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THE OLD TESTAMENT USE OF THE LAW: THE OLDEST PERSPECTIVE OF PAUL

BY
MIKE TOLLIVER

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF THEOLOGY

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Abstract Of

The Old Testament Use of the Law: The Oldest Perspective of Paul

By Michael Morgan Tolliver

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate an ongoing hermeneutical process in ancient Israel concerning the message and meaning of *Torah*. The interwoven narrative and legal materials in *Torah* create a robust ethical framework that enables the *Torah* student to wisely apply its paradigm to new ethical situations. The narrative sections demonstrate that *Torah's* ethical requirements are a response to membership in the covenant, not a requirement for membership in the covenant. The narrative sections also demonstrate the conditions necessary for reapplication of the ethical paradigm set out in *Torah*. The legal materials describe the mediators who will judiciously apply and reapply *Torah* ethics to the life in the land. The narrative and legal materials together describe several features of an eschatological hope that finds further description in the Prophets and Writings. It is precisely this eschatological hope that the New Testament authors portray Jesus as fulfilling. Both Jesus' words and deeds demonstrate the attitude that *Torah* must be reinterpreted in light of his life, death, and resurrection. This reinterpretation follows the exact same pattern as it did in ancient Israel, and it is precisely this pattern that Paul applies to his own message. Paul demonstrates a hermeneutic consistent with that of the Old Testament prophets and sages, and this message agrees with the Jewish gospels of Matthew and John. The continuity of interpretation and reapplication

between the New and Old Testament authors should encourage modern readers to read Paul in a light more consistent with his original intention.

To

My Beloved Molly

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This thesis represents the culmination of seven years of theological study, and it could not have been written without the constant support of friends and family. Because of your love and care, I count myself among the very rich.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Since the Enlightenment, liberal biblical scholars rejected the Old Testament emphasis on the cultic focus of detailed priestly rituals in favor of the spiritual and ethical religion of the prophets.[1] Protestants, on the other hand, rejected the validity of Old Testament faith because Luther equated the Israelite law with works and the New Testament faith with grace, which are opposites in Pauline formulation.[2] Recent scholarship has called into question both of these traditional interpretations of Paul's perspective on the Old Testament law. The so-called New Perspective holds that the Lutheran and Liberal perspectives sprung out of the cultural presuppositions of their day and ignored the immediate context of the biblical narrative. Focusing on the Second Temple context from which the New Testament sprung, the new interpretation of Paul's message declared that rather than a strong opposition between grace and law, Paul actually believed grace came through the law. This New Perspective on Paul essentially supplanted the monolithic assumptions of traditional scholarship with a new monolith.

The view of this paper holds that the New Perspective adequately critiqued the Old Perspective and revealed much about the Second Temple period, however the New Perspective did not choose the correct locus of theology for Paul's message. Rather than the Second Temple period serving as

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[1] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 66.

[2] Samuel Balentine, *The Torah's Vision of Worship* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 71.

the interpretive lens for Paul, the appropriate place to start is the Old Testament depiction of the law. My thesis is that Paul's theology holds a strong continuity with the Old Testament portrayal of the law, and at places connects with or critiques the Second Temple Jewish expectations. To demonstrate this, I will first define the biblical understanding of the law. I will then discuss how it functioned in ancient Israel as a methodically reinterpreted legal code, the purpose of which was to produce holiness in its adherents. Next, I will present the various mediators regulated by the law who were authorized to reinterpret the law for the sake of justice within the land. Following this, I will demonstrate the way these roles got wrapped up in the eschatological hope of *Torah* and came to be reinterpreted throughout the redemptive history of God's people. Finally, we will evaluate the congruity of this presentation with that of Paul's writings.

Assumptions

Any attempt at adequately representing such a comprehensive view of scripture will necessarily require a discussion of assumptions made in terms of authorship, dating, and setting for the works we will discuss. We begin this discussion by recognizing the canonical order of the books in the Hebrew bible:

The Torah:	The Nevi'im:	The Ketuvim

• Genesis
• Exodus
• Leviticus
• Numbers
• Deuteronomy
	• Joshua
	• Judges
	• Samuel (I & II)
	• Kings (I & II)
	• Isaiah (740-681)
	• Jeremiah (640-585)
	• Ezekiel (597-560)
	• The Book of the Twelve:
	  • Hosea (752-724)
	  • Joel (*)
	  • Amos (767-753)
	  • Obadiah (*)
	  • Jonah (760-740)
	  • Micah (739-686)
	  • Nahum (626-612)
	  • Habakkuk (640-628)
	  • Zephaniah (640-625)
	  • Haggai (520-516)
	  • Zechariah (520-480)
	  • Malachi (477-457)
		• The Sifrei Emet:
		  • Psalms
		  • Job
		  • Proverbs
		• The Five Megillot:
		  • Ruth
		  • Song of Songs
		  • Ecclesiastes
		  • Lamentations
		  • Esther
		• The rest of the "Writings":
		  • Daniel
		  • Ezra-Nehemiah
		  • Chronicles (I & II)

The threefold division of the Hebrew bible represents a roughly chronological collection of writings. This is confirmed through a study of intertextuality by recognizing that Amos, one of the earliest prophets, relies heavily on the message of *Torah* for his rebuke of the nations.[3] This suggests that *Torah*, in some form or fashion, was largely a completed document that could be referenced, memorized, and cited as justification for a prophet's rebuke. The dates attached to the latter prophets in the table above indicate a largely

[3] Implicit allusions from the book of Amos predict doom to Israel on the basis of their practice of oppression (Amos 4:1; 8:4 and Deut. 24:14; Ex. 22:20-21; Lev. 19:13), their extortion (Deut. 23:20; Ex. 22:24; their perversions of justice and taking bribes (Amos 2:7; 5:7, 10, 12; and Deut. 16:19; Exod. 23:1-3), their manipulation of weights and measures (Amos 8:5 and Deut. 25:13-14), and their misuse of security deposits (Amos 2:8 and Deut. 24:17). While these are mostly implicit and lack lexical support, "this lack of explicit references is not sufficient to gainsay the strong impression made by the sources that Amos was aware of ancient Israelite legal traditions, and that he made use of them in the course of his diatribes and forecasts of doom." Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 295.

chronological ordering among the major and minor prophets.[4] These dates are informed by the content in the books themselves as well as the written form of the works. The transition from largely poetic prophecy into prose appears to be a stylistic confirmation of these dates as well.[5]

These observations concerning the Prophets (Nevi'im) provide our limits for *Torah* and the Writings (Ketuvim). *Torah* must have reached a roughly final form by end of the ninth century/early eighth century B.C. and the Writings were likely compiled after the mid-fifth century B.C.[6] The Writings largely present themselves as anthologies of earlier works, either as collections of narratives, poetry, prophecy, or a mix of these three. The works in the Writings certainly reached their canonical form by the mid-third century, as the LXX provides witness. I will not attempt to date either the material within *Torah* or the material in the Writings, as a discussion of the canonical form will suffice.

The body of materials belonging to the Second Temple period will be discussed, although not in detail. A detailed discussion of Jewish culture in this period will suffice for the purposes of this paper. While we will discuss the Gospels, the focus of this paper will be limited to Matthew and John. These have been selected because they demonstrate a message crafted to a Jewish audience who has been largely influenced by the various schools of Second

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[4] C. Hassell Bullock, *An Introduction to the Old Testament: Prophetic Books* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007). Jonah (pg 61), Amos (pg 72), Hosea (pg 104), Micah (pg 131), Isaiah (pg 158), Zephaniah (pg 202), Habakkuk (pg 220-221), Jeremiah (pg 234-236), Nahum (pg 265), Ezekiel (pg 280, 291), Obadiah Uncertain, Haggai (pg 368), Zechariah (pg 381), Joel Uncertain, Malachi (pg 408).

[5] Samuel A Meier, *Themes and Transformations in Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2009), 78-93.

[6] Again, as noted above, for Amos to assume his audience's familiarity with *Torah*, it must have been written prior to Amos.

Temple *Torah* interpretation. Certainly these Gospels were written after Paul's letters, but the theology contained within Matthew and John will play an important role in demonstrating the predispositions of the Jewish audiences to which they were addressed. When Paul's message is discussed in Chapter 10, we will see how his theology fits in a straight line of interpretation from the Old Testament Prophets to the New Testament Gospel writers.

Finally, while discussing Paul's theology and interpretation of *Torah*, we will focus specifically on Romans, 1 Corinthians, and Galatians. Few dispute the authenticity of these letters, and they form the basis of the Baur hypothesis as representing true Gentile Christianity before its synthesis with the opposing Jewish Christianity. These letters are therefore crucial to our study, because the position of this paper is that these letters demonstrate a strong continuity with Old Testament theology and the Jewish Gospels.

Chapter 2: Torah Definition

The first step in our task of identifying the Old Testament (OT) perspective on the law is to determine what we mean when we say "the law." The collections of legal material frequently studied are:[7]

- Decalogue (Exodus 20:2-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-21)
- Covenant Code (Exodus 20:22-23:33)
- Priestly Code (Exodus 25-Leviticus 16)
- Holiness Code (Leviticus 17-26)
- Deuteronomy

Many attempts have been made with varying success to categorize the laws within these major legal blocks.[8] Perhaps the most helpful, and also the most general, is the distinction between apodeictic and casuistic laws. First discussed by Albrecht Alt, this observation connects the format of Hittite Suzerain treaties with the pattern of the legal material found within *Torah*.[9]

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[7] John H. Sailhamer, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2009), 357. Christopher J.H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2004), 284-288.

[8] The three uses of the law (civil, pedagogical, and normative) and three kinds of law (ceremonial, civil, and moral) ultimately prove to be artificial and deceptive categories. I will not take up reasons why here, but issues associated with each scheme have been noted elsewhere. Sailhamer, 542, 546. See also David Jones, *Biblical Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1994), 117-120, and Wright *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* 288-301.

[9] Wright, 289.

The apodeictic laws typically begin with “You shall” or “You shall not” and contain an absolute command/prohibition, usually without reference to penalty. The casuistic laws typically begin with “If...” or “When...” followed by a set of instructions. Casuistic laws also typically apply the principles of the apodeictic laws to specific situations.[10] It should be noted, however, that there are laws that fit into either of these categories without exhibiting these features exactly. Despite this occasional formulaic inconsistency, the categorization of biblical material into apodeictic and casuistic laws will allow us to make a number of important observations concerning the function and interpretation of law throughout the bible.

Interestingly enough, the biblical description of “the law” indicates that the ancient Israelite viewed it as much more than just legal codes.[11] The ancient Israelite acknowledged the first five books of the Bible, Genesis-Deuteronomy, as “the law,” or *Torah*.[12] This designation conveys two very important insights that run contrary to our expectations. First, the ancient Israelite mind intimately connected the historical narrative with the legal code.[13] Therefore, any study that

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[10] Some have even attempted to categorize the various casuistic laws by their apodeictic counterparts. Philo of Alexandria used the Ten Commandments as summary heads for the ‘special laws,’ which he saw as deriving their authority and justification from the Ten Commandments. Jones, 104-105.

[11] Consider Psalm 19 and 119, for instance.

[12] Wright, 283. I will hereby refer to the collective work of OT law as *Torah*, but it will be necessary to distinguish between the components of *Torah* as law (a collection of legal codes within the *Torah)* and narrative (a collection of didactic tales within the *Torah*).

[13] “One of the most researched areas of biblical law is the question of the interrelationship between the law and the surrounding narrative in which it is embedded.” Assnat Bartor, *Reading*

focuses exclusively on the legal codes without assessing the connected narratives necessarily misses the purpose of *Torah*. Second, the term *Torah* itself means "guidance" or "instruction," not "law."[14] This appellation indicates not only that its contents are potentially much broader than blocks of legal codes, but also that as guidance/instruction its message is to be applied by its readers. The implications of the above observations will provide a framework for how we understand the OT portrayal of *Torah*.

Didactic Narrative and Narratival Law

The general makeup of the content in *Torah* is about 50% narrative and 50% law code. Genesis and Numbers are mostly narrative, Leviticus and Deuteronomy are mostly law code, and Exodus is roughly an even split between the two. Understanding the purpose behind the insertion of law within the narrative is a central question of Pentateuchal interpretation.[15] Good readers of any text understand that an author has a message he or she intends to convey to their audience. Rhetorical Criticism "attempts to show how an author writing in a particular context organized his work to try to persuade his readers to respond in the way he wanted."[16] As it pertains to *Torah*, the didactic purpose of the

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Biblical Law as Narrative: A Study in the Casuistic Laws of the Pentateuch (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 9-10.

[14] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament: The Ordering of Life in Israel and Early Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 84.

[15] Sailhamer, 360.

[16] Gordon Wenham, *Story as Torah* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2000), 3.

narrative is to instill theological truths and ethical ideals in a way that codified law cannot.

The historical narrative offers examples, positive or negative, of men and women who understood or should have understood the ethical ideal and theological significance of their actions. On this view, then, the rhetorical aim of the author in presenting historical narrative is to compliment the function of the law by providing ethical and theological insight and encouragement. In analyzing the rhetorical message of Genesis as it describes the ethical ideal of God's people, Gordon Wenham indicates that it is possible to:

> "build up a catalogue of the virtues as they are perceived by the author, an identikit picture of the righteous. He or she is pious, that is prayerful and dependent on God. Strong and courageous, but not aggressive or mean. He or she is generous, truthful and loyal, particularly to other family members. The righteous person is not afraid to express emotions of joy, grief or anger, but the last should not spill over into excessive revenge, rather he should be ready to forgive. Finally righteousness does not require asceticism: the pleasures of life are to be enjoyed without becoming a slave to them."[17]

The actions of the virtuous man or woman go above and beyond the requirements of the law, and the narrative encourages its readers to be virtuous. Because the virtuous person goes above and beyond the law, we can view the legal codes as a floor of ethical conduct. Beneath this floor lies curse and punishment and above this floor is blessing and reward (Deut. 28-30). Throughout *Torah* the apodeictic laws set the boundaries of the ethical floor, and

[17] Ibid., 100.

the Ten Commandments represent the prototypical example of this boundary.[18] This gap between law and ethic can be demonstrated with respect to the first commandment. The law set out penalty for breaking the first commandment through apostasy or idolatry, but "fearing, loving, [and] cleaving to the Lord was not fulfilled just by avoiding the worship of other gods."[19] The historical narratives become didactic by describing the blessings of exceeding the legal requirements and the curses for going below them.

In addition to defining the ethical floor, the apodeictic laws have a directional quality. The virtuous man or woman should not aim to act just above the floor, but rather pursue a trajectory above the floor toward an ethical ceiling.[20]

Floor

Commandment	Number	Exodus	Deuteronomy
I am the Lord	Prologue	20:02	5:06
No other Gods	1	20:03	5:07
No graven images	2	20:4-6	5:8-10
Name	3	20:07	5:11
Sabbath	4	20:8-11	5:12-15
Father and Mother	5	20:12	5:16
Murder	6	20:13	5:17
Adultery	7	20:14	5:18
Theft	8	20:15	5:19
False Witness	9	20:16	5:20
Covet Wife/Property	10	20:17	5:21

Ceiling

Lev. 11:45 For I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."
Lev. 19:2 "Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.
Lev. 19:3 Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.
Lev. 19:4 Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves any gods of cast metal: I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 11:45 and 19:2-4 indicate that the ceiling of the law lies in the holiness of God.[21] These two holiness passages explicitly tie the ceiling and floor of the

[18] Ibid., 104.

[19] Ibid., 82.

[20] Ibid., 107.

law together by citing the prologue to the ten commandments (Lev. 11:45) and commandments one, two, four, and five (Lev 19:3-4).[22] *Torah*, therefore, frames the virtuous actions recommended by the narratives with apodeictic laws. This framing demonstrates the ideal direction of ethical conduct for God's people.

Additionally, the ceiling and floor demonstrate heavy reliance upon the Genesis narratives. Implicit in the encouragement to "be holy, for I am holy" is the logic of Genesis 1:26. God's people can and should be holy because they are made in God's image. The sixth commandment is connected to the same passage by Genesis 9:6. The fourth commandment relies on the seven-day pattern of creation in Genesis 1:1-2:4, and Deuteronomy 4:15-19 connects the second commandment to the same narrative.[23] These examples demonstrate how some narratives even lay beneath or behind the apodeictic laws. Because of this narrative underpinning, we see that *Torah* portrays the apodeictic laws as deriving their authority from the creator/creation distinction. God, as the creator, makes the laws and we, as the creation, follow them.[24] Obedience to the law, therefore, merely means the creation functions as the creator intended. The

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[21] Balentine, 237. All direct citations of scripture in this thesis are taken from the ESV translation.

[22] This reckoning of the Ten Commandments follows the Reformed, Anglican, and Orthodox traditions, Jones, 104 fn 3. If we were to continue going in Lev. 19, we would see all ten of the Ten Commandments represented. The third commandment corresponds with Lev. 19:12, the sixth with Lev. 19:16, the seventh with Lev. 19:29, the eighth and ninth with Lev. 19:11&16, and the tenth with Lev. 19:18, per Samuel E. Balentine, *Leviticus*, ed. James L. Mays, Interpretation (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2002), 161.

[23] Fishbane notes that Gen. 1:14-27 forms the pattern for the prohibition concerning the second commandment in Deut. 4:15-19, Fishbane, 321-322.

[24] Psalm 19 appears to reflect this same sort of understanding.

apodeictic laws describe the general principles of human functioning based on their created purpose whereas the casuistic laws carry this same logic into the specific situations of daily life.

As discussed above, the formulation of the casuistic laws typically looks very different from the formulation of the apodeictic laws, even if one borrows its justification from the other. Assnat Bartor sees within the typical casuistic formulation a narratival structure that apodeictic laws typically lack:[25]

> "Casuistic laws are composed of two parts that are sequentially and causally linked: (1) the first part describes an event or a state of affairs that presents some sort of problem, and (2) the second part presents or establishes its resolution. The first descriptive part details the circumstances of the case and thus forms an independent narrative unit: it includes all the elements that constitute such a unit. On the other hand, the second normative and prescriptive part is usually shorter and in any case does not form a separate and independent narrative unit."

The narratival construction of the casuistic laws focuses the Israelite's attention on the consequences of abrogating the law. The casuistic emphasis on consequences, required by the unique formulation of casuistic law, is markedly different from the apodeictic laws. We will explore the ethical function of these differences when we discuss normative ethical theories below. For now, it is enough to comment that the narratival construction of the casuistic laws frequently presents the worst case scenario, inviting application of the same principles to less severe situations. For example:[26]

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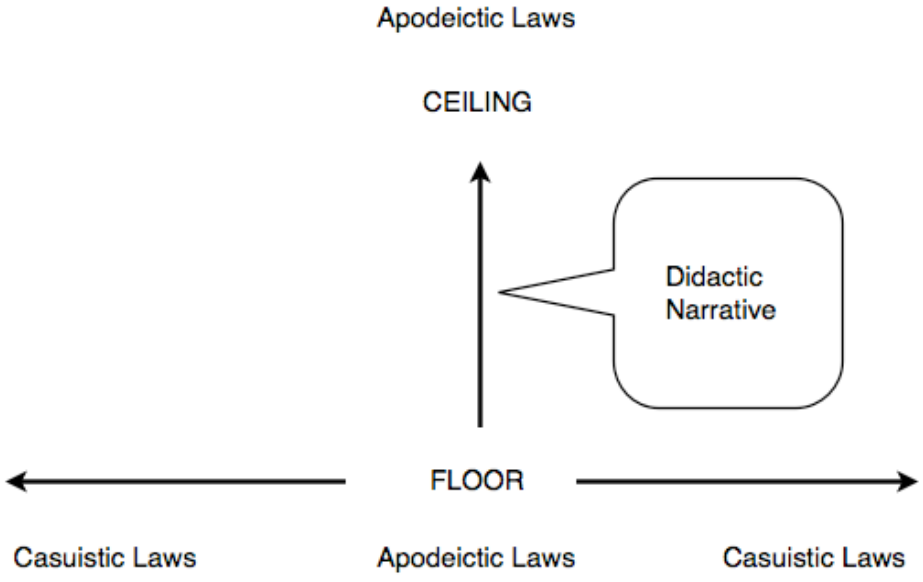
[25] Bartor, 9.

[26] Fishbane, 313.

> "Exod. 22:1-2a outlines a paradigmatic situation of burglary which restricts self-help cases of surreptitious breaking and entering, but requires reparation where the property-owner could reasonably estimate the malice or intent of the alleged intruder. The case is formulated in casuistical style, with two protases and two apodoses, and it uses the extreme situation of manslaughter as the legal model. Presumably, if a property-owner is judged innocent of manslaughter when the intrusion is, he would also be acquitted of liability for any lesser bodily assault. The implicit legal logic underlying this paradigm is thus *a fortiori*."

