heavens,” or the “heavenly hosts,” among other like cults, that Israel was destroyed, 2 Kgs 17:16, and also why Judah went into exile, 21:3, 5, 10-15; 23:26-27; see Jer 19 (especially v. 13).

²²⁸ According to this view (also in Deut 3:26), Moses’ suffering is vicarious: it substitutes for the punishment the people deserve, according to OLSEN, “NUMBERS,” *HarperCollins Bible Commentary*, 178.

left (this is the notion of the “faithful Remnant”).²²⁹ There they will indeed serve/adore (this word in Hebrew can mean both things) other gods, who are really the work of human hands, 4:25-28.²³⁰

Deut 4:29-31 is one of Deut’s most beautiful passages, now converging with P covenant-promise theology. From those far-away places whither YHWH will disperse it, Israel will seek YHWH their God, and will find him if it seeks him ‘with the whole heart and the whole soul’, a Dtr refrain.²³¹ In their anguish —this word, even in Hebrew, indicates a confined space, being in ‘dire straits’, the opposite of being at one’s *anchas*, Spanish for being at ease, with plenty of room, comfortable— when all these *words* (or things) shall have found (come upon) them, “at the end of the days,” Israel *shall turn* to YHWH their God and will obey his voice. The “words” are those of Deut, including the curses which have just been announced (dispersal, etc., fully described in Deut 28). What is the meaning of “at the end of the days”?²³² We are inclined to give this phrase an eschatological sense which must be further explained.²³³ Without being able to dwell on this point now, we would have to say that “the end of the days” refer to the end of all of Israel’s history up to this point, a history of seven hundred years of sin (from the Exodus *ca.* 1250 until approximately 550, towards the end of the Exile which is about to end. It is then that YHWH will give his people a new, obedient heart (and a new covenant, Jer 31:31-34), and really, when this change takes place, it will be the Kingdom of God.²³⁴

The verb “to turn” is of great importance. It is the Hebrew verb *shuv*, whence comes *teshuvá*, “conversion, penance,” in the Dtr and prophetic sense of returning to YHWH with one’s whole heart and strength. But it is polyvalent verb (with multiple meanings, all significant and inextricably connected). It refers to the return from the

²²⁹ Diaspora also refers to the dispersal of the northern tribes after the Assyrian conquest in 722. Regarding the “Remnant,” see already the expressions in Amos 3:12 regarding the northern kingdom.

²³⁰ Jer 44 shows that the “Jews” (mere ex-inhabitants of Judah, and not faithful keepers of the Mosaic Law) who fled to Egypt chose to adore the “Queen of Heaven,” alleging that things had gone better for them with this cult than with that of YHWH. Many Bible scholars, including prominent Jewish ones, accept the idea that pure Yahwism was mostly a minority religious practice (the majority being syncretists) until the Babylonian Exile, and even after the Exile (see Third Isaiah) the polemic against syncretists continued.

²³¹ It is repeated in 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 13:4; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10.

²³² See note g to Deut 4:30 in *Jerusalem Bible*. The *NRSV* translation “in the time to come” avoids having to put a note here. The expression is very suggestive for those of us interested in eschatology.

²³³ See its use in this sense in Gen 49:1; Num 24:14; Isa 2:2 || Mic 4:1; Jer 23:20; 30:24; 48:47; 49:39; Ezek 38:16; Hos 3:5; Dan 10:14; cf. Deut 31:29.

²³⁴ Cf. LOHFINK, “Theology of the Wilderness,” 34.

Babylonian Exile, and, what is essentially the same thing, the change in Israel's fortunes, and the end of its "captivity." Let us see this illustrated in various translations of Ps 126:1:

- "Cuando Yahveh hizo volver a los cautivos de Sión" (*Biblia de Jerusalén*);²³⁵
"Cuando cambió el Señor la suerte de Sión" (*Biblia del Peregrino*);
"When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion" (*New Revised Standard Version; New American Bible*);
"When Yahweh brought Zion's captives home" (*The Jerusalem Bible* [1966]);
"When the Lord turned the tide of Zion's fortune" (*The New English Bible*);
"When the Lord turned the captivity of Sion" (LXX);
"Lè Seyè a te fè moun Siyon yo te depòte yo tounen lakay yo" (Haitian Creole Bible);
"Au retour du SEIGNEUR, avec le retour de Sion, nous avons cru rêver" (Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible).

The reason for this liberation is given in Deut 4:31(formulated in P terms): YHWH is a compassionate God (using an adjective which derives from the mother's womb and maternal compassion) who will neither abandon (or lay down, that is, stop carrying) nor destroy Israel, and he will not forget the covenant (Promise) he swore to the Fathers. We see here, beautifully joined, Dtr conversion theology (seeking and turning to YHWH is a condition) and P's eternal, unbreakable covenant/unconditional-Promise, based on God's irrevocable love for the Fathers.²³⁶

Deut 6-9. In Deut 5 we have another version of the Decalogue (cf. Exod 20). Note the reappearance of "hear/listen" in 5:1, together with "precepts and norms," "today," and

²³⁵ The *Reina-Valera* (1995) translation is more precise" when it translates "captivity" instead of "captives."

²³⁶ Some nuances may be apropos. MILGROM, *Leviticus 17-22*, 1412, states that "For D, Israel's election is traceable to God's demonstrable love of the patriarchs (Deut 4:37; 7:8)." Some do not consider the concept of Israel as chosen people to be Dtr. The Hebrew conjunction *ki*, translated by the *NRSV* in Deut 4:29 as "if you search after him etc." is firstly a conjunction (= "since, given that you will search for him etc."); the Hebrew imperfect used here can be a future or a subjunctive, i.e., can mean "you will search for him" or "[if] you search for him etc." In other words, the verse can be interpreted either as 'Israel will find God if it searches for him' or 'Israel will [certainly] find God because it will search for him [because of the change in Israel that YHWH will perform in its heart]'. This will be better appreciated after we examine Deut 29:3 [*NRSV* 29:4] and 30:6, linked as they are to Jer 31:33. In any case, seeking YHWH with one's whole heart—even if this is a divine gift—is in fact a necessary condition to finding him.

