

## ***Qx8 – Policies in Leviticus & Numbers***

Dear: The next “book” of the Old Testament (OT), *Leviticus*, has got to be one of the craziest pieces of literature ever concocted in the history of the world! As its title suggests, it was created by and for the benefit of the Jewish priests, the Levites. As a “policy document”, *Leviticus* basically details how the priests are to be kept in comfort for running their protection racket. These damnable clerics first specify their preferred menu and how and when they are to be served (in *Leviticus 1–3*) and then (in *Leviticus 4–5*) they specify, with great preciseness, how much they’ll charge to run their racket. In summary, the people are first told how the Levites’ food is to be prepared and then how to pay-off the priests for sins, namely, by supplying the fat priests with still more food – plus other “goodies”.

For example, at *Leviticus 5*, 11–13, it’s thrilling to learn that:

If the man [a “sinner”] cannot afford two turtle-doves or two young pigeons [to pay the priests] for his sin [then we have a special low-budget scheme for paupers, for it’s important that we bleed everyone], he shall bring as his offering a tenth of an ephah of flour, as a sin offering... He shall bring it to the priest, who shall scoop up a handful from it as a token and burn it on the altar on the food-offerings to the Lord: it is a sin-offering. The priest shall make expiation for the sin the man has committed in any of these cases, and it shall be forgiven him. The remainder belongs to the priest, as with the grain-offering.

What incredible con artists! What incredible policies! What an incredible racket! What incredible idiocy!

Yet, Dear, I doubt if you can read this stuff without at least smiling at the idiocy. For example, surely you will at least smile when at *Leviticus 8*, 3 you learn that God told Moses to “assemble all the community at the entrance to the Tent of the Presence”, which of course Moses did – without questioning how in hell (or anywhere else) could ~ 3 million people assemble at the entrance to anything! I mean, Dear, you try standing on a one-foot-square floor tile. Imagine people packed in beside you, each allotted only 1 square foot. Then 3 million people could be packed (and I mean packed!) “at the entrance to a tent”, say in a column 30 feet wide (~10 times the width of the entrance to the tent), but the column of people would stretch in front of the tent’s entrance a distance of 100,000 feet = ~ 20 miles! But then, I wasn’t gonna comment on the science – except to get you to smile a little (☺).

But I expect that you won't smile at still another swat at womanhood by the damnable clerics (*Leviticus 12, 1*):

The Lord spoke to Moses and said, "Speak to the Israelites in these words: When a woman conceives and bears a male child, she shall be unclean for seven days... If she bears a female child, she shall be unclean for fourteen days..."

Pity any poor mother who brought a priest into the world: how long, I wonder, would that "uncleanliness" last!

Anyway, Dear, should you care, then in *Leviticus 13*, you can learn God's amazing knowledge about skin diseases (surprisingly consistent with the ignorance of the clerics of the time) and about God's wonderful treatment for the "unclean" (*Leviticus 13, 45*):

One who suffers from a malignant skin-disease shall wear his clothes torn, leave his hair disheveled, conceal his upper lip [for reasons unexplained] and cry, "Unclean, unclean."

For some strange reason, God didn't recommend treatment with any modern medication. For some strange reason, God didn't mention the roles of parasites, viruses, and genetic disorders. For some strange reason, God didn't give a clue to scientists who have now cured so many skin diseases and have almost cured cancer. And for some strange reason God (or Moses) didn't wave his magic staff (or whatever) and rid humanity of all illnesses. Very strange – unless, of course, all this crap was concocted by a bunch of lame-brain clerics.

Incidentally, though, in an attempt to help you understand the above "policy statement" dealing with "public health", let me mention a little history (more of which I'll show you in later chapters). In about 300 BCE, the Egyptian high priest Mantheo provided the world with essentially the only surviving non-biblical descriptions of Moses and the "escaping" Israelites. His descriptions certainly aren't pretty. But I should immediately add that, as with all ancient descriptions of "history", it's difficult to determine their accuracy – especially since, throughout history, rarely did a cleric of one religion (or even a sect) have kind words to say about competing clerics and their converts.

Yet, this strange emphasis in *Leviticus* on skin diseases is consistent with Mantheo's account: that the Egyptians isolated and put to forced labor a group of malformed and diseased people, both Egyptians and aliens, and including the malformed Egyptian priest Moses. Subsequently, with the help of additional Hyksos people (so Mantheo relates), the isolated people revolted, but eventually the Egyptians pushed them out of Egypt.

But returning to the Bible, may I suggest, Dear, that if ever your house develops a mold, then you may want to try a policy different than the disinfection routine recommended by God at *Leviticus 14, 49* – even though his procedure probably represents the best recommendations that the “scientists” of ancient Egypt had to offer:

In order to rid the house of impurity, he [the priest] shall take two small birds, cedar-wood, scarlet thread [just red thread won't do it, doncha know], and marjoram [or, if it's unavailable, you can use a mixture of margarine and jam]. He shall kill one of the birds over an earthenware bowl [don't use a regular copper-bottom pot!], containing fresh water. He shall then take the cedar-wood, marjoram [or substitute], and scarlet [not red!] thread, together with the living bird, dip them in the blood of the bird that has been killed and in the fresh water, and sprinkle the house seven times...

Although this is still a recommended way to occupy clerics in activities that don't cause people so much harm, the problem is that God's recommended procedure involves killing too many, poor little innocent birdies! Therefore, Dear, first try Lysol (or similar), and if that doesn't work, then seek advice from someone more competent than I, Moses, or God. Such people are easy to find, e.g., in the yellow pages of your phone book or at your local Department of Public Health.

Although I'm not sure if Israelites still disinfect their houses with a bird dipped in the blood of a dead bird, religious Jews do still follow *Leviticus* rules about acceptable (Kosher) food. Yet, for some strange reason, they no longer seem to follow the rule described at *Leviticus 17*, even though at *Leviticus 17, 7* we read God's commandment (I've lost count, but maybe it's Commandment #437):

“This shall be a rule binding on them [the Israelites and therefore, I guess, on all Muslims, since they consider themselves descendants of Abraham and they assume that the Bible is “God's holy words” – and I guess on all Mormons, since they claim similar] and their descendants for all time.”