The implicit legal logic encouraged by the narratival construction of the casuistic law will play an important role as we investigate the paradigmatic nature of *Torah* discussed later in this chapter. At the very least, we can now conclude that the presentation of didactic narrative and legal codes in *Torah* creates this ethical framework:



As we can see, many of the narrative portions serve a legal function by filling the space between the apodeictic laws. The apodeictic laws rely on the narrative logic of creation to justify the duties they require. Lastly, the narratival

construction of the casuistic laws invites application and interpretation of their judicial logic to areas not explicitly addressed by the laws themselves. Thus, the relationship between the legal and narrative portions of Torah creates a full ethical standard for the Israelite to live by.

Israelite Normative Ethics

As we surveyed the function of the various components in *Torah*, we concluded that the narrative portions outline virtuous behavior, the apodeictic laws represent duties based on the pattern of creation, and the casuistic laws focus on the consequences of abrogating that pattern. These three functions correspond to the grounds for the three primary normative ethical theories prominent in moral philosophy. As presented in this paper, the narrative materials correspond with virtue ethics, the apodeictic laws correspond with deontology, and the casuistic laws correspond with utilitarianism.

Virtue Ethics traditionally encourages adherents to "be the right sort of person" who will then be equipped to "do the right things."[27] *Torah* portrays the right sort of person as someone whose flesh *and* heart are circumcised (Deut. 10:16; 30:6). Heart circumcision requires fidelity to *Torah* in both legal obedience (Deut. 30:8) and virtuous living (Deut. 30:6).

Deontology essentially means "the study of duty," and as such, ethical theories that appeal to duty as the basis for ethical behavior are typically referred

[27] Rosalind Hursthouse, "Virtue Ethics," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2012). http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2012/entries/ethics-virtue/.

to as deontological.[28] Deontological conceptions of ethics appeal to maxims that can be universalized and applied by rational agents. *Torah*, then, presents the apodeictic laws as duties to be performed by those who would image God and pursue holiness.

The floor and ceiling of *Torah* receives its authority from the creator and requires obedience from the creation. In other words, the apodeictic laws are duties to be performed by the creation.

Utilitarianism assesses the moral worth of an action on the basis of the good it produces.[29] As formulated by John Stuart Mill, "the good" accords with pleasure, so that ethical actions are actions that increase pleasure or minimize pain for everyone.[30] This ethical theory's focus on the consequences of an action parallels the focus of the casuistic laws.[31] These laws seek to bring about the good of Israelite society by regulating every sphere of Israelite life and providing a judicial paradigm that can be applied to similar and new situations.

As an ethical document, we can now see how the narrative and legal portions of *Torah* present Israel with a robust normative ethical system. While the traditional formulations of the three aforementioned normative ethical theories

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[28] "The word deontology derives from the Greek words for duty (*deon*) and science (or study) of (*logos*)," Michael Moore and Larry Alexander, "Deontological Ethics," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2008). http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/ethics-deontological/.

[29] Julia Driver, "The History of Utilitarianism," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2009). http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2009/entries/utilitarianism-history/.

[30] John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, ed. George Sher, 2 ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2001), 6.

[31] Per the discussion of Assnat Bartor's work above.

are typically considered mutually exclusive, *Torah* presents us with an ethical system that incorporates many of the important features of each theory in a consistent and coherent manner. Thus, we can conclude that the rhetorical aim of *Torah*'s author was at least to present Israel with a comprehensive ethical guide. Though *Torah* does not aim to be comprehensive in the sense that it enumerates every possible scenario the Israelite might encounter, it is comprehensive as an ethical guide which gives a consistent account for the virtuous person, the conditions necessary for their actions, the consequences for their actions, and a judicial paradigm for sapiential application of case law to every new ethical situation.

Paradigmatic Wisdom

As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, referring to the books of Moses (Genesis-Deuteronomy) as *Torah* not only reveals the crucial interplay between the narrative and law sections, it also gives insight into the genre of that content. *Torah* most properly means 'instruction' or 'guidance,' not 'law.' The importance of this distinction cannot be overemphasized. This appellation indicates how the text should be interpreted and applied in the daily life of ancient Israel and explains the presence of several textual features.

While there are many laws within *Torah*, the case laws were not intended to cover all possible scenarios.[32] Rather, the case laws give a pattern for how to

[32] The traditional reckoning of the number of laws contained within *Torah* is 613. Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament*, 85.

apply Apodeictic values to specific situations.[33] In this way, the collections of laws serve as 'guidance.' The 'guidance' *Torah* offers is a paradigmatic grid applicable to any situation the people of God may encounter.

Referring to the legal sections as "codes" implies that the laws are fundamentally comprehensive and prescriptive.[34] Because the biblical material is neither comprehensive nor prescriptive, a more appropriate grouping for these anthologies is the category of treatise.[35] The character of these treatises is perhaps best described as a sapiential paradigm for judicial wisdom.[36] Though this might run counter-intuitive to us today, there are many points of contact between the legal treatises and wisdom within the Bible to substantiate this claim.[37]

Deuteronomy 4:5-6 explicitly links *Torah* study and obedience with Israel's mission to bless the nations through wise living.[38] Additionally, Israelite law and

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[33] "The laws presented in Deuteronomy-indeed, the laws of the Torah as a whole-are not a complete, systematic code that could have sufficed to govern the entire life of ancient Israel...One gains the impression that only a part of the existing laws have been selected, perhaps to illustrate certain ideal principles of social justice and religious devotion." Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, ed. Nahum M. Sarna and Chaim Potok, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996), xvi.

[34] John Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 288.

[35] Ibid. See also Fishbane, 95.

[36] Walton, 291. "The laws in the Pentateuch provide an exemplary collection of 'just' decisions to help inculcate a spirit of justice in the reader's heart. Perhaps the most important reason for the Mosaic law in the Pentateuch is to serve as a textbook on justice", Sailhamer, 561.

[37] "Israelite wisdom aimed at promoting order and maintaining an ethical consensus in the society based on the accumulated experience of the past. In view of this emphasis on justice and order, it would be natural to expect many points of contact with Israel's legal tradition," Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament*, 84.

[38] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, 22.

wisdom are explicitly described as the primary means for living life to the fullest, as outlined by Deuteronomy 30:15-20 and Proverbs 8:35-36. Both the law and wisdom presuppose an existing relationship with God and they both function as a means for flourishing as the people of God.[39] Biblical flourishing relies on a concept of justice and order that roots itself in God as the creator. In other words, God has created his world and his people to function in a specific way, and the key to flourishing is functioning as *Torah* requires and as wisdom encourages.[40] Because both law and wisdom focus on living as the people of God, we could say that their primary purpose is sanctification.[41] This observation will require further qualification below, but it is enough to merely indicate that neither law nor wisdom is ever viewed as a means of becoming a member of God's people, only as a means of regulation for life as God's people.

Another connection between *Torah* and biblical wisdom literature is that they both contain aphoristic material and didactic narrative.[42] We have already seen how the narrative material serves a rhetorical function and therefore naturally fits together with the law in *Torah*, but at this point we are ready to conclude that the didactic nature of these historical narratives is in some sense

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[39] Proverbs 1:7 serves as the interpretive key to the wisdom contained within, which roots all wisdom in the "fear of the Lord." This sapiential technical term requires knowledge of the Lord in order to fear him and therefore infers a relational backdrop to true wisdom. The relational backdrop of the law will be discussed in chapter four.

[40] This coincides with our observations of the apodeictic laws discussed above.

[41] If the trajectory of the apodeictic laws truly is holiness, then the wise application of God's law to every day life could easily be equated with sanctification. See Walton, 293.

[42] Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament*, 97.

sapiential. Just as the law treatises reflect the aphoristic sayings contained within Proverbs, so too do the historical narratives reflect the sapiential narratives of works like Job. The narratives encourage a lifestyle or attitude that cannot be regulated but can be recommended by example.

One major difference between the traditional categories of law and wisdom is the manner in which they approach Godly living. Law regulates order that has been undermined and seeks to repair that damage. Wisdom recommends order by anticipating situations and offering advice so that order will not be undermined.[43] Taken as a whole, although *Torah* and wisdom possess distinct characteristics, the evidence suggests that one is an extension of the other.

Why devote so much time to the connection between *Torah* and wisdom literature? The answer is two-fold. (1) Just as the rhetorical force of the narratives in *Torah* serves to illustrate the trajectory of law from the floor to the ceiling, the law is not limited to the specific cases mentioned, but rather provides a model that the Israelite judge is to wisely apply to situations not covered by the law. (2) Subsequently, the need for wise application of divine principles to specific situations allows us to account for the historical development of the law throughout the history of God's people. This dynamic quality of biblical law often goes unnoticed and rarely factors into discussions of New Testament (NT) legal interpretation, but the fact that Mosaic law demonstrates a decidedly non-static

[43] Walton, 302.

nature throughout the OT will shape how we understand Paul's interpretation of *Torah.*

Chapter 3: Torah Interpretation

We have just observed that the relationship between the legal and narrative sections of *Torah* produces a paradigmatic framework that allows for the application of the *Torah* to new situations in life through judicial wisdom. Certainly, this material's appellation "*Torah*" testifies to the author's intent for it to provide "guidance/instruction" in the way described above, but if our observations are correct, we should find evidence of paradigmatic application and reapplication within *Torah* and the rest of the Hebrew canon. Indeed, even before Israel receives the legal texts we find the narrative of Ex 18:13-26 setting up the expectation that judges established throughout Israel will apply *Torah*-based judicial wisdom through the ages.

Occasionally the narrative describes situations where the paradigm created by the written law does not provide adequate information for new situational application. In these cases, the paradigm presented by the narrative encourages direct interaction with God for wisdom.[44] The inclusion of these narratives in *Torah* testifies to the need for legal interpretation. It also suggests that *Torah* anticipated situations where the solution to a legal matter was not

[44] "Certainly the repeated recourse to Moses in the desert, in the cases of blasphemy (Lev. 24:10-23), defilement at the time of the Paschal feast (Num. 9:1-14), gathering wood on the Sabbath (Num. 15:32-36), and grievance of the daughters of Zelophehad (Num. 27:1-11), are exemplary in this regard. In these cases, Moses cannot solve the legal situation on the basis of the inherited (oral or written) *traditum*, and so turns to a divine oracle for adjudication." Fishbane, 236-237.

immediately obvious through the casuistic guidelines and provides an avenue for resolution.

Certainly we expect to see the casuistic laws transformed in new ways throughout Hebrew canon, however there are several types of *Torah* interpretation illustrated throughout the biblical material. Michael Fishbane's *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* details the many types of application and interpretation illustrated in the written sources.[45] While I will describe several specific examples of this process at work, my intention is not to create a comprehensive catalogue or description of the many types. My aim in this chapter is to illustrate that the process was commonplace. We will see how Torah's legal and narrative portions shaped the retelling of Israel's history as well as the prophetic messages delivered by the writing prophets.

As an example of *Torah* adaptation and intertextuality throughout the history of OT interpretation, we will look at the development attested of the Hebrew calendar in the Hebrew bible. We will then look at several other specific examples of *Torah* interpretation at work in every epoch of Jewish life and every genre of Jewish text.

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[45] Michael Fishbane provides a methodology for identifying and categorizing each type of interpretation at work within the Hebrew canon. I will rely heavily on specific examples identified by Fishbane, however my intention is not to replicate his work. Rather, my intention is to illustrate the frequency of *Torah* interpretation in Israel so as to show that the practice represents the rule rather than the exception.

The Jewish Calendar

Many texts within *Torah* discuss the Jewish calendar, referring to its feasts/fasts, sacrifices, Sabbaths, sabbaticals, jubilees, etc.[46]

Feasts	Sacrifices	Sabbath	Sabbatical
Ex. 23:14-17	Lev. 1-7	Ex. 16:23-29	Lev. 25:2-6
Ex. 34:18-26	Lev. 16	Ex. 20:8-11	Jubilee
Lev. 23		Ex. 31:13-16	Lev. 25:10-54
Num. 28-29		Ex. 35:2-3	Lev. 27
Deut. 16:1-17		Deut. 5:12-15	Num. 36:4

We could analyze this material in many ways, but we will begin our examination of the calendar with an analysis of its composition, then discuss its ordering elements, demonstrate the development of the five major observances, and finally discuss the late addition of new observances.

With respect to the month titles in the Hebrew calendar, the Pentateuch and 1 Kings only attest to four month names: Abib, Ziv, Ethanim, and Bul.[47] All other references to a month are merely numbered, not named. During or after the exile in Babylon, the Judeans adopted the titles of the Standard Mesopotamian calendar as their own.[48] Despite the frequency with which Israel interacted with neighboring nations, they continued to regulate their calendar

[46] This list is adapted from Jacob Milgrom, *Numbers*, ed. Chaim Potok, Nahum M. Sarna, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 238. Milgrom identifies the several calendars described in varying level of detail throughout the bible.

[47] Roger T. Beckwith, *Calendar, Chronology, and Worship*, ed. Martin Hengel, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity, vol. 61 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005). 27 fn 20.

[48] Mark E. Cohen, *The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient near East* (Bethesda: CDL Press, 1993). 299. Additionally, see page 386 “All biblical references to the Standard Mesopotamian month names occur in books dealing with the Persian period, the period of the Jews return from exile.”

through observation rather than calculation.[49] The Hebrew calendar determined the beginning of a given month by the sighting of a new moon and the yearly calendar was neither lunar nor solar; it was seasonal.[50] The Hebrew calendar centered around three elements, the Sabbath, New Moon, and Feast, which regulated the week, month, and year respectively.[51] Each of these ordering elements were largely independent of one another in the sense that one was not used to calculate the other.[52] Later interpreters conflated one or more of these elements, added theological significance to the calendar that wasn't previously there, and/or based the calendar on calculation rather than observation.[53]

The three main feasts, Unleavened Bread, Weeks, and Booths were the primary ordering unit, around which fall the additional celebrations of Passover, First Fruits, the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement fall.[54] These celebrations all take place in the 1st, 3rd, and 7th months and we will discuss them in order (following Num. 28-29).

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[49] ibid. 25

[50] J. Van Goudoever, *Biblical Calendars* (Leiden: Brill, 1959). 4.

[51] "The holy days and seasons of the Old Testament calendar are linked to the week, the month and the year: the Sabbath is linked to the week, the New Moon to the month, and the rest to the year." Beckwith, 2.

[52] Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 480. There were seven days in a week, 29 or 30 days in a lunar month, and an undetermined number of days or months in a given agricultural cycle.

[53] Beckwith. 27-28. Ecclesiasticus, Aristobulus, Josephus and Philo attest to a lunar calendar. 1 Enoch and Jubilees attest to a solar calendar. Internal biblical evidence for a solar year can only be inferred, and so must be externally motivated. Jubilees, arguably the most inventive interpretation of the Hebrew Calendar, reorganizes the calendar using the Sabbath and Lunar cycle to add a high degree of regularity. This enables the author of Jubilees to place redemptive-historical events on Sabbaths and high holy days, where previously no such date was indicated.

[54] Ibid., 82. This list is based off of Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28-29

The Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread. Initially two distinct celebrations with Passover on the fourteenth of the 1st month and Unleavened Bread the fifteenth through the twenty-first of the 1st month, these two eventually fused into one.[55] The first difficulty we face with the Hebrew calendar is identifying when the Passover is to be celebrated with respect to the week of Unleavened Bread. Numbers 28:17, Exodus 12:14, and Leviticus 23:6 indicate Passover falls on the first day of the festival, whereas Exodus 13:6 places it on the last day. Ezra 6:22 synthesizes the two accounts by indicating that the celebration of Passover lasted the entire week festal week.[56]

The Feast of First Fruits. This feast marks the beginning of the barley harvest and also occurred in the first month. This celebration required not only the conquest of Canaan, but permanent settlement in the land for its observance. Therefore this feast not only celebrated the beginning of the agricultural cycle, it also celebrated God's provision of the land.[57] Some consider this celebration to actually be the beginning of the Feast of Weeks, and not a separate feast.[58] Great debate surrounds the beginning of this feast, some celebrating it the day

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[55] Milgrom, 243. Milgrom believes this fusion was the result of biblical depiction, not later tradition.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Robert I. Vasholz, *Leviticus*, Mentor Imprint (Fearn, Ross-shire, UK: Christian Focus Publications, 2007), 292-293. This inference became embodied in the invasion of Canaan by the Israelite forces on Passover, followed by the seven-day march around Jericho during the Feast of Firstfruits, Josh. 5-6.

[58] Goudoever, 15.

after Passover, the Sunday after Passover, the day after the week of Unleavened Bread, and the Sunday after the week of Unleavened Bread.[59]

The Feast of Weeks. This feast is independent of the lunar calendar and marks the beginning of the wheat harvest.[60] It is connected to the Feast of First Fruits, separated by seven full Sabbaths, and *Shavuot* celebrates the harvesting of wheat instead of barley.[61] Again, the Israelites could only celebrate this feast while possessing the land, and the date of its celebration would vary depending on the dating of the First Fruits.

The Feast of Trumpets. While this feast receives no official title in scripture, it has been given this name due to the trumpet blasts required by the priests.[62] While the blowing of silver trumpets was required at the beginning of the other months, the *shofar* horn was blown at the beginning of the 7th month.[63] The prominence of this day was likely because of the important celebrations occurring in this month.

The Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement was a day of complete rest and fasting, with the intention of cleansing the temple and the people of their

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[59] Ibid., 18-29. Thus the casuistic legal requirements for celebrating this feast demonstrate a high degree of historical interpretation.

[60] Milgrom, 244.

[61] Vasholz, 292-293.

[62] Ibid., 297.

[63] Ibid., 298.

cultic uncleanness.[64] It occurred on the tenth day of the 7th month, and was a Sabbath from which all work ceased. The atonement made in this celebration covers both animate and inanimate objects, and achieves acceptance, forgiveness, consecration, and purification.[65]

The Feast of Booths. This feast celebrated the end of the agricultural cycle and was the feast *par excellance*.[66] Not only was it tied to the agricultural cycle, but it also commemorated Israel's time of sojourn in the desert by requiring the people to live in tents for seven days.[67] *Sukkot* began on the fifteenth of the 7th month and ended on the twenty-second of the same month.[68] It was on this Feast that Solomon dedicated the temple, and that the altar was supposedly rededicated after the exile.[69]

Later Feasts and Fasts. To the list described above, two major feasts were added: Hanukkah and Purim. Hanukkah celebrated the victory of the Maccabees over the Seleucids in 164 B.C. This festival, also known as the Feast of Lights, was similar to the Feast of Booths. It was celebrated for eight days, and began on the 25th of Kislev. Purim is drawn from the book of Esther. It was celebrated

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[64] Baruch Levine, *Leviticus*, ed. Chaim Potok Nahum M. Sarna, The JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 162.

[65] Vasholz, 300-301.

[66] Goudoever, 30; Milgrom, 247.

[67] Gordon Wenham, *Numbers*, ed. D.J. Wiseman, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1981), 222. This act compared the present prosperity of Israel with their former plight.

[68] Vasholz, 305.

[69] Vaux, 512.

on the thirteenth of Adar with a day of fasting, followed by the fourteenth and fifteenth of Adar with feasting.[70] The book of Esther was read aloud to the synagogue and presents were distributed along with alms for the poor.

During the exile, four fasts were added to the calendar in the 4th, 5th, 7th and 10th months.[71] The first of these, taking place in the 4th month on the ninth day, commemorated the first breach in the walls of Jerusalem.[72] The second fast is held in the 5th month and commemorates the destruction of the temple.[73] The third fast is held on the third day of the 7th month and commemorates the assassination of Gedaliah, the Governor of Judah.[74] Finally, the fourth fast is held on the tenth day of the 10th month and it commemorates the beginning of the siege.

The reference to these exilic and post-exilic feasts and fasts in Esth. 8:16-17; 9:29-31, which alludes to Zech. 8:9, 19, legitimates their addition to the Hebrew calendar.[75] Zech. 7:1-5 connects these new observances to the Jeremian prophecy concerning the length of the exile (Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10-14), which was itself related to a blend of the sabbatical principle (Lev. 26) and the promise for restoration (Deut. 30).

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[70] Ibid., 512, 514-515.

[71] Goudoever, 45.

[72] Ibid. There are two days connected with this fast, the 9th and the 17th, but the 17th is connected with the second fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

[73] Ibid., 46. The exact day again is in question. It could be the 7th, 9th, or the 10th.

[74] Ibid., 47. The exact day is never mentioned.