the other exhortations found in this verse. In Deut 5:3 there is a repetition of 4:4: the people who count, those whom the author has in mind, are not the ancient ancestors, but those who are alive “today.” We have already mentioned 5:23-31: the people at Horeb heard YHWH directly, but feared to die; they therefore begged Moses to be their intermediary before the Lord. The purpose of this passage is to validate Moses’ perpetual authority as intermediary. In the future, Israel will not be able to say that they want to hear something directly from God apart from Moses as intermediary, since their own experience showed them that this was inadvisable, nay, unbearable. On the other hand, Moses was on intimate terms with God, like no other.²³⁷

Now in Deut 6, we continue to see the Dtr exhortation, so repetitive but so earnest. Everything has to do with possession of the Land —this great concern and even obsession with the Land is shared by D and H— that of the people then and their future descendants. “All the days of your life,” “so that your days may be prolonged [in the Land etc.]” and “so that it may go well for you” are typical Dtr turns of phrase. In Deut 6:4-9, we have Israel’s great creed, the *Shema* (“Hear”), recited thrice a day by pious Jews. Note the repetition of “heart.” These Words shall be written on one’s forehead and hand and even on the doors.²³⁸ Dtr warns Israel not to forget YHWH its God when it enters into the Land and it goes well; Israel should fear YHWH and serve/adore him alone, 6:13.²³⁹

“To go after other gods,” 6:14, is a typical Dtr expression.²⁴⁰ Dtr’s whole program is: one God alone, one chosen people who belongs to YHWH in a unique way, and one place alone where YHWH must be worshipped (fictitiously, in Deut this place is still to be revealed; in fact, it is the Jerusalem Temple). Yhwh is a jealous God: YHWH should not be put to the test (“tempted”), 6:16.²⁴¹ We find mention of the sworn oath to the Fathers in 6:10, 18, 23, etc., a sign that P theology is incorporated in these passages (but

²³⁷ See Exod 33:11; Num 12:6-8; Deut 34:10.

²³⁸ What is tied to the forehead and hand are called phylacteries (from the Greek word for protection, “prophylactic,” amulet), in Aramaic *tefillin* (“things which are hung or stuck”). What is placed on the door is the *mezuzah* (“doorpost”).

²³⁹ Quoted by Jesus against the devil in Matt 4:10 || Luke 4:8.

²⁴⁰ See also 31:18, 20, in a prediction of exile.

²⁴¹ Also quoted by Jesus in his “temptations” during the forty days in the desert. Jesus symbolically makes the same journey as Israel, but without putting God to the test as Israel had done at Massa (= “Temptation, Trial”).

cf. Milgrom). Note the markedly educational character of Deut, as it recounts Israel's history, 6:7, 20-24. Israel's "righteousness" will be to put in practice (Hebrew "do") these commandments, 6:25.²⁴²

Deut 7 is a severe admonition not to have dealings with the people Israel will encounter on the Land. In fact, Israel historically often fell into the Canaanite Ba'al cult (see, e.g., Elijah's conflicts in 1 Kgs 18:20-40, in the DtrHist). Israel must not make treaties nor marry with them, but should instead demolish their cult places, without pity, 7:1-5, 16-26.²⁴³ Israel is a people holy (= "separated, consecrated") to/for YHWH its God, who *chose* them to be his "personal property" (*segullah*, in the LXX *laón periousion*, as in Titus 2:14) from among all the peoples of the earth.

But immediately these lofty thoughts are tempered (along with the use of P elements): it is not due to Israel's greatness that YHWH chose it, but rather because of the love God has for their Fathers and because of the oath he made to them, Deut 7:7-8.²⁴⁴ We see in 7:9-10 an apparent updating of the earlier notion that YHWH made children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren pay for the sins of their parents (Exod 34:6-7), "until the fourth generation." This idea seems to be linked to Gen 15:13-16, which may allude to the Exile.²⁴⁵ Only the guilty one himself will be punished.

In Deut 7:12-15, we see a mix of Dtr and P: it is because Israel has obeyed these decrees and has *kept* them that YHWH their God *shall keep* the covenant and the "love" (*hesed*) which he swore to their Fathers. According to Father Lohfink, a Deuteronomist reworked Dtr ideas in various sections of Deut (most of Deut 7; 8:1-9:8, 22-24).²⁴⁶ This

²⁴² The Hebrew word *tsedaqah* (translated "righteousness, justice") means being in a good relationship with God, which brings "salvation." We saw that in Gen 15:6, Abraham's faith/trust/obedience was reckoned to him as "righteousness." In a late passage (Deut 9:4-6), we see that ultimately this righteousness does not depend on Israel, but is YHWH's gift.

²⁴³ This text, which can appear harsh, is better understood keeping in mind its theologico-spiritual purpose. After the Exile, when Israel returns, there will be few Canaanites, and moreover, Israel will have no military capacity.

²⁴⁴ St. Paul takes up this idea in Rom 11:28-32: Almighty God's love for the "Patriarchs" will never be extinguished, and will result in all-Israel's salvation in the End, 11:25-26.

²⁴⁵ The idea that "the fathers ate sour grapes and the children's became dull" was modified in the Exile, Jer 31:29-30 (Dtr text), Ezek 18:1-4. The idea of personal (or "vertical") versus collective (or "horizontal") responsibility would serve to forestall the Babylonian exiles' fatalism (see Ezek 33:10; 37:11). But some scholars, such as Milgrom, believe we have different theologies at work, some requiring that all sin be paid for by somebody, even if the (main) culprit is dead, which in any case reflects a "fact of life." See Lam 5:7; Lev 26:30-40 (H text); Num 14:33.

²⁴⁶ "Theology of the Wilderness," 31. Lohfink labels this reworking (*Überarbeitung*) or expansion of the text "DtrÜ."

Deuteronomist, “DtrÜ,” corrects or contests Dtr’s “nomistic” (“legalistic”) theology (which Lohfink designates “DtrN”) which conditioned entry (really, return) to the Land on observance of the Law. DtrÜ, on the other hand, stresses God’s grace, the gratuitousness of his gift.²⁴⁷ Lohfink says: for DtrN —our Dtr *tout court, a secas*, simply— the desert represents all of Israel’s history, from Horeb until the Babylonian Exile; its message is for these exiles.²⁴⁸ It is a period in which Israel disobeyed the first commandment (not to have other gods), putting God to the test and provoking his wrath (as in Massa and Meriba).

