

Qx6 – Policies in *Exodus* – 2

Dear: With the previous chapter's review of the clerics' horrible concepts ritualized in their Passover ceremony (the annual celebration of their imagined god's imagined murder of all Egyptian firstborn), I wish I could now report that I had already covered the worst of the clerics' pathetic policies promoted in the Old Testament (OT). Unfortunately, though, as I'll show you in this and subsequent chapters, the horror continues. In particular, with this chapter and the next, I want to show you the sad personal policies and sick public policies promoted by the clerics in their (not God's!) famous (notorious?) Ten Commandments.

The clerics' story about the creation of these commandments (a story that, as I'll show you in the "excursion" Yx, almost certainly was derived just from politically motivated but otherwise unconstrained imaginations of Jewish clerics living in Babylon ~800 years after Moses allegedly lived) starts at *Exodus 12, 37* with 600,000 men and dependents (a total of perhaps 3 million people), plus "cattle in great numbers" tromping out of Egypt. Subsequently, at *Exodus 13, 17*, the clerics claim:

God did not guide [the Israelites] by the road towards the Philistines, although that was the shortest; for he said [apparently mumbling to himself, but sufficiently loudly that a eavesdropping cleric must have overheard him]: "The people may change their minds when they see war before them and turn back to Egypt."

Thereby, the clerics seem to be advocating quite an amazing policy (which is repeatedly reinforced later in the OT) regarding relationships between the Israelites and their god (or more accurately, between the Israelites and their clerics).

Think of it, Dear. The clerics have their god capable of controlling the mind of the person who undoubtedly was the most powerful person in the world, viz., the Pharaoh of Egypt. Thus (so the clerics tell us), their god repeatedly (even continuously) made the Pharaoh obstinate, until God had finished playing his games – with his favorite "sport" being killing people (although he also seems to find fun killing all the cattle in the country and, for that matter, other beasties and birdies as well).

And yet, now we're told that, in the case of the Israelites, not only can't the clerics' god influence the Israelites' minds (for he says "the people may

change their minds...” so the obvious inference is that God is unable to influence the Israelites’ minds) but also he can’t influence their commitment to escaping from “slavery” – which surely most people would consider to be trivially simple to do! Most strange. It suggests that the clerics are building a case to defend against accusations of their own incompetence. I can imagine their argument: “It’s not our fault that the people won’t listen to us; God Himself is unable to influence the minds of these people.”

Or is it, I wonder, that the Israelites doubted the power of the clerics’ god. After all, Jacob/Israel beat God in a wrestling match, and when God tried to kill Moses, his wife Zipporah beat God off with her son’s bloody foreskin. So, did the Israelites actually think that their God was a wimp? Or is the whole story total fabrication, with no more sense than the primitive clerics who created it? I expect, Dear, that you know how I’d answer that question.

In any event, apparently God was still “hung up” on the fact that the Egyptians didn’t show him proper respect (the original Rodney Dangerfield: “I don’t get no respect”); so, God hatched another plan (apparently his killing all their firstborn wasn’t sufficiently convincing). Thus, after telling Moses about where to camp, God states (so we’re told, at *Exodus 14*, 3):

“Pharaoh will then think that the Israelites are finding themselves in difficult country, and are hemmed in by the wilderness. I will make Pharaoh obstinate, and he will pursue them, so that I may win glory for myself at the expense of Pharaoh and all his army...”

Can you imagine it, Dear? Creating the universe wasn’t enough for him; creating all life wasn’t enough for him; killing off essentially everything in a flood wasn’t enough for him; killing off all the Egyptian firstborn wasn’t enough for him; God wants still more “glory”? He really seems hung up on what ant-like people think of him; so now, he plans to defeat Pharaoh’s army. Surely somebody’s lying.

Meanwhile, with the Pharaoh and his army bearing down on the Israelites, they were understandably frightened and complained to Moses. Not understandable, however, is God’s response: “What is the meaning of this clamor?” I mean, isn’t God supposed to be omniscient, knowing everything, hearing everything, seeing everything, understanding everything – even when he’s on the other side of the universe? And yet, in this case, he was only a few feet from the Israelites and he needs to ask: “What is the meaning of this clamor?” Is he God or a character in an illogical story?