[75] Fishbane, 505.

This survey of the biblical calendar and its interpretation throughout the Hebrew bible and 2nd temple period indicate the freedom with which Israel transformed the paradigmatic wisdom of *Torah* to their current circumstances. The construction of the calendar, the month names, the start/end of festivals, the theological significance, and the number of observances all saw later interpretation and adaptation in the Hebrew canon. While this survey focuses primarily upon the legal requirements of the Hebrew cultic calendar, both the casuistic laws and the narrative sections of *Torah* demonstrate interpretation throughout the Hebrew bible.[76] The following is a brief discussion of several different examples.

Legal and Narratival Interpretation and Application in the Prophets

Often, we see the later historical narratives reflect usage of *Torah* as justification for the actions of God or man. For instance, in Jeremiah 26:2-24 the people debate whether or not to stone Jeremiah on the basis of Deuteronomy 18:20. 1 and 2 Kings frequently explicitly connects positive estimations of kingly behavior in Kings as directly connected with *Torah* piety in accordance with the requirements established in Deut. 17:14-20 (Asa in 1 Kgs. 15:11-13//2 Chron. 14:1-2, 4; Yehoiada in 2 Kgs. 11:17-20//2 Chron. 23:16-17, 20-21; and Josiah in 2 Kgs. 23:28//2 Chron. 35:26b).

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[76] "Inner-biblical legal exegesis, as explored earlier, is distinctively concerned with making pre-existent laws applicable or viable in new contexts...By contrast, aggadic exegesis is primarily concerned with utilizing the full range of the inherited traditum for the sake of new theological insights, attitudes, and speculations...Aggadic exegesis is thus not content to supplement gaps in the traditum [as legal exegesis does], but characteristically draws forth latent and unsuspected meanings from it." Fishbane 282-283

Jeremiah 3:1 metaphorically adapts Deuteronomy 24:1-4, transforming a law pertaining to the conduct of Israelite individuals into a national and spiritual indictment.[77] *Torah* serves as the basis for many similar prophetic indictments. Consider how Ezekiel 22:10-11 uses Leviticus 20:10-18 or Ezekiel 2:12-13 uses Deuteronomy 27:20-25. This latter is significant because Deuteronomy 27:20-25 and its parallels 23:20-21; 24:14-15 reformulated Exodus 22:24 and 23:8, illustrating a history of interpretation from tribal culture to centralized cult to exilic community. Similarly, Ezekiel 18:1-32 reworks Exodus 22:10, 24-26 and Deuteronomy 24:10-18.[78]

As described in the preceding chapter, the casuistic laws served as a paradigm for judicial wisdom. Often, these casuistic laws provided the sapiential basis for application to new and tangentially related circumstances. Some texts update legal requirements into modern times, such as Haggai 2:11-14 interpreting the transfer of cleanness and uncleanness on the basis of Leviticus 22:4-6 and Numbers 19:16-22. This occurs with the application of Num. 9:9-14 to 2 Chron. 30. The transformations to this original law were two-fold: "first, miasmic defilement is analogized to defilement through contact with idols; and second, distance from the holy land and one's clan is analogized to distance from

[77] Ibid., 284,308.

[78] Ibid., 293.

the one legitimate shrine." [79] Thus, this pre-conquest law extends its logic to the 1st temple era by a 2nd temple author in an altogether new way.

Occasionally in *Torah*, we find comments that explain an ambiguity in a previous command. One such example is the interpretation of Lev. 4:13-14 in Num. 15:22-24. Lev. 1-3 explains the requirements for the various offerings. Specifically, Lev. 1:4-5, 10-11 explicitly gives the worshipper a choice for the burnt offering as either a bull, sheep, or goat. Lev. 4:1-21 equates the sin offering with a sacrificial bull, but further description of likewise unintentional sins makes the typical animal for a sin offering a goat (Lev. 4:22-31). Numbers 28:11-15 clearly indicates that the burnt offering excludes goats and the sin offering is exclusively goats. In light of this tension, Num. 15:22-24 cites Lev. 4:13-14, and clarifies the command by splitting it into a reference to two sacrifices:

Lev. 4:14 when the sin which they have committed becomes known, the assembly shall offer a **bull** from the herd for a **sin offering** and bring it in front of the tent of meeting.	Num. 15:24 then if it was done unintentionally without the knowledge of the congregation, all the congregation shall offer one **bull** from the herd for a **burnt offering**, a pleasing aroma to the LORD, with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the rule, and one male **goat** for a **sin offering.**

What once seemed like a single sacrifice, which could have created interpretive problems, has now been clarified as an abbreviated reference to two sacrifices.[80]

[79] "A more transformative type in the Hebrew Bible is 'analogy by substantive extension'. In this third sub-type one is faced with a veritable transformation of the meaning and intent of the original rule." Ibid., 249.

[80] Ibid., 250.

The later interpretations of *Torah* narratives frequently focus on and occasionally transform the covenantal sections. For instance, Isa. 51:2 connects to the covenantal promises to Abraham in Gen. 12:1-3. Isa. 54:7-10 connects to the covenantal promises of Noah in Gen. 8:21-22; 9:15-17. Sometimes new meaning is given to these covenantal promises, as in Joshua 1:5-6, 9; 23:6-13 which transforms Deuteronomy 31:4-8 and Genesis 15:18b or 1 Kings 2:1-9 which reworks 2 Samuel 7:12-16. In both cases, the historiographer links the unconditional promises of land and kingship to a required and conditional *Torah* piety.

The creation narratives also saw tremendous interpretation. The Gen. 1 creation account connects to Jer. 4:23-26 and Job 3:1-13 as a destruction/reversal of creation. Gen. 1:14-27 also serves as the textual basis for warnings against idolatry in Deuteronomy 4:12-19 and Is. 5:18. Is. 40:28 clarifies that the rest God enjoyed on the seventh day was not required due to physical exhaustion, but rather as a pattern for us to imitate (Ex. 20:8-11).[81]

Legal and Narratival Interpretation and Application in the Writings

The editors who put together the various books in the Writings not only had the written works of *Torah* at their disposal, they also possessed the written works of the Prophets. This additional written material led to new combinations and interpretations, as many texts in *Torah* were viewed through the lens of the prophets. Certainly, though, we still see direct interpretation of *Torah* in the

[81] Ibid., 326.

Writings. In some cases, the Writings combine two casuistic laws in *Torah*, as 2 Chron. 35:13 does with Ex. 12:9 and Deut. 16:7. Others explain the theological/ethical significance of a narrative, as Psalm 106 does with Num. 25:1-8.[82]

But as noted above, we frequently find the Writings appropriating *Torah* material that has been mediated through the Prophets. For instance, 2 Chronicles 36:18-21 ties together Leviticus 26:34-35 and Jeremiah 36:18-21.[83] Also, Dan. 9:24-27 and 2 Chron. 36:21 tie together Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10-14 and Lev. 26:34-35; 25:1-55. Psalms 4 and 67 make use of the Aaronic blessing from Num. 6:23-27 and Mal. 1:6-14; 2:2-9.[84] Joel 2:28-29 likely connects to Isa. 59:21, taking the narrative of Num. 11:39 and appropriating it as a prophecy concerning all of Israel. Many of the Writings synthesized the content from *Torah* and the Prophets into their message, such as "the wisdom teacher of Prov. 1-9 [who] used words and phrases from Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah as the basis of his theological speculations...and Diessler proposed that Ps. 119 reutilized material mainly from the Pentateuch, especially the Book of Deuteronomy, and occasionally from such prophets as Jeremiah."[85]

This very brief illustration of *Torah* interpretation demonstrates that Hebrew authors felt a liberty in applying *Torah* legislation and narrative to their new context. Some of these interpretations upheld the previous casuistic message while others added new meaning or transformed it altogether. The

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[82] Ibid., 397-398.

[83] Ibid., 480-481.

[84] Ibid., 330.

[85] Ibid., 287.

specific example of the Hebrew calendar demonstrated how something so central to Israelite life remained a fluid regulative concept. While this survey confirms that ancient Israel understood *Torah* as a sapiential paradigm for Godly living throughout its history, we will see that the narrative sections serve purposes beyond the ethical and paradigmatic.

Chapter 4: Torah Contextualization

In chapter 2 we discussed how the narrative and legal portions of *Torah* worked together to present a robust ethical document that served as a sapiential paradigm for just and holy living. Creation theology served as the basis for *Torah*'s virtue ethics, deontology, and utilitarianism. It was precisely *Torah*'s casuistry that allowed for sapiential reapplication of deontological principles throughout the Hebrew Bible. In chapter 3 we looked for illustrations of this paradigmatic application and interpretation of *Torah* throughout the Hebrew bible. In chapter 4, we return to the concept of just and holy living. Specifically, we will see how the narrative portions of *Torah* illustrate the logic of the legal sections, i.e. who these laws apply to, why they are applied, and when they are applied. In chapter 5 we will expand these concepts to see when the laws are reapplied through new casuistry.

Torah Context

The traditionally recognized legal blocks in *Torah* are located in roughly half of Exodus and most of Leviticus and Deuteronomy:

- Decalogue (Exodus 20:2-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-21)
- Covenant Code (Exodus 20:22-23:33)
- Priestly Code (Exodus 25-Leviticus 16)
- Holiness Code (Leviticus 17-26)
- Deuteronomy

As discussed in chapter two, the narrative portions interwoven with this legal material describe the ethical goal of the law, justify the apodeictic laws, and illustrate the legal logic to be applied wisely in new situations. On this view, *Torah*'s trajectory encourages the appropriation of God's holiness by his image bearers. In other words, we could define *Torah* as a document whose purpose is to instill or encourage holiness in its readers/hearers. As noted above, the legal framework that establishes the holiness trajectory begins in Ex. 20. The content of *Torah* prior to Ex.20 is almost exclusively narrative, and another function of this narrative is to provide the context for the law.

Just before God delivers the major blocks of legal treatise to Moses, he couches these ethical guidelines with a purpose statement:

> Ex. 19:3 while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel:
> Ex. 19:4 You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.
> Ex. 19:5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;
> Ex. 19:6 and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

This passage simultaneously points its readers forward to the stipulations that will constitute covenantal behavior and backward to the conditions that constituted Israel's deliverance from Egypt.

> "The paucity of use of this language points us to the fact that a covenant between YHWH and this people already exists. God's covenant commitment to Abram was the basis for the people's deliverance from Egypt (cf. Ex 2:24; 6:4-5). Exodus 19-24 is not an account of a covenant making, but of the sealing or reconfirming or renegotiating of a covenant." [86]

[86] John Goldingay *Old Testament Theology: Israel's Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 370.

The Mosaic legislation did not inaugurate a new covenant in place of the Abrahamic covenant, but rather provided a robust ethical guideline for life in the promised land as God's people.[87] Thus, as *Torah* describes it, covenantal obedience requires an existing covenantal relationship. The narrative portrays the covenantal basis for God's exclusive relationship with Israel a number of times, but the first and simplest formulation of this covenant occurs as early as Genesis 12:1-3:

> Gen. 12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and
> your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.
> Gen. 12:2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and
> make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.
> Gen. 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you
> I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

The importance of this narrative cannot be overstated. Through this text, Israel receives an identity as the people of God, the promise of a land to call their own, and a purpose to bless the nations.[88] The threefold nature of the Abrahamic covenant provides the context for the covenantal stipulations and shapes the description of God's interaction with his people.[89] The connection between Gen. 12:1-3 and Ex. 19:3-6 indicates that the stated purpose for Israel to bless the nations (Gen. 12:2) hinges on their obedience to the covenantal stipulations (Ex. 19:5). This covenantal obedience signifies their holy status and fulfills their priestly ministry (Ex. 19:6). The narrative context of the law,

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[87] This interpretation carries on throughout the Hebrew bible into rabbinic interpretation. "The rabbis associate Israel's election with the ברית given to Abraham and with circumcision, not with the Sinai ברית and the Exodus...In addition, the rabbis most frequently use ברית to signify 'circumcision' as an act of obedience in association with the Abrahamic covenant." Mark A. Seifrid, "Righteousness Language in the Hebrew Scriptures and Early Judaism," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism*, ed. Peter T. O'Brien D. A. Carson, and Mark Seifrid (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 438.

[88] Wenham, *Story as Torah*, 37.

[89] "The purpose of Abraham's covenant is that all the nations be blessed in his 'seed.' This is the Abrahamic covenant, and it is the central covenant of the Pentateuch." Sailhamer, 369.

therefore, explicitly equates covenantal obedience with holiness and declares that the purpose of this holiness is to bless the nations.

Again, the three aspects of the Abrahamic covenant are: identity, land, and blessing. When these covenantal promises in Gen.12 are ratified at the covenant making ceremony in Gen. 15, the basis for this covenant is Abraham's faith, not his obedience.[90] Even though covenantal obedience is required as a response (Gen. 17:10-14), the narrative makes plain that it is not required as a basis for formation of the covenant. This accords well with our observation above that covenantal obedience requires covenantal relationship. We will return to this detail below, but for now it is enough to recognize that the covenantal promises of identity, land, and blessing are not merited through obedience.

While covenantal obedience does not generate the covenantal promises of identity or land, *Torah* clearly indicates that covenantal disobedience will cause disinheritance from the land and the people. Disinheritance from the land as a result of covenantal disobedience is the explicit focus of Deut. 28:15-68. Disinheritance of the Israelite identity as a result of covenantal disobedience is not as succinctly stated. The term used in *Torah* to describe the blotting out of a family line is the Hebrew word כרת (*Karet*).[91] Milgrom identifies nineteen

[90] "But here [in Gen. 15:6] Abram is not described as doing righteousness. Rather faith is being counted for righteousness." Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1987), 329-330.

[91] This list is adapted from Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 458. Numbers 18:3, though not a direct use of *Karet*, discusses the same effect.

different types of use for this term within *Torah*, all of which describe intentional neglect of the cultic system:

1. Sacred Time
   - Neglecting the Passover sacrifice (Num. 9:13)
   - Eating leaven during the matzah festival (Exod. 12:15,19)
   - Working on the Sabbath (Exod. 31:14)
   - Working or not fasting on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:29-30)
2. Sacred Sustenance
   - imbibing blood (Lev. 7:27; 17:10,14)
   - eating suet (Lev. 7:25)
   - duplicating or misusing sanctuary incense (Exod. 30:38)
   - duplicating or misusing sanctuary anointment oil (Exod. 30:33)
   - eating a sacrifice beyond the permitted period (Lev. 19:8)
   - eating of a sacrifice in the state of impurity (Lev. 7:20-21)
   - Levites encroaching upon sancta (Num. 18:3)
   - blaspheming (flauntingly violating a prohibitive commandment, Num. 15:30-31)
3. Purification Rituals
   - neglecting circumcision (Gen 17:14; the purification is figurative, Josh 5:9)
   - neglecting purification after contact with the dead (Num. 19:13-20)
4. Illicit Worship
   - Molech and other forms of idolatry (Lev. 20:2-5; Ezek. 14:5)
   - consulting the dead (Lev. 20:6)
   - slaughtering animals outside the authorized sanctuary (Lev. 17:4)
   - sacrificing animals outside the authorized sanctuary (Lev. 17:9)
5. Illicit Sex
   - effecting forbidden consanguineous and incestuous marriages (Lev. 18:27-29)

In other words, to pursue holiness is so intrinsic to the identity of an Israelite (per Exod. 19:6) that intentional neglect of the legal system that produces holiness identifies someone as an outsider who should be cut off or cast out. Thus, obedience to the covenantal stipulations does not secure the covenantal promises, but disobedience to the covenantal stipulations can cut someone off from the covenantal promises.

In all of these observations, the centrality of holiness to *Torah* cannot be ignored. We have already explored how the construction of *Torah*'s apodeictic laws encourages holiness and how the narrative context of these laws explicitly

ties covenantal obedience to holiness. *Torah*'s emphasis on holiness as the goal of the law and the purpose for the people encourages us to explore this concept in greater detail.

Holiness

Leviticus 10:10 creates the paradigm for *Torah*'s portrayal of holiness, stating "You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean." Common things can be either clean or unclean, but holy things can never be unclean.[92] Israel's sacrificial system enabled the worshipper to move through these categories as follows:[93]

Unclean ⟶ Clean ⟶ Holy

In the Israelite mind, these three categories served as a means of classifying the world and its inhabitants. The spatial world paralleled these categories by highlighting the role of the land God initially promised to Abraham, which Israel would be imminently inheriting. As Lev. 17:27 describes, the Israelites must cleanse Canaan from the wickedness of the current inhabitants, thereby justifying the conquest. The spatial parallel thus looks like this:[94]

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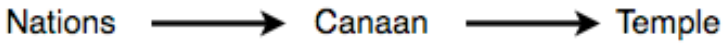
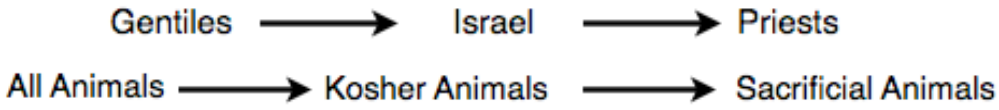
[92] Ibid., 732.

[93] Gordon Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, ed. R.K. Harrison, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1979), 19-26. Even among the general category of holiness, there are grades of holiness. These levels of holiness are reflected in the construction of the tabernacle/temple, with its outer court, inner court, and Holy of Holies. Philip P. Jenson, "The Levitical Sacrificial System," in *Sacrifice in the Bible*, ed. Roger T. Beckwith and Martin J. Selman (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1995), 32.

[94] See Gen 13:10; Is 51:3; Ezek 36:35; 47:12; Joel 2:3. G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, ed. D.A. Carson, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2004), 116. We can infer that this is why the destruction of all idols and unclean peoples in the land is so important to God. There can be no impure worship of the true



Just as *Torah* divided the spatial world along the unclean/clean/holy paradigm, so too did it categorize the world's inhabitants along the same logical basis. Both the people and the animals paralleled this classification as follows:[95]



This biblical taxonomy indicates that every facet of Israel's life belongs to the "clean" category. Israel's people, land, and food are distinct from Israel's neighbors according to these cultic categories. The focus of the cultic system is that the various sacrifices offered would move the Israelite from unclean to clean or from clean to holy, depending on the sacrifice and the occasion. The four traditional sacrifices offered were:

1. **The burnt offering (Lev. 1:1-17; 6:8-13)**-presented as a gift to God[96]
2. **The purification (sin) offering (Lev. 4:1-35; 6:24-30)**-presented to restore cultic purity[97]
3. **The reparation (guilt) offering (Lev. 5:14-6:7; 7:1-10)**-presented to compensate God for the worshipper's cultic debt[98]
4. **The peace/communion offering (Lev. 3:1-17; 7:11-36)**-presented as an appropriate expression of harmonious relationship with God[99]

God, and its presence defiles his temple, cf. Lev. 18:25; 20:22. Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, 102.

[95] "The tripartite division of the human race corresponds to three of its covenants with God: mankind (Gen. 9:1-11, including the animals), Israel (i.e., the patriarchs, Gen. 17:2; Lev. 26:42), and the priesthood (Num. 25:12-15; Jer. 33:17-22). The three human divisions are matched by the three animal divisions: all animals are permitted to mankind, except their blood (Gen 9:3-5); the edible few to Israel (Lev 11); and of the edible, the domesticated and unblemished qualify as sacrifices to the Lord (Lev 22:17-25)." Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 722.

[96] While the tendency has been to view this sacrifice as the premier atoning sacrifice, Jenson warns that this association may well be the result of later systematizing, Jenson, 28.

[97] This sacrifice removed the affect of significant cultic impurity, which, while affected by sin, does not mean that it was intended to remove sin, Jenson, 29.

[98] Jenson indicates that this was a repaying of cultic sacrificial offerings that had been delayed due to impurity preventing the worshipper from offering them at the appropriate time, Jenson, 30.

[99] Jenson notes that this offering represented the ultimate goal of worship for the Israelite, Jenson, 31

The purpose of these sacrifices, then, is not the removal of sin but the trajectory of holiness for God's people. While the cultic system acknowledges the affect of sin on the Israelite and provides measures within the system to restore cleanness/holiness, the focus of the standard sacrifices does not atone for sin in the sense of establishing a right relationship with God.