Now, in Deut 8, DtrÜ inverts things. Instead of Israel putting YHWH to the test, it is YHWH who put Israel to the test. Deut 8:1, 6, verses which form an *inclusio* to this unit, exhort to observance of the commandments. But when Israel is asked to remember the whole way that YHWH made it walk those forty years in the wilderness, it is explained that this was in order to humble and put Israel to the test (“tempt”),²⁴⁹ in order to know the heart of Israel, if Israel would keep God’s commandments or not. DtrÜ interprets the manna as a humbling form of nourishment, in order to test Israel (and not exactly, as in Exod 16, as a sign of God’s material providence), and in order to make Israel know that human beings live not only by bread, but they live by what comes out of the mouth of YHWH.²⁵⁰ But despite this, Israel’s garments did not wear out nor did its

²⁴⁷ LOHFINK, “Theology of the Wilderness,” 27, 30-31, considers this to constitute an anticipation, or at least the basis, of the doctrine of justification by grace (and not works) which Paul develops more than five centuries later in a context similar to that of DtrN and DtrÜ. This theology of justification becomes more explicit in Deut 9. According to Lohfink, this shift comes from the late Exile (somewhat after 550), when nothing is yet known for certain about an actual return to the Land. Lohfink (31) suggests that Deut 4, which knows of texts like Deut 7-9 —that is, is later than them— does yet know of an actual return to the Land, either.

²⁴⁸ See also “Theology of the Wilderness,” 19, 55 (“a message to the exiles concerning their future”).

²⁴⁹ The Hebrew verb “to test” is applied to Abraham in Gen 22:1. The word “tentative” means “as a test, for a trial period.”

²⁵⁰ Also quoted by Jesus in his desert temptations.

feet swell: YHWH was only correcting his son as human parents do.²⁵¹ YHWH put his son to the test so that *it would go well for him in the end*, 8:16.²⁵²

But the warnings continue. The Land where YHWH is taking them is very good, it has everything, they will be able to eat all they want and will lack for nothing, 8:7-10. That is why they should be on their guard and not forget YHWH and his commandments when things go well for them. Let not their heart “be exalted” so that they forget YHWH and everything they experienced in the wilderness, 8:11-15. Let not Israel think that it is due to its own strength that it has prospered: it is YHWH who gives wealth, thus fulfilling his covenant-Promise to the Fathers. If Israel forgets this, it shall perish like the other nations.²⁵³ Compare Lev 26:44-45.

Deut 9 begins with another instance of “hear, listen.” Israel is going to *cross the Jordan*.²⁵⁴ The nations that were on the Land will disappear before YHWH and his people Israel. But Israel should not think (“say in his heart”),²⁵⁵ “because of my *tsedaqah* (“righteousness”) is YHWH making me enter into possession/inheritance of this Land,” since it is rather because of the wickedness of those nations (*goyim*) that YHWH is dislodging them, and in order to confirm the word he swore to Israel’s Fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.²⁵⁶ This is the passage which Lohfink considers to be the precursor of the

²⁵¹ The biblical concept of divine “correction” or “discipline” (in Hebrew, *musar*, from the verb *yasar*) is very important. We find the verb in Lev 26:33, the noun in Prov 3:11; 6:23; 13:24 (the famous “corporal punishment” passage, “Spare the rod and spoil the child”), and frequently in Prov. Of the “Suffering” Servant of YHWH it is said that “the *musar* (“discipline,” perhaps flagellation here) of our *shalom* (“well-being, salvation”) [fell] upon him.” In beautiful Ps 16:7, it literally says “even at night [God] corrects me in my kidneys” (= in my inmost being). Recall the image of YHWH carrying Israel his son (Exod 4:22) through the desert in Deut 1:31.

²⁵² This reminds us of the story of Joseph, who puts his brothers to the test (although using another verb), Gen 42:15-16, with a happy result. LOHFINK, “Theology of the Wilderness,” 43, states that the message (kerygma) of DtrÜ to the exilic reader is: “Observe the Law, but if you are unable to observe it fully, have confidence that God will bring you back because of the promises God made to your ancestors.”

²⁵³ This is an astounding statement based on a high ethical code, unique in world literature. Only Israel is under such a standard. Cf. Amos 3:1-2. Recall P theology: the Holy Land vomits its impure and wicked inhabitants, Lev 18:28; 20:22. But Milgrom, who attributes Lev 18 to H, would disagree that for H the Land is holy, *Leviticus 17–22*, 1399; for H, only priests are innately holy (they must sustain this holiness), and Israelites must strive for holiness, *ibid.* 1352-1353. The Land is indirectly holy by virtue of YHWH’s ownership of it.

²⁵⁴ As we shall see shortly, in 29:11 (*NRSV* 29:12) it is said they will “*cross into the covenant*.”

²⁵⁵ The “heart,” in Hebrew anthropology, is the seat of thought and decision-making. The place of *feeling* (compassion, etc.) are the entrails, the “innards;” see Luke 1:78: “by the entrails (or bowels) of mercy of our God etc.” Cf. Deut 29:18 (*NRSV* 29:19).

²⁵⁶ Here, in Deut 9:5, “word” (in Hebrew, *davar*) is usually translated as “promise” in the *NRSV* and other versions. There is no Hebrew word specifically for “promise.” The LXX translated here *diatheké*, its usual word for “covenant,” and this is probably what is behind Gal 3:15-18, where Paul mixes up (on purpose)

Pauline doctrine of justification by grace and not by works.²⁵⁷ In 9:6, the idea that Israel should not think it has earned the right to the Land is repeated,²⁵⁸ since it is a “stiff-necked” people (a Dtr expression).

Israel’s whole history up to that point —seven hundred years, from the time of the exodus from Egypt until that of the Babylonian Exile, according to Lohfink— was one of rebellion against its God, 9:7-24.²⁵⁹ YHWH had wanted to destroy them, and Moses broke the two Tablets (with the Ten Words, according to 10:4),²⁶⁰ but he interceded for the people and also for Aaron. Moses laid prostrate forty days and nights, praying to YHWH, petitioning God to *remember* the Fathers and to forgive his people, lest it be said that YHWH had not been able to lead them to the Land he had said (“promised”), or worse, that it was due to his hatred that he took them out to the desert to die, 9:25-29.²⁶¹

We have been seeing the first part of Deut, but this was not the first to be written. We have seen passages that are the product of DtrN and DtrÜ, which Lohfink says are from the late Exile period (towards 550), although DtrÜ, being a response to DtrN, must be a little later.²⁶² Deut 4 is even later, but it still knows nothing about an actual return to the Land.²⁶³ We are now going to pass over to the final part of Deut, skipping the central portion of this book, Deut 12-26, the “Deuteronomic Code,” remembering that it was in

the Greek word for “promise” and *diatheké*, which can mean both “covenant” and “testament.” From the LXX translation of *berith* (Hebrew for “covenant”) as *diatheké* we get Old and New “Testament.”