As for the rest of the story, I know that you know it, Dear, but let me quote some more – because I want to make sure you see the sheer horror of the policies advocated by the crazy clerics. Thus, at *Exodus 14, 15* we find God saying:

“Tell the Israelites [you might have thought he’d say “tell my people”] to strike camp. And you [Moses] shall raise high your staff, stretch out your hand over the sea and cleave it in two, so that the Israelites can pass through the sea on dry ground. For my part [now that God has Moses doing his part] I will make the Egyptians obstinate [God definitely has his part “down pat”] and they will come after you; thus will I win glory for myself at the expense of Pharaoh and his army...”

It’s a real pity that God’s parents didn’t teach him not to seek glory by using people; it’s the quintessence of immorality; one would have hoped that God might have set a better example, leaving the immoral stuff to Satan. But then, maybe... Oh well, it was just a passing thought.

Anyway, Moses did his part, and then God did his (*Exodus 14, 24*):

[The] Lord looked down on the Egyptian army... and he threw them into a panic. He clogged their chariot wheels and made them lumber along heavily [presumably in mud], so the Egyptians said [though it’s not reported exactly which Egyptian said it nor exactly who overheard him say it] “It is the Lord fighting for Israel against Egypt; let us flee.” Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, and let the water flow back over the Egyptians, their chariots, and their cavalry.” [Whereupon] the water flowed back and covered all Pharaoh’s army, the chariots and the cavalry... Not one man was left alive...

Which is triply interesting. For one, notice that the Egyptians were fleeing; so, God didn’t kill them to save the Israelites, but probably mostly for the sheer fun of killing people. Second, I find it interesting that it was the cleric, Moses, who pulled off the major miracle, not God (who managed only to clog up some chariot wheels with mud, while Moses opened and shut the sea – which I guess shows who has the real power – or at least who wrote this crazy story). And the third item is one that I find it so interesting that it leads me to question the story line: given that the goal was (as clearly stated in *Exodus 6 & 7*) to spread God’s fame among the Egyptians (e.g., “then Egypt will know that I am the Lord”), then wouldn’t it have been rather more sensible of God to let a few Egyptians survive the overflowing waters, so that the story could be told? I mean... duhhhh. What is it with this god? Besides being immoral and a murderer, is he also stupid?

And, Dear, of course I'm strongly tempted to show you, here, that the chance that any of this silliness actually occurred is less than the chance that the famous nursery-rhyme cow did, in fact, jump over the moon. But I'll try to restrain my urge, and here just mention the possibility (which is much more likely to be correct than this silly Biblical story) that perhaps an event occurred, memorable to the Hebrews, during one of the many attempts by the Egyptians to rid themselves of the foreign invaders known as the Hyksos, whom the Hebrews probably followed into Egypt. These Hyksos were "rulers of foreign lands", maybe from Palestine or what's now Syria. About two hundred years before Moses allegedly lived, the Hyksos had conquered at least Northern Egypt using horses and chariots. Subsequently, the Egyptians learned how to make and use chariots. During one campaign to rid themselves of the Hyksos (and their friends, the Hebrews), possibly the chariots of the Pharaoh's army became stuck in the mud of some tidal flats. The Egyptians probably then abandoned both their chariots and their chase of the Hyksos when the tide came in – and the story grew and grew in the retelling.

But, Dear, instead of my now providing you with historical information to support the suggestions in the previous paragraph, let me just repeat that I'm trying to view the Bible from what I call the "quintessential perspective": I don't care if the Bible contains as little historical truth as the nursery rhyme about a cow jumping over the moon; I seek only to know what policies the clerics who wrote this crap are advocating. And in this silly story about the "Red Sea" (which, correctly translated is "Reed Sea") drowning the Pharaoh's entire army, the clerics claim that their God forced the Egyptians into His trap (by making the Pharaoh "obstinate") and then drowned them "to bring glory to myself at the expense of the Pharaoh and his army." And the policy being promoted is...?

Glory to the Lord? What "glory"? If the actual events were roughly as given in the above historical hints, there would have been some "glory" in the Egyptians expelling invaders. And even for the clerics' version, I could acknowledge some "glory" in what the Egyptians did: they did what they had to do as members of the Pharaoh's army. But what possible "glory" could there be in any god's forcing ant-like humans to fall into a trap and then killing them? I can just see the humpty-dumpty clerics, who concocted such as hideous God, claiming:

“There’s glory for you!”

“I don’t know what you mean by ‘glory’,” Alice said.

Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. “Of course you don’t – till I tell you. I meant ‘there’s a nice knock-down argument for you!’”

“But ‘glory’ doesn’t mean ‘a nice knock-down argument’,” Alice objected.

“When I use a word,” Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, “it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less.”

“The question is,” said Alice, “whether you *can* make words mean so many different things.”

“The question is,” said Humpty Dumpty, “which is to be master – that’s all.”

Sorry, Dear: sometimes I can’t resist. But please, think for a minute about the idea being conveyed by Humpty Dumpty/ Lewis Carroll/ Charles Dodgson, “The question is... which [or who] is to be master...” Next, consider the clerics’ decision: they construct a god who is to be the master – and define his power as “glory” (as in “the power and the glory, for ever and ever, Amen”). It’s hideous!

The clerics advocate not only that “might makes right” but also that “physical-might makes moral-right”. Their god, originally promoted only as a “land lord” (giving the Hebrews the land that belonged to the Canaanites), now is identified as a “war lord”. You can see it explicitly, Dear, in the following lyrics of the “song to the Lord” given in *Exodus 15* (apparently originally sung, accompanied by tambourines, by Moses’ sister and part-time prophetess, Miriam):

The LORD is a warrior...
Thy right hand, O LORD, is majestic in strength:
Thy right hand, O LORD, shattered the enemy...

Actually, though, there’s something rather strange, here.

At *Exodus 15*, 12 this “song” states: “Thou didst stretch out thy right hand, earth engulfed them.” This disagrees with earlier text (*Exodus 14*, 27), which states: “So Moses stretched out his hand...”, i.e., Moses made the magic. Therefore, at least one version is wrong – unless, of course, the clerics’ policy is promote the idea that that Moses was God’s right hand – or

that Moses, himself, was the Israelites' god. To which I'd respond, in appropriate seriousness: "Whatever!"

And while I'm commenting on this "song", Dear, please notice some characteristics of the clerics' god that will be relevant to later remarks. First, notice that (consistent with many statements earlier in the Bible) the Israelites weren't indoctrinated with the idea that theirs was the only God, but just a special god for the Israelites. Thus at *Exodus 15*, 11, the song states: "Who is like thee, O LORD, among the gods?" Further, in the song at *Exodus 15*, 17, we learn even where Yahweh lives:

Thou broughtest them [the Israelites] in and didst plant them in the mount [or mountain] that is thy possession, the dwelling-place, O LORD, of thy own making, the sanctuary, O LORD, which thy own hands prepared.

That is, the Israelites' god was one of many gods, a special god for the Israelites, a god who lived on his mountain.

Finally, with all those silly details aside, the clerics get to their point. Prior to entering Egypt, the Israelites were in direct contact with their tribal, mountain god. After a few hundred years of living in Egypt, with multi-generations of interbreeding with the Egyptians (starting with Joseph), and with some of the Israelites having been trained as Egyptian priests (e.g., almost certainly Moses, if he existed), then these would-be priests decided to "lay down the law", forcing a new priesthood on the Israelites.

They start on this scheme with the following proclamation (*Exodus 15*, 26), as if the "laws" were created not by the clerics but by their created god, who supposedly states (to whom, it isn't reported):

"If only you will **obey the Lord** your God [I added the bold type], if you will do what is right in his eyes, if you will listen to his commands and keep all his statutes, then I will never bring upon you any of the sufferings which I brought on the Egyptians..."

This, then, is the backbone of the clerics policy: "Obey the Lord" – and of course the people are to remember who it is who speaks for "the Lord", namely, the clerics. I haven't bothered to count how many times the clerics repeat their principal theme ("Obey"), but it goes on and on and on.¹

¹ Well, I could add (but I ain't gonna check each result to see how it's used in context) that the "search engine" at BibleGateway.com (<http://www.biblegateway.com/keyword/>) gives 82 "hits" for the word "obey" in the KJV of the OT and 32 in the NT.

And so does the silliness. At *Exodus 16* we learn that the ~6 million Israelites and cattle (assuming one of the latter per Israelite) stopped at Elim, where conveniently there were the astrologically significant number of springs (twelve) and palm trees (seventy). That means that if ~500,000 people and cattle lined up at each spring, and if each spring could supply 10 people and their cattle with water per minute (which would be amazing – probably a factor of ten smaller would be more realistic), then it would take only 50,000 minutes = ~1000 hours = ~30 days (served 24 hours every day) = ~1 month (or ~10 months!) for each person and each animal to get a drink of water – although the number would then obviously be reduced considerable, because during the wait, most of the people and animals would have dehydrated and died... Sorry, Dear, I wasn't going to comment on the Bible's silly science.