The cultic calendar and its three main pilgrimage feasts uniquely utilized the same sacrificial offerings to celebrate the redemptive deliverance of God from Egypt. While there were sacrifices associated with each holy day, these sacrifices were offered in remembrance of that redemptive work.[100] Stated another way, these celebrations acknowledged the saving work of God, but did not secure it. The one holy day that deserves closer examination is the Day of Atonement. Of all the cultic observances, this one is most closely associated with the expiation and propitiation of sin.[101] However, as Jenson points out, because this rite deals with the priestly classes of impurity and sin, it may very well be that the sin dealt with on the Day of Atonement is neglect of cultic worship.[102] Thus it appears likely that the only sin atoned for in this ritual is the disregard for cultic holiness, for which *Karet* was reserved as punishment. So serious a punishment required so serious a cleansing, and the Day of Atonement provided just such a cleansing.

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[100] T. D. Alexander, "The Passover Sacrifice," in *Sacrifice in the Bible*, ed. Roger T. Beckwith and Martin J. Selman (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1995), 11.

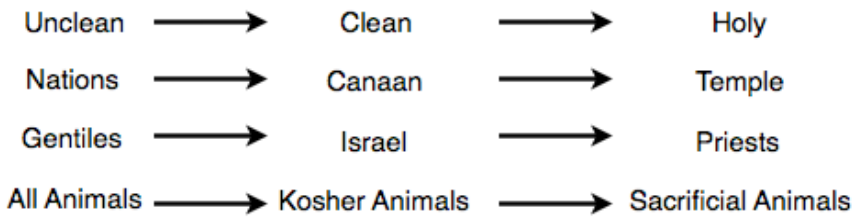
[101] Jenson, 33-37.

[102] Ibid., 35.

The common thread throughout the cultic system, cultic calendar, and Mosaic legislation as a whole is the pursuit of holiness. Again, holiness is synonymous with covenant obedience, not covenant making. The historical narrative of the Abrahamic covenant provides the context for the requisite covenantal obedience of the Mosaic legislation. The basis for this covenant, as described above, is righteousness through faith. As important a concept as holiness has been to our discussion of *Torah* thus far, we will see that righteousness is every bit as important.

Righteousness

Recall *Torah*'s paradigm for holiness laid out in Lev. 10:10:



Within this taxonomy is the recognition that while all sin is unclean, not all uncleanness results from sinful activity.[103] The ability of natural processes to make the cultic observer unclean testifies to the affect of sin on the created order. Likewise Lev. 11, following Gen. 1's classification of animals, lists the clean and

[103] With respect to Leviticus 15, Kurtz says "These conditions and functions, the whole of which, with the single exception of conjugal intercourse, were involuntary and to a certain extent inevitable, are not treated in the law as sinful in themselves, or as connected with special sins...Yet by requiring a sin or trespass-offering for the removal of the higher forms of uncleanness, it indicates a primary connection between them and sin, so far, that is to say, as the processes occurring in the body are dependent upon the influences and effects of the universal sinfulness." J.H. Kurtz Offerings, Sacrifice, and Worship in the Old Testament (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 416.

unclean animals according to land (Lev. 11:2-8), water (Lev. 11:9-12), and air (Lev. 11:13-25). Although everything in creation was created good, here we see that the sin introduced in Gen. 3 affects the natural state of all of the earth's inhabitants.[104] Genesis 1-3, therefore, plays a crucial role in the holiness taxonomy described in Lev. 10:10.

The language of Genesis 1-2 characterizes the garden in Eden as a prototypical temple, and the cultural mandate to 'fill the earth and subdue it' depicts Adam's priestly duty to make the rest of the world like the garden.[105] Adam's role as the proto-typical priest was to fashion the rest of the earth after the proto-typical temple in Eden. According to our paradigm, we recognize that Adam's purpose was to make the 'clean' earth like the 'holy' temple. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command in Genesis 3, God cast them out of the land/temple.[106] Their disobedience affected both the human condition and the whole of creation.[107] All of creation fell from the 'clean' or 'holy' categories to the 'unclean' category as a consequence of Adam's disobedience.

When God makes his covenant with Abraham in Gen. 12:1-3 and gives the threefold promise of identity, land, and blessing, God essentially moves

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[104] Paul Copan, *Is God a Moral Monster?: Making Sense of the Old Testament God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 80-81.

[105] The language of 'keep' and 'cultivate' in Genesis 2:15 carries with it the connotation of a priest attending his daily work in the temple. Beale, 81. Also, "The intention seems to be that Adam was to widen the boundaries of the Garden in ever increasing circles by extending the order of the garden sanctuary into the inhospitable outer spaces." Ibid., 85.

[106] Ibid., 116.

[107] See Gen. 3:16-19. C. John Collins, *Genesis 1-4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2006), 178.

Abraham's descendants from the unclean category to which all of nature belongs into the clean category. Israel's new nature is cleanness. As discussed above, deviations from cleanness into uncleanness were viewed as temporary, and the cultic system provided a means for returning to cleanness. Repeated, intentional deviation into uncleanness was also viewed as evidence of an individual's rejection of their clean nature, and as such they were cast out or cut off.

At the ratification of the Gen. 12:1-3 covenant in Gen. 15, the basis for moving Abraham and his descendants into the clean category is referred to as 'righteousness.' Unfortunately, an appropriate understanding of how the bible uses 'righteousness' and its cognates has been clouded by the Catholic-Protestant debate.[108] In an attempt to avoid any category errors, we will briefly survey the biblical evidence here:[109]

- צדק- the verb form, "to be just," occurs in **40 verses**: *Torah* (4), Prophets (11), and the Writings (25). Nearly half of these occurrences appear in the verses of Job (17).
- צֶדֶק- the masculine noun, "righteousness," occurs in **116 verses**: *Torah* (8), Prophets (38), and the Writings (70). The majority of these are concentrated in Isaiah (25) and Psalms (50).
- צְדָקָה- the feminine noun, "righteousness," occurs in **150 verses**: *Torah* (9), Prophets (79), and the Writings (62). The majority of these are concentrated in Isaiah (34), Ezekiel (18), Psalms (34), and Proverbs (17).

[108] Discussions of 'status' and forensic usage dominate the conversation, whereas the biblical evidence may or may not warrant this discussion. Seifrid, 422.

[109] An Accordance search yielded these results, and the tallies are original to my research.

- צַדִּיק- the masculine adjective, "righteous," occurs in **197 verses**: *Torah* (15), Prophets (44), and the Writings (138). The majority of these are concentrated in Isaiah (12), Ezekiel (14), Psalms (50), and Proverbs (66).

In its historical context, "the root צדק is associated with concepts of legitimacy and normativity throughout the entire Northwest Semitic language group."[110] Following this context, the masculine and feminine noun forms exhibit a slightly different semantic range, where the feminine tends to refer to concrete things such as a righteous act, while the masculine usually signifies an abstract concept such as "that which is morally right."[111] As this abstract/concrete distinction applies to verses in which the retributive/punitive righteousness of God is in focus, there also appears to be a lexical distinction between the use of צְדָקָה and צַדִּיק: צְדָקָה is used when speaking of the concrete, vindicating acts of God, whereas צַדִּיק is used when signifying a retributive justice of God. "The difference in meaning between the noun and the adjective should not be unexpected: in the Hebrew Scriptures in all but one instance צַדִּיק is used of persons, while, as we have observed, the use of צְדָקָה is weighted toward description of action."[112]

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[110]Seifrid, 420-421.

[111] Ibid., 428.

[112] Ibid., 430.

The various forms of צדק and שׁפט pair together in 142 contexts, indicating that the righteousness of God correlates with his ruling and judging creation.[113] Thus, biblical righteousness highlights the kingly function of the creator to rule 'rightly.' Divine kingly concepts such as judicial wisdom, universal justice, and covenant-making are frequently associated with righteousness.[114] The application of the term 'righteousness' to humans, therefore, might well indicate God-likeness in these respects.[115] If God's righteousness appeals to his right action as the creator, and man's righteousness appeals to the human imaging of God (Gen. 1:26), then we can see how righteousness, like holiness, is tied to creation theology.[116]

So how does this apply to the covenant making narrative of Gen. 15? As indicated above, the holiness encouraged by the Mosaic legislation connects to the righteousness of the Abrahamic covenant. Human righteousness is typically associated with God-like action, but where we would expect Abraham's righteousness to be determined by his actions, it is uniquely qualified by his faith.[117] In other words, God as the righteous creator remakes Abraham's

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[113] Ibid., 425. This would account for roughly 30% of all occurrences of צדק in the biblical text.

[114] E.g., Isa. 33:22, which draws many of these concepts together in a single verse.

[115] Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 330.

[116] Seifrid, 425. To be sure, Seifrid is exclusively concerned with righteousness, but his observations accord well with our survey of biblical holiness.

[117] "But here Abram is not described as doing righteousness. Rather faith is being counted for righteousness. Normally righteousness results in acquittal by the divine judge. Here faith, the right response to God's revelation, counts instead." Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 330.

unclean nature into a clean nature on the basis of his faith. The subsequent gift of the Mosaic legislation codifies the actions necessary for Israel to move from clean to holy, as mankind existed in the Garden of Eden. The righteous status that affords Abraham a new nature therefore depends on God's work and is responded to through circumcision. The righteous individual acts in accordance with his or her recreated nature by pursuing holiness through the rules and regulations revealed by God.

Biblical Interpretation: Righteousness and Holiness

Though our survey of the term 'righteousness' covered its usage throughout the Hebrew bible, the majority of our study on holiness and righteousness thus far has been contained to *Torah* itself. How do the prophets and the writings interpret these concepts?

As indicated above, Ex. 19:5-6 discusses the expectation that the 'clean' nature of Israel requires covenantal obedience, the result of which is holiness. WIthin *Torah*, this expectation is explicitly applied as though it were already true in Deut. 7:6.[118] This means that Deuteronomy assumes the covenantal obedience required of Israel to produce holiness in Exodus. Ezra later reflects on Deut. 7:6, indicating in Ezra 9:2 that the Jews have intermarried, thus mixing the holy seed with unholy people. The context of Deut. 7:6 specifically refers to intermarriage with unclean peoples as a catalyst for the Lord's judgment (Deut.

[118] The Exodus usage is conditional whereas the Deuteronomy quotation is transformed into an unconditional. In other words, what once was required before Israel's holiness was attained, now in Deuteronomy holiness is a mere fact of the people's existence, Fishbane, 122.

7:3-4). In other words, the post-exilic community affirmed that the 'clean' nature of God's people at Sinai is made 'holy' through *Torah* observance, and that 'holy' nature can be corrupted through mixture with a naturally 'unclean' people.

The effectual appropriation of 'holiness' through covenantal obedience was referred to within *Torah* as 'heart circumcision' (Deut. 10:16; 30:6). This signified the 'clean' Israelite's embrace of the holiness trajectory provided through the Mosaic legislation. Later prophets contrasted the heart-circumcised of Deuteronomy with those who merely received the physical circumcision associated with the Abrahamic covenant (Jer. 9:25). Those circumcised only in the flesh inherited the Mosaic legislation but chose not to appropriate the holiness it encouraged. Whereas Deut. 29:18-21 warned of the death and destruction of these Israelites, Ezekiel prophesied a time when even those Israelites would have their hearts circumcised (Ezek. 11:19; 36:26). Just as God, through his actions alone, moved Abraham's nature from the unclean to the clean category, so too does he promise to move even those unobservant Israelites into the holy category.[119] This promise was apparently even open to the Gentiles (Ezek. 44:7, 9).[120] While the law provided means to achieve a holy state, this appropriation was transitive and temporary. Ezekiel prophesies a new holy nature available in the future to Israelite and Gentile alike.

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[119] Christopher J.H. Wright, *The Message of Ezekiel* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2001), 291-292

[120] The contrast of admitting those Gentiles who were not circumcised in either flesh or heart implies it was possible to admit Gentiles who had been or could be circumcised in flesh and heart.

The conceptual distinction between flesh-circumcised and heart-circumcised Israelites is one of consistent focus by the prophets. The prophets describe two possible scenarios on the basis of this distinction: 1) the intentional neglect of the Mosaic legislation as evidence of a lack of membership in true Israel, and/or 2) the rote performance of the covenantal stipulations without an appropriate spirit. Amos' prophetic doom emphasized the intentional neglect of the law by the Northern and Southern kingdoms, providing justification for their judgment and the basis for Amos' encouragement for a correct moral disposition.[121] Isa. 58:1-12 encourages a similar sort of spiritual realignment with respect to the practice of covenantal stipulations.[122] Isaiah explains here that righteousness is displayed through a heart disposition (Isa. 58:8), not through observance alone (Isa. 58:4). In Amos' case, the laws and the ethical ideal has been neglected, whereas Isaiah's case features Israelites who obey the law to the letter but neglect the ethical ideal encouraged by the *Torah* narratives. In both cases the prophet exhorts his audience to return to *Torah* observance as is commensurate with their nature.

The most challenging aspect of the prophetic interpretation of *Torah* is the apparent abrogation of *Torah* piety in several places. Isa. 1:11-17 represents a standard critique, where several facets of the cultic system and calendar are explicitly mentioned and rejected. This rejection does not invalidate the worth of

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[121] Amos 4:1 and 8:1 recalls Deut. 24:14, Amos 3:7; 5:7, 10, 12 recalls Deut. 16:19, Amos 8:5 recalls Deut. 25:13-14; and Amos 2:8 recalls Deut. 24:17, Ibid., 295.

[122] Isaiah interacts with Lev. 16; 23:24-32, indicating observance of the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement.

Torah, but rather the worth of *Torah* observance without heart-circumcision. This is apparent in Isa. 1:17 where the prophet cites Deut. 10:18, in effect using *Torah* theology to critique morally bankrupt *Torah* observance. Deut. 10:18 describes the character of God, and Isaiah's exhortation to his audience to exhibit God-like behavior is, as we have seen, an appeal to righteous living. In other words, Isaiah presents us with a picture where *Torah* observance without the right heart disposition indicates a lack of the 'clean' nature presented to Abraham. Isaiah's concern for his audience, then, is an appropriation of the faith that makes one righteous before he encourages the holiness that results from proper *Torah* observance.

If this interpretation is in some way implicit in Isaiah, it is made explicit in Malachi 1:6-2:16. Malachi lists the legal requirements of sacrifice (1:7-8) and the ethical ideal of marriage (2:14-15) as two different ways God's people have neglected God's revealed word. This intentional neglect forms the basis for God's threat to cut them off from his people (2:11-12). The prophet describes this as a situation of faithlessness, highlighting the requirement of righteousness through faith to appropriately pursue *Torah* holiness. Thus, Malachi, in the post-exilic period, explicitly sums up our observations of *Torah*'s distinction between righteousness and holiness.

Among the writings, as indicated in our survey above, righteousness is of particular importance to both the Psalms and Proverbs. The Psalter itself has been arranged into five books, a likely illusion to *Torah*.

- Book 1: chs. 1-41
- Book 2: chs. 42-72
- Book 3: chs. 73-89
- Book 4: chs. 90-106
- Book 5: chs. 107-150

The first book opens with a declaration that the 'law of the Lord' is a means of flourishing for the people of God.[123] The first book and the last have at their center Psalm 19 and 119, expositions of the importance of *Torah* in the life of the righteous. Psalm 119's synonymous terms for *Torah* indicates that the entirety of divine revelation saves and redeems.[124] The psalmist thus affirms *Torah* and the interpretation of *Torah* by the Prophets.

The composition of the Psalter as an anthology of songs meant to be memorized enables the average Israelite to appropriate and integrate *Torah* theology. "Throughout the Psalter, one is confessing that the Lord is God, and, as the psalms often insist, this is supposed to be a confession that comes from a pure and sincere heart."[125] Thus, by singing through the Psalms the worshipper commits to the same faith God regarded as righteousness for Abraham. "The

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[123] See Psalm 1:3. This prosperity connects to the opening chapter of Joshua (1:8), itself the beginning of a book as well as the beginning of the Prophets. Gordon J. Wenham, *Psalms as Torah*, Studies in Theological Interpretation (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 79.

[124] "The central message of [Psalm 119] is this: the psalmist is waiting for divine intervention to free him." תּוֹרָה (law), דָּבָר (word), מִשְׁפָּט (jugdment), עֵדוּת (testimonies), חֻקָּה (statutes), מִצְוָה (commandments), פִּקּוּדִים (precepts), and אִמְרָה (word), all serve to convey the rich diversity within the revelation of God to his people and its relevance for salvation. Ibid., 84, 86-88.

[125] For this quote, see Ibid., 75. See also Ibid., 57-76.

psalmists affirm both their love for God and his law and their hatred of sin. Although this means that the psalmists are righteous in comparison to the wicked...it does not mean that the psalmists see themselves as perfect."[126] The recognition of sin in the life of the righteous individual admits of a temporary uncleanness, and seeks God for restoration to cleanness or holiness (Ps. 19:12-13). The means of divine restoration in the Psalter typically comes through *Torah* (Ps. 19:7-11), whose ability to restore rests in God's authority as the creator (Ps. 19:1-6). The Book of Psalms, therefore, through its composition, purpose, content, and theology agree with our observations of righteousness and holiness above.

The wisdom literature, best represented by Proverbs, also interacts with the historical context of *Torah* through the lens of a theological synthesis. The salvation history of *Torah* and its theological import are recast by the sages to assess the role of human interaction and dependence on the ordered creation.[127] The main thrust of this sapiential synthesis is that the created order possesses a natural state, that deed and consequence are directly linked to this nature, and that God is superior to the created order.[128] The role of creation in the Israelite wisdom tradition served two functions: 1) creation has a nature by which it operates, and wisdom provides the means for understanding this nature, and 2)

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[126] Ibid., 95.

[127] Katharine J. Dell, *The Book of Proverbs in Social and Theological Context* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 131. Dell describes this phenomenon of reinterpretation on the basis of Von Rad's *Wisdom in Israel*.

[128] Ibid., 133.

creation is the arena in which experience occurs, even the experience of God.[129] The centrality of creation theology to the Israelite wisdom literature is right at home with Israelite Yahwism, itself utterly distinct from its neighbors.[130]

> "Creation thought, priestly thought (cult and ceremonial), and wisdom thought have one major feature which they share in common: they order reality into meaning forms or create universes of meaning within which life can be viewed and understood without much special appeal to or reliance on historical thought categories or *Heilsgeschichte*."[131]

Thus, wisdom and cult are unified through a consistent application of creation theology. The categorization of the world into unclean, clean, and holy categories appeals to their nature, and deviations from this nature are considered unusual, temporary conditions that must be rectified. Wisdom shares the assumption that creation operates along a certain set of conditions, and while there may be deviations from this sapiential norm, they are just that-deviations.

While all of creation possesses a nature according to which it generally operates, the Israelite sage categorizes mankind into one of two categories: the righteous and the wicked. These categories are often associated with other dichotomies, like the wise and the fool, but they are synonymous and descriptive of the two main categories. The righteous nature is evidenced by a fear of the Lord, which is defined as "religious piety characterized by faith in God as creator

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[129] Ibid., 135. The first point corresponds to the rules and regulations of *Torah*, which are themselves justified by the created order as seen in chapter 2. The second point corresponds with the historical context provide by the *Torah* narratives as described in this chapter.

[130] Ibid., 136.

[131] Ibid.

and sustainer of life."[132] According to the Israelite sages, therefore, a righteous nature is evidenced by Abrahamic faith. By contrast the wicked are those who lack this faith and corresponding nature. So in both the cultic holiness categories and the understanding of righteousness, Proverbs stands in agreement with the prophets, the priests, and the various other levels of Israelite society.[133]

[132] See Prov. 1:7; 9:10; 15:33; 31:31. Ibid., 139.

[133] Ibid., 152. These other levels will be covered in much greater detail in Chapter 6.

Chapter 5: Torah Application

Thus far we have seen how Torah serves as a robust normative ethical document, whose ethical character derives from creation theology. This ethical code guides the actions of God's people, whose righteous status requires and enables holy living. We have also seen how the deontological principles of Torah get reinterpreted through new casuistic application depending on the situation in which God's people find themselves. In this chapter we finally discuss *Torah*'s method behind its reapplication of deontological principles. As we will see, the narrative content of *Torah* provides the context and conditions necessary for the reapplication of its apodeictic laws into new casuistic laws.

The Land as Temple

In looking at the foundation of the Mosaic covenant in Exodus 19:3-6, the people are explicitly referred to as a 'kingdom of priests.' This reference to everyone who obeys the Mosaic covenant carries with it enormous significance. It creates a parallel between the entire people of God and the priests who will offer sacrifices in the tabernacle/temple.[134] The analogy created by this passage is that just as Israel's priests minister on behalf of the people at the

[134] Beale, 117.

tabernacle/temple, so too does Israel minister on behalf of the world in Canaan.[135] In other words, Canaan serves as a kind of temple.