²⁵⁷ See LOHFINK, “Theology of the Wilderness,” 41, 43. On the other hand, the Deut passages which call for loving God and “clinging” to him (with the matrimonial verb, 4:4; 10:20; 11:22; 13:4; 30:20) should dissipate any caricature which we may have that Judaism is a legalistic religion without love and inward devotion.

²⁵⁸ This is what Paul laments in Rom 10:3 that Israel did not do, in his view.

²⁵⁹ “Theology of the Wilderness,” 34.

²⁶⁰ That is, the “Decalogue.”

²⁶¹ Cf. Exod 32:12; Ezek 20:9. In Ezek, YHWH acts in favor of his people so that his Name not be profaned among the nations, 20:14, 22; 36:20-23; 39:7, 25, and not primarily in consideration of Israel per se (36:22).

²⁶² LOHFINK, “Theology of the Wilderness,” 30, 31. In 42, he says that DtrÜ presupposes pentateuchal priestly (P) sources. We are in the stages of the final redaction of the Torah.

²⁶³ LOHFINK, “Theology of the Wilderness,” 16, 30-31. Lohfink (7, 16) posits the “first formulation” of the DtrHist as being in the time of Josiah’s reign (seventh century), earlier than Noth does. Lohfink (17) believes that Deut 8 is “probably postexilic” (that is, after 538), but cf. 19 (‘late exile’). It is difficult to be so precise about dates!

fact the first part to be written, in order to replace, as many think, the “Covenant Code” of Exod 20-23.²⁶⁴

Deut 28-31. Like Lev, Deut has at the end blessings and curses which will occur according as Israel keeps the Torah or not.²⁶⁵ As in Lev, the curses in Deut 28 are much more numerous than the blessings. Let us note some differences between Lev 26 and Deut 28. Lev 26:44 seems softer than Deut 28:20-21: Israel will not be wholly cut-off, although both agree that it will be in effect “cut-off” from the Land. Deut 28 does not speak of the Sabbaths that the Land will have to pay (or enjoy, the Hebrew verb has both meanings), as does Lev 26:34-43. Only Deut 28:33-35 says that Israel shall be “exploited and oppresses,” and that it will go crazy (*meshuggah*) because of what it will behold,²⁶⁶ and it will suffer ulcers from head to toe. Deut 28:47 “predicts” that an iron yoke will be placed on Israel’s neck; in Jer 28:4, this refers to the king of Babylon (Deut 28:49-52 in fact reflects what happened when the Babylonians conquered Judah).²⁶⁷ Deut dwells more than Lev does on the cannibalism and desperation that will occur during the Babylonian siege: families will be divided, everyone will seek to feed himself, Deut 28:53-57.²⁶⁸ Repeated three times is the refrain “in the siege and in the distress [with] which your enemies will distress you,” 28:53, 55, 57; these words are spoken by YHWH in Jer 19:9, and the siege is realized in the invasions described in Jer 52:5; 2 Kgs 24:10; 25:2.²⁶⁹

Moreover, Deut 28 sees the curses as reversing all that YHWH had done for Israel when he took him out of Egypt. God will now make Israel suffer the same plagues with

²⁶⁴ Some version of Deut 12-26, more or less like the one we have now, is commonly thought to be what was “found” in the Temple during Josiah’s reign, 2 Kgs 22:8 (there called the “Book of the Law”). The date for this is 622 B.C.E.

²⁶⁵ According to BLENKINSOPP, *Pentateuch*, 224, Lev 23 (the part of Lev corresponding to Deut 28), combining elements from Dtr, P and Ezek, is from the very late Exile (a little before 538), when the exiles were already preparing to return. According to Milgrom, Lev 23 is the work of the H redactor who is from the Exile period (H, the Holiness author, or school, was, we recall, an eighth century priestly response to prophetic preaching). For Milgrom, the H redactor (H_R) was responsible for the redaction of the whole Torah.

²⁶⁶ This Hebrew word is still used among used to describe something crazy, an “unreal” situation. In Yiddish, the language of Ashkenazi Jews (from Germany and Easter Europe), see Gen 10:3), a madman is *meshuggener*, a crazy woman is *meshuggeneh*. See also Deut 28:65-67.

²⁶⁷ See also Jer 5:15-17; Bar 4:15.

²⁶⁸ See also Jer 19:9; Lam 2:20; 4:10 (written shortly after the Babylonian conquest); Ezek 5:10.

²⁶⁹ See also Jer 27:8, 11-12; 28:2, 4, 11, regarding the Babylonian conquest.

which God accomplished the Egyptians' ejection of his people, 28:60. Of this people, only a few (the "Remnant") will be left ("remain"), on account of their disobeying YHWH's voice, 28:62.²⁷⁰ The same YHWH who blessed Israel will now destroy it, 28:63.²⁷¹ Finally, YHWH will make Israel return to Egypt, to where they never should go back,²⁷² to be male and female slaves again, but there shall not even be a buyer for them, 28:68. It is as if they had no one and nothing. This return to Egypt is the Babylonian Exile.

The other covenant (new or renewed). Another speech of Moses begins in Deut 28:29 (29:1 in the *NRSV*).²⁷³ In Hebrew, it begins with almost the same words as does Deut itself.²⁷⁴ It speaks of "a covenant which YHWH commanded Moses to cut with the sons of Israel in the land of Moab *separate from/in addition to* the covenant which was cut with them in Horeb." For Blenkinsopp, it is a covenant remade for the "post-catastrophe" community, one already foreshadowed in Jer 31:31.²⁷⁵ For Lohfink, "What happens in Moab is simply the reenactment of the covenant of Horeb. It is a new act of covenant-making, but an act for the old and existing covenant relation."²⁷⁶ Be it as it

²⁷⁰ By the way, in Hebrew, the verb "hear" is the same as "listen," and it becomes "obey" with the use of certain prepositions.

²⁷¹ In Lam 2:4-5, YHWH is seen as Israel's enemy. The warrior-God who once fought for Israel fought against Israel then. Cf. Isa 63:10.

²⁷² Also in Deut 17:16.

²⁷³ Lohfink states that it is not Moses' third speech (as in *Jerusalem Bible*), but rather the sixth of twenty-two; "Theology of the Wilderness," 44.