More to the “policy point”, the second paragraph of *Exodus 16* contains an understandable policy position advanced by the new head-priests, Moses and Aaron. Reportedly the Israelites complained about lack of food (as well they might, for they had been “in the wilderness for 45 days”, and I challenge anyone to start out across a desert, on foot, carrying more than 45 days worth of food). Anyway, Moses arranged with God for him to rain down “manna from heaven” (described at *Exodus 16, 31* as “like coriander seed, and it tasted like a wafer made with honey”, similar to Graham crackers, I guess, which was provided in a form of a miraculous flour, courtesy a flock of quails), and then Moses pointedly said to the people (*Exodus 16, 8*):

It is against the Lord that you [people] bring your complaints, and not against us [i.e., Aaron and me].

And thus, Dear, in case you've ever wondered, then here the clerics provide important guidance: clerics speak for God, but if you have complaints, then take them up directly with the big boss, himself. That is, the clerics are more than willing to accept authority, but as for responsibility, well, obviously that belongs to... Riiiiight.

The clerics than proceed to administer a test to determine if the people had learned to obey. Moses tells the people not to go out and pick up manna on the seventh day (for the seventh day is going to be “sacred” – to the clerics), but of course, at least some of the people ignore the order. The clerics then

claim that the Lord, HIMself derides the people – of course, through Moses (*Exodus 16, 28*):

The Lord said to Moses, “How long will you refuse to obey my commands and instructions? The Lord has given you the Sabbath, and so gives you two days’ food every sixth day. Let each man stay where he is; no one may stir from his home on the seventh day.”

And therefore, Dear, should you ever desire to skip church any Sunday [to just sit around the house, watch TV, maybe read a certain book, whatever, or even to camp out (cause obviously, a tent or whatever, is just the same as “home” – cause I assume no Israelite had built a house in the desert) and for that matter, you probably could consider your car a “home” (certainly it’s as good as any tent)], then to any complainer, just quote *Exodus 16, 28*: “No one may stir from his home on the seventh day”!

Anyway, moving on to *Exodus 16, 34*, we’re told (and who would doubt the “truth” of the Bible!):

The Israelites ate the manna for forty years until they came to a land where they could settle; they ate it until they came to the border of Canaan.

There is, however, a slight problem here. Thus, given that the distance from where the Israelites reportedly left Egypt to Canaan is far, far, less than 400 miles (no matter the circuitous route they took), then if it took them 40 years to travel 400 miles, that’s a speed of 10 miles per year (!) or ~1 mile per month or ~200 feet per 24 hour day or ~10 feet or ~3 footsteps per hour. Talk about a slow shuffle! Meanwhile, a line of 3 million people, 3 abreast, following each other by only 3 feet, and allowing no room to be taken up by “a large company of every kind, and cattle in great numbers, both flocks and herds” would stretch for 3 million feet = ~500 miles, i.e., farther than the total distance they had to travel! Oh, sorry, I missed that rainbow again: I forgot that I wasn’t gonna comment on the idiotic “science” in the Bible.

But you’ll be pleased to know, Dear, that (as given at *Exodus 17, 7*) Moses went ahead of the people (the full 500 miles?!) and managed to get a rock to sprout water. You see, the people had complained “Why have you brought us out of Egypt with our children and our herds to let us all die of thirst?” Forty years later, when the end of the line of people had reached the water fountain, then... Whoops... But how could anyone “believe” this crap?!

Then, in the last two paragraphs of *Exodus 17*, the clerics convey the following three hideous policies in one crazy little story about Moses sending Joshua out to fight the Amalekites.

1. Clerics aren't to fight in wars; they're to watch from safe locations; yet
2. The clerics' role is critical: just the raising or the lowering of one of the clerics' magic wands can determine the outcome of a war (never mind the mind and muscle and courage of the men doing the fighting); and
3. Wars are to continue for generations, until all genetic trace of the original enemy is "blotted out [from] all memory... under heaven."