The analogy of the priest interacting with God on behalf of the people, and likewise Israel on behalf of the world, introduces the biblical concept of mediation.[136] Mediated interaction with God is the biblical solution to the immanence of Israel's incommensurate God. In other words, mediation is a necessary consequence of the relationship that Israel has with its God.[137] Israel's priestly work, then, was to "articulate and accept modes of mediation...whereby Yahweh's presence, power, and purposes were available."[138] While this mission is most clearly articulated in temple worship, and subsequently by analogy through Israel's mission to the world, God's mediated presence takes several other forms. The five prominent aspects of mediation in the OT are *Torah*, kingship, prophecy, cult, and wisdom.[139] While I have already discussed *Torah* and wisdom at some length, I will mention them again in the context of mediation, together with the other categories, in chapter 6. For now, suffice it to say that just as the purpose of God's people is to bless the

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[135] Ibid., 114-121. This is primarily conveyed by acting as a witness to the presence of God and testifying to his redemptive work, which in turn their adherence to God's law confirms.

[136] Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 568.

[137] "It is daring of Israel to insist on relatedness with Yahweh. But to be specific about that relatedness requires that along with the daring of Israel's utterance, we pay attention, as best we can, to the practices that give the testimony *concrete embodiment*." Ibid.

[138] Ibid.

[139] Ibid., 575.

nations, the purpose of God's land is the provision of mediated communion with God.

The interrelated portrayal of God's people and his land begins with Adam and the garden in Eden. Adam's priestly commission and purpose extended beyond him through his descendants Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all of Israel.[140] The purpose of their priestly duty corresponds to the work of increasing holiness among the covenant people and throughout the world. Portrayed as a temple, the land of Israel embodied a concentrated form of hallowing bestowed on the earth.[141] Obedience to *Torah*, as God's recommendations and regulations for life in the land, became synonymous with Israel's priestly duty. As discussed in chapter 2, the ethical ceiling encouraged by Torah was holiness. We see now that obedience to Torah was the priestly ministry of every man, woman, and child in Israel.

The Defiled Temple

While it may be tempting to view the need for priestly duty and mediation as a consequence of sin, this is not the case. As already noted, Adam served as a prototypical priest in the prototypical temple of the garden well before sin entered the world. It is perhaps more fruitful to describe the mediated nature of

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[140] Gen 1:28; 9:1, 7; 12:2-3; 17:2, 6, 8; 22:17-18; 26:3-4, 24; 28:3-4; 35:11-12; 47:27; Exod. 1:7; Deut. 7:13; Ps 107:38; and Is 51:2. "These informal sanctuaries in Genesis pointed then to Israel's later tabernacle and temple from which Israel was to branch out over all the earth." Beale, 94-98.

[141] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, 111.

God's presence as affected by sin, rather than required by sin. God's redemptive response to this sin forestalled the death promised in Gen. 2:17 by extinguishing his anger on innocent animals and clothing Adam and Eve in the righteousness of those animals. This act simultaneously recognizes their inability to cover their own sin/shame and their need for God to provide a solution.[142]

The narrative thus brings out several important features concerning priestly mediation before and after the fall. First, sin has affected every facet of human life and worldly experience. We would expect the practice of mediation by Israel to reflect this new reality. This will be taken up in the following section concerning ritual uncleanness. Second, the focus of the priestly mediation performed by Adam before sin and his successors after sin is primarily focused on communion with God.[143] Though this function has been marred by sin, we must recognize that its function was never intended to remove the source of sin. Flowing from this second point is the third, namely that obedience to God's laws prior to sin and after sin are drastically different.

The Cleansed Temple

As discussed above, mankind's disobedience tainted the worship of God in his temple. God's temple had been defiled and Adam's priestly ministry corrupted. Adam and Eve's banishment from the Garden of Eden can then be viewed as God cleansing his temple. Just as God placed his people in the

[142] Compare with Adam and Eve's previous clothing-making attempt, Gen 3:7.

[143] Brueggemann, 650-651.

temple, so too does he remove them when necessary.[144] While disobedience disqualifies God's people from their priestly ministry, it does not divorce them from membership in the people of God.[145] If we understand the law as a description of Godly living in God's land by God's people, then if God removes his people from his land, Godly living will necessarily look different. This principle is demonstrated several times within *Torah* and the subsequent narrative and prophetic sections.

Different Temple, Different Application

While in the garden, Adam and Eve's obedience to the law required them not to eat from the tree in the middle of the garden. Their removal from the garden necessarily changed the nature of their future obedience. Just as the change in status of the proto-typical priest with the proto-typical temple changed the nature of his obedience, so too does wise application of the law change throughout the rest of the biblical narrative. We can see this principle at work within the Pentateuch when comparing the Decalogue and Covenant Code with Deuteronomy:

> "It is precisely the Book (and practice) of Deuteronomy that prevents the Mosaic Torah of Sinai from being closed off, fixed, and settled. The dynamic process of the Book of Deuteronomy precludes any strict constructionism about the Torah, any notion that the text can mean only what its original speaker said and intended, for the Decalogue is now shown to be enormously open for continuing processing."[146]

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[144] Beale, 116-117.

[145] The blessings and curses of the law in Deuteronomy 28 portray a removal from the land as a consequence of disobedience. Deuteronomy 30 describes a return of God's people to the land as a result of his gracious continued provision. In other words, the blessings and curses of the Mosaic law do not run the risk of voiding the Abrahamic covenant.

[146] Brueggemann, 587.

Whereas the people at Sinai were nomadic, the people on the plains of Moab were preparing for life in their own land.[147] In other words, the shift from a kinship based tribal network to a church/state nexus shaped the wise application of the apodeictic Decalogue into a new casuistic mold.[148] Unlike the earlier Covenant Code, Deuteronomy offers a comprehensive picture of the community of faith, details a thorough treatment of covenant relationship, presents a highly developed theology of land, and lastly represents a remarkable approach to government.[149] These new facets of the law reflect the new experience of God's people with respect to his land/temple.[150]

One example of reapplication or expansion from *Torah* itself is in Exodus 20:24-25, where as long as the altar is constructed along specific guidelines, animal sacrifice may be carried out at different places. In Deuteronomy 12:5-14, however, only one place is the legitimate locus of cultic sacrifice.[151] Likewise, the Passover feast outlined in Exodus 12 as a family meal is reconstituted as a sacrifice at the central sanctuary in Deuteronomy 16.[152]

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[147] "All of Deuteronomy looks toward Israel's life in the promised land." Tigay, xvi.

[148] Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in Israel and Early Judaism*, 107.

[149] Daniel I. Block, "Deuteronomy," in *Theological Interpretation of the Old Testament*, ed. Kevin Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 77-80.

[150] Brueggemann, 586.

[151] Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in Israel and Early Judaism*, 87. The location identified in Deuteronomy corresponds with Jerusalem, anticipating the first temple constructed by Solomon. See also Fishbane, 252.

[152] Alexander, 11-14.

Not only can we demonstrate this process of reinterpretation occurring, the later historical narratives explicitly refer to biblical figures engaging in *Torah* reinterpretation. During the Rosh Hashanah convocation, the Levites addressed the returnees from exile and "read aloud from the book of the *Torah* of Elohim and gave the sense and they expounded the recited text (Nehemiah 8:8)."[153] Thus, not only does *Torah* itself demonstrate interpretation and reapplication, later writings confirm that this process continued with great regularity.

When To Reapply?

Summing up our observations allows us to answer the question of when does *Torah* require a new set of casuistic laws. As stated above, *Torah* represents God's laws for God's people in God's land. When the status of God's people to God's land changes, we should expect a new set of casuistic laws to correspond with this new reality. By looking at the descriptors for God's people, we recognize that the Hebrew bible itself provides us with guideposts for the phases of reinterpretation:[154]

> Stage #1: Ancestral wandering clan: Gen. 10:31-32
> Stage #2: Theocratic people/nation: Gen. 12:2; Exod. 1:9; 3:7; Judg. 2:20
> Stage #3: Monarchy, institutional state, or kingdom: 1 Sam. 24:20; 1 Chron. 28:5
> Stage #4: Afflicted remnant: Jer. 42:4; Ezek. 5:10
> Stage #5: Postexilic community/assembly of promise: Ezra 2:64; Neh. 13:1

I contend that every example of legal reinterpretation is the result of a transition between one of these stages and another. To be certain, these stages

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[153] Fishbane, 108-109. Translation provided by Fishbane. He also concludes that these two terms 'gave the sense' and 'expounded the recited text' are explicitly exegetical in nature, "and indicate the addition of clarifications and interpretations to [the] text."

[154] Copan, 65.

are not always clear cut. Stage 2-3 was very, very messy and Stage 4-5 was a slow transition. Stages 1-2 and 3-4, on the other hand, were rather clear-cut.

Regardless of how clear-cut these divisions are, we can at least recognize the application of the logic underlying the transition from one set of casuistic laws to another. But we should be careful what expectations we set for this sort of legal transition. The old legal codes are never discarded outright. Rather, the underlying logic of a given law serves as the basis for the new law. This pattern could be replicated with the whole set of legal requirements in this new stage. But it is important to note that within Torah itself, there is ample reference to those who were held responsible for the appropriate application and administration of the laws. These roles grew and adapted to match the life-stage of Israel, but nevertheless, the principle of mediation was intimately woven into the fabric of Israel's existence.

Chapter 6: Torah Mediation

We have observed that *Torah* contains both didactic narratives and legal treatises. This combination provides a robust ethic and the principles necessary for wise application of the law. Torah's narrative material also provides a historical context for the legal treatises, which ties creation theology to the purpose for Israel's election. Their election corresponded to righteousness and their purpose was holy living. Israel's obedience to the law blesses the nations by correctly representing the values and character of the one true God, thus fully describing the nature of their priestly mission. The wise application of Israel's duty is directly connected to the people's relationship with the land, and this connection provides a control for when and how the law is to be wisely applied to new situations and contexts.

As chapters two and five have already demonstrated, the ethical wisdom of Torah and the process by which it was interpreted provides the framework needed to analyze the various forms of mediation described by *Torah*. While the cult expresses the most immediately obvious form of mediation for Israel and the whole world, *Torah* identifies several forms of mediation.[155] Indeed, *Torah* itself

[155] It is this mediation that gives concrete embodiment to the relationship between Israel and the creator God. Brueggemann, 568.

is a form of mediation.[156] *Torah*, as the spoken word of God in written form, provides access to God by regulating all of Israel's other forms of mediation.[157] In other words, all the means of mediation God provides find description and regulation in *Torah*.[158] The various roles discussed in *Torah* are the Israelite in general, the priests, the prophets, the kings, and the sages. I will end the discussion by commenting on the future goal for each of these mediators.

The Peculiarity of the People

As discussed in chapter four, Exodus 19:3-6 identifies the people as priests on behalf of the whole world.[159] *Torah* describes the divine act of separating Israel in terms reminiscent of the divine act of creation.[160] In this sense, Israel's call to priestly duty on behalf of the nations acts as a form of 'recreation' on God's part. Just as Adam did nothing to merit his creation, neither did Israel do anything to merit its 'recreation.' However, just like Adam, Israel's experience of their 'recreation' was expressly conditional on their fidelity to their

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[156] "It is clear...that the rhetoric of the text is indeed a lively mode of mediation in which the community gathered around the text has found itself connected to Yahweh." Ibid., 573.

[157] Ibid., 567-704. I am indebted to Brueggeman for introducing this concept as a grid for understanding Old Testament theology.

[158] Ibid., 578.

[159] "Israel, the people of Abraham, was conscious of a unique role and status among the nations given to them by God in his act of choosing and calling Abraham. Certain things were true of them that were not true of other peoples. God did certain things in relation to them that he did not do to others." Christopher J.H. Wright, *The Mission of God* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2006), 254.

[160] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, 101-104. The connection here is between Gen. 1:1-2:4 and Lev. 11:46-47 and 20:24-26.

mission. One of the chief conditional requirements for Israel's fulfillment of their priestly duty was the extensive list of cultural distinctions.[161]

Torah outlines several specific cultural distinctions which identified Israel before the nations as representatives of God. Their peculiar dress served as an immediate outward indicator of Israel's distinction.[162] The dietary practices, along with the clean and unclean categories, mirrored the 'recreation' of Israel and reminded them of their calling.[163] The unique practice of Sabbath observance, connected to the seven day cycle of creation, was a day of the week set aside for the worship of Yahweh.[164] Just like the priestly lineage of Levi, Israel's priestly function was also tied to a lineage, passing from Adam through Abraham down to the various descendants of Jacob.[165] In addition to these positive proofs of Israel's distinction, the prohibition of worshipping foreign gods, practicing divination, and participating in death cult rituals served as negative proofs.[166] These facets of ancient Israelite life demonstrate the consistent link to either creation or priestly duty, and usually both.

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[161] Wright, *The Mission of God*, 226-227.

[162] Kenton Sparks, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1998), 265-266.

[163] See fn 157. While the specific purpose of the kosher food laws is widely debated, the separation of clean from unclean can at least be said to serve as an indicator of a culturally unique society.

[164] Sparks, 266.

[165] Ibid., 228.

[166] Ibid., 266-267.

Israel's life in the land recognized their priestly distinction in the economic sphere as well. According to *Torah*, people fell into one of five categories: landed Israelite, unlanded Israelite, non-Israelite on the social periphery (proselyte), non-Israelite in geographical proximity (sojourner), and foreigner. The first three categories were considered inside the covenant community while the last two were considered outside the covenant community.[167] These categories mirror the graded holiness found in the Jerusalem temple and serve the priestly mission by inviting humanity into the smaller concentric circles.[168]

Nowhere, however, was Israel's cultural distinction more evident than in the practice of circumcision. Circumcision, given to all Israelite males on the 8th day after their birth, served as a constant reminder of Israel's election (Lev. 12:3). Israel's 'recreation' began with the covenant made with Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3, which was then ratified in Genesis 15, and finally sealed through circumcision in Genesis 17. Just as corporate Israel had not earned its 'recreation,' so too had these children done nothing to earn their birth into Israel. The sojourner could move into the inner concentric circle of proselyte by practicing the rite of circumcision, thereby taking part in the unconditional calling of Israel.[169] Also, because Gentiles were not allowed to inherit land in Israel and were thus deprived the opportunity to provide for themselves, circumcision

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[167] Ibid., 241. These distinctions are drawn from Deut. 14:21 and 16:9-14

[168] Jenson, 32.

[169] Exod. 12:48 and Num. 32:12

provided membership into a household and the community. Even though they could not own land, they are provided for.

The laws concerning Israelite distinction, though peculiar, served to identify the people as priests on behalf of the world. These distinctions covered every aspect of daily life, and although they might seem inwardly focused, they serve the purpose of blessing the nations defined in Ex. 19:5-6. This priestly mission moved the foreigner ever inward, eventually bringing them through circumcision to observance of the sacrificial system. Again, this follows the same flow of thought we observed in chapter four, where righteousness is the context for the practice of holiness. As we discuss the various forms of mediation present in Torah, we now turn to the practitioners of the cultic system whose responsibility is the holiness of the people: the priests.

The Center of the Cult

Just as Israel mediated God's presence for the whole world, so too did Israel's priests mediate in a unique way for Israel. The details concerning priestly mediation also find extensive description in *Torah*. While priests in ancient Israel served a number of functions, the most notable was the performance of their cultic responsibilities. This included all activities relating to the altar, ceremonies associated with the festal calendar, and the task of pronouncing things ritually clean or unclean (Lev. 11-14).[170] Priests also taught the law (Deut. 33:10),

[170] Lester L. Grabbe, *Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages: A Socio-Historical Study of Religious Specialists in Ancient Israel* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995), 42.

adjudicated lawsuits and cases of assault (Deut. 21:5), and accompanied the troops out to war (Deut. 20:1-4).[171]

As indicated above, the cultic priestly functions were limited to a lineage. The descendants of Levi performed the general priestly duties throughout the nation while the descendants of Aaron (a subset of Levi) performed the duties associated with the altar.[172] Early in its history Israel had many cultic sites, which were described either explicitly or implicitly "in narrative and prophetic texts-Shiloh (1 Samuel 1-3), Shechem (Judges 8-9), Beersheba (Amos 8:14), Gibeon (1 Kings 3:4), Gilgal (Amos 4:4; 5:5)-and there were also numerous open-air shrines or 'high places' that would have required the services of one or more priests."[173] Many of these sites correspond to the earlier activity of the patriarchs and typically predate the centralized worship of the Solomonic temple.[174]

As Israelite society developed from a tribal confederacy into a monarchy, the level of complexity in the operation of the cult and priesthood grew to correspond with the new social reality.[175] Even though centralization of the cult is not required by *Torah*, Leviticus and Deuteronomy provide the means for just such a historical development. Once again, wise application of the law was

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[171] Ibid., 42-43.

[172] Ibid.

[173] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, 70-71.

[174] Bethel (Gen 12:8; 13:4; 28:18, 22; 35:7), Shechem (Gen. 12:6-7; 33:20), and Beersheba (Gen. 26:25) in particular, Ibid., 72.

[175] Ibid.

required in Israel to reflect this new condition of life in the land. Centralization of the cult helped stem the activity of syncretism or outright pagan worship.[176] Thus, the OT generally portrays cultic personnel and places outside of Jerusalem in a negative light.[177] As worship was centralized in Jerusalem, a number of new functions were added to the priestly duties, such as psalm writing and singing.[178]

The mediation of the priests in Israel not only effected the sacrificial system, but also served as a safeguard against the infestation of pagan practices into true worship. However, even though the priests and their duties were at the center of ancient Israelite life, the priestly class did not exercise absolute authority. The narrative of the historical books show that the priests were under the authority of the prophets.

The Message of the Prophet

In addition to regulating the cult officials and their responsibilities, *Torah* also provides guidelines for Israelite prophets. Prophets differed from priests in one major respect: prophets were called to a mission while priests merely occupied an office.[179] This did not prevent priests from being called as prophets, and in fact this overlap occurred several times throughout the historical

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[176] Ibid., 70-71.

[177] Grabbe, 58.

[178] Ibid.

[179] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, 116.

narrative.[180] The two primary texts that regulate prophetic ministry are Deut. 13:2-6 and 18:9-22. Deut. 13:2-6 provides criteria for identifying a true prophet as one who encourages fidelity to Yhwh.[181] This minimalist description is filled out in Deut. 18:9-14 by contrasting the Israelite prophet with their foreign counterparts: practitioners of divination, soothsayers, augurs, sorcerers, caster of spells/wizards, one who consults ghosts, mediums, and consulters of the dead/necromancers.[182] Deut. 18:15-22 then discusses the 'prophet like Moses,' who will mediate for the people by speaking for God as Moses had done.[183]

Torah's description of prophecy in ancient Israel does not go much beyond these two chapters. As the subsequent historical narrative describes later prophets, however, it intentionally does so in connection with Deuteronomy's qualifications. Despite the wide variety of activities and characteristics later prophets display, the one thing they all have in common is speaking in the name of God and passing on his revelation to the people.[184] The two major functions of a prophet are: "to promulgate the law, preach its observance after the manner of Moses, and transmit it to posterity" and "the prediction of the future, which, when

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[180] As was the case with the calling of Samuel, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah. With respect to the call of Samuel specifically, see Ibid., 73.

[181] Grabbe, 67. In other words, adherence to the first commandment is evidence of the prophet's authenticity, Brueggemann, 634.

[182] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, 120.

[183] Grabbe, 67. See also Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, 120.

[184] Grabbe, 83. This is in keeping with the qualifications outlined in Deuteronomy.

successful, can serve to validate the prophet's mission."[185] Less often, prophets would provide signs or miracles to confirm their message.[186] The content of a prophet's message usually fell into one of two categories: oracles of judgment or oracles of hope. At the root of these themes lies the testimony of Exod. 34:6-7, and this defining character statement of God communicated to the Israelite that God's judgment was limited in scope when compared with his mercy.[187]

The prophet's role as the conduit for God's word served as a form of separation of powers and a check and balance against the potential abuse of power by either the priests or the king. We have discussed the important role of the priests in Israel's life and mission, but we will now discuss the role of the king as anticipated by Deuteronomy.

The Character of the King

Another of the ancient Israelite offices is that of the king. Deuteronomy 17:14-20 anticipates Israel's desire for a king and explicitly allows such an innovation but never requires it. Negative attributes for an Israelite king were that he could not be a foreigner and he should abstain from a large collection of horses, wives, and wealth. Positive attributes were that the king was to be chosen by God and that he was to keep a copy of the law copied for him by the

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[185] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, 120.

[186] Grabbe, 83.

[187] Brueggemann, 639.