In essence the rule seems to be that, for all time, all slaughtering of all oxen, sheep, and goats shall be done “before the Tabernacle of the Lord”, or else the butcher “has shed blood and shall be cut off from his people.” We then learn that “the priest shall fling the blood against the altar of the Lord... and burn the fat as a soothing odor to the Lord.” I don’t know what happened to this rule: maybe the Israelites (and Muslims and Mormons?) found that this ritual attracted too many flies, the blood was hard to scrape off their sandals, and the place stunk to high heavens. (What a neat expression: it all stinks to high heavens!)

Or maybe what happened is that all Israelites (and Muslims and Mormons) gave up the ghost, once they realized that they were cut off from God. Thus, in the remainder of *Leviticus 17*, in which God repeatedly makes the idiotic pronouncement that “the life of every living creature is the blood” (without explaining why the vehicle for transporting food and oxygen to cells is more important than the food, or the oxygen, or the cells, or the DNA molecule within the cells, or...), God informs the Israelites that “every man who eats it [blood] shall be cut off [from his father’s kin].” Thus, maybe the people realized that, if one eats meat, it’s impossible not to eat blood, and therefore, they made the choice between becoming vegetarians (apparently eating the “life blood” of plants is okay) or abandoning still another of the lame-brain God’s idiotic commandments.

If there’s any truth in the clerics’ claim that Moses wrote *Leviticus* (in fact, some people claim that he wrote the first five books of the Bible, known as the Pentateuch, but as I’ll show you later, this claim is easily discredited), then Moses must have been either amazingly dumb (not to realize the trouble he was getting himself into) or else, surely he must have tied himself in knots with his hypocrisy in *Leviticus 18*. It starts with Commandment #\_\_ (I’ve lost count!):

The Lord spoke to Moses and said, “Speak to the Israelites in these words: ‘I am the Lord your God. You shall not do as they do in Egypt where you once dwelt, nor shall you do as they do in the land of Canaan to which I am bringing you; you shall not conform to their institutions. You must keep my laws and conform to my institutions without fail: I am the Lord your God [You just finished saying that!]. You shall observe my institutions and my laws’ [You just finished saying that, too – and by the way, I think a more accurate phrase describing “you shall not do as they do” would be “you shall not follow their customs”; that is, I assume that the Israelites are still allowed to continue to engage in such activities as breathing, eating, breeding, and so on!]....”

And of the options I listed to describe Moses, I think it would be kindest to identify him as dumb. I mean, Dear, if you had a chance to challenge Moses, then wouldn't you be inclined to challenge him with something similar to the following:

Hey wait a minute there, Moses old boy, just exactly what do you mean? Do you propose to abandon the Egyptian custom of dividing years into 12 months (one for each of their second-tier gods)? Do you plan to stop using a seven-day week (one for each of the first-tier gods)? If so, then on what day will the Sabbath occur? Once per year? And what about the Egyptian custom of not eating pork? Also, what about the Egyptian practice of circumcision: if you don't mutilate infant males, then how will you make their mothers afraid of the clerics, and in later years, how will the boys and men remember that the priests are in control? Also, speaking of priests, how are they gonna survive without using the customary tricks of the Egyptian priests, such as magic and not letting anyone say the principal god's name? In fact, what about the glorious institutions of racism, sexism, and slavery that you promote – and for that matter, what about the most important institution, that of the priesthood, in which sexist priests use racism to promote enslavement of the people? I mean, have you thought about what you're saying?

Anyway, Dear, maybe someone did rein in Moses' plan to abandon Egyptian customs, because in the rest of *Leviticus 18* (and more), Moses has his god focus just on "institutions" dealing with sex.

Yet, Moses still managed to trap himself in his hypocrisy, for at *Leviticus 18, 12* we find Commandment #\_\_\_ (a prize for anyone who has kept track!): "**You shall not have intercourse with your father's sister.**" But for those of us who did keep track of at least some references, we find back at *Exodus 6, 20*:

**These were the families of Levi in order of seniority. Amram married his father's sister Jochebed, and she bore him Aaron and Moses.**

Would Moses have us believe that such sexual relations were an Egyptian and not a Hebrew "institution"?

Anyway, giving Moses enough rope to hang himself, time and time again, we then see how he managed to convince himself that it was okay for him to steal the land belonging to the Canaanites and murder the inhabitants. Starting at *Leviticus 18, 22*, we find a string of more commandments and idiocies, with God (aka Moses) saying:

“You shall not lie with a man as with a woman: that is an abomination. [He doesn’t mention why it’s an abomination. It just is. It’s one of those absolutes that all clerics love. It’s one of those wonderful “revealed truths”, that the all-powerful, all-knowing, ruler of the universe was kind enough to whisper in some “holy cleric’s” ear. And ‘abomination’ means... Hmm, they forget to explain that one...]

“You shall not have sexual intercourse with any beast to make yourself unclean with it [not, of course, to worry about maltreatment of animals], nor shall a woman submit herself to intercourse with a beast: that is a violation of nature. [Which, if you think about it, is really quite astounding: God recognizes some rules of Mother Nature that are not to be violated! Good job, God! But then, on the other hand, if a “beast” such as a dog initiates such intercourse, then how is it a violation of nature? Isn’t a dog a part of nature?] You shall not make yourselves unclean in any of these ways; for in these ways the heathen [the horrible heathens, who have their own gods, their own customs, their own “institutions”... and worst of all, their own priests!], whom I am driving out [of their land] before you, made themselves unclean [and we all know that people who follow their own customs are “unclean” and therefore don’t deserve to live on their own land – or, for that matter, even to continue to live].

“This is how the land became unclean [Amazing!! We learn, here, from the Great Land Lord in the Sky, HIMself, that land doesn’t become “unclean” because of natural processes (infestations, weathering of certain minerals, erosion, volcanic eruptions, and so on) nor because of pollution (with arsenic, DDT, cyanide, fecal material, irrigating with saline water, or similar), but from the sexual habits of its inhabitants. What an amazingly enlightened policy. I wonder if God would like to...], and I [God] punished it for its iniquity so that it spewed out its inhabitants. [Hello? God punishes the land? God punishes “the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generations...” and now we learn that he punishes the land for the sexual customs of its inhabitants? And when God punishes the land, does it cry, does it beg for mercy, does it become wasted...? Why no – and isn’t that amazing: it spews out its inhabitants! I guess God just sort of spansks the land, the right way, and it spews out its inhabitants. Is this why Egypt spewed forth the inhabitants known as the Israelites? And God punished the land of Egypt because of the sexual habits of the Israelites (such as the way Moses was conceived)? And the land of Egypt didn’t spew out the Egyptians, only the Israelites? Does this mean that... Hmm.]