But, Dear, notice that the last-listed policy couldn't possibly work. The Lord said "I am resolved to blot out all memory of Amalek from under heaven." Then why, pray tell, did God permit the clerics to write about Amalek?!? Does this reveal the quality of all God's resolutions – or his stupidity – or just the stupidity of the clerics who wrote such nonsense?

Then, in *Exodus 18*, again we meet Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, who was a priest (as was Joseph's father-in-law). As I mentioned before, I suspect that Moses' father-in-law represented a real authority figure to Moses (who had asked his father-in-law's permission before returning to Egypt). Now, at *Exodus 18, 7*, we read: "Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, bowed low to him, and kissed him..." Upon hearing all that God had done for the Israelites (providing a story to tell children about how He had made sport of the Egyptians, killing so many of them), Moses' father-in-law in effect said: of all the gods, ours is the greatest. Specifically, his words are reported to be (*Exodus 18, 11*):

Now I know that the Lord is the greatest of all gods...

Which leads me to wonder about exactly how many gods there are – and how it's determined which god is the 'greatest'? Is their 'greatness' measured by their magic, or do the gods have contests to determine how many humans each can kill? Do they get extra points for killing children? Maybe their greatness is measured by the sizes of their separate piles of human body parts, and the Lord's "claim to fame" is his huge pile of foreskins! Makes a person wonder...

Actually, though, *Exodus 18* contains one of the few sensible stories in the Bible that the clerics concocted. This is contained in the long paragraph at the end of *Exodus 18* and describes the advice from Moses' father-in-law about how Moses should administer justice among the Israelites, by establishing a "permanent court". As I'll show you in the "excursion" **Yx**, this is the same method that had been practiced in Egypt for at least 1,000 years, but still, it represented an improvement over the method that Moses had allegedly been using. In addition, his father-in-law instructed Moses "to be the people's representative before God... instruct them in the statutes and laws, and teach them how they must behave what they must do" – which of course is the task that Moses undertook with his commandments. But I must admit to being intrigued by why the clerics decided that it was a priest who provided this good advice to Moses, rather than God. Maybe the clerics decided that their god was already busy enough (being a land lord, a war lord, murdering children, flying around in his foreskin balloon filled with hot air...) to be bothered with justice...

In *Exodus 19* we learn that the Israelites' mountain god lives on Mount Sinai, "the mountain of God" – which I find rather surprising. Let me put it this way. If you could live anywhere on Earth, Dear, would you choose a mountain in the desert?! How about Hawaii? Or maybe move around a bit: summer in the Pacific Northwest, New England in the fall, winter in Florida, spring in Holland? And by the way, you needn't stay on Earth. I've heard that there's a great condo for lease in a corner of the Andromeda galaxy... So tell me, what's with this god? Mount Sinai? Of all the stupid...

But that's nothing compared with the stupidity displayed by the clerics who wrote the racist crap at *Exodus 19, 5*, where they have their god say:

"If only you [Israelites] will now listen to me [God] and keep my covenant [i.e., keep those foreskins coming], then out of all peoples, you shall become my special possession; for the whole earth is mine [even though the other gods only let me have this mountain]. You [Israelites] shall be **my kingdom of priests, my holy nation** [bold type added]."

Yet I should acknowledge, Dear, that the above racist filth (claiming that the Israelites are God's "special possession") simultaneously contains one of the cleverest tricks ever concocted by any group of con-artist clerics.

As I'll show you in **Yx**, the clerics of earlier and many later groups (but not the Mormons) made a fatal mistake: they set themselves above the people,

* Go to other chapters *via*

and particularly in Mesopotamia and Egypt (about 1,000 before Moses allegedly lived), the people finally became so fed up with the excesses of the priests that the people revolted and threw the bums out. Therefore, perhaps for the first time in history, the would-be Hebrew priests concocted a new con game: make everybody a priest (but, of course, just the men, because, of course, might still makes right, and men are stronger than women). It was a brilliant con game: who among the people would ever complain about the priests, when the people, too, were priests! Meanwhile, of course, there are degrees of priesthood, and so in reality, the “high priesthood” maintained as much power as they wanted (which is the same game still played today by Mormon clerics).