²⁷⁴ But it reads "that YHWH commanded Moses" instead of "which Moses said," as in 1:1.

²⁷⁵ See his article on Deut in the *NJBC*, 107. Thus Blenkinsopp thinks that the name *deuteronomium* ("Second Law") in LXX Deut 17:18 is apt. See *Pentateuch*, 209-210. Regarding Jer 30-31, BLENKINSOPP, *A History of Prophecy*, 135, states: "Here, too, we find indications of deuteronomic editing, especially in the passage promising a new covenant (31:31-34). The tone and sentiments also make a good fit with the exilic Deuteronomic perspective familiar from Dtr and the book of Deuteronomy itself [footnote omitted]. In giving new prescriptions for the future that draw on the experience of past religious failure, both Jer. 31:31-34 and Deut. 30:14 speak of the law inscribed in or on the heart without, however, explaining how exactly this inscription will lead to a future different from the past."

²⁷⁶ "Theology of the Wilderness," 54. Lohfink adds that "The important thing in cultic consciousness is that . . . [e]verything is present, now, as if for the first time." This would explain the very frequent repetition of "today" in Deut; especially recall 5:3. According to Lohfink (54), "the covenant of Moab should be considered as a foreshadowing of the covenant as it will be experienced at the moment of the return from Exile. At that moment Israel, in a certain sense for the first time, will recognize that 'I am YHWH'." See the formula frequent in P and Ezek in Deut 29:5 [*NRSV* 29:6]. That is to say, for the first time, as it were, Israel will want to and will be able to keep the first commandment, Deut 5:6 (and thus the whole Law). Moreover, in a talk given at the celebration of the Pontifical Biblical Institute's ninetieth anniversary on May 8, 1999, Lohfink, referring to Ezek 20 as telling the story of Israel in its Land looking back from the Exile, states (I translate from the Italian): "It all sounds as if Israel in its land had not yet been there. It is

may,²⁷⁷ we are inclined to stress the novelty with which Deut presents Israel's new situation (Israel being in the Babylonian Exile): now, *today*, Israel will finally be able to keep the covenant. Israel had seen all that YHWH had done in Egypt, "but YHWH had not given them a heart to understand nor eyes to see nor ears to hear until this day/today," 29:3 (NRSV 29:4). Israel had walked for forty years (a whole generation) in the wilderness, sustained by YHWH, but without being able to celebrate: thus did YHWH educate them, 29:4-5 (NRSV 29:5-6).²⁷⁸ "You are standing *today* all of you before YHWH your God . . . to cross into the covenant of YHWH your God and into his oath²⁷⁹ which YHWH your God cuts with you *today*," 29:9, 11 (NRSV 29:10, 12).²⁸⁰ It is *today*, that cultic, religious present/now, that Israel shall be YHWH's people and YHWH shall be their God, 29:12 (NRSV 29:13), forever.²⁸¹

In Deut 29:21-27 (NRSV 29:22-28), the Dtr explains why the catastrophe came upon Israel, so that they in turn explain it to their children.

When all the nations (*goyim*) ask, Why did YHWH do thus to this Land, why this burning wrath so great?, they shall say because they abandoned the covenant of YHWH the God of their Fathers . . . and they went to serve/adore *other gods* . . . which they did not know (= had no relationship with) and which had not been allotted to them.²⁸²

still in the desert, in the "desert of the peoples" [Ezek 20:35]. The real entry is yet to arrive. At bottom, it is yet to arrive in all the prophetic writings."

²⁷⁷ In his article on Deut in the *NJBC*, 107, Blenkinsopp says that "The covenant in the land of Moab is a second covenant after all, since the Law revealed to Moses alone at Horeb was promulgated and accepted there."

²⁷⁸ LOHFINK, "Theology of the Wilderness," 51, says, however, that the idea of "education" (probably in the harsher sense of "correction," which we have seen) is "clearly" absent from Deut 29:5, which emphasizes YHWH's care. Like good German, he translates "beer" (as in modern Hebrew) instead of "strong drink," and speculates (51) that Israel in the desert is like in a Nazirite state, where this type of beverage cannot be drunk (Num 6:3). Only at the conclusion of the covenant in Moab will this period of sacrifice be over; then they can celebrate. Based on the only other text in Deut where this word ("beer or liquor") appears, 14:26, Lohfink believes that the likely celebration would be Succoth, Booths, the principal feast in Deut, and for Judaism.

²⁷⁹ *New Jerusalem Bible* translates "sworn with imprecation;" the earlier edition has "ratified with dire sanctions," and the Spanish "jurada con imprecación," in view of verses such as 29:18-19, where the same one Hebrew word "oath, curse" seems to have this sense.

²⁸⁰ Note the use, unique here, of "crossing, going over" (at times "passing over") to describe entrance into the covenant. It creates a bond with crossing the Jordan River; in other words, with the entry (fictively, for the first time, actually, with the return from Babylon) into the Promised Land; see 4:14, 26; 6:1; 9:1 ("today"); 11:8, 31, etc.

²⁸¹ This is a P formula in the midst of a Dtr text. But Milgrom explains the similar language in Lev 26:12 as an H text providing that if Israel keeps the commandments, it can regain the conditions of Eden (when YHWH walked in the garden, Gen 3:8 (same Hebrew verb as in Lev and several other passages).

²⁸² "To abandon the covenant" is Dtr language; see Elijah's lament in 1 Kgs 19:10, 14. Every nation has its assigned deities, as we shall see in Deut 32:8-9.

What happened was that YHWH caused to come upon this Land the whole curse written in this book,²⁸³ and uprooted them from their soil and flung them *to another land as (on) this day*, 29:26-27 (NRSV 29:27-28).²⁸⁴

Lohfink ventures that “Dt 29-30 belongs to the work of the redactor of the Pentateuch. If that is indeed so, the idea of covenant-making at Moab was introduced into Deuteronomy only at the time of the redaction of the Pentateuch.”²⁸⁵

Finally, in Deut 30:1-14, “Moses” “foretells” Israel what will take place at the end of the days (NRSV “in time to come,” Deut 4:29-30; 31:29). All the horrible curses will have come upon Israel, and Israel in its Exile will have meditated on them in its heart, 30:1. Then Israel *will return* to YHWH its God and will listen to/obey his voice “in all that I have commanded it *today*.”²⁸⁶ And it is then that YHWH will *turn/change* Israel’s captivity/fortunes,²⁸⁷ will gather Israel from wherever it is dispersed, and will make (enable) Israel go to the Land that their Fathers possessed, and Israel will possess it, etc., 30:3-5. What makes this possible is that YHWH will circumcise Israel’s heart so that it will love God with all its heart and with all its life or soul (*nephesh*); thus will Israel be able to live, and enjoy the same blessing as its Fathers, so beloved of YHWH, 30:6, 9.