“You, unlike them, shall keep my laws and my rules; none of you, whether natives or aliens settled among you shall do any of these abominable things. [Really? Is that one of your famous prophecies? May I suggest that you check...] The people who were there before you [in Canaan – and it really shouldn’t be written in the past tense, cause they’re still there; that is, the Israelites haven’t murdered them all yet] did these abominable things [that is, more correctly, are doing these things], and the land became unclean. So the land will not spew you out for making it unclean as it spewed them out.” [And if there’s some small chance that there’s any logic in all of this, perhaps it means that, if these “abominable things” are done, then the once-clean land becomes dirty – which, of course, is why ‘land’ is called ‘dirt’. Duh.]

Anyway, Dear, there you have the essence of the case that the followers of Moses propose to present to the World Court: we had a perfect right to kill the Canaanites and take their land, because their sexual customs were different from what our chief priest prescribed. Poor old Moses. It's a pity he didn't stick to his duties as an Egyptian priest, because once he started talking to (and for!) his invented god, he found that the brain of the ruler of the universe was badly damaged –when he fell into a Black Hole, in turn because he used too much gas from leavened bread in his foreskin balloon.

It's also a pity that the clerics didn't apply, to their own god, their definition of 'abominable' – plus add a little logic. Thus, start from their definition: acts that violate the laws of nature (such as homosexuality and bestiality) are abominable. Then add that all supernatural stunts (such as magic), by definition, violate the laws of nature. So, this little syllogism leads to the obvious conclusion that all gods are abominable – and it doesn't require much extension to reach the conclusion: so are all clerics.

Of course I hope that the above logic would convince the clerics, Dear, but meanwhile, I hope that you'll evaluate the premisses – and the prejudices. For example, instead of the above, how about adopting the prejudice that, so long as the practicing people doesn't bother you, or others, or maltreat animals, or similar, then their sexual behavior is nobody else's business? Then, how about adopting the premiss that, because every process and thing is a part of Nature, it's impossible to violate Nature's laws? Further, how about adopting the premiss that the only "things" that are "supernatural" are figments of people's imaginations? Then it appears that we'd be left with the conclusion that all supernatural gods, and all their supernatural stunts, are figments of people's imaginations. And by extension we can conclude that all clerics are engaged in a monstrous con game, manipulating people's imaginations for the benefit of their priesthoods.

Yet, Dear, on occasion, poor-old God (aka Moses) did make some sense. In *Leviticus 19*, he lists another group of commandments (who knows their numbers), and among these, at *Leviticus 19, 18*, you'll find the essence of what most Christians (and Mormons) consider to be the most important contribution from the clerics' Jesus, who reportedly lived ~1200 years after Moses or ~500 years after the clerics (led by Ezra) who wrote the OT. Moses' reasonable statement was:

You shall love your neighbor as a man like yourself [or, abbreviated, love your neighbor as yourself].

It's also the case (as I'll show you in Yx) that the Egyptians had promoted the same idea at least 1500 years earlier than Moses, but still, I'll try to give credit where credit is due, and therefore, I congratulate the clerics for promoting this tidbit of well-tested wisdom.

In fact, if ever the clerics seek my assistance in editing the Bible, I expect I'd recommend that the new edition keep essentially all of both paragraphs between *Leviticus 19, 11 to 18*. Of course I'd have them cut all the silly references to God (in fact, I'd cut all references to God, throughout the entire Bible), but here and there in the Bible, one can find some solid advice. I expect that such advice would stand the test of time, even without having any clerics around to enforce it, threatening to torture and kill people (and torturing and killing them) for failing to follow such advice. And of course they're sound policies, because long before any priests were around to muck things up, the people had learned these good policies from experience. Thus, in summary, I expect that enough good advice could be found in the Bible to produce, perhaps, a useful 10-page booklet – although it probably wouldn't sell, cause everyone knows these policies already.

But in case you might think that I'm getting carried away with so much praise, Dear, let me add that immediately after giving a tidbit of good advice, God (aka Moses) really blew it. For example, we could really have done without his commandment at *Leviticus 19, 19*:

“You shall not put on a garment woven with two kinds of yarn.”

Maybe the problem wasn't so much with the Black Hole. Instead, maybe in God's fall, some of the foreskin from his balloon wrapped around his neck, cutting off the blood supply to his brain – and as we all know by now, “**the life of every creature is in its blood.**”

But sick jokes aside, Dear, I should caution you. Please be careful around anyone who considers the Bible (or any “holy book”) to be “God's holy and unerring word”. Such people (e.g., Presidents Carter, Bush Sr., Clinton, and Bush Jr.) are either monstrous hypocrites (who probably have never read the Bible) or mentally unbalanced. To illustrate, consider the hideous stuff in *Leviticus 19, 20–22*.

As background, remember God's "holy words" that there's nothing wrong with the concept of slavery (save his hypocritical policy against slavery of the Israelites by the Egyptians). Also, realize that another key principle in God's "holy words" is that slave girls deserve less consideration than animals: thus, although the Israelite men were forbidden to have sex with animals, yet they could have sex with their slave girls. Therefore slave girls deserve less consideration than animals – although I should admit that I'm giving God the benefit of considerable doubt by assuming that he was concerned more with cruelty to animals than "cleanliness" of the Israelites.

Now, at *Leviticus 19, 22*, we learn about an activity of God's clerics that doesn't seem to be advertised as widely as it might. Specifically, if an Israelite male rapes another Israelite's slave girl, then the payment to the priest is one ram.

As for how the priests got in on this deal, that isn't clear. Maybe the priests learned (as did the Mafia, much later) that once you have a prostitution-ring up and running, then there's no need to advertise: if the price is right (and I guess one ram per rape wasn't too steep), the news travels and customers come. But I do wonder what cut of the profits had to be given to the godfather of this mafia, namely, Moses: The horns? A leg of lamb? His own slave-girl-raping privileges? Sometimes God's "holy words" provides such excruciating details, and then other times, on important matters, it's singularly silent.

As examples of excruciating details, why at *Leviticus 19, 26* does God tell men how to wear their hair and beards? Isn't the subject of slavery slightly more important? Is it really that important to learn at *Leviticus 19, 28* that tattooing is forbidden, compared to the question of raping slave-girls?