Then, in *Exodus 19*, we get what I think is the Bible’s first clear hint of an oft-repeated sickness of the Hebrew clerics, a sickness that has persisted for the past ~2,000 years in our culture (courtesy the damnable Christian and Mormon clerics) – and it’s even worse in Islamic societies. Specifically, when Moses came down from the mountain with God’s important (!?) message to Moses, namely “Go to the people and hallow them today and tomorrow and make them wash their clothes”, then Moses (who reportedly speaks for God) apparently had to interpret what God meant by “hallow them”. This is explained at *Exodus 19*, 16:

He hallowed them and they washed their clothes. He said to the people [well, actually, just to the men, for as everyone knows, women aren’t real people ☹], “Be ready by the third day; do not go near a woman.”

Astounding! Even though God had defined the prime purpose for humans to be “go forth and multiply” or “be fruitful and increase”, yet now the clerics inform us that having sex with women defiles men.

I wonder why so many clerics have so many unnatural feelings about sex. Are most clerics impotent or homosexuals or pedophiles? Do they bury normal human sexual emotions in mountains of words about their gods? Why do so many clerics force young boys to have sex with them? Are the cowardly clerics (who climb ridge tops to watch wars) afraid of normal relationship with women? Do they require their sex partners to be as helpless as children? Whatever the clerics’ illness, they’ve managed to make it contagious throughout our culture, courtesy their power structure and their “holy books”. The result as been one of the most horrible personal and public policies that normal humans have ever had to suffer through.

If they had done nothing else, then for their warped ideas of human sexuality, I would damn all clerics to the hell they concocted. But of course the damnable clerics did much more – which I’ll get to.

First, though, notice a neat little twist in their con game. God had just finished telling the Israelites that they would be a “kingdom of priests”, but now at *Exodus 19*, 21, we learn that some priests are “more priestly” than others. God reportedly said to Moses:

“Go down [from my mountain]; warn the people [“a kingdom of priests”]... that they must not force their way through to the Lord to see him, or many of them will perish. Even the priests [What “priests”? Everyone of them was supposed to be a priest!], who have access to the Lord [Oh, really! Do tell: do only some ‘priests’ have ‘access’ to the Lord? How did they get this special access? What’s the point of being a priest if you don’t have access to the Lord?!], must hallow themselves [You mean: no sex for three days?] for fear that the Lord may break out against them. [And how, pray tell, does the Lord ‘break out against’ people?]”

The rest of the paragraph is equally crazy. God apparently forgot that he already had given appropriate messages to the people via Moses (God has a rather advanced case of Alzheimer’s disease, doncha know), Moses reminds him, and then God says:

“[Oh yah, I forgot about that; through all the smoke, thunder, and lightning I couldn’t see my rainbow that reminds me of stuff, so anyway...] Go down, then come up and bring [your brother] Aaron with you, but let neither priests nor people force their way up to the Lord, for fear...”

To which Moses replied: “You idiot God! Can’t you keep your story straight? What do you mean ‘neither priests nor people’? You already told us that everyone of us [men] was to be a priest!” Well, actually, Moses didn’t say this – but he should have!

In any event, although God never seemed to get it straight just who was and who wasn’t supposed to be a priest, we learn at the end of *Exodus 19* and the start of *Exodus 20*: “So Moses went down to the people and spoke to them. God spoke, and these were his words...” I broke off the quotation there, Dear, because I wonder if you can distinguish between Moses and God. I can’t – and I assume that the clerics purposefully created this confusion, just as they purposefully created the confusion about who was and who wasn’t a priest.

What God (aka Moses) then said was what-the-clerics-would-have-us-believe were “God’s Ten Commandments”, with the first two buried in the following (*Exodus 20, 2*):

“I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other god to set against me [viz., Commandment #1]. You shall not make a carved image for yourself nor the likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth [viz., Commandment #2]. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your god, am a jealous god. I punish the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me. But I keep faith with thousands, with those who love me and keep my commandments.”

Amazing! It’s amazing that the clerics could manage to compact so much stupidity into so few words.

Dear, please consider the following:

- Why call Egypt “the land of slavery”, when obviously the Hebrews had been practicing slavery for centuries – and continued to practice it for thousands of years? How can it be “wrong” for the Egyptian to have slaves but “right” for the Israelites?
- The clerics’ god demands that the Israelites “have no other god to set against me” (or, as in a footnote to the New English Bible: “no other gods to set against me”). Why? Can’t God hold his own among the other gods? Has the creator of the universe been challenged by the other gods in some sort of a “people-popularity contest”?
- Why is God concerned about mere ant-like people setting other gods against HIM? Do people have sufficient power to set the gods against one another? Do we have sufficient power to make or break the gods? Do we have sufficient power to make gods disappear? Do we have the power to create gods? And the obvious answers to those questions, Dear, is: Yes! The clerics know that the only power possessed by their god is the power given to their god (i.e., to the clerics) by the people. The people have the power to say “poof”, all gods will immediately disappear (for they existed only in the believers’ imaginations), and all the con games perpetrated by all clerics will immediately collapse.