²⁸³ Note the evocation of the catastrophe (Greek for “overturning,” called exactly that in the LXX) of Sodom and Gomorrah, Deut 29:22/23 (see Gen 19:24-25), which not even Abraham’s intercession could prevent.

²⁸⁴ It is not easy to know the function of the beautiful verse Deut 29:28 (NRSV 29:29) here. BLENKINSOPP, “Deuteronomy,” *NJBC*, 107, noting that it has “a sapiential flavor,” says that “it enjoins concentration on observance of the divine law rather than speculation, including the apocalyptic kind, about divine intentions (cf. Job 28:28).”

²⁸⁵ “Theology of the Wilderness,” 55. By “redaction” here we should understand “give it the definitive written form,” incorporating and editing earlier materials. This is Lohfink’s conclusion (55) about the theology of the desert in Deut: “During that whole period Israel continuously sinned, they were continuously educated through the punishment of the sinners and they were continuously forgiven by a God who acted like a good father, heaping on them miracles. The Wilderness wanderings as a whole are a case model of the theology of justification.”

²⁸⁶ Remember, the Hebrew conjunction *ki* in Deut 4:29; 30:1-2, 10 need not be translated solely as a conditional (“if”), but can be translated as causal (“because”) or temporal (“when”). My choice of the temporal is supported by the LXX translation, *hotan* (“when, whenever”) in 4:29 (but not in 30:10), by the RSV in 30:1-2 (changed to “if” in the NRSV) and by the fact that it is God who will circumcise their hearts in 30:6 (see vv. 7-8) and who gives them the ability to obey in 29:3 (NRSV 29:4). This stresses that the change wrought in Israel’s heart is more God’s doing than the people’s, but obviously, a human response is required. Cf. Rom 3:21-26; Phil 2:12-13.

²⁸⁷ We have said that the Hebrew verb *shuv* has the multiple meanings of “turning, make turn, convert or repent, change, return.” A noun derived from it, variously *shevit*, *shevut* (*shivat* in Ps 126:1) is translated “captivity, captives, fortune” (“*situación*” in Job 42:10, *Biblia de Jerusalén*). The connection is made between conversion/repentance and return from Exile (= change of fortune, end of captivity, ultimately, salvation).

Israel will listen to/obey YHWH's voice and will keep his commandments, *because it will return/“convert”* to YHWH with the whole heart and with all its soul.²⁸⁸

This portion of Deut ends with a description of the commandments or of the word (what is in the Torah, 30:10) that is very similar to Jer 31:33-34. It is a Torah, a covenant, which Israel will be able to fulfill, since it is in its heart now circumcised, and Israel shall thus be able to “do” it, 30:11-14.²⁸⁹

In Deut 31, we are prepared for Moses' death; he has attained to the maximum one hundred and twenty years of life allowed by God in Gen 6:3.²⁹⁰ YHWH commands him to name a successor, who will be Joshua, 31:14.²⁹¹ Exile is again predicted, 31:16-21. The command here to write the “song” corresponds to the six-hundred-and-thirteenth commandment according to Jewish tradition (the rabbis counted six hundred and thirteen commandments in the Torah). Note how often the exhortations not to fear, to trust, appear: 31:6-8, 23. The Promise of the Land given under oath is stressed, 31:7, 20, 21, 23; YHWH *will be with* Israel, will guide it and not abandon it, 31:8. Moses finishes writing “the words of this Torah in the book until its end,” 31:24.²⁹² The whole Law (Torah, Pentateuch) has been given. The Levites appear, Dtr favorites. The Book of the Law shall be beside the Ark of the Covenant of YHWH, as a witness against Israel, who is a stiff-necked people liable to rebel at any time, 31:25-27. Moses had already foreseen that they turn aside from the way he had commanded and that evil would befall them at the end of the days, because they would do evil in the sight of YHWH, provoking him with the work of their hands, 31:29.²⁹³

Now let us take a look at some aspects of the aforementioned beautiful “song.”

²⁸⁸ Again, taking the conjunction *ki* not as a conditional but as causal.

²⁸⁹ Deut 30:15-20, with the metaphor of the two ways which the *Didaché* will adopt, is considered to be part of the covenant liturgies, and invokes the two necessary witnesses (here, heaven and earth); BLENKINSOPP, “Deuteronomy,” *NJBC*, 107. This practice is reflected in Deut 31:9-13.

²⁹⁰ Compare what Moses says in Deut 31:2 (“I cannot go out or in” = I can't do anything —this is another example of hendiadys, taking two extremes to signify a totality) with 34:7, where it is said that Moses had kept all his vigor (commonly understood as a reference to sexual potency).

²⁹¹ The “Tent of Meeting,” a P term, is unique here in Deut; BLENKINSOPP, “Deuteronomy,” *NJBC*, 107.

²⁹² “Its end” translates a Hebrew verb (*tamam*) which indicates completion, integrity, perfection. The adjective (*tam*, or *tamim*) is applied to Noah, Gen 6:9, Abraham, Gen 17:1, and Job, 1:8, and to the animals acceptable for sacrifice, Lev 1:3, 10, etc. (*NRSV* “without blemish”).

²⁹³ “Work of human hands” is usually a reference to idols.