Further, how can any God give details about how to sell one's daughter into slavery and about raping your (or someone else's) slave-girl, and then, turn around at *Leviticus 19, 29* and tell the people "**Do not prostitute your daughter and so make her a whore.**" Is this God bananas? If a father can sell his daughter into slavery, and if her master can rape her whenever he wants, then by the father selling his daughter into slavery, he did prostitute his daughter – and worse. Would that God had learned not to ride his foreskin balloon in the neighborhood of Black Holes!

And so it goes, on and on and on. At *Leviticus 19, 31* God (aka Moses) tells us: “**Do not resort to ghosts and spirits.**” What, pray tell, does he (or Moses) think that gods are?! Within *Leviticus 20* is a list of “**capital offences**”, i.e., those whose penalty is death. These include homosexuality, bestiality, incest, and at *Leviticus 20, 27*:

**Any man or woman among you who call up ghosts or spirits [a clear challenge to the clerics’ con game] shall be put to death. The people shall stone them...**

By the way, this little rule might have been the justification that the Jewish people used for stoning to death the wandering Jewish cynic whose name might have been Jesus ben Pandera, whom the Gnostics called Jesus the Christ, and who “called up” what he called “the holy ghost”.

Then, in the paragraph that starts at *Leviticus 21, 16*, the clerics inform the world of their enlightened policy that people with physical defects (including those people who are too short or too tall!) “**profane**” the clerics’ “**sanctuaries**”. Unsurprisingly, the clerics place no restrictions on people with mental defects – for if people with mental defects were prohibited from entering the clerics’ sanctuaries, then obviously...

Most of *Leviticus 22–24* deals with eating, resting, and other rituals, so I’ll skip them. But at *Leviticus 24, 10*, there’s a little story with at least three policy positions:

1. A man born of mixed parents (an Egyptian father and an Israelite mother) is not an Israelite of “**pure descent**” (so, by “pure descent”, these male-chauvinist pigs apparently mean a person must have an Israelite father, such as Joseph, even if he had an Egyptian wife – although I think that subsequently and at present, “Jewishness” is defined maternally),
2. A dictator (such as Moses) receives his dictates direct from God, and
3. “**Whoever utters the Name of the Lord [viz., Yahweh or Jehovah or even God, which to this day religious Jews write as G\_d] shall be put to death; all the community shall stone him; alien or native, if he utters the Name, he shall be put to death.**”

Subsequently this third policy was extended even to writing God’s name (in the form Yahweh, Jehovah, or God). Therefore, Dear, being an “alien” and frequently “uttering” **the Name of the Lord** (e.g., God is an idiot), I’m to be stoned to death by the Israelites.

I invite them to try! I trust that they won't mind if I defend myself with an AK-47, for I make the minor little claim that I have an equal right to claim my own existence, and once someone else starts it, I'm quite willing to participate in the policy that might makes right – although I do admit to modifying it slightly to “brains (including using AK-47s) over brawn.”

At *Leviticus 25, 24*, God (aka Moses) spells out some details of his slavery policy:

“Such slaves as you have, male or female, shall come from the nations round about you; from them you may buy slaves. You may also buy the children of those who have settled and lodge with you and such of their families as are born in the land. These [human beings] may become your property, and you may leave them to your sons after you; you may use them as slaves permanently.”

In response, Dear, let me summarizing by saying that anyone who believes the above to be “God's holy words”, and who would take consistent actions, is my enemy – and I'll do whatever I consider reasonable to purge such a person of such ignorance, i.e., such evil.

In *Leviticus 26*, the dictator threatens the people with no end of calamities unless they obey. The poor people. If there's any truth to this story (and I expect that there's very little, because it was written by clerics), then with their con game, the clerics successfully separated the Israelites from reality. The people substituted the customs and wisdom of their ancestors with the contrivances of the clerics. Through eons of experience, the people's ancestors knew that they must cope with Nature's vagaries and with the propensity of all people to try to prosper at other people's expense. Yet, the people abandoned both these pieces of wisdom. Not only did the people abandon the knowledge that they must cope with Nature's vagaries, they adopted the clerics' con game (that the clerics' god controlled Nature and that the people must obey and pay the clerics to placate their god), thereby demonstrating the propensity of people to prosper at other people's expense.

Further, in *Leviticus 27*, the clerics specify what they'll charge, in cash, for services supplied as part of their con game. This ensures that, if only the ignorant Israelites will obey, then their damnable clerics will continue fat and happy forever, a concept they learned from the Egyptian priests and a concept practiced by all clerics to this day. But whether or not any group of clerics, to this day, ever matched the cunning of the clerics of ancient Israel is debatable!

Thus, surely anyone who has read the next book in the Bible, called *Numbers*, agrees that these clerical authors were cunning. First, as described in *Numbers* 3, 5–9, the clerics firmly established their power base:

The Lord spoke to Moses and said, “Bring forward the tribe of Levi and appoint them to serve Aaron the priest... They shall be in charge of all the equipment... [machine guns, rocket propelled grenades, IEDs, and similar]. You shall assign the Levites to Aaron and his sons [the priests] especially dedicated to him out of all the Israelites. To Aaron and his line you shall commit the priestly office and they shall perform its duties; any unqualified person who intrudes upon it shall be put to death.”

Then, in addition to receiving all the food they wanted and perpetual income from tithes, the clerics added a special “poll tax”, the likes of which the world may never have seen again (*Numbers* 3, 44–51): after much counting (or “numbering”; therefore, the title of this book, viz., *Numbers*), Moses found that there were 273 more first-born males among the rest of the Israelites than there were all-age males among the Levites; so, Moses charged the rest of the Israelites 5 shekels of silver for each “excess” male, collecting a cool 1,365 shekels of silver – just for the hell of it!

No doubt Moses convinced the Israelites that it was a hell of deal, because he could have charged 5 shekels for every first-born Israelite numbering more than half the number of Levites, or for that matter, 15 shekels per excess, and if the people didn’t like that, then his next best offer was 50 shekels on each and every one of them (any more trouble makers in the crowd?) – because dictators do what they damn well please, and as any Rabbi, Pope, Ayatollah, or Mormon prophet knows, no dictator surpasses the dictator whose dictates are direct from God.

And if you wonder, Dear, why any Israelite male (who wasn’t a coward) wouldn’t take up his own sword against the clerics (even though the clerics were obviously quite capable of wielding their own swords), perhaps it was because the clerics, not only permitted, but promoted the domination and subjugation of women. As one of many examples of this brutality, read the method (whose description starts at *Numbers* 5, 16) that the clerics used to support any husband who charged his wife with adultery – even if the husband had absolutely zero evidence to support the charge against his wife.