- And let me add the question: what's all the stuff (later in the Bible) about there being only one god? That's not what this "one god" said! If there were only one god (as later clerics write), then here the clerics would have Yahweh say something similar to: "You shall not worship any man-made, false god". But since all gods are man made, did the clerics not want to put the adjectives "man-made" and "false" together?
- And what the devil is all the weird stuff about: "You shall not make a carved image for yourself nor the likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the sun." No woodcarvings of birds? No sculptures of humans? No paintings of fish? No paintings, no pictures, no arts and crafts? This god certainly is no benefactor of the arts! I guess it follows that he's opposed to TV. Do I hear a certain grandchild say: "Hey, wait a minute, no TV?" Dear, it seems to me that you haven't adequately committed the clerics' instructions to heart: you're not to evaluate, you're to obey!
- Because, Dear, if you were to evaluate rather than obey, you could obviously cause the clerics major headaches. For example, whereas writing is a "likeness" of the spoken word, then you might conclude that the clerics are demanding that there be no writing. That means no books, not even "holy books". So that would mean... Stop that, Dear, you're not to evaluate, you're to obey.
- And how about the stupidity of "I... am a jealous god"? Jealous of what? Is Jehovah's vanity (and sanity?) been strained by a beauty contest among the gods? Jehovah is "jealous", as in "coveting" (some possession or characteristic of another god)? But a later Commandment (#10) states: "Thou shalt not covet." So what do we have here: do as I say and not as I do? Isn't that the dominant characteristic of a hypocrite? Is God the supreme hypocrite?!
- And if (as the clerics already wrote) this god is the creator of "heaven and earth", then what's he jealous of? The omniscient ruler of the universe is jealous, like a pathetic little ant-like human? Is he worried about how he looks? Did the atomic blast at Sodom and Gomorrah disfigure him? Is he still smarting from being beaten by Israel in their wrestling match? Couldn't he get the blood off his face from when Zipporah zapped with her kid's bloody foreskin? Do his memory lapses embarrass him? Is he ashamed that he killed so many people?

- Or is he ashamed of his sense of justice? “I punish the children for the sins of the father to the third and fourth generations of those who hate me.” He punishes innocent grandchildren for the sins of their grandfather? What’s the matter: doesn’t God have the guts to punish the guilty? It’s beyond immoral – it’s deranged – to advocate punishing the innocent for the “crimes” of the guilty! Humans are to obey such a deranged god? Gimme a break! It’s bad enough that the creator of the universe has such a pathetically human characteristic as jealousy, and it’s bad enough that the object of his jealousy is so trivial (“worship” by some pitiful, non-thinking, ant-like humans), but then look at his horribly immoral punishment for those humans who choose to think for themselves: “I punish the [innocent] children...”
- Who wouldn’t hate this god? He punishes the innocent for alleged crimes of the guilty. He kills innocent people for the sport of it. He causes people to “sin” (e.g., be obstinate), so he can punish them. He sends a raped slave girl back to be beaten by her slave owners. He rewards people for cheating their brothers out of their inheritance, pimping their wives, blackmail, and on and on, all the way back to tricking two innocent kids in the Garden of Eden and then punishing all humans, forever, for the alleged sin of the first two. What’s not to hate?
- And what’s it to be: the third or the fourth generation? That may not seem important to you, God, but you see, I want to know if my grandchildren are the last ones to be punished for my hating you, or do you propose to punish my great grandchildren also?
- But meanwhile, Dear, don’t sweat it, because the clerics’ god keeps faith only “with thousands, with those who love me...” Not millions, Dear, not billions, but thousands! So that means... Hmmm...