Deut 32:1-12, 48-52. The “song” (*shirah*) is recited at Lauds on Saturday of the second week in the Liturgy of the Hours.²⁹⁴ Compare the image of the word as rain and dew with the end of Deutero-Isaiah (end of the Exile), Isa 55:10-13. The God of Israel is the ‘the perfect Rock’,²⁹⁵ he is a faithful and reliable God, righteous and straight (or “right”). But the foolish people, not wise (unlike the models for Exile Joseph, Gen 41:39, and Daniel, Dan 1:19-20), a perverse generation, reciprocated badly with YHWH, the Father who created them. They should *remember* the eternal days of old, or ask their parents, who will explain it,²⁹⁶ and their elders, who will tell of it. The Most High (*‘elyon*) divided up human beings and set the boundaries for the peoples of the world, but YHWH’s lot fell to Israel, Jacob was his portion, his special possession (*nahalah*).²⁹⁷

The following verses, 32:10-12, are among the most beautiful in all of Scripture. In the *Revised Standard Version* (slightly altered), they read:

He found him in a desert land, and in the howling *chaos*²⁹⁸ of the wilderness; he encircled him, he cared for him, he watched him as the apple of his eye. Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that hovers²⁹⁹ over its young, spreading out its wings, catching them, bearing them on its pinions,³⁰⁰ the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no foreign god *with him*.³⁰¹

Deut 34. We have come to the end of the Torah, our Pentateuch. Some consider this last chapter to have been edited in the P tradition by the redactor who incorporated

²⁹⁴ “This [“song”] is spoken rather than sung, indicating its didactic nature. Moses is represented as one with prophetic vision, uncovering the meaning of the past while providing a vision of the future and a challenge for the present. He tells the story of Israel from election through apostasy to God’s gracious vindication;” RICHARD D. NELSON, “Deuteronomy,” *HarperCollins Bible Commentary*, 211. The same could really be said for all of Deut. This song employs the form of prophetic lawsuit (the *rib*, where Meriba comes from), which includes accusation, witnesses, verdict and the sentence of final destruction (32:19-25); *ibid.*, 211-212.

²⁹⁵ “Perfect” here (referring to God’s works) is the same word as “unblemished” (see footnote 292), and “Rock” is the same word as in footnote 195 above.

²⁹⁶ Recall the concern for religious teaching that Deut shows in 4:10; 11:19; 31:12, 19, etc.

²⁹⁷ *Nahalah* is Israel as YHWH’s very own property in Deut 4:20; 9:26, 29; the Land is Israel’s particular inheritance or possession (same word, *nahalah*) in 4:21, 38; 12:9; 15:4, etc. (see 21:22-23, in the passage concerning those who are hung up on trees). The Levites have no share in the Land: YHWH himself is their portion, 10:9 (that is why the Israelites must take special care of them).

²⁹⁸ *Tohu*, same word as in Gen 1:2.

²⁹⁹ Same verb as in Gen 1:2.

³⁰⁰ “Pinions” are “the terminal section of a bird’s wings . . . also flight feathers;” *Webster’s*, 893. Cf. Exod 19:3-4.

³⁰¹ The gods of the other nations, which in the Exile came to be recognized as not being nothing (Isa 45:22; Deut 4:39), were not *with Israel*, as YHWH was, 2:7; 31:6, 8, 23. Recall the probable meaning of the very name YHWH, “I am [with you].” Cf. Deut 32:17; here, these “gods” are despised as demons (cf. 1 Cor 10:20), newly-arrived unknown gods, never feared (or revered) by the Fathers.

Deut into the Pentateuch. YHWH shows his servant Moses the whole Land which he swore to the Fathers, but Moses himself shall not cross into it. Moses dies there, in the land of Moab, according to the mouth of YHWH. He was buried, but no one knows where his tomb is. He was one hundred and twenty years old and his eye had not dimmed nor was his freshness gone. He had laid his hands on Joshua, whom the Israelites were now to obey.³⁰² Deut carefully notes that no prophet like Moses has yet to appear in Israel,³⁰³ whom YHWH *knew face to face* (= had a most intimate relationship with). The Dtr editor of the *corpus propheticum* (= books of the Prophets) puts a reference to the Torah of Moses at the end of the last prophetic book, in Mal 3:22 (*NRSV* 4:4), apparently in order to place the Prophets (in the Jewish tradition, including both the Former Prophets Josh-2 Kgs and the Latter Prophets, Isa-Mal) alongside the Torah (the “Law and the Prophets” of the Jewish canon).³⁰⁴ The Prophets must comport (agree with, and thus be interpreted) with the Torah of Moses.³⁰⁵

Conclusion to Deut. This book closes the Torah. It puts in the mouth of Moses, who was on intimate terms with YHWH, and was his spokesman (or prophet par excellence) and Israel’s legislator, a reflection on all that Israel has experienced in the wilderness. Firstly, the consequences of not believing in or trusting YHWH: wandering in circles in the desert, that evil place of demons where one’s time is wasted waiting to die. Secondly, God educated Israel in the wilderness, carried it and cared for it like a father, for Israel is YHWH’s chosen people. Finally, after that whole experience of sin, of futility, of suffering all the curses of the covenant that the people had undertaken, Israel,

³⁰² From the Hebrew verb here (“to lay on hands”) comes *semikah*, the Jewish word for rabbinic “ordination” (not priestly ordination, which we saw in Exod 32:29; see page 41 above). This rabbinic ordination enables the rabbi to issue valid legal decrees. Interestingly, the Hebrew expression for priestly ordination, “to fill the hands,” was rendered in Greek by the LXX as “perfect the hands” in Exod 29:9. Father Albert Vanhoye, S.J., a leading expert on the Epistle to the Hebrews (which regards the priestly sacrifice of Christ), believes that this turn of phrase in Greek is behind the “perfection” passages in Heb 2:10; 5:9-10 which refer to Jesus (i.e., he became “perfected,” ordained as eternal priest, by sacrificing himself).

³⁰³ According to Deut 18:15, YHWH shall raise a prophet like Moses. This was interpreted eschatologically. According to some traditions, he would be Elijah, back on earth before the great and terrible final visit of YHWH, Mal 3:23-24 (*NRSV* 4:5-6); cf. Matt 17:10-13; Luke 1:17. In Acts 3:19-24, it is Jesus. BLENKINSOPP, *A History of Prophecy*, 46-47, thinks the Deut passage itself refers to the whole of prophetic succession in general, and not to just one individual.

³⁰⁴ See 2 Kgs 17:13; Neh 9:26; Zech 7:12; 2 Macc 15:9; Luke 16:16; 24:44.

³⁰⁵ Deut 18:15-18. According to BLENKINSOPP, *A History of Prophecy*, 12, the role of the prophet of Deut 18:15-19 is to continue Moses’ work throughout history, urging obedience to the Law. But these prophets are “of an inferior order” than Moses, *ibid.*, 50. Jeremiah is presented as a prophet like Moses, *ibid.*, 137.