The description is quite long. In essence the method was to force the accused women to drink some water mixed with dust from the floor of the

Tabernacle (“**the water that brings out the truth**”). Then, if the women miscarried or had an “**untimely birth**”, she was guilty as charged. What hideousness! It’s a wonder that the stress on the poor woman didn’t cause a miscarriage. And if she didn’t miscarry or have “**an untimely birth**”, then what punishment for the husband for putting his wife through this cruelty? Nothing! Put the screws to the wife, but let the cowardly husband coast.

So, Dear, maybe the clerics saw and capitalized on the obvious policy: the building blocks of any religious construct consist of cowardly men in control of women – and, of course, it’s crucial for the clerics to get their clutches on some cash. Thus, at *Numbers 7*, 84, after a very long windup, we learn that the clerics picked up another 2,400 shekels of silver, 120 shekels of gold, and assorted beasts, food, and other stuff. Boy this Bible is an enlightening book: a handbook for arm-twisting, a compendium for con artists, a manual for the Mafia.

At the end of *Numbers 9* and the start of *Numbers 10*, the clerics story is that the Israelites were exactly as the clerics wanted them, with the clerics in total control (i.e., with the Israelites perfectly obedient to the clerics, perfectly willing to sprawl on the floor before the clerics, their faces in the dust, begging for mercy, as any slave would do before its master). Who says the Bible isn’t fiction?!

Meanwhile, the clerics continue to describe their god as a forgetful fool, who now needs, not only a rainbow to remind of his covenant, but also a cheer and/or a trumpet blast, e.g., at *Numbers 10*, 10, “**the trumpets shall be a reminder on your behalf before the Lord your God.**”

But the clerics do have difficulty keeping their story straight. They would have us believe that, throughout the “exodus”, their God showed the way, *via* assorted clouds and night lights, and even showed the Israelites where and when to make and break camp. Then, at *Numbers 10*, 29, Moses’ brother-in-law (not an Israelite but a Midianite) decided to give up the ghost and go back to his people. Whereupon Moses said:

**Do not desert us, I beg you; for you know where we ought to camp in the wilderness, and you will be our guide.**

Why on Earth would Moses beg his brother-in-law for directions, when the clerics just finished telling us that God was doing the directing?!

I don't know the answer to that obvious question, but possibly the source of the problem was that God lost his spectacles and could no longer see any rainbows, he lost his hearing aid and could no longer hear the trumpet, and he was temporarily out of range of Moses' cellphone. The clerics don't say.

They also don't explain Moses' description of God, at *Numbers 10*, 36: “**Lord of the countless thousands of Israel.**” This is especially annoying to the reader who struggled through the first nine chapters of *Numbers*, in which the clerics had Moses count all the Israelites – well, at least all those who count for anything, i.e., the males. That is: why call the Israelites “**countless**” when Moses just finished counting them – which is what this silly “*Numbers*” is all about?!

Meanwhile, at *Numbers 11*, 1, the clerics provide us with some important practical tips. Uncontrolled fires in the camp are caused, not by people who are careless with their campfires, but by complaining to God about hardships. Further, if you want to put out a raging fire, then don't deprive it of fuel or oxygen (e.g., using water); instead, ask the high priest to “**intercede**” with God, on behalf of the people. For after all, in this racket, people pay the priests plenty for protection...

But the people are portrayed as being stupid – and the clerics are left to display their own stupidity. Thus, leading up to *Numbers 11*, 25, first the Israelites started bitching about the food (they were tired of munching manna and wanted meat, and were stimulated to complain by some trouble-making, lesser humans known as a “**mixed company of strangers**”, which modern politicians usually call “**foreign agitators**”). So Moses got on the cellphone with God (or whatever), bitched about the responsibilities of his job, whereupon good-old God passed out some of this responsibility to (of course) seventy of the Israelite elders.

And how did God do this? Well, it's explained at *Numbers 11*, 25:

**He [God] took back part of that same spirit [no doubt “the spirit of the Lord”] which he had conferred on Moses and conferred it on the seventy elders; as the spirit alighted on them, they fell into a prophetic ecstasy [or trance], for the first and only time.**

And why did I write that the clerics display their stupidity? That will require a bit of explanation.

First, Dear, here (I think for the first time in the Bible) the clerics describe what it's like to have “**the spirit of the Lord**” conferred upon you. With it, you fall into “**prophetic ecstasy**”, although with the most-common modern usage of the word ‘ecstasy’, perhaps it would be better to use the phrase “prophetic trance”, or following the King James Version of the Bible, use “**when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied and did not cease.**” Further, according to common usage as given in my dictionary, ‘prophecy’ means “**prediction of the future under the influence of divine guidance.**” Thus, if “**the spirit of the Lord**” is conferred upon you, then you can see and therefore predict the future.

But, Dear, would that be desirable? Apparently Moses (aka the clerical authors who wrote this junk) thought so, because with the little story at *Numbers 11*, 26, the clerical authors have Moses say (at *Numbers 11*, 29):

**I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would confer his spirit on all them all!**

Well, fine, that's Moses' (or the clerical authors') opinion, but, Dear, what's your opinion? Please, Dear, try to evaluate it. Imagine that “**the spirit of the Lord**” descended on you. Imagine that you could see into the future. Do you like what you see? You see that you'll break your leg. Did you like seeing that? Well, then, okay: you see that, later, you'll become a world famous... and gain great... and then you'll... What's wrong?

You didn't want to know that you'll break your leg? You agree with the idea presented later in the Bible (*Mathew 6*, 34): “**Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof**” – especially when you know that there's nothing you can do to prevent “**the evil thereof**”, because what you see of the future, courtesy “**the spirit of the Lord**” (such as breaking your leg), can't be altered?

But don't you want to know that you'll become a world famous...? Why? Because nothing that you do will matter? No matter what you do, you'll become a world famous...? Wouldn't you like to be able to goof off, do whatever you please, and yet still you'll become a world famous... [goof off!]? What's the problem? You want goals? You want to be able to define and to pursue your own goals? Defining, pursuing, and achieving your goals makes you happy? You enjoy feeling happy – feeling that you're making progress toward your goals?