Oh, by the way, Dear, in case it’s a mistranslation and should have been translated as in a footnote in the New English Bible “I keep faith for a thousand generations with those who love me...”, then don’t sweat that one either: live your life as you see fit, using your brain as best you can, and forget about the clerics’ god, because surely there’s at least one multi-great grandfather of yours, somewhere back within 1000 generations (20,000 years!), who blasted off on the power trip thinking that he was one of God’s favorites and, for that matter, surely there’s also at least one multi-great

grandmother of yours who drifted off in the dream world in which she thought that at least God loved her. So, Dear, don't sweat it if you're guilty of hating this god: he punishes the innocent for three or four generations but he doesn't punish the guilty for thousands of generations. How's that for justice?!

Similarly, Dear, don't sweat the next one, either, because it's essentially impossible to break Commandment #3:

“You shall not make wrong use of the name of the Lord your God; the Lord will not leave unpunished the man who misuses his name.”

It's essentially impossible to violate this commandment, Dear, because whatever adjectives you attribute to this god (jealous, envious, covetous, grudging, resentful, invidious, disgusting, fool, numbskull, hypocrite, idiot, coward, murderer, fiend, racist, child killer, deranged, evil, foreskin fanatic,...), all are totally appropriate. That is, whereas this God obviously has all these (and many more) negative attributes, then how could anyone possibly “make wrong use” of his name? No matter how one cursed this evil God, it would be a “right” use of his name!

So actually, maybe, this jealous malefactor of a god has something here. Maybe the key is the phrase “wrong use”. I mean, obviously this jealous malefactor has pathetic human features, so maybe no matter how you defile HIM, the description fits! Maybe that's why, after I've cursed HIM so much, never once has HE punished me; therefore, I guess I've never misrepresented HIM! Good! Finally a rule that's easy to obey! But then, now that I think of it, it would be “wrong use of the name of the Lord” if ever you add adjectives such as kind, loving, just, understanding, forgiving, and similar. So that means the clerics who promote this crap... Hmmm...

Meanwhile, the stupidity of Commandment #4, dealing with “the Sabbath”, is something else again:

“Remember to keep the Sabbath day holy. You have six days to labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God; that day you shall not do any work you, your son or your daughter, your slave or your slave-girl, your cattle, or the alien within your gates...”

Dear, I'm sorry to report that God must have damaged his brain (perhaps when he took that tumble in his foreskin balloon inflated from the gas from

leavened bread). In this commandment, God (aka the cleric who wrote this crap) tells us that we have six days to do all our work, but the seventh day is to be “holy”, when we are to do no work. But what, pray tell, does God mean that he “Blessed the Sabbath day and declared it holy”?

I mean, there are humans who not only think but also think that working, producing, creating, doing something for others,... are “holy”. So we’re not to work for others on his holy day? We’re not to be kind to others on his holy day? Being “holy” is to lie around and do nothing? So God is saying that Joe Six-pack has it right, parking himself in front of the TV all day Sunday? Oh, sorry: I forget, TV isn’t allowed.

But, God, suppose I’m working to stop an asteroid from crashing into the Earth that would eliminate all life on Earth. Suppose I’m working to eliminate the “killer virus” that makes AIDS look like a mild flu. Is that work “unholy”? Suppose my six-day job is as a fire fighter, crime fighter, or similar. Am I to let fires burn and allow crimes on your Sabbath? And similarly what if... Ah, phooey, what’s the point.

But, God, maybe you would explain something else. You say “for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and on the seventh day he rested”? Does this mean that all-powerful creator of the universe has such a trivial human characteristic as to become tired? He needed to rest? He became weak? But, but, but...

And by the way, God, while you were firing out all your orders, why didn’t you suggest that slavery was a no-no. I’m sure that all the slaves are grateful to hear that they won’t need to work on your “holy day”, but tell me, you twit, why do you approve of slavery? Do you think that it’s right that some people should do nothing but obey? Do you think that all people should do nothing but obey? In fact, I have an even more fundamental question: Do you think?

Apparently not. But, by the way, thanks for listing “the alien within your gates”, who apparently is lower than slaves and cattle. I do however wonder, God, about those “gates”: the people are wandering through the desert, just breaking free from slavery. So, exactly what “gates” are you talking about? And for that matter, are you quite sure that the Israelites, who just escaped from slavery in Egypt, had their own slaves with them? How interesting... Hmmm...

Sorry, Dear, as you no doubt know by now, I have a tendency to...

Maybe at least one of us needs to take a break and get some exercise. If you do, too, then later, how about reading through the rest of *Exodus*?