Levitical priests.[188] Just as the priestly role is limited to the descendants of Levi, so too is the office of king limited to the descendants of Judah.[189] While the king possessed no additional cultic responsibilities beyond those of the traditional Israelite, he was adopted as the 'son of God' "and was uniquely responsible for the religious condition of the people."[190] Israel's designation as God's son in Exod. 4:22 and its application to the king in 2 Sam. 7 and Ps. 2 explicitly illustrate the king's representational role.[191] The Mosaic blessings and curses available to the whole assembly are likewise concentrated on the king.[192]

Deuteronomy restricts the powers and responsibilities of the king, a feature unique among Israel's neighbors.[193]

> "The extent of the restriction of the king's powers emerges more fully when the law is seen in the context of the series of laws in Deuteronomy that prescribe a constitution for Israel (Deut. 16:18-18:22). These provide for the establishment of judges, both in the cities of Israel and at the central sanctuary (16:18-20; 19:9); the Levitical priests, both in their capacity as judges (18:9-22) and in respect of their cultic duties (18:1-8); and the prophet (18:9-22)... In the context of this distribution of powers, the king occupies a position that can be seen as less influential than either the priest or the prophet."[194]

The diminished role of the king in Israel served to demythologize the ancient near eastern perspective on the royal figure.[195] Deuteronomy, therefore,

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[188] Grabbe, 20.

[189] By way of David, the tribe of Judah exclusively possesses the kingly lineage. See 2 Sam. 7.

[190] Ibid., 39. and Ibid., 28. respectively.

[191] J.G. McConville, "King and Messiah in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History," in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient near East*, ed. John Day (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 270.

[192] Brueggemann, 607. With specific reference to 1 Kgs. 3:14.

[193] McConville, 276.

[194] Ibid., 277.

presents a genuinely innovative governing structure in its depiction of the roles of the Israelite priest, prophet, and king.[196]

The Meditation of the Wise

The role of the sage in ancient Israel is perhaps the most obscure. It does not find explicit mention in Torah, but rather seems to be the designation of those who study Torah.[197] Only later in the Second Temple period does the term 'sage' appear to represent a particular class of people.[198] Prior to this time, those in Israelite society with the leisure required for the kind of meditation typically characteristic of a sage would have been members of the royal court, the wealthy class, the priesthood, and the scribes or other government officials.[199] This is likely why the "wisdom tradition unites a number of streams or institutions in Israelite society: (a) mantic wisdom, with its divinatory associations, has much in common with (b) prophecy, and the circles which carried it on seem to have included (c) priestly and (d) scribal elements."[200]

From the earliest days, the scribes and judges were the likely practitioners of wisdom in any sort of official capacity.[201] This was the source of Jeremiah's

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[195] Ibid., 290.

[196] Ibid., 281.

[197] As evidenced by Jer. 8:8, Brueggemann, 592.

[198] Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament*, 11.

[199] Grabbe, 169.

[200] Ibid., 180.

[201] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, 38-39.

derision against the scribes who transmitted Torah without themselves applying its wisdom (Jer. 8:8-9).[202] Again, while not explicitly mentioned, Deut. 17:18; 31:9, 10-13, 24-26 describes the reading and transmission of the law in such a way that "represents a point of convergence between the tradition of the sages and that of the priests."[203] These functions indicate that the sage did not meditate on Torah for his own sake, but for the sake of the community. In this way, the sage mediated divine wisdom that was immediately practical and accessible, and likely prefigured the Levitical instructors frequently encountered in the Second Temple period (e.g. 2 Chron. 17:7-9; 19:8-11; 35:3; Neh. 8:7-8).[204] The sapiential mediation offered by sages, either the early priestly practitioners or the later official scholars, was important because it uniquely broke into the daily reality of life in the ancient near east. Thus the role of the sage, together with the other forms of mediation discussed thus far, served to bring divine mediation into every sphere of Israelite life.

The Diversity of Torah Mediation

As just demonstrated, *Torah* describes many peculiar institutions that set apart Israel for priestly duty. Their cultural distinctions, priestly functions, prophetic ministries, kingly duties, and sapiential reflections all characterize holy

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[202] Ibid., 40.

[203] Ibid., 41.

[204] Ibid.

living as the constituted people of God. With respect to Torah's superiority over these mediators in ancient Israel, Fishbane said it best:

> "The fact remains that the biblical collections [of law] are presented as divine revelation and the basis for covenantal life. The priests must teach these laws; the judges are enjoined to follow them; the kings are held accountable to their enforcement; and the prophets repeatedly exhort their observance."[205]

Each of these roles also has an eschatological trajectory, indicating that the application described within *Torah* is not the final application. This trajectory encourages and requires further interpretation of Torah, which historical evidence shows occurred throughout the First and Second Temple period into the Christian era.

[205] Fishbane, 96.

Chapter 7: Torah Anticipation

As chapter 2 indicated, *Torah* is paradigmatic judicial wisdom with an ethical floor and ceiling. As chapter 5 indicated, *Torah*'s paradigm needed reinterpretation and reapplication when the status between God's people and God's land changed. Chapter 6 detailed the various modes of mediation outlined in *Torah*, and the present section will analyze the historical changes these modes underwent with respect to *Torah*'s eschatological trajectory.

Sabbath Rest

Up to this point we have said very little about the future hope presented in *Torah*, although much of what we have already discussed is tangential to it. The eschatological trajectory of *Torah* begins where *Torah*'s narrative begins. Embedded within the narrative and law codes of *Torah* lies a sabbatical principle linked to the creation account.[206] Begun in the seven-day creation cycle of Gen. 1-2, this paradigm connects *Torah* worship with the covenant community in the Decalogue and Covenant Code of Ex. 19-24.[207] It has been suggested that the

[206] I am indebted to Balentine for highlighting the eschatological force present in the text of *Torah* as it pertains to the application of creation principles in the construction of *Torah* itself, Balentine, *The Torah's Vision of Worship*, 237-254.

[207] As already discussed, the priestly duty of the people declared in Exod. 19:3-6 connects with Adam's priestly duty. Also, the fourth commandment in the Decalogue presented for the first time in Exod. 20 explains that the Sabbath principle is a directly connected to the creation account.

Sabbath had Babylonian, Akkadian, or Canaanite origin, but the practice and symbolic meaning are so different between these that Jewish borrowing seems extremely unlikely.[208] Rather, the Sabbath institution became truly idiosyncratic.[209]

The sabbatical principle extends to the tabernacle/temple and its rituals through heptadic patterning (Ex. 25-31 and 35-40).[210] Seven divine speeches define the sacrificial system (Lev. 1-7), seven acts complete priestly ordination (Lev. 8), and seven festivals comprise the festal calendar (Lev. 23).[211] Sabbatical regularity is required for the sake of social justice demonstrated in "forgiving the debts of the poor, freeing the enslaved, and providing for the needy with compassion and generosity (Deut. 14:22-16:17)."[212] Each of the governing offices of judge, king, priest and prophet are responsible for the faithful application of *Torah's* concern for the justice just outlined (Deut. 16:18-18:22).

While we have already looked at the separation of Israel as a sort of 'recreation,' we can now acknowledge how the consistent appeal to creation language throughout *Torah* points us back to the seventh day. God's rest on the seventh day, according to Gen. 1-2, was the only day that lacked the traditional closing formula "and there was evening and there was morning, the X day" (Gen.

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[208] De Vaux, 476-477.

[209] Ibid., 480.

[210] Balentine, *The Torah's Vision of Worship*, 237.

[211] Ibid.

[212] Ibid.

1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31).[213] The lack of this refrain appears to suggest an ongoing, unfinished aspect of God's rest. Israel's constitution as a 'recreated' people adhering to a law code based around the organizing principle of the seventh day serves to invite God's people into his ongoing rest.[214] The future hope of joining God in his rest is embedded in the very fabric of Torah and communicated through its rhetoric.[215]

Divine Mediation

The eschatological trajectory present in *Torah* enveloped every facet of mediation outlined by Torah. Not only were the offices of judge, king, priest and prophet responsible for administering justice according to the sabbatical principle, they were also wrapped up in the future hope of *Torah*. Throughout the history of God's people, these forms of mediation responded to the change in condition of the land and grew to encompass new aspects of *Torah*'s future hope. In the Second Temple period, certain factions began to focus exclusively on one form of mediation or another as the full embodiment of Torah's eschatological hope. As we will see, only the New Testament portrayal of Jesus incorporates all of the historically adapted forms of mediation presented in *Torah*.

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[213] Collins, 42.

[214] "If the human Sabbath points to the divine Sabbath, we might consider whether the activities of man's Sabbath offer a foretaste of the full experience of that rest. This provides a basis for understanding public Sabbath worship as the means by which people are invited to have a foretaste of their eternal rest," Ibid., 93-94.

[215] Balentine, *The Torah's Vision of Worship*, 238.

The mediation that *Torah* provided came to be thought of as situated in Jerusalem, eventually referred to as Zion. "This should not surprise us, because with the establishment of the Solomonic temple, Jerusalem became the focal center of Israel's theological reflection and a magnet that drew all of Israel's theological and cultic instruments to its ambience."[216] Indeed, Jerusalem became the hub of each mediated office described in *Torah*. Zion gave *Torah* international scope, enabling its mission to bless the nations through God's people.[217] In this way, Zion became the entry point for the nations into the eschatological rest of God. This eschatological future hope envisioned not only the membership of the nations, but also the perfect obedience of God's people to *Torah*.[218]

While Torah itself saw adaptation throughout the subsequent historical narrative of God's people, the forms of mediation it regulates also developed. The mediation that the people of Israel provided grew to encompass all of the nations. While Abraham's initial call always had blessing for the nations in view, later prophets describe a situation where all the nations join Israel in full relationship with God.[219] If we were to analyze only the shift of Israel from a tribal confederacy to a united monarchy, we would see that with Samuel, a new

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[216] Brueggemann, 593.

[217] This is the view of the later prophetic interpreters, such as Isa. 2:3-4; Mic. 4:1-4; Zech. 8:20-23; Isa. 42:4. See Ibid., 594.

[218] Ezek. 36:24-30; Jer. 31:31-34. See Ibid., 594-595.

[219] Wright, *The Mission of God*, 222-243.

paradigm for prophecy began.[220] With Eli, the priestly lineage responsible for centralized worship shifted in preparation for temple worship.[221] With David, kingship changed lineages from Benjamin to Judah and took on a messianic role.[222] With Solomon, wisdom took shape as the meditation of the wise which eventually became its own official role. With this retrospective view, we can clearly see how the new condition of the people in a monarchic church/state nexus shaped application of *Torah*.

We can also see how these modes of mediation became entwined in the eschatological hope of Israel. Eventually, there would be a time when all the nations were united with Israel. There would eventually be a prophet like Moses who would show God's people the way.[223] The priestly lineage would somehow eventually intersect with the kingly lineage and effect an age of worldwide justice and *Torah* fidelity.[224] All of these developments are canonical and considered authoritative by the Israelite community. Only later in the Second Temple did

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[220] 1 Sam. 1:1-4:1, Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel*, 132.

[221] In 1 Sam. 2:27-36, an unnamed prophet declared the bankruptcy of Eli's priestly lineage and subsequent replacement with the Zadokite lineage, Ibid., 74-75.

[222] "The dynastic promise, rooted in 2 Samuel 7 and explicated in Psalm 89, was turned to the future, so that Israel expected the good, faithful, effective king to come, even though all present and known incumbents had failed," Brueggemann, 616. See also Isa. 11:3-9; Jer. 23:1-7; 33:14-16; Ezek. 34:23-24; Hag. 2:23; Zech. 9:9-10

[223] "Deuteronomy 18:15-22 go on to discuss the 'prophet like Moses.' Whether this was to be a special figure or office, as the 'prophet like Moses' tradition later became, or simply a prophet who might arise in any generation after Moses' death is debatable." Grabbe, 67.

[224] Ps. 110

interpretation of the various modes of mediation become over- or under-emphasized by various factions.

The Day of the Lord

A concept which first finds description in Amos, the Day of the Lord is one loaded with meaning that Amos assumes his audience already knows.[225] He transforms their understanding of this day from one of light to darkness (5:20). Then again, Amos 9:11-15 indicates "that day" (or "days" in 9:13) is one of restoration and renewal, featuring the restoration of the Davidic dynasty (v.11), the expansion of the kingdom of God (v.12), the earth made fruitful (v.13), the people returned from captivity (v.14), and the security of the land of Israel (v.15).[226] This fairly confusing picture Amos paints of a day of darkness and a day (or days) of restoration can be explained through a later prophet, Zechariah.

Zechariah envisions the Day of the Lord in Zech. 14 as a day that should be followed by the Feast of Tabernacles. Tying the Day of the Lord to the festal calendar gives some indication as to how the prophets are viewing the Day of the Lord. Zechariah essentially places the Day of the Lord immediately prior to the Feast of Tabernacles, which would equate it with the Day of Atonement. As we have discussed above, this solemn day of fasting represented the ritual cleansing of Israel in a unique way, such that anyone who chased after uncleanness would

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[225] "Moved by an irresistible force to proclaim doom in Israel, Amos introduced the term "the day of the Lord" (5:18-20), obviously a popular doctrine already, but with a repeal of its positive features." Bullock, 98.

[226] Ibid.

be excluded from Israel, or made as the scapegoat sent into the wilderness to die. For those observant Jews, it would be a time of light and cleansing, those who rejected God would find this day as a day of darkness.

The Day of Atonement was then followed by the Feast of Tabernacles, which, though an eight-day celebration, was considered a single feast. It celebrated the harvest that had just finished, and was a tangible reminder of God's provision and faithfulness. By connecting the Day of the Lord with the Feast of Tabernacles, Zechariah makes sense of the progression Amos discusses with his several references to the Day of the Lord. They are given a chronology and significance through the cultic calendar that demonstrates how they could be thought of as a single day, and yet have several different days that are interconnected.

This, in turn, gives added significance to the cultic calendar. As we saw above that the Sabbatical pattern was woven throughout scripture and that this was viewed as an invitation for God's people into His rest, now we see that the cultic celebrations in the seventh calendar month captured the prophetic imagination as the eschatological fulfillment of this hope.

Chapter 8: Torah Fragmentation

The anticipated events described in the previous chapter are not the creative flourishes of an over-theologizing interpretation of *Torah*. They represent the very real hope that Jews in Jesus' day expected. However, by the time of Jesus several different factions had appeared in Israelite culture. These sects focused on the role of a single mode of mediation or a specific future hope and made it the primary avenue for communion with God. These sects were the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots, and Herodians. Each group was geographically situated in or around Jerusalem and generally emphasized *Torah* observance, though the method of their observance differed greatly.[227] The geographic proximity to Jerusalem is not altogether surprising, since we saw that an historical development upon the centralization of worship in Israel was that *Torah* (that is, Sinai) became equated with Zion (that is, Jerusalem).

Hebrew Factions

The first of these sects we will consider is the Pharisees. Historically a member of a larger sect known as the Hasidim, this group became distinct when they opposed the Hasmonean high priesthood but did not go so far as to sever all relationship with it.[228] The Pharisees emphasized Torah observance and

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[227] "Both the Essenes and the Sadducees interpreted the law of Moses in a very strict way (unlike the Pharisees, relatively speaking) and as a result agreed on a number of points." James C. VanderKam, *An Introduction to Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 162. Also, Ferguson declares "The twin pillars of the Pharisaic system were 'Torah and Tradition,'" Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2003), 515.

[228] Ibid., 410.

interpretation, keeping the law alive and fresh with new doctrines such as the resurrection of the body, last judgment, and rewards and punishments in the afterlife.[229] They saw *Torah* as the chief form of mediation, and as indicated in chapter six, were probably right to do so. But their deference to *Torah* excluded the other forms of mediation regulated by *Torah* or universalized their requirements to all believers.[230]

This was the chief critique of the Sadducees, who represented the wealthy, priestly class. They rejected the innovations of the Pharisees and interpreted scripture with a stricter hermeneutic. Their center of strength was the temple cult and its administration. The Sadducees accepted only the written law of Moses as authoritative and rejected the oral law of the Pharisees. Of course, they had their own traditions of interpretation relative to the temple ritual and legal matters, but these were not *Torah* and were not binding.[231] "Josephus describes [the Sadducees] as 'having confidence of the wealthy alone but no following among the populace, while the Pharisees have the support of the masses."[232]

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[229] VanderKam, 188. See also Ferguson, 516.

[230] The Pharisees differed from Sadducees in giving divine authority to the interpretation and application of the law. 'It is more culpable to teach against the ordinances of the scribes than against the Torah itself (Sanhedrin 11.3).' The Sadducees answer the question 'By what authority?' in terms of Deuteronomy 17:8-13, that the priests were to give the authoritative applications of Torah, but their instructions were not Torah." Ibid., 515-516.

[231] The following description of the Sadducees was taken from Ibid., 519-520.

[232] VanderKam, 189.

The third important ideology in Israel at this time was the Essenes. The other branch of the Hasidim, they went further than the Pharisees and ostracized themselves from the Jewish community that supported the false priesthood of the Hasmoneans. The Qumran community lived under a strong eschatological expectation, assuming that they lived in the final age. They looked forward to the coming of the prophet like Moses, of the eschatological priest, and the messianic king.[233] In some respects the community's founder, the Teacher of Righteousness, was a wisdom teacher who filled all of these roles and would lead them to their apocalyptic end. Aside from the various ideologies just listed, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes differed with respect to the role of free will and fate in world events. The Sadducees assigned everything to free will; the Essenes assigned everything to fate; and the Pharisees believed in both.[234]

The "fourth philosophy" among the Jews was the Zealots, whose primary focus was the statehood of Israel and the pressing need to defend its borders with their lives.[235] The rejection of Roman rule, at its core, was a hope in the restoration of the church/state nexus and the independence of Israel as a nation. In most other respects the Zealots appeared quite similar to the Pharisees. Likewise, the Herodians, although a distinct group, appear to have been Essenes who supported the Herodian dynasty.[236] This means that they endorsed, to

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[233] The following description of the Essenes was taken from Ferguson, 521-525.

[234] VanderKam, 162. See also Ferguson, 516.

[235] Ibid., 532.

[236] Ibid., 533.

some degree, the idea that the Herodian line would produce the messianic heir for which they anxiously awaited.

Hellenist Factions

While these factions concentrated mostly in and around Jerusalem, the Diaspora had a vibrant Jewish population relatively distinct from the Jerusalem factions.[237] From roughly 600 BCE up through Jesus' day there was a large Jewish community in Egypt.[238] Even after the return from Exile, many Jews continued to inhabit Babylonia.[239] And until the Hasmoneans destroyed it, the Samaritans worshipped YHWH at Mt. Gerizim.[240] These 3 regions represent the condition of a number of other pockets of Jewish population in the Diaspora. If the Jerusalem factions interpreted Torah too strictly, the Diaspora interpreted Torah too loosely. The Egyptian Jews inhabited Egypt contrary to Jeremiah's counsel and built for themselves an alternative temple.[241] The Babylonian Jews took Jeremiah's counsel out of context and stayed in exile even after the Lord provided a means of return.[242] The Samaritans rejected the words of the later

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[237] The Pharisees and Essenes traveled the furthest afield of Jerusalem, as the Sadducees clustered around the Temple, the Herodians rallied around their king, and the Zealots sought the freedom of Zion (Jerusalem).

[238] These Jews encountered oscillating periods of favor and persecution from the Egyptians over this course of time, Ibid., 400, 404.

[239] Ibid., 400.

[240] Ibid., 401, 410.

[241] VanderKam, 147.

[242] Jer. 29:4-14

prophets and intermarried with non-Jews.[243] The positive attributes of the Diaspora's liberal theology are of crucial importance to this study. Just as in Jerusalem, these Hellenized Jews viewed *Torah* as equivalent with wisdom.[244] In its liberal Diaspora expression, *Torah* observance as the practice of true wisdom came to be known as ethical monotheism, and it is precisely this ethical monotheism which led to a number of Gentile converts.[245]

In the cases of the Jerusalem sects, we see how *Torah*, the temple cult, wisdom, the messianic hope, and the distinction of Israel were exemplified. While Torah emphasized each of these roles and their role in the future hope of Israel, the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Herodians and Zealots singled out a specific form of mediation as the source of their future hope. To a certain extent the Essenes looked to all of these, but focused them on a single sapiential figure, the Teacher of Righteousness, who was neither a priest nor a descendant of David and therefore could not have fulfilled the eschatological expectations. Therefore, each group was right to focus on the aspect of eschatological hope, but wrong to do so at the exclusion of the others.

In the cases of the Diaspora, we see how the certain modes of mediation were neglected or forgotten to accommodate the social setting in which they

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[243] Ferguson, 534-535.

[244] See Sirach 24 and Wisdom of Solomon 2:12; 6:4, Ibid., 539. and John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2000), 199.