Do you mean, Dear, that you don't want to see the future, whether it bodes good or ill? You mean that you don't want "the spirit of the Lord" to descend upon you? You mean that, when Moses wished that "all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would confer his spirit on them all" he was conferring a wish that would destroy the people's happiness? You mean that: what Moses wished for would make people unhappy?

So finally, Dear, do you see why I wrote that the clerics display their stupidity? They go to great pains to describe the greatest glory that their god can bestow on people: to have "the spirit of the Lord" descend upon them. Ordinary people, with "smarts" enough to evaluate, respond: "Thanks, anyway, but no thanks; I'd sooner have the spirit of a human."

But, Dear, even if you don't plan to buy anything that these snake-oil salesmen are selling, let's push on. If nothing else, it can be stimulating to learn what else they propose to pan off on the public. Because, thousands of years before H.L. Mencken (1880–1956), clerics apparently learned that nobody ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the public.

As I wrote in an earlier chapter: if you want a stimulating thought (even if scary), realize that fully half of the people are below average intelligence. Worse: realize that it's exactly these dumbest of people who plan to tell you how to live your life. And as they've demonstrated time and time again, when they get a chance, they'll kill those who have the audacity to evaluate concepts for themselves and refuse to obey the clerics' orders.

So, anyway, returning to the story, the people got the meat they desired, air mail, special delivery from God: huge quantities of quail. Then we're told (*Numbers 11, 33*):

But the meat was scarcely between [the people's] teeth... when the Lords' anger broke out against the people and he struck them with a deadly plague. That place was called "The Graves of Greed", because there they buried the people who had been greedy for meat.

And so, Dear, you choose the policy message of this part of the story. A couple of obvious choices are the following:

1. Be content with what you have; don't strive for more; don't set goals; don't pursue your purposes; don't be a human; be content with your lot; dim your vision, lower

your sights, lower your eyes, look down; stoop, pray, plead, beg, grovel, lower than a worm; cringe before the ruling clerics.

2. Don't listen to your body's demands; your body may want meat, but control your greed with your mind; your body's greed is bad; only greed of the mind is good; your body will never tell you that it wants, for example, some gold; so, do what your mind tells you; greed for gold is good: because gold is good, it gives you power, and power is good, as any cleric knows.

Sorry, Dear, but the policies in the Bible get crazier by the page – and more horrible.

For example, at the start of *Number 12*, we learn that Moses' brother and sister, Aaron and Miriam, **“began to speak against Moses.”** Not much explanation is given for why, just:

They [Miriam and Aaron] blamed him [Moses] for his Cushite wife (for he had married a Cushite woman [a negro]), and they said, “Is Moses the only one with whom the Lord has spoke? Has he not spoken with us as well?”

Whether they had some specific complaint against Moses' Cushite wife or they viewed any marriage outside “the race” to be wrong (such as Joseph's marriage to an Egyptian?) is unknown, just as it's unknown if both Moses and Joseph found their “foreign” wives to be especially attractive or if they had the insight to know the genetic value of marrying outside “the family”.

In any event, after the clerical authors inform us at *Numbers 12*, 3 that **“Moses was in fact a man of great humility, the most humble man on earth”** [from which we can conclude either that Moses didn't write this (the clerics' claims notwithstanding) or that he did and he was bananas, because as Thomas Paine pointed out, anyone who claims to have **“great humility”** negates the claim], then God gets mad at Aaron and Miriam:

“Listen to my words. If he [Moses] were your prophet and nothing more, I would make myself known to him in a vision; I would speak with him in a dream. But my servant Moses is not such a prophet; he alone is faithful of all my household. With him I speak face to face, openly and not in riddles. He shall see the very form of the Lord. How dare you speak against my servant Moses?”

Whereupon, at *Numbers 12*, 10, God zaps Miriam with a skin disease (which the King James Version says was leprosy), good old Moses intercedes on her behalf, and apparently she will be okay after seven days – and nothing happens to Aaron.

Consequently, Dear, I (and the clerics) trust that the message is clear: women who criticize clerical power (even a woman as close to the high priest as his own sister) will be zapped with... [whatever], and unless the chief cleric intervenes, the zapping will be permanent.

And if that's the penalty for mild criticism of the high priest, do you really want to know the penalty for fermenting an uprising, let alone for initiating a revolt? Men, however (surprise, surprise) get special treatment – at least if their brother is the high priest and so long as they beg for forgiveness, e.g., Aaron's:

Pray, my lord [Moses], do not make us pay the penalty of sin, foolish and wicked though we have been.

You see, Dear, if you're to join the cleric's game, you've got to learn to grovel. Don't you ever dare say: “Blow it out your ear!” – unless, of course, you plan to claim ownership of your own life.

In this little story, also, appear a number of interesting little tidbits about the special position of being a “prophet”: ordinary run-of-the-mill prophets (Ezra, Muhammad, Joseph Smith, Jerry Falwell...) receive their messages from God in dreams and visions – but only in riddles. So, I guess the rest of us just hope that the prophets are competent at correctly interpreting riddles!

For example, Dear, reconsider (from an earlier I-chapter) what Pope John Paul II (who claims to speak for God) wrote in the introduction to his 1985 laughable “proof” for the existence of God:

In speaking of the existence of God we should underline that we are not speaking of proofs in the sense implied by the experimental sciences. Scientific proofs in the modern sense of the word are valid only for things perceptible to the senses, since it is only on such things that scientific instruments of investigation can be used. To desire a scientific proof of God would be equivalent to lowering God to the level of beings of our world, and we would therefore be mistaken methodologically in regard to what God is.

Therefore, two obvious interpretations seem available: either the Pope incorrectly interpreted whatever riddle God communicated to him, or the Bible is wrong – for if the Pope had read his Bible, he would have read that God said about Moses:

“With him I speak face to face, openly and not in riddles. He shall see the very form of the Lord.”

Of course, God may have a “cloaking devise” (like a Klingon warship), through which only Moses could see, but then (according to the principle of conservation of momentum) if God ever moved, he could be detected through his cloaking device. As for the possibility that all of this (Moses’ story, the existence of prophets, the Bible, the Pope’s “proof”, the existence of God, etc.) is just the babbling of immature minds, who am I to say? I’m just one of those humans who wants more data and fewer speculations.