“at the end of the days,” has *turned/converted* to YHWH its God, who remembered his covenant-Promise with the Fathers so beloved of God, and therefore Israel will be able to *return* both to the Land and to the covenant, that other (or new) covenant written in Israel’s now circumcised, obedient heart, a circumcision and writing made by YHWH himself (cf. Jer 31:33), the God who initiated and established this intimate relationship between himself and his people. *This is a complete change of fortunes!*

Conclusion

The Pentateuch, the Jewish Torah, is a teaching (= *torah*) for Israel and for us, the religious and spiritual heirs of this people. It is a teaching (or “doctrine”) based on the history of primitive humanity, who sinned and caused God to regret that he created them. The biblical God is passionate (a better translation than “jealous”), he has strong reactions as the good Semite that God is (!). But God softens with the just (or “righteous”), such as Noah,³⁰⁶ and relents in his desire to destroy, giving not only a sign of his Promise never again to destroy the earth, but even mitigating the requirements that he makes of human beings.

But within this universal framework, and with it as a background, God has a special relationship with a man called Abraham. It is through him that God will bless all nations, bringing to them the *torah* that he gave to Israel (see Isa 42:4). YHWH God establishes a covenant-Promise with Abraham; its sign is circumcision. God promises Abraham and his descendants that they shall be very numerous, which corresponds to the commandment-blessing —what God commands is a blessing to the who do it!— of Gen 1:28. But God also promises a Land, and indicates its frontiers. Israel cannot conceive its existence, or at least, its well-being and salvation, without this Land. The Pentateuch itself depicts the Fathers (Patriarchs) as pilgrims without fixed abode,³⁰⁷ but we cannot understand what we call the “Old Testament” (nor even Jeremiah’s “New Testament”) if we do not understand that God’s saving action cannot be conceived apart from the Land of Israel.

³⁰⁶ Jewish tradition has it that God maintains the world due to the presence in it of thirty-six righteous persons whose identity is not known to other people.

³⁰⁷ See footnote 6 above.

For Israel, to possess the Land means to be in a good relationship with the God who promised it. It means, in our Pentateuch, that Israel has kept itself holy and pure, in an intimate relationship with God (= Israel “knows” God), obedient to God’s commandments which are light and well-being, Ps 119:47, 105, and life, Deut 32:47; Ps 119:93. The whole of Israel’s hope is to return to “that good Land,” as Deut never tires of repeating.³⁰⁸ Therefore, the whole concern of the Torah is to reflect on how Israel came to lose this Land, and what hope there is that Israel will return, and what Israel must do so that this hope is fulfilled. Two main movements or schools (and H would be included in P) flourished in the Babylonian Exile (although their antecedents were much older) in order to confront this situation of the people in Exile. The Priestly school developed a whole metaphysic of what constituted salvation for Israel. It was based on the presence of the creator God, the holy God, separate, who from the time of creation had overcome, dominating chaos by making separations, putting order in what had none. He is the God who rested on the Sabbath, who commands Abraham to be circumcised, who requires Israel to master its appetite and obey God by making distinctions between what it may eat and what it may not. Israel, the people who must be holy like God, as Leviticus repeats, must keep separate from all other peoples, and lead a life that preserves and reinforces this separation = consecration. The holy God cannot dwell in the midst of his people as God had promised if the people are impure. God’s absence brings chaos all over again, that primordial chaos which reigned on the planet before God created (= formed).³⁰⁹ Avoiding this chaos is what P made a great effort to *teach* (*torah* means “priestly teaching or instruction”) in the Pentateuch.

The other school, the Deuteronomic, comes out of other traditions, lay ones, non-priestly. It comes out of a tradition of social justice, and is influenced by the idea of treaty or covenant (in the sense of “pact”). The pact involves mutual obligations. The idea of pact helped Israel to understand the why of its Exile, it made it rational, understandable, something which had been predicted and was deserved. It also gave Israel an out: if they would obey the pact, they could return to the Land. But what guarantees were there that they would not fall again into the same thing and bring upon themselves the curses once

³⁰⁸ Deut 1:25, 35; 3:25; 4:21-22; 6:18; 8:7, 10; 9:6; 11:17.

³⁰⁹ This is the meaning of Gen 1:1.

more? This is where we begin to see a coming together (confluence) of the two schools. P, the school of stability and order —and thus, according to some scholars, not eschatologically-oriented— had developed the notion of an eternal “covenant” (but understood as a promise) which was unbreakable. The Dtr had no such concept, but they did await a time (“days”) in the future (“at the end of the days”), in which YHWH God himself would provide Israel with the capability of loving God with its whole heart and soul, in order to cling to God as a bonded marriage partner who obeyed God without deviating either to the left or to the right. YHWH would circumcise Israel’s heart and would write his *torah* in the heart of his people: this would be the “new covenant” that would enable Israel to truly be Israel’s people, Jer 31:33. Israel’s sin would be forgiven, 31:34, and they would return to the Land, 30:3. In this time of the late Exile, when the exiles were preparing their return, the ideas of Ezekiel the priest regarding the eternal covenant (Ezek 16:59-60; 37:26-27) find their way into the Book of Jeremiah (Jer 32:40; 50:5).³¹⁰ We thus find also incorporated into Deut the idea that the basis for God’s Promise to Israel that it will return to its Land (which really stands for all of God’s promises in the “Old Testament” and even for his “salvation,” more of a Christian term, but including forgiveness, healing, new life, longevity, prosperity, etc.) is God’s love for the Fathers (Deut 6:10, 23; 7:7-8; 8:18; 9:4-5).³¹¹ This everlasting love of YHWH God for the Fathers of Israel is also the foundation of our Christian faith, according to Rom 11:16-18.³¹²

³¹⁰ See GUY P. COUTURIER, “Jeremiah,” *NJBC*, 291. The idea of an eternal covenant is found in Second Isaiah (late exile) as an extension to the people as a whole of God’s eternal and unconditional covenant with David, Isa 55:3 (see 2 Sam 7). In Isa 54:10, the eternal covenant with Noah is mentioned in a universalistic context (CARROLL STUHLMUELLER, : Deutero-Isaiah and Trito-Isaiah,” *NJBC*, 343), as in the “Isaian Apocalypse,” 24:5 (WILLIAM H. IRWIN, “Isaiah 1-39,” *NJBC*, 244).

³¹¹ Although Milgrom considers this a Dtr theme; see footnotes 209 and 236 above.

³¹² See EMILIO G. CHÁVEZ, “Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles. An Introduction with a Brief Commentary on his Authentic Letters,” unpublished class notes for the course on “Pauline Letters,” St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, 77.