[245] "Several features of Judaism appealed to many Gentiles: the pure monotheism, the high ethical standards, the philosophical (rational and non-sacrificial) worship of the synagogue, an ancient and inspired written revelation, and the social cohesiveness of the Jewish community." Ferguson, 546.

found themselves. Regardless, we will see how even the theology of these liberal Jews contributed to the Christian mission. Likewise, while the Essene's concentrated many of the modes of mediation on the Teacher of Righteousness, the New Testament (NT) biographers concentrated every form of mediation in their portrayal of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Chapter 9: Torah Culmination

Even though the Second Temple period of Judaism saw great divide among various parties concerning specific aspects of the eschatological promises made by God, the NT authors make their belief plain that all modes of mediation provided by God are important and find their fulfillment in Jesus. While we could easily analyze each gospel and compare its description of Jesus with the OT, the Second Temple, and Paul, space constraints forbid this approach.[246] It will be enough to compare the gospels of Matthew and John with the OT and Second Temple. As we will see, these two works speak to Second Temple Jews with a message that maintains continuity with the OT. Recognizing that these gospels post-date the Pauline letters, in essence we are discerning an interpretive method that pre-dates (OT) and post-dates Paul (Gospels) and determining whether or not Paul's interpretation falls in line with that tradition or breaks from it. The history of religion school of New Testament scholars would expect Paul to deviate from this pattern, whereas the history of salvation school of scholars would expect Paul to be right in line. We shall save that analysis for the next chapter, but suffice it to say for now, much rides on the ability to distinguish a continuity between OT interpretation and NT interpretation.

[246] Beyond the works covered in this paper, at the very least, the letter to the Hebrews, James and 1 Peter deserve close attention.

Culmination in Matthew

The Gospel of Matthew presents itself as the authoritative account of the life of Jesus. The authority assumed by Matthew is made plain by the book's obvious affinity for *Torah*. Some scholars have seen within Matthew a pattern which divides the Gospel into five major sections, mimicking the structure of the books of Moses:[247]

	Matthew		Content
Prologue	1:1-2:23	Narrative:	Incarnation
Book I	3:1-4:25	Narrative:	
	5:1-7:27	Discourse:	Sermon on the Mount
	7:28-29	Formula:	"And when Jesus finished..."
Book II	8:1-9:35	Narrative:	
	9:36-10:42	Discourse:	Mission and Martyrdom
	11:1	Formula:	"And when Jesus finished..."
Book III	11:2-12:50	Narrative:	
	13:1-52	Discourse:	Parables on The Kingdom
	13:53	Formula:	"And when Jesus had finished..."
Book IV	13:54-17:21	Narrative:	
	17:22-18:35	Discourse:	Church Administration
	19:1	Formula:	"And when Jesus had finished..."
Book V	19:2-22:46	Narrative:	
	23:1-25:46	Discourse:	Olivet Discourse
	26:1-2	Formula:	"And when Jesus finished..."
Epilogue	26:3-28:20	Narrative:	Resurrection/Ascension

This pattern identifies narrative and discourse as its structuring element, with each division signaled by a formulaic saying. This pattern clearly sets apart five sections and highlights the function of narrative and discourse within them. These facets of Matthew would connect to the five books of Moses, which, as we

[247] Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 294-296. This is an adapted chart from Allison's recap of B.W. Bacon's initial observation at the beginning of the 20th century.

have seen, also communicate their message through the interplay of the discourse and narrative.

Even though this pattern is compelling, when we delve into the sections labeled 'narrative,' we see that there is actually quite a bit of discourse within them. Thus, this structure of alternating narrative and discourse sections undoubtedly stretches the data to fit the pattern. However the five formulaic sayings certainly serve some function within the book. They likely still serve as a device to set off one section from another, but rather than some hardline division between narrative and discourse sections, it is probably more fitting to Matthew (as it would be to *Torah*) to recognize the interwoven nature of this material. Dale Allison proposes his own assessment of the Gospel's relationship to *Torah*. Allison identifies a topical relationship between the content of various sections within Matthew and the type they are patterned on within *Torah*:[248]

Matthew	Torah	Content
1:1-17	Genesis 5; 11:10-26	Linear Genealogy
1:18-2:23	Exod. 1:1-2:10	Infancy narrative
3:13-17	Exod. 14:10-31	Crossing of water
4:1-11	Exod. 16:1-17:7	Wilderness temptation
5-7	Exod. 19:1-23:33	Mountain of lawgiving
8-9	Exod. 24-Lev 27	Legal/Narratival Casuistry
10:2-4	Num. 1:1-47	The 12 Tribes
10:5-17:27	Num. 1:48-36:13	Trouble amongst the Jews and Gentiles
18:1-20:28	Deut. 1:1-17:7	Legal/Narratival Casuistry
20:29-22:26	Deut. 17:8-18:22	Jesus as the Prophesied Mediator
23-25	Deut. 28-30	Eschatological Promises
28:16-20	Deut. 31:7-9; Josh 1:1-9	Commissioning of successor

[248] Ibid., 268, 310. Allison includes M.D. Goulder's observations which accord well with his own view. I have added to Allison's original chart to demonstrate additional similarities in narrative if the scope of observation is the content of the entire *Torah*, and not just the comparison between Jesus and Moses.

This approach has more to recommend it, as it does not force Matthew into some rigid pattern, a pattern of which he himself seems to ignore at places. While the parallels occasionally summarize large portions of text (for instance Matt. 8-9 and Exod. 24-Lev 27), the emphasis of those pericopes covers issues pertinent to the sections paralleled (for instance on resolving issues of ritual purity or other legal concerns).

In addition to the book's *Torah*-like structure, Matthew presents Jesus, in rapid succession, as the fulfillment of every mode of mediation provided by *Torah*.[249] Indeed, Matthew even presents Jesus as the embodiment of *Torah* itself.[250] Jesus is also portrayed as a new Moses who gives a new law.[251] Matthew portrays this new law as the eschatological, sapiential reapplication of the pre-messianic *Torah* into the messianic *Torah*.[252] Both the narrative and discourse throughout Matthew testify to Jesus' ability to transform the character of *Torah* into an expressly messianic revelation.[253]

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[249] Matthew 1-4 and 5-7 appear to make this case, where the rest of Matthew explicates the claim. Brice L. Martin, *Christ and the Law in Matthew* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001), 15. See also Allison, 268.

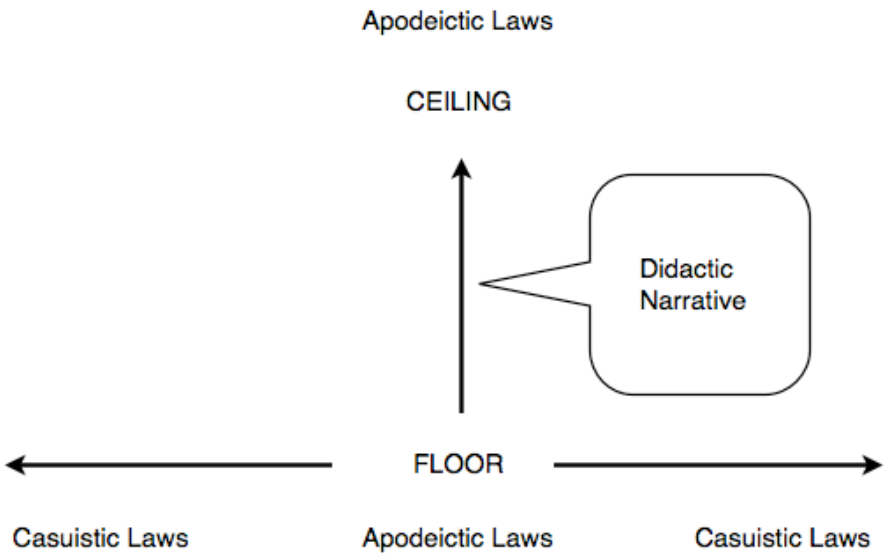
[250] In Matt. 11:28-30, Jesus "is not offering an alternative to the yoke of Torah; the passage is not a polemic against the law as such, for Jesus is speaking as wisdom and as Torah," Martin, 16. In other words, Matthew clearly identifies Jesus as the *Torah* anticipated eschatological rest long hoped for by Second Temple Judaism. As such, he embodies *Torah*.

[251] This connects to the promised prophet in Deut. 18:15-18, Ibid., 18-19. Moses, the giver of Torah, was viewed as the mediator par excellence, Brueggemann, 633.

[252] Martin, 20.

[253] Ibid., 20-32. This is confirmed again and again through the titles applied to Jesus (Teacher, King, Lord, Son of Man) and the ten major declarations that Jesus is the Christ serve as turning points in the gospel narrative, 1:17, 18; 2:4; 11:2; 16:16, 20; 22:42; 23:10; 24:5, 23; 26:63.

For instance, Matt. 5:18-19 says, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished." This passage accomplishes several tasks in Matthew's retelling of events. First, the rhetoric of Matt. 5:18-19 is a lens through which to view Jesus' other sayings. For instance, it immediately precedes the seven antitheses of Matt. 5:21-49, where Jesus repeats the phrase "You have heard it said...But I say to you..." These antitheses were frequently viewed by scholars as a rejection of Mosaic law and a direct contradiction with Matt. 5:18-19. Rather than rejecting Mosaic law, however, Matthew portrays Jesus' antitheses as a Messianic heightening of the Mosaic legislation.[254] Recall the diagram we created with respect to *Torah's* ethic:

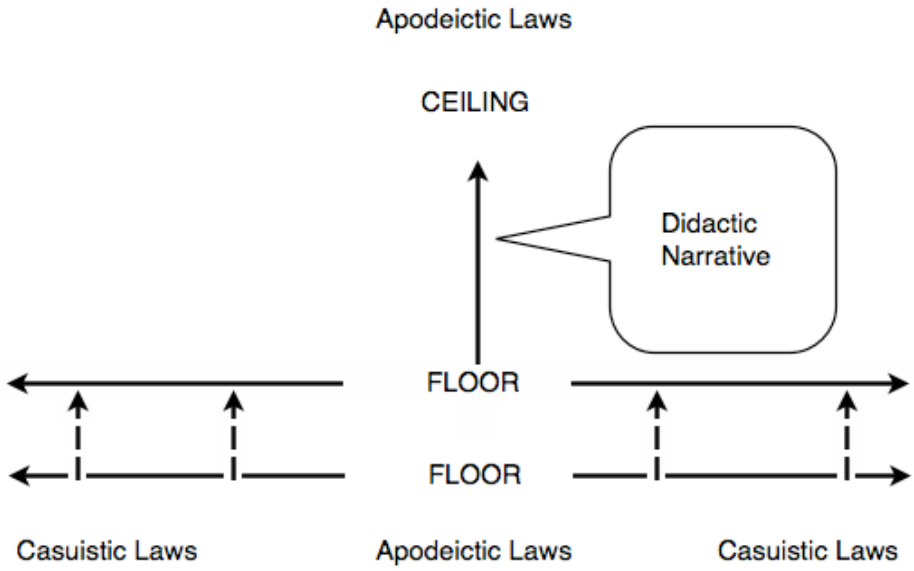


[254] "Davies and Allison believe that the Sermon on the Mount is intentionally set within the context of Messianic motifs. They agree with Gerhardsson that Jesus transforms the 'pre-messianic Torah into the messianic Torah.' Jesus gives demands that are even more demanding that those of Moses, and, consequently those who obey the Messiah will find that their righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees." Ibid., 20-21.

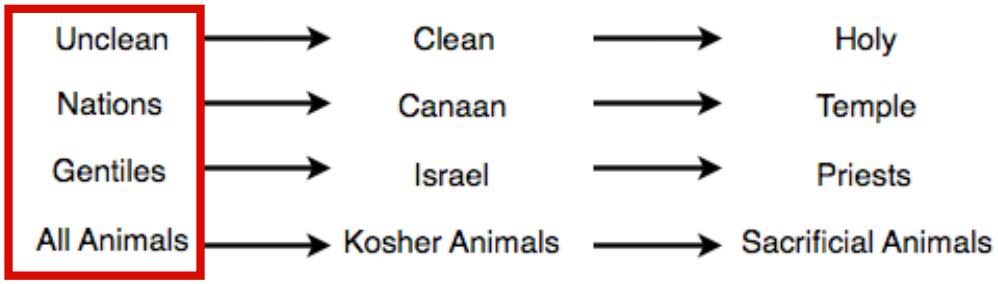
For example, in Matt. 5:21-22 Jesus says:

> 5:21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.'
> 5:22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire.

Far from denying the authority of the Mosaic legislation against murder, Jesus affirms it by highlighting what falls under the category of murder: anger and slander. Jesus, through his affirmation and exposition of the Mosaic law, raises the floor of the law thereby heightening the requirements for obedience. In other words, the Messianic Torah does this to the Mosaic Torah:



Second, Jesus' rhetoric in Matt. 5:18-19 is a lens through which to view Jesus' actions in Matthew's gospel. For instance, consider the leper in Matt. 8:1-4: though an Israelite, his leprosy moved him from his rightful place in the 'clean' category to the 'unclean' category:



Because of his disease, he was permanently disowned from membership in the Israelite community and touching him would temporarily transmit his uncleanness to any other Israelite (Lev. 13:9-11).[255] It appears that Jesus' contact with the leper is a willful digression into unclean status, and since Matthew never records Jesus as undergoing the required purification rituals, he essentially puts himself at risk for the same *Karet* punishment as that mentioned in Numbers 19:13-20. On the face of it, Matthew's narrative retelling appears to contradict Jesus' discourse on the law. However, if we remember the transference rules of the cultic system, we recognize that rather than neglecting the legal requirements for ritual cleanness, Jesus fulfills them.

Matthew conveys this fulfillment by describing a narrative where we expect the leper's uncleanness to transfer to Jesus, but what happens instead is that Jesus' transfers his cleanness to the leper. There is precedent for this phenomena within the Mosaic legislation, and it concerns the purification (sin) and reparation (guilt) offerings of Lev 6:24-7:7. These were the only offerings in the cultic system that moved the observant Jew from an unclean or clean disposition into a holy disposition merely by touching it. So Matthew's portrayal

[255] We have already discussed the OT concept of clean/unclean transference. See Hag. 2:11-14; Lev. 22:4-6; and Num. 19:16-22.

of Jesus in this narrative is such that he is identified with the sacrifices that bestow holiness. Therefore, where the average Israelite's natural state was cleanness, Jesus' natural state is holy, and that state is contagious.

Other scholars point to Jesus' attitude towards the Sabbath as evidence of his rejection of the Mosaic law. The rejection of the Sabbath would, in fact, be a significant position for Jesus to take because as we have already seen, the apodeictic commands of the Ten Commandments serve as a cornerstone of the Mosaic ethic, and these are rooted in the creation theology laid out in Gen. 1-3. It is important to note, however, that while the fourth commandment does indeed prohibit work on the Sabbath, the term work is never expressly defined. Only Exod. 35:3 and Num. 15:32-36 describe this work as kindling fires and gathering sticks, respectively. So Jesus and his disciples do not act in direct contradiction with Moses here. Furthermore, Jesus defends his actions by citing the law (Num. 28:9-10) and the prophets (1 Sam. 21:1-6) in Matt. 12:1-8.[256] Furthermore, his logic concerning action on the Sabbath in Matt. 12:11-12 seems to be derived from Prov. 12:10 and Deut. 22:4, again including a defense from *Torah*, but additionally including the Writings. Therefore, Jesus utilizes the entire OT to account for his actions on the Sabbath, demonstrating that his attitude is in line with the entirety of the OT witness.

In addition to the *Torah*-esque interplay between narrative and discourse, Matthew portrays many similarities between Jesus' teaching and the various

[256] Ibid., 45.

Jewish factions of his day.[257] Matthew's portrayal of Jesus as the new Moses, however, would have challenged the authority and validity of every Jewish sect.[258] Matthew confirms Jesus' authority and validity to reapply and reinterpret *Torah* in numerous ways, but perhaps the most profound as it concerns this study is Jesus' cleansing of the temple in Matt. 21:12-13. This action is bookended by the Messianic proclamations of the crowds in 21:9 and 21:15, Jesus is declared a prophet in 21:10-11, and he brings the eschatological healing of the messiah in 21:14. In case there was any doubt in the minds of his readers, Matthew has, in a very short narrative, confirmed Jesus' fulfillment of the hope begun in *Torah*. Lest we forget, the entire witness of the OT indicates that when the status of the people changes with respect to the temple, *Torah* must be reapplied. Jesus has just cleansed the temple, and shortly afterward predicts its destruction and reconstitution in himself.[259] With this authority, Matthew challenges the Jerusalem factions of Jews in the hopes of convincing them that Jesus is the hope for which they have been longing.[260]

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[257] "Just as the Pharisees awaited the Messiah who would be an expounder of the law, so the men of Qumran awaited the teacher of righteousness in the last days," Ibid., 23. See also Ferguson, 517.

[258] Allison, 280-281.

[259] Matthew 24:1-2; 26:62; 27:40

[260] I. Howard Marshall, *New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2004), 125.

Culmination in John

The Gospel of John, unlike the Gospel of Matthew, portrays Jesus as the paradigmatic sage.[261] More than that, John depicts Jesus as the personification of God's Wisdom.[262] The wisdom psalm in John 1 begins John's portrayal of Jesus as wisdom personified and connects with Proverbs 8 and Sirach 24. The Wisdom of Solomon connects God's pre-incarnate wisdom with his various redemptive acts in the OT, and John's appropriation of this wisdom imagery demonstrates Jesus' provision for Israel throughout their history.[263] In other words, John ties the three most important sapiential works in the Second Temple period to his description of Jesus.[264] Additionally, John's most thoroughly cited OT work was the book of Psalms, and it was this book that most heavily informed his theology.[265] John wrote his gospel in Asia Minor, specifically Ephesus, and this region had a high concentration of Jewish worshippers and Gentile

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[261] Ben Witherington III, *John's Wisdom* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 21.

[262] "In the seven key 'I am' sayings, Jesus is characterized variously as living bread, light of the world, the door, life, and the authentic vine (cf. 6:35, 51; 8:21; 10:7, 9; 10:11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5). *All* of these things are said at one point or another to come from or characterize personified Wisdom." Ibid., 22.

[263] Ibid., 20.

[264] "This Gospel has been written for Christian teachers or evangelists to use, teachers and evangelists who have been trained in a school setting where sapiential thinking and wisdom literature like that found in Proverbs, Job, and especially the Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach were important formative influences." Ibid., 19.

[265] Andreas Köstenberger, "John," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 417.

proselytes who would have known the Jewish wisdom literature well.[266] This made John's portrayal of Jesus an effective tool for evangelistic witness.

What this depiction demonstrates is that the historical life, death, and resurrection of Jesus provided John with ample material for his gospel. Jesus wasn't just portrayed as the paradigmatic sage; he lived as the paradigmatic sage. Thus, John's emphasis on this mode of mediation would have connected strongly to any Jews who had a background in Essene theology, as there is strong evidence to suggest many in John's audience did.[267] His emphasis also would have relied heavily on the Second Temple Jew's assimilation of *Torah* into wisdom. While John appears to reject many of the other forms of mediation, e.g. the cult, he merely subsumes them in this chief focus of his audience.[268]

John's gospel has a fairly simple broad structure:[269]

- The Book of Signs: Seven Signs of the Messianic King (John 1-12)
- The Book of Glory: Life in the Messianic Kingdom (John 13-21)

This structure articulates the signs that identify Jesus as the messianic fulfillment of OT hopes, and describe his rejection by the people who should have been hoping for him. Additionally, it details what life for the messianic community

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[266] As already discussed in section 4.3.2. See also III, 19, 29.

[267] "The Johannine dualism between light and darkness, above and below, spirit and flesh, etc…can be readily paralleled in Gnosticism, though John's is not so much a cosmological dualism…as a dualism of decision and the parallels with Qumran are closer," James D.G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* 2nd ed. (London: SCM Press, 1990), 299. See also Stephen Neill and Tom Wright, *The Interpretation of the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 331-332.

[268] John 4:21-24

[269] Köstenberger.

should look like in light of the resurrection. In other words, Jesus resurrection necessitates a sapiential reinterpretation of *Torah*. John even provides a narrative which explicitly describes this new situation in John 4:4-30. As we identified before, the casuistic application of the Mosaic law depends upon the conditions in which the people interact with God and his land. Jesus declares that a new condition is coming, and as we would expect, *Torah* must be reapplied in light of this new reality. In this sense, the Gospel of John could be viewed as a guidebook to the sapiential reapplication of *Torah* in light of the resurrection.