And actually, Dear, in *Numbers 14*, the clerics’ policy of punishing complaining people, both men and women, is made clearer. The story is that a group (of, of course, 12 men) set out to spy on the Canaanites, who were living peacefully on their land. The spies returned and reported their findings, describing a strong people living peacefully on their land. The Israelites then started complaining that they should have stayed in Egypt, and so, the clerics describe the punishment for anyone who has the audacity to evaluate data rather than put complete trust and faith in the Lord (aka the clerics): God kills the messengers (save for two, i.e., Joshua and Jephunnch) and sentences everyone over 20-years old to wander in the desert for 40 years and then die. So, Dear, I trust that the correct policy is quite clear to you: you’re never to complain about the clerics; it’s sheer stupidity to be skeptical; it’s courting disaster to be a dissenter; grovel, kid, grovel; obey without delay.

In *Numbers 15*, after we learn about a few more items that the clerics demand be included on their menu (they love to eat other people’s food – the original meaning for ‘parasites’), then at *Numbers 15, 32*, we learn about the penalty for picking up sticks (presumably for firewood) on the Sabbath: the offender is stoned to death – presumably not on the Sabbath, because to do that, the people would need to pick up stones (☹).

So remember, Dear, on the Sabbath, you’re to stay in your house and just contemplate your navel (or whatever). And no, of course you can’t go to church on the Sabbath! What in heaven’s name are you thinking about child! Don’t you remember what god, HIMself, said at *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... Let each man stay where he is; no one may stir from his home on the seventh day.”

Do you want to be stoned to death?! Of course, maybe the clerics have subsequently learned that people who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. For after all, how come clerics leave their homes to go to church on Sunday? But still, God's words are clear: you're to stay home; to hell with clerical hypocrites.

In *Numbers 16*, the clerics add more to their claims of the consequences of complaining and of trying to usurp the priesthood. The clerics have their god open up the Earth, swallowing some people, and then zap an additional 14,700 with a fatal plague. But actually, it ain't work for God to kill off people: it's his favorite sport.

In *Numbers 17 & 18*, we learn that everything given by the Israelites to placate their god in fact belongs to the priests. My, my, my: who would have thought that the clerics' powerful, vengeful, jealous, murdering god would be so kind to the clerics?

In *Numbers 20*, after learning in *Numbers 19* about how to clean up after touching corpse (a clean-up task that must be a real drag for any Jewish doctor, nurse, or undertaker), we learn that, with God, you gotta follow instructions exactly to the letter – even if you're a Moses.

Thus, at *Numbers 20*, 8, God tells Moses explicitly:

“Take a staff, and then with Aaron your brother [that actually might have been superfluous; there is a chance – slight as it might have been – that Moses knew that Aaron was his brother] assemble all the community [it's not clear if that means just the 600,000-or-so men (give or take a few tens of thousand that God killed) or the full ~3 million people; anyway, quite a crowd gathered], and in front of them all, speak to the rock and it will yield its water.”

Well, poor old Moses didn't quite exactly follow instructions “to the letter” (of the law), for at *Numbers 20*, 10, Moses states:

Listen to me, you rebels [the Israelites were complaining again, this time from lack of water – and lack of sense, for by now they should have learned the consequences of complaining about the clerics]. Must we get water out this rock for you?

Then, foolishly,

Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff [rather than do what God told him, i.e., he was supposed to just “take a staff... [and] speak to the rock”].

Did I hear a certain grandchild say: “Big deal”?

Well, Dear, if you’re gonna believe the clerics (and by now, you’re supposed to know that you’d better believe!), it was a big deal to God, for he then reportedly said to Moses and Aaron:

“You did not trust me so far as to uphold my holiness [I guess God means that every word of his is “holy”] in the sight of the Israelites; therefore you shall not lead this assembly into the land which I promised to give them.”

So there you have it, Dear, don’t mess with God’s words (as written by the clerics). One little mess up, no matter your prior record, will get you in deep do-do. And thus, for example, when he tells you to stay home on the Sabbath, then you’d better bloody-well stay home!

On the other hand, the all-powerful and all-constant god changes the rules whenever he feels like it. Thus, Dear, I trust you paid attention to every single word in God’s second commandment:

“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.”

But now, at *Numbers 21*, 8, after God used poisonous snakes to kill off a few more thousand Israelites (Why not? They complained again!), we learn:

The Lord told Moses to make a serpent of bronze and erect it as a standard, so that anyone who had been bitten [by a poisonous snake] could look at it and recover.

And do you think that Moses then said “But, but, but... you told us not to make a likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth”? Nah, not Moses. He had learned his lesson. Never mind consistency, never mind logic, never mind anything – just obey.

*Numbers 21*, 10 is the start of an abbreviated description of Israelite massacres. I wrote “abbreviated”, even thought the description goes on, and on, and on, because at *Numbers 21*, 14, reference is made to “the Book of the Wars of the Lord”, which seems to be quoted at *Numbers 21*, 15, 18, & 27 but which, as far as I know, has never been discovered. Based on the Bible’s descriptions of these horrible massacres, maybe the Israelites

destroyed “the Book of the Wars of the Lord” out of shame. I hope so. It gives some hope that they may yet destroy the entire, damnable Bible.

Now, Dear, I don’t plan to go through all the gruesome, gory details about how the Israelites slaughtered the people they encountered. Later in this “excursion” (in **Qx10**) and in the “excursion” **Yx**, I’ll give you at least a glimpse of the historical setting for all the hideousness described in the OT, from which I trust you’ll see that the hideous activities of the Israelites seemed to be common among all people in the region during this time period: apparently there was no conception of basic human rights; people killed people as readily as they slaughtered animals. In fact, more ceremony was given to killing off some animals.

Yet, while you’re reading the Bible, Dear, I’d alert you to what are described as “songs” and “oracles”, because they may contain some accounts of events as remembered by the people, rather than as altered by the clerics (~800 years later) in their propaganda campaign to promote their priesthood. An example already mentioned is the “song” at *Exodus 15* (where the Israelites sang about the Egyptians “engulfed in the Red [or, more accurately, the Reed] Sea”. By the way, notice that in that song (at *Exodus 15, 15*), reference is made to “the chieftains of Edom” and “the leaders of Moab”, two references that make no sense so early in the Bible. Other examples are in *Numbers 21*, where references to Edom and Moab make more sense.

In particular, at *Numbers 21, 18*, we find a “song” about how water was found, a story that conflicts with the clerics version about Moses zapping a stone with his staff:

Well up, spring water! Greet it with song,  
The spring unearthed by the princes,  
laid open by the leaders of the people with scepter [i.e., a ceremonial staff]  
and mace [i.e., a spiked war club]  
a gift from the wilderness [not, as claimed by the clerics, a gift from God].

