

## Survey of the Bible - The Torah

### January 11, 2015

#### Torah – The Law

Abrahamic religions – Judaism, Christianity & Islam

all three faiths trace lineage to the patriarch Abraham who fathered Ismael with Sarah's servant Hagar - Ishmael (Genesis 16) The prophet Mohammed was of the line of Ishmael

There are multiple authors of the five books, edited/redacted over time

J or Yahwist, E or Elohist, P – Priestly, D - Deuteronomist Redaction

Names for God: Yaweh, Elohim, Adonai, I AM,

The name for God is too holy to utter or to spell out fully: YHWH, G-d

J- earliest, God in anthropomorphic terms, an immanent God 9-10c BCE

E – Elohist – 9-3c BCE – insisted on only one sanctuary

-God keeping divine distance, communicating through dreams, visions, angels

P – Priestly – created during exile 6-5 c BCE

-stresses Israelite ritual and religious observance such as Sabbath (Gen 2:2-3), circumcision (Gen 17:9-14), and dietary laws (Gen 9:4)

-includes Passover ritual, ordination ceremonies, vestments of high priest, tabernacle and its furnishings

-it never mentions revelation of the law on Sinai. Prominence is given to Aaron over Moses

-unites J & E material through genealogies and a series of covenants with Noah, Abraham and all of Israel at Sinai

-P's God is more transcendent and less anthropomorphic than J's

-It is P who has given the Torah its present shape, beginning with creation and ending with death of Moses

D – Deuteronomist – Deutero - “second law” in Greek

-mandate to centralize the cult of YHWH and the suppression of all Canaanite cults which other sources accept more readily

-obedience to the law which brings reward, while disobedience results in adversity

-worship of God in one shrine (which eventually becomes Jerusalem)

-literary style: sermons and exhortations

-strong moral tone

-Israel's election because of God's overwhelming love

-identification with the book of the Law discovered in 2Kings 22:8 in 621 BCE:

*The high priest Hilkiah said to Shaphan the secretary, 'I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD.' When Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, he read it.*

## Books of the Torah – central stories and key verses

### **Genesis** – The Beginnings -

Creation, Garden Flood (1-11) Abraham (11-25) Isaac & Jacob (25-26) Joseph 37-50

**Key verse:** *“I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. (Gen 17:7)*

### **Exodus** – Deliverance

Moses (1-7) The Plagues 7-13) The Law (19-24o) Tabernacle and Worship (25-40)

**Key Verse:** *God said to Moses, “I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” (Exodus 3:14)*

### **Leviticus** – Law & Sacrifice

Sacrifice (1-7) Priesthood (8-10) Clean and Unclean (11-15) Day of Atonement (16)

Laws for Daily Life (17-27)

**Key Verse:** *Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the Lord your God. Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the Lord, who makes you holy. (Leviticus 20:7,8)*

### **Numbers** – Census and History

Census (1-9) Sinai to Canaan (10-12) Spies and Rebellion (13-19) Moab (20-36)

**Key Verse:** *The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)*

### **Deuteronomy** – Sermons by Moses

Journey Review (1-4) Laws (5-28) Covenant (29-30) Final Farewells (31-34)

**Key Verse:** The Shema *Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)*

See also: Mark 12:29-31 Luke 10:25-27 Quran Sura 112

Hebrew: שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד - *Sh'ma Yisra'e (YHWH) Adonai Eloheinu (YHWH) Adonai Echad*

*mezuzahs and phylacteries contain the words of The Sh'ma.*