The Law Fulfilled

The gospels of Matthew and John bring together the modes of mediation presented in *Torah* that the Second Temple sects divided. Jesus, and Jesus alone, fulfills every eschatological hope focused through the modes of mediation and as such allows entrance into the sabbatical rest of God. Matthew and John also portray Jesus as a figure greater than Moses with the divine power to wisely reinterpret and reapply *Torah*. This dual portrayal shows how Jesus could be the fulfillment of the law and simultaneously keep it alive for subsequent generations.[270] All that remains for us to do is analyze Paul's thought to see if his view of Torah observance demonstrates the fragmented portrayal of his Pharisaic background, or if he depicts the unified view of the gospel authors.

[270] "So paradoxically the law continues to be valid, but only in the new form in which it is taught by Jesus." Marshall, 125.

Chapter 10: Torah Reinterpretation

In chapter two, we learned that Torah contained both narrative and law. This narrative served the didactic, rhetorical goal of demonstrating the ethical ideal for the Israelite, which was rooted in the holiness of God. Additionally, we saw that the law served as a paradigm for applying godly wisdom to the issue of justice and order. In chapter four, we saw how the narrative material gave an historical context for the law which highlighted God's unconditional covenant as the basis for the conditional blessings and curses of the law. In chapter five we learned that the law served as God's recommendations and regulations for living in the land he provided. The focus of this lifestyle, complete with the cultic sacrificial system, was also holiness. As the people's relationship to the land changed, they were required to reapply and reinterpret the legal paradigm wisely with respect to their new situation.

Chapter six began our discussion of the mediations regulated by Torah. These modes enabled the priestly purpose of God's people by ensuring the preservation of justice in the land through *Torah* observance. In chapters seven and eight, we saw how the various modes of mediation became entwined with the eschatological hope of Torah, even as they too were reinterpreted and reapplied in different historical stages of God's people. In the Second Temple

period, different factions formed who overemphasized or underemphasized the importance of one or more of these mediators. The Gospels demonstrated to these factions that Jesus alone brought all of these modes of mediation together and fulfilled their eschatological hope.

As we analyze Paul's perception of the law with respect to the OT witness and his contemporary historical setting, we will focus our discussion on Romans, 1 Corinthians, and Galatians. These books contain most of Paul's direct citations from the Old Testament and each text contains a very full description of Paul's theology.[271] These works also demonstrate Paul's central apostolic message: the gospel of Jesus.[272] Lastly, these works were chosen because they are all undisputedly Pauline.[273]

Romans

A broad overview of the content in Romans reveals Paul's flow of thought as:[274]

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[271] Marshall indicates that Paul's theology is thoroughly Jewish, consistent with contemporary Jewish exegesis, and broadly apocalyptic/sapiential. Ibid., 421.

[272] Romans 1:1, 9; 15:16; 1 Corinthians 1:17; 15:2-8; Galatians 1:16, Ibid., 422, 432.

[273] "Even the Tübingen scholar F.C. Baur accepted Galatians as by Paul and built his case for early Christianity on 'the four great Epistles of the Apostle which take precedence of the rest in every respect, namely, the Epistle to the Galatians, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, and the Epistle to the Romans," Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), lviii.

[274] Adapted from the outline provided by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1964), 98-99. There is broad agreement between Fitzmyer and other commentators, even if section titles and exact verses differ slightly. See also Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998), 25-27. Douglas Moo, *Romans 1-8*, The Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary, vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981), 29-31. James D.G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1988), xxxii.

Epistolary Introduction and Theme	(1:1-17)
Doctrinal Section (Who you are)	(1:18-11:36)
The Gospel Reveals God's Righteousness	(1:18-4:25)
God Assures the Justified by Faith	(5:1-8:39)
Continuity Between New Israel and Old	(9:1-11:36)
Ethical Section (What you do)	(12:1-15:13)
Epistolary Conclusion and Itinerary	(15:14-16:23)

By focusing first on God's redemptive work and then discussing the ethical standard of the believer, this outline expresses Paul's thought that justification is "not a matter of reward or payment for deeds done but of gracious gift (Rom. 4:1-8; cf. Rom. 6:23); righteousness is attained not by doing what the law requires but through faith in Christ (Phil 3:9)."[275] In other words, ethical obligation comes after saving faith. This accords well with the OT perspective presented in *Torah* where we saw that righteousness precedes, but makes possible, holiness. Thus, for Paul, justification conceptually connects with righteousness and sanctification connects with holiness.

Paul's use of OT quotations and themes in Romans also paints this picture. Direct citations are more numerous in Romans than in any other letter.[276] Identifying each of the direct citations reveals Paul's emphasis on the Psalms and Isaiah as cites them more than any other book in the crafting of his letter.[277]

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[275] Marshall, 449.

[276] Mark A. Seifrid, "Romans," in *Commentary of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 607.

[277] See above.

Canonical Order of Citations (Tanakh)

Torah:

Gen	15:5,6; 17:5; 18:10,14; 21:12; 25:23
Ex	9:16; 20:13-17; 33:19
Lev	18:5; 19:18
Deut	30:14; 32:35,43

Former Prophets:

2 Sam	22:50
1 Kg	19:10, 14, 18

Latter Prophets:

Isa	1:9; 10:22-23; 11:10-11; 28:16; 45:23; 52:5,7,15; 53:1; 59:7-8,20-21; 65:1-2
Hos	1:10; 2:23
Joel	2:32
Hab	2:4
Mal	1:2-3

Writings:

Ps	5:9; 10:7; 14:1-3; 19:4; 32:1-2; 36:1; 44:22;51:4; 53:1-3; 69:9,22-23; 117:1;140:3
Prov	1:16; 25:21-22

However, if we highlight just the citations of *Torah* within the letter and compare them with the structure of the letter, we begin to identify a narrative framework for the letter.[278]

[278] For more on the centrality of a narrative framework to Paul's thought in general, see Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2002).

Romans	Direct Citation	Romans	Direct Citation
1:17	Hab 2:4	9:33	Isa 28:16
2:24	Isa 52:5	10:8	Lev 18:5
3:4	Ps 51:4	10:8	Deut 30:14
3:10	Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-3	10:13	Joel 2:32
3:13	Ps 5:9; 140:3	10:15	Isa 52:7
3:14	Ps 10:7 (LXX)	10:16	Isa 53:1
3:15	Prov 1:16	10:18	Ps 19:4
3:15-17	Isa 59:7-8	10:20	Isa 65:1
3:18	Ps 36:1	10:21	Isa 65:2
4:3	Gen 15:6	11:3	1 Kings 19:10, 14
4:7	Ps 32:1-2	11:4	I kings 19:18
4:17	Gen 17:5	11:9	Ps 69:22-23
4:18	Gen 15:5	11:26	Isa 59:20-21
8:36	Ps 44:22	12:19	Deut 32:35
9:7	Gen 21:12	12:20	Prov 25:21-22
9:9	Gen 18:10, 14	13:9	Ex 20:13-17; Lev 19:18
9:12	Gen 25:23	14:11	Isa 45:23
9:13	Mal 1:2-3	15:3	Ps 69:9
9:15	Ex 33:19	15:9	2 Sam 22:50; Ps 18:49
9:17	Ex 9:16	15:10	Deut 32:43
9:25	Hos 2:23	15:11	Ps 117:1
9:26	Hos 1:10	15:12	Isa 11:10-11
9:27	Isa 10:22-23	15:21	Isa 52:15
9:29	Isa 1:9		

The letter roughly follows the ordering and flow of thought of *Torah*. Romans 1-8 focuses mainly on the covenant making narratives of Genesis 1-17 along with their emphasis on salvation through faith in YHWH. Romans 9-11 highlights the historical trajectory of God's people and the theological lessons learned from God's dealing with them in Genesis-Numbers. Finally, the ethical section of Romans 12-15 reflects the method and message of Deuteronomy as a meditation on the purpose of the law and its reapplication to a new situation.[279]

[279] The key verse to support this conclusion is the citation of Exod. 20:13-17 and Lev. 19:18 in Romans 13:9. Just as Deuteronomy interpreted the sapiential ethical commands of Exodus and Leviticus, so too does this section of Romans. For discussion on this, see Seifrid, "Romans," 682-684.

Paul's dominant use of Isaiah and Psalms could then be seen as his attempt to demonstrate agreement between his method of reapplication and the Prophets and Writings.

From this analysis we can interpret Paul's stated views of the law. In chapters 1-11, Paul indicates that the law identifies how dramatically short mankind falls at living up to God's ideal.[280] In this sense, it serves God's work of salvation by demonstrating our propensity for damnation. The focus of this doctrinal section, however, is not the law but the righteousness promised through Abraham. Therefore, Paul connects to the historical narrative of *Torah* and demonstrates how the priestly ministry of God's people, namely *Torah* observance, has been profoundly affected by sin. God's solution alone can fix this, as is exemplified by Abraham and confirmed by Habakkuk 2:4 (Rom. 1:17).

However, once we turn to the ethical section of the letter (Romans 12:1-15:13), Paul describes the law in a different light. It is the means of just and wise living in the new Christ-oriented covenant community.[281] The portrayal of the law here illustrates that in Christ, the law has found its eschatological fulfillment.[282] As reinterpreted and reapplied *Torah*, the law perfectly conveys holiness to God's people through Christ, just as Moses and the prophets hoped it would.[283] Taken

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[280] See Rom. 1:18, 32; 2:27, 29; 3:19-20; 4:15; 5:20; 7:6-25, Ibid., 608.

[281] See again the citation of Ex 20:13-17 and Lev 19:18 in Romans 13:9.

[282] Seifrid, 683.

[283] Romans 12:1-2, cf. Deut 30:1-10; Jer 31:31-34; Eze. 36:23-28

together, Paul's portrayal of the law in Romans accords well with *Torah*. The chief difference is that Paul looks back through Christ's earthly work, whereas Moses looked forward to it.

1 Corinthians

Whereas Paul presented his argument in Romans as a reinterpretation of *Torah* in light of the earthly ministry of Jesus, Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is more a reflection on Jesus as the wisdom of God.[284] Contrary to the rhetorical structures identified in several commentaries, Paul's unifying theme throughout the book appears to be the application of divine wisdom to the two issues of idolatry and sexual immorality.[285] Paul presents a theological treatise on the nature of this wisdom (1 Cor. 1-4), applies it to sexual immorality negatively (1 Cor. 5-6) and positively (1 Cor. 7), applies it to idolatry negatively (1 Cor. 8-10), then positively applied to true worship (1 Cor. 11-14), and finally rests his ethical encouragement in the resurrection (1 Cor. 15).[286]

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[284] "For Paul, God was now to be known definitively by reference to Christ. If I am right, the use of Wisdom language to describe Christ, including the language of preexistence, was in the first instance an attempt to say that God's self-revelation in and through creation was now most clearly manifested in Christ." James D.G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 723.

[285] Contra the rhetorical structure presented by Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, Sacra Pagina (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 29-31. I prefer Ciampa and Rosner's approach to the book's method, detailed in this paper. See Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, "1 Corinthians," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 695-696.

[286] Ibid.

Though OT citation does not play as big a role in this letter, its argument is built upon the framework of the Deuteronomic expulsion formula.[287] By relying so heavily on Deuteronomy as the means of wise living, Paul demonstrates knowledge of not only the Second Temple equation of wisdom and law, but also of the stated purpose for both within the OT.[288] This presentation of law and wisdom would connect well with liberal Diaspora Jews and Gentile proselytes, who likely made up his audience.[289] Paul's expectation in Corinth was that the community would raise up judges who could wisely reapply Torah principles in criminal cases (1 Cor. 5:1-13) and civil cases alike (1 Cor. 6:1-11).[290] Paul's response to the questions in their previous letter, then, functions as his creation of the paradigm these judges should then apply.[291] It is also significant that Paul identifies both the community of the church and the individual as the temple of the living God.[292] Thus, Paul's exhortations for wise reapplication of *Torah* follows the OT principle which connects this process to a change in status between God's people and the temple. In the eschatological age inaugurated by

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[287] 1 Cor. 5:13 becomes the key verse here, connecting to the execution of a variety of offenders in Deut. 17:7; 19:19; 21:21; 22:21, 24; 24:7. This formula encourages expulsion from the covenant to prevent further breach of the covenant community and to purify the current guilt of the community, Ibid., 708-709.

[288] Discussed in chapter two

[289] Ben Witherington III. *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995).

[290] Rosner, 710.

[291] 1 Cor. 7:25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1, 12, Ibid., 695.

[292] 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 and 6:19 respectively.

Jesus, God's people have become the temple and are therefore in need of a newly applied ethic to fit this situation.

Whereas the Torah story explicitly described in Romans would likely have appealed to the Jerusalem factions, the tactic used in 1 Corinthians by Paul appeals to the broader Hellenistic population. This fits well with the expectations we would have of a church in Corinth, lending weight to our observations of the content.

Galatians

Galatians is a letter of a different sort from Romans and 1 Corinthians. This letter fits the same general shape of argumentation as Romans, however, Galatians fits rather neatly into the traditional form of a standard Greek letter.[293]

Galatians	Direct Citation
3:06	Gen 15:6
3:08	Gen 12:3
3:10	Deut 27:26
3:11	Hab 2:4
3:12	Lev 18:5
3:13	Deut 21:23
4:27	Isa 54:1
4:30	Gen 21:10
5:14	Lev 19:18

Structure of Galatians

Epistolary Prescript	(1:1-5)
Exordium	(1:6-11)
Narratio (Personal)	(1:12-2:14)
Propositio	(2:15-21)
Probatio (Doctrinal)	(3:1-4:31)
Exhortatio (Hortatory)	(5:1-6:10)
Epistolary Postscript, with a Peroratio	(6:11-6:18)

Largely regarded as Paul's earliest letter, Paul has two primary concerns that are shaped by the infancy of his ministry. The first concern is the defense of

[293] Lightfoot's categories of Personal (Gal 1-2), Doctrinal (Gal 3-4), and Hortatory (Gal 5-6) connect with the pattern we identified Romans. These are too general to take into account the specific concerns of Paul for the Galatian church, which is more closely identified by the classic Greek letter-writing formula as identified by Longenecker. See J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 65-67. See also Longenecker, cx.

his apostleship and the second is the message of his gospel. The OT allusions in Galatians 1-2 connect Paul's conversion and ministry to the calling of the OT prophets.[294] By making this connection, Paul attempts to show that his message is the word of God. The second concern of Paul in this letter is the distinction between justification and sanctification, or rather the Abrahamic and Sinaitic covenants. Moises Silva says it best with respect to Galatians 3:21: [295]

> "What needs emphasis is that the apostle here encapsulates his assessment of the law by specifying in what respects the law may be viewed positively and in what respects negatively. The positive element can be readily inferred from Paul's forceful exclamation [by no means!]: the law is certainly harmonious with God's saving purposes, that is, with the Abrahamic promise. The negative element is expressed by a contrary-to-fact conditional sentence that in effect constitutes a twofold denial: (a) the law cannot impart life-it certainly was not given for that purpose; and (b) righteousness is not by the law."

This interpretation of Paul is confirmed by an analysis of the OT citations in the book. Apart from the letter to the Romans, Galatians possesses more direct citations than any of Paul's other works, even though it is six short chapters.[296] With so many citations crammed into such a small space, it is of note that most of these fall within the doctrinal section outlined above. These references connect to the OT's own description of righteousness and holiness, or in Paul's terms, justification and sanctification. Particularly telling is his citation of Habakkuk 2:4 and Leviticus 18:5 in Galatians 3:11-12. These two encapsulate as tersely as possible the OT attitude concerning both righteousness and

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[294] Galatians 1:15-16a connects with Jer. 1:5; Isa 49:1-6, see Moises Silva, "Galatians," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 786-787.

[295] Moises Silva, *Interpreting Galatians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 187-188.

[296] Silva, "Galatians," 785.

holiness. Faith in the Abrahamic covenant produces righteousness, whereas obedience to the Sinaitic covenant produces holiness.[297] The Judaizers appear to be equating the two covenants with one another, an attitude that Paul vehemently opposes.[298] The letter then carries on in Galatians 5-6 to exhort the Galatians concerning the implications of his Gospel compared with that of his opponents.

This situational context is altogether different from Romans and 1 Corinthians. In neither context did Paul find such confusion about the historical redemptive work of God or the place of the law in it. While we could imagine which Second Temple Jewish sects might have been susceptible to such an error, they are not equated with any particular group. Paul's background as a Pharisee would uniquely qualify him to recognize such ideology and name it as such, but he does not do so here. We must infer from this that the Judaizers did not belong to the Pharisaic sect, but rather were a group of Jewish Christians in the Galatian church (and as far as we know only the Galatian church) who had substituted the eschatological hope of the messiah with *Torah* obedience.

Final Considerations

Where Romans portrays Jesus as the awaited hope of every Second Temple faction member and 1 Corinthians portrays Jesus as the awaited hope any member of the liberal Diaspora, Galatians appears to be aimed at an

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[297] Silva, *Interpreting Galatians*, 194.

[298] Ibid., 189-190.

idiosyncratic group who had confused the biblical storyline. Rather, Paul demonstrates extraordinary continuity with the OT portrayal of *Torah*, as well as the perspective of the later Gospel authors. For Paul, righteousness/justification entails faith in the saving work of God produces, holiness/sanctification while obedience to the divine law of God produces. Paul's theology therefore demonstrates extraordinary continuity with those who came before him and those who came after him.

It should also be noted that Paul's presentation of Torah in light of the Gospel is surprisingly full. Dunn puts it quite well:[299]

> "Christ...became for Paul the decisive triangulation point from which Paul was able to assess the dimensions of Torah and scripture in their bearing on his own faith and life and on that of his churches. As already noted, Torah still had claim to guide and direct Christian living; 'keeping the commandments of God' still counted for Paul (1 Cor. 7:19). But it was not the law as such which Paul had in mind, only the law as 'the law of Christ' (Gal. 6:2), only as 'in-lawed' to Christ (1 Cor. 9:12). Christ as the self-revelation of God in creation, Christ as the archetype of the human creature, Christ as the characterization of God's Spirit, Christ as the enactment of God's righteousness, Christ as the implementation of Israel's promise and commission, was also Christ the measure of what should still count in God's Torah."

Additionally, Paul presents Jesus as the lens through which we should reapply and reinterpret the sapiential paradigm for justice that Torah presents. Jesus also represents the one with the divine power to re-situate the people with respect to the temple, which in turn necessitates the reapplication of the law. For instance, we still participate in the sacrificial system, but we do so now exclusively through communion and tithing. In this way, God's law is still alive today in full continuity with the paradigmatic approach laid out for us in

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[299] Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 725.

Deuteronomy. Jesus also fulfills each aspect of Deuteronomic mediation and the eschatological hope that these roles developed. He was the true Israelite, the messianic king/priest, the prophet like Moses, the true sage, and the one who gave us access to the rest of God. In this way, God's law is fulfilled.

Chapter 11: Conclusion

Our survey of *Torah* revealed that the Mosaic narrative and legislation created a sapiential paradigm for justice in the land based on creation theology. The Prophets and Writings bear out the extension of this paradigm into new epochs of Israel's history through its reinterpretation as the people's status with respect to the land changed. Several expectations for eschatological fulfillment were interwoven in *Torah*, and as these developed, expanded, and intertwined throughout the rest of the OT, only in Jesus did they find fulfillment. Jesus' fulfillment of the eschatological hopes in *Torah* is the primary message of the Gospel writers, demonstrating the late first century Christian continuity with OT theology. The truly important facet of this study is the demonstration that Paul also appropriated this theology. Some critical scholars imagined Paul's version of Christianity (mid first century) at odds with the Jewish Christianity exemplified within Matthew and John. By illustrating Paul's reliance upon the OT for justification of his theology and the technique of his OT interpretation, we have successfully shown that Paul's method appropriates the same strategy as the Prophets, the Writings, and the Gospel authors. In other words, there is no merit to a distinction between Gentile Christianity and Jewish Christianity on the basis of Paul's theology in Galatians, Romans, or 1 Corinthians.

"The law" maintains extraordinary significance in the life of the NT believer, even if its expression is different today than it was prior to Messianic reinterpretation. Despite the difference in expression, we are still given a method for reinterpreting the Mosaic legislation. The sapiential paradigm is demonstrated through several different epochs in the OT, and the NT authors depict several ways in which the Messianic age affects the OT casuistry. This pattern should be utilized by Christians when reading through *Torah* and attempting to apply it to today. This process is one which should be done with charity, recognizing that Christians may disagree on the wise reapplication of *Torah* in a given instance this side of the cross (as Romans 14 makes plain). This does not mean we shy away from the task, but rather trust the Helper to convict and guide us (as John 14:15-27 makes plain).

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