And actually, Dear, there might be something more in this song than the clerics ever meant to expose. Notice the line: “the spring unearthed by the princes”. What “princes”? Was one of them Prince Moses? To be consistent with the clerics’ story, the spring was unearthed by the high-priest Moses. So, is the clerics’ story a manipulation of the historical record, vaguely remembered by the people in their songs and manipulated by the priests for their profit? I imagine you can guess where I’d put my money.

Similarly, in the “song” (or a report of what “**the barbs say**”) at *Numbers 21*, 27, there’s a hint that the invading Israelites didn’t meet the Moabs in a fair fight but burned them out. And at the end of *Numbers 21* there’s a horrible refrain that becomes the hallmark of all the Israelites conquests: “**They put him [the King] to the sword with his sons and all his people, until there was no survivor left, and they occupied his land.**” Similarly, in *Numbers 22–24*, there’s a story that makes little sense unless it’s viewed as a construction by clerics living approximately 800 years later, in Babylon and in cahoots with the Persian clerics.

I won’t go through the story in detail, but notice that it’s about the “prophet” Balaam “**who was at Pethor by the Euphrates**” (i.e., probably a Persian) and who not only (so it turns out) could easily communicate with the Israelites’ god (who, when the clerics wrote the OT, was transformed into a form astoundingly similar to the Persian god) but also had an amazing power (similar to God’s) that was described by the King of Moab as follows (*Numbers 22*, 6): “**I know that those whom you bless are blessed, and those whom you curse are cursed.**” Stated differently, Dear, if while you’re reading this part of the Bible the stories smell suspiciously like propaganda by Persian priests, trust your nose!

But I’ll push that historical and covert stuff aside, for now, and return to more overt policy statements. At *Numbers 25*, 1, the clerics strain credulity to its extremity, wanting us to believe that, after all the Israelites had been through, they still strayed from the clerics’ control:

**The people** [and, of course, only men count as real “people”] **began to have intercourse with Moabite women... and they ate the sacrificial food and prostrated themselves before the gods of Moab** [in particular, the god Baal of Peor].

God [aka Moses aka the clerics] then became angry at the competition and killed off another 24,000 Israelites.

So, Dear, in case the clerics hadn’t made their message sufficiently clear earlier in their creation called “the holy Bible”, here we learn again of the consequences of not acknowledging the clerics’ exclusive rights to all religious con games. Their policy: religious tolerance is for those who don’t know how to kill off the competition.

*Numbers 26* details how the spoils of war were to be distributed among the Israelites, and *Numbers 27* details how Moses power was passed to Joshua. *Numbers 28 & 29* mostly deal with more items the clerics wanted on their menu. Then, in *Numbers 30*, the clerics enlighten us with a new policy, of course received as a direct communication from God. It takes longer to quote than it's worth; basically the policy is that a woman's word isn't worth a tinker's damn, unless it's approved by her father or husband.

In *Numbers 31*, some of the brutalities, butcheries, debaucheries, and depravities of the Israelites are detailed. Moses drafted 12,000 Israelites to attack the Midianites; they proceeded to slay all the Midianite males, but (so it's reported at *Numbers 31*, 8):

The Israelites took captive the Midianite women and their dependants, and carried off all their beasts, their flocks, and their property. They burnt all their cities, in which they [the Midianites] had settled, and all their encampments. They took all the spoil and plunder, both man and beast, and brought them – captives, plunder, and spoil – to Moses... Moses spoke angrily to the officers of the army...: "Now kill every male dependent, and kill every woman who has had intercourse with a man, but spare for yourselves every woman among them who has not had intercourse..."

And how I wish, Dear, that I could now report that because of this depravity, God abandoned Moses and the Israelites abandoned their God.

Instead, at *Numbers 31*, 25, the clerics convey that God relayed a message, via Moses, to tax the plunderers: of the 675,000 sheep, 72,000 cattle, 61,000 asses, and 32,000 virgin girls (all were divided evenly between the army and the people), the priests were to get 1 in 500 of everything in the warriors' half and 1 in 50 of everything in the people's half. Then, at *Numbers 31*, 51, the priests got all the plundered gold, which summed to a cool 16,750 shekels. So, Dear, I trust you clearly see the clerics' policy (Muhammad certainly did): properly directed and executed, crime pays – big time.

At the end of a long rehash of events and planned division of spoils, at *Numbers 35*, 34, a policy was enunciated by the damnable clerics that has plagued all subsequent Israelites who were foolish enough to believe all this crap. In its statement, the policy may not seem significant:

"You shall not make the land which you inhabit unclean [i.e., the Canaanites land]; the land in which I dwell; for I, the Lord, dwell among the Israelites."

The consequences, however, were significant: after the Israelites were thrown off the Canaanites land (by the Romans, more than 1,000 years later), the displaced Israelites (or Jews, for they then followed a modified version of their original religion, called Judaism) generally avoided becoming farmers in any “foreign land”, claiming that any land except the Canaanites’ land was “unclean”.

As a result, for the next 2,000-or-so years, the Jews never settled down, i.e., never became affiliated with any land, with their only “national identity” being *via* their religion (and associated customs). Consequently, devout Jews didn’t become farmers, and therefore, didn’t identify with another homeland. Further, as far as the people who lived on and worked their lands were concerned, devout Jews were then always considered to be “outsiders”, a depiction made horribly worse by Christian clerics’ claims that the Jews were responsible for the death of Jesus

As a consequence, when times became tough in any country, political leaders (who were wont to identify causes of the troubles other than their own incompetence) would commonly use the Jews, the “outsiders”, as “scapegoats”. The most familiar and most hideous example was Hitler’s Germany of the 1930s (when the Great Depression hit worldwide) – in part because, more than 2,000 years earlier, the damnable clerics promoted the nonsensical policy that only the Canaanites’ land was “clean”.

And after going through all this mud and guck, I admit that, once again, the word that comes to my mind is “impenetrability”.

“Would you tell me please,” said Alice, “what that means?”

“Now you talk like a reasonable child,” said Humpty Dumpty, looking very much pleased. “I mean by ‘impenetrability’ that we’ve had enough of that subject, and it would be just as well if you’d mention what you mean to do next, as I suppose you don’t mean to stop here all the rest of your life.”

Similarly, Dear, for you: it’s time to take a break. Later, please try to read through *Deuteronomy*... after you get some exercise!