

Yx13 – The Mythical Monster Moses – 2

From my admittedly superficial investigations reported in the first half of this post, I've reached two, tentative conclusions. The first is that, if one seeks reliable information about Moses, then such a search would probably devour the rest of one's life! If the reader thinks I exaggerate, then after admitting that I sometimes do (to try to emphasize a point), I'd challenge the reader to peruse what Mudarras Kadhiri Gaznavi has written about Moses,¹ and then, peruse the two-part analysis of "Moses and the Exodus" posted by The Circle of Ancient Iranian Studies.² And my second tentative conclusion is that, at the end of such investigations, I wouldn't be surprised if one discovered that Ezra & Co-Conspirators (Ezra & C-C) composed their mythical Moses by forming a "composite" of all possible Moseses!

But again (as I stated in the previous post), whoever "the real Moses" might have been doesn't matter, because a 100% guarantee (or more accurately,³ a 99.99999... [continue for ~500 nines!]...999% guarantee) can be given that the Moses described in the Bible is a myth: no real Moses pulled off any supernatural stunts ("miracles") and no real Moses talked to any god – because (in the vernacular) *there ain't no such animals* (and there never were)! So, regardless of what crumbs of reality might be contained in the existence of a real Moses (or more than one!), I want to return, now, to listing additional "ingredients" available to the authors of the *Pentateuch* for "cooking up" their mythical Moses. In the previous post I listed six such ingredients; here, I continue with:

7. Miracles and Similar Silliness

There are a number of literary sources that could have provided the Old Testament (OT) authors with material for all the supernatural silliness described in the *Pentateuch* dealing with "miracles".⁴ To illustrate, first consider Moses' "magical staff".

¹ See http://www.geocities.com/spenta_mainyu_2/moses1.htm.

² At http://www.cais-soas.com/CAIS/Religions/non-iranian/Judaism/Persian_Judaism/book4/pt10.htm.

³ See <http://zenofzero.net/docs/IiIndoctrinationinIgnorance.pdf>.

⁴ I put "miracles" in quotation marks because the word 'miracle' has two meanings. One meaning is to describe an event that has an extremely low probability of occurring, as in, "It'll be a *miracle* if I ever finish the task of plumbing the full depth of the damnable God Lie!" The other meaning for 'miracle' describes alleged events used to concoct essentially all religions, i.e., some "supernatural stunt" (an event caused by some "supernatural force or agent"). Here, I'm addressing this second type of "miracle" – the type that, in reality, never occurs, simply because what occurs is, perforce, natural; so, "supernatural" forces, agents, events, etc. (such as gods, angels, miracles, etc.) don't exist.

With God’s help, Moses (and his brother Aaron) allegedly caused a host of troubles for the Egyptians, including parting the Red Sea (or, translated correctly, “the Reed Sea”), to let the Israelites pass, and then closing it, drowning the Egyptian army. The ancient Egyptian literature has many examples of the “importance” of such “magical staffs” and associated “miracles”. One example is entitled *The Legend of the Taking of Joppa*, which tells a story about the Egyptian retaking of a Palestinian town for Thutmose III. The full story is long; I’ll quote only a little to indicate the “importance” of the king’s staff, starting with the report to Thutmose III from a messenger from the governor of “the country of Kharu [Palestine]”:⁵

“The vanquished of Joppa [it’s not clear to me if that’s a person’s name or if it refers to a group, similar to referring to an enemy as “he”] has revolted against his Majesty (l.h.s. = life, health, strength) [namely, King Manakhpirriya, i.e., Pharaoh Thutmose III] and he has massacred the foot soldiers of his Majesty (l.h.s.), also his charioteers, and no one can stand with him.”

When the King Manakhpirriya (l.h.s.) [by the way, this use of “l.h.s.” for “life, health, strength” is similar to the Muslim custom, started ~2,000 years later, of adding “pbuh” (peace be upon him) behind Muhammad’s name – although, actually, there’s some controversy about that⁶] heard all the words that the messenger had said to him, he fell into a rage like a cheetah of the south. “By my life, by the favor of Re, by the love borne for me by my father Amon, I will destroy the city of the vanquished of Joppa; I will make him feel the weight of my arm.”

He called his nobles, his captains of war, also his magician-scribes [note that the scribes were also magicians!], and repeated to them the message that the Governor of the land of the North had sent him. Lo! they were all silent with one mouth; they knew not what to reply, either good or evil.

But Thutiya [a commander in the army] said to his Majesty (l.h.s.): “Oh thou to whom the Entire-Land pays homage, command that there be given me *the great staff* [italics added] of the King Manakhpirriya (l.h.s.), the name of which is... *tiut-nofrit*. [Staffs were so important that they had proper names; here, though, a part of this name is missing from the original papyrus.] Command also that there be given me foot-soldiers of his Majesty (l.h.s.), also charioteers of the flower of the brave ones of the land of Egypt, and I will slay the vanquished of Joppa, I will take his city.”

⁵ From http://www.archive.org/stream/sacredbooksearly02hornuoft/sacredbooksearly02hornuoft_djvu.txt.

⁶ See the Comments at <http://www.jihadwatch.org/2009/01/the-ongoing-exploits-of-fr-zakaria-botros-god-does-not-pray.html> - comments.

His Majesty (l.h.s.) said, “It is excellent, excellent, that which thou hast spoken.” And the great staff of the King Manakhpirriya (l.h.s.) was given to him, and foot soldiers were given to him and the charioteers which he had asked for.

[After preparing for battle, Thutiya sent the following message to the “vanquished of Joppa”:]

“I am Thutiya, the general of infantry of the land of Egypt, and I have followed his Majesty (l.h.s.) in all his marches to the lands of the North and the lands of the South. But lo! now, the King Manakhpirriya (l.h.s.) has been jealous of me because I am a hero, and wished to kill me [but if he were rebelling from the King, why would he still add “l.h.s.” to the King’s name?!], but I fled before him, and I have brought the great staff of the King Manakhpirriya (l.h.s.) [along with a trap to ensnare you!] and I have hidden it in the baskets of forage for my horses, and if thou wilt, I will give it thee, and I will be with thee, I and the people who are with me of the flower of the brave ones of the army of Egypt.”

When the vanquished of Joppa heard this he [fell for the trap!] rejoiced greatly, greatly, for the words that Thutiya had spoken, for he knew that Thutiya was a hero who had not his equal in the entire land. He sent to Thutiya, saying, “Come with me, and I will be to thee as a brother, and I will give thee a piece of land chosen from what is the best of the country of Joppa.”

As readers can find from the referenced site, the rest of the story is interesting: it provides a forerunner (by about 500 years) for the tale of the Trojan horse! But with the above, my goal was simply to provide an example of a story, available to Ezra & C-C on papyrus (e.g., when the Persians conquered Egypt) in which a special staff (in this case, the king’s staff) was central to the story. In *Exodus*, Moses’ staff is called “**the staff of god**” (*Exodus 4, 20*).

With “the staff of God”, Moses and Aaron allegedly pulled off a bunch of “miracles”, which surely anyone with the intellectual capabilities of at least a six-year old consider to be on par with the “miracles” in children’s TV cartoons. But amazingly, believing Jews, Christians, Muslims, and Mormons say that Moses and Aaron actually pulled off their supernatural stunts. Do they also believe in the Easter Bunny, Santa Claus, and Bugs Bunny?! Doesn’t it bother them – at least a little – that the OT reports that also the Egyptian priests pulled off many of the same “miracles”?!

As for details of the alleged miracles, the authors (identified herein as Ezra & C-C) could of course let their imaginations run wild. They claim, first, that first Moses and then Aaron threw the magic staff to the ground and it

became a snake – but then, the Egyptian magicians did the same with their staffs (*Exodus 7, 12*). Next, Aaron used the magic staff to turn all the water in Egypt to blood (*Exodus 7, 22*) – but then, the Egyptian magicians did the same (although how they could have done it, after all the water was already blood, is a minor detail that apparently didn't bother the authors). And so on the silliness continues: Aaron used God's staff to create a plague of frogs that “covered the land of Egypt” (*Exodus 8, 6*) – but it was matched by the Egyptian priests. How Aaron's frogs could be distinguished from the Egyptian priests' frogs is another minor detail omitted; perhaps Aaron's frogs croaked in Hebrew, while the rest croaked in Egyptian. ☺

The next two magic tricks Aaron conducted with God's magic staff (or wand!) led to swarms of gnats and flies (*Exodus 8, 16–24*), which for some unexplained reason, the Egyptian priests couldn't duplicate – perhaps because gnats and flies being so common in Egypt, no one noticed the change! And so on it goes, getting sillier and stupider, including (*Exodus 9 – 10*) killing all the livestock (multiple times!), boils, hail, and locusts. “The Ninth Blow” (starting at *Exodus 10, 21*) was a real doozy: darkness for three days. That, thereby, after 72 hours without the Sun, the temperature would have dropped by about 40°F (~20°C) every 12 hours, leading to a total temperature drop of about 240°F (~120°C), freezing every living thing to death (including the Jews), is just one of those minor details that needn't concern “true believers”.

The finale of this silliness – or more appropriately, this horror story – was the killing of all Egyptian firstborn (*Exodus 11 – 12*). Note that God specifically states (so the authors allege) that He purposefully made the pharaoh “obstinate”, leading to all the horrors allegedly inflicted on the Egyptians, so (*Exodus 12, 26*) the Jewish people would have a story to tell their children about the greatness of their god! Elsewhere,⁷ I already criticized the hideousness of this story, this god, and that (to this day!) Jewish people still “celebrate” this alleged atrocity in what they call “Passover” (since God, while spreading his hideousness, allegedly “passed over” the Jewish homes). I repeat my desire that every Jewish person in the world would reject this story (and their god) as a diabolic lie, most likely concocted by Ezra & C-C to entrap the Jewish people into paying the tribute that the Persian emperor Darius demanded from his “fifth satrapy”.

⁷ At http://zenofzero.net/docs/Ox05_Policies_in_Exodus_-_1.pdf.

But returning to the thrust of this post, the question arises: Did Ezra & C-C have anything to stimulate these stories (besides unconstrained imaginations)? At least a partial answer to that question seems to be that the authors could have used what appears to have been a “literary construct” called *The Admonitions of Ipuwer*, copies of which were probably available to the authors when their Persian masters conquered Egypt. These *Admonitions* include the phrases:⁸

Foreigners have become people everywhere... the Nile is in flood... poor men have become the possessors of treasures... many dead are buried in the river... let us banish many from us... the River is blood.

When these *Admonitions* were written is uncertain, but interested readers can find⁹ that the consensus view among Egyptian scholars is that they were most likely composed (predominantly as a literary construct, describing chaos) no later than the Hyksos rule and probably earlier, after the world’s second known social revolution (which occurred in Egypt in about 2000 BCE) – although many “defenders of the faith” have (dishonestly) claimed that these *Admonitions* attest to the reality of Moses’ “miracles”, which allegedly occurred centuries later.

For Christians, Muslims, Mormons, etc., the most famous supernatural stunt claimed to have been conducted by Moses was to separate the Red Sea (or, translated correctly, the Reed Sea), leading to the drowning of the Egyptian army (an incident without corroboration from Egyptian sources and which is probably a priestly exaggeration of an incident in which some army’s chariots were stuck in the mud somewhere, e.g., on some tidal flats). The silliness of parting waters as a part of an army’s campaign is also contained in myths about Sargon the Great, who lived ~1,000 years before Moses allegedly lived and about whom an Assyrian myth states:

But I, Sargon... led my army over the Tigris and the Euphrates, at the peak of the flood, the spring flood, as (if it be) dry ground.

Other myths about gods or the favorites of gods parting waters are described in the 1884 book (available at Google books) by J.W. Bouton with the snappy little title: *Bible Myths, and their Parallels in Other Religions: Being a comparison of the Old and New Testament Myths and Miracles with*

⁸ See <http://www.touregypt.net/admonitionsofipuwer.htm> & <http://www.reshafim.org.il/ad/egypt/texts/ipuwer.htm> - rem1.

⁹ For example, see <http://www.heardworld.com/higgaion/?p=108>.

those of Heathen Nations of Antiquity, considering also their Origin and Meaning. Examples (see especially pp. 55–57 of Bouton’s book) include the similar “miracles” performed by Bacchus (or Dionysus or Osiris) and, in Hindu tales, by Chrisna’s father Yasodha, and as given in the *Rig Veda*, by the Indian sage Visvimati.

Similar nonsense was also “standard fare” in Egyptian literature. A famous example (a part of the *Tales of the Magicians*, which seem to be the first Egyptian stories written) is described in *The Temple of the Cosmos* by Jeremy Naydler, who starts his description with the sarcastic statement:¹⁰

Division of waters was certainly a skill known to have been practiced by Egyptian magicians as far back as the Old Kingdom. The Papyrus Westcar relates how the Fourth Dynasty king Snefru (the predecessor of the better known Khufu or Cheops [who commissioned the building of the Great Pyramid in about 2500 BCE]) was one afternoon enjoying a diversion from the cares of state by being rowed on his royal lake by twenty beautiful young women from his palace. Now it happened that one of these girls dropped her pendant in the water, and in her distress ceased rowing. Because she was the leader who set the stroke for all the girls on that side of the boat, they all stopped rowing. The result, we may imagine, is that the royal barge was soon going round in circles.

King Snefru, finding himself unable to console the girl with promises of another pendant to replace the one she had lost, called for his chief magician, Zazamankh. Zazamankh hastened to reassure the king that all would be well. Then, stepping forward to the front of the boat, he proceeded to pronounce “words of power” over the waters. He then rolled back one side of the lake, piling it upon the other, so that a cliff of water was formed. The papyrus states:

Now, as for the water, it was twelve cubits deep in the middle, and it reached twenty-four cubits after it was turned back.

[That, by the way, is a standard trick used by tellers of “magic stories” (used for more than 4,000 years!): after describing some magic feat, the storyteller immediately adds some fact that’s obviously true (thus, here, if the water was originally 12 cubits deep, then doubled, it would be 24 cubits deep) – as if “truth” were contagious, acquired through close contact! I mean, if the 12 cubits were doubled to obtain only 23 cubits of water, then obviously the alleged miracle would be a fake. Right? Riiiiiiight.]

¹⁰ Copied from

http://books.google.com/books?id=QIWupcekPckC&pg=PA168&lpg=PA168&dq=Moses++Zazamankh&source=web&ots=71B8DZ_AFM&sig=B76S0sqVDtD933Q6S8L8CvvKTmk&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=3&ct=result

As a consequence, the pendant could soon be discovered lying upon the exposed bed of the lake. The girl having retrieved it,* Zazamankh once more pronounced words of power over the waters and returned the half of the lake that he had displaced to its original position.

* [Incidentally, although it's a minor point, yet to try to keep the record straight (and to give the reader the treat of reading the original of a ~4,000 year old manuscript!), the translation of the original papyrus that's available on the internet states that, actually, Zazamankh retrieved the pendant from the lake bed – although, the girl then “retrieved” it (in the sense that she repossessed it):¹¹

And his Majesty said, “Haste, bring me the chief reciter Zazamankh,” and they brought him. And his Majesty said, “Zazamankh, my brother, I have done as thou sayedst [i.e., gone for a boat ride with his female rowers], and the heart of his Majesty is refreshed with the sight of their rowing. [The “sight of their rowing” or the “sight of the rowers rowing?! Happiness is having 20 beautiful young women rowing your boat in unison!] But now a jewel of new malachite of one of the little ones is fallen in the water, and she ceases and rows not, and she has spoilt the rowing of her side. And I said to her, ‘Wherefore rowest thou not?’ and she answered to me, ‘It is for my jewel of new malachite which is fallen in the water.’ I replied to her, ‘Row on, for behold I will replace it’; and she answered to me, ‘But I want my own piece again back in its setting’ [pouting like a child!].” Then the chief reciter Zazamankh spake his magic speech. And he placed one part of the waters of the lake upon the other, and discovered the jewel lying upon a shard; and he took it up and gave it unto its mistress. And the water, which was twelve cubits deep in the middle, reached now to twenty-four cubits after he turned it. And he spake, and used his magic speech; and he brought again the water of the lake to its place.]

Besides having 20 beautiful young girls rowing your boat in unison, happiness is apparently possessing “words of power”, “magic speech”, and the ability to keep a boat on a steady keel while the water is parted, doubled, and then replaced! – plus, apparently, believing that silly stories, fairy tales, and “sacred scripture” are “gospel truth”.

But otherwise, it's mind boggling that so many people in the world (including most Muslims, fundamentalist Jews and Christians, Mormons, etc.) actually “believe” that Moses parted the waters of the Red (or Reed) Sea. In particular, a February 2004 ABCNEWS/Primetime poll¹² found:

...64 percent [of Americans sampled] believe the story of Moses parting the Red Sea is “literally true, meaning it happened that way word-for-word”.

¹¹ See http://www.archive.org/stream/sacredbooksearly02hornuoft/sacredbooksearly02hornuoft_djvu.txt.

¹² See http://abcnews.go.com/sections/primetime/us/views_of_bible_poll_040216.html.

That's terrible! How could anyone be so gullible – so dumb?! Next, they'll be believing that some giant Jabberwock in the sky will be angry at them, and punish them – for eternity – if they don't exactly follow all the laws that the con-artist clerics claim were laid down by their god!

8. Supernatural source of laws

Still another ingredient for the *Pentateuch* stories was the lie (essentially universally accepted at the time as “truth”) that the gods were the source of the people's laws. The most obvious (and famous) example is the laws of Hammurabi, which I've reviewed elsewhere¹³ and which were carved into stone approximately 600 years before Moses allegedly did his engraving. And actually, it may reveal something about the authors that they had Moses allegedly carve his commandments in stone, whereas an Egyptian priest would have been expected to write his laws on papyrus. As for the Ten Commandments, already I've pointed out their similarity with the Sumerian *Instructions to Zi-ud-sura from his Father*,¹⁴ a copy of which (on a clay tablet) has been dated to be from about 2600 BCE, and in a later post, I'll show the similarity of the Ten Commandments with ancient Egyptian “moral codes”.

The reason why primitive people reached the conclusion that the gods dictated the laws seems obvious. They found themselves in possession of customs and regulations that their ancestors (and animals!) had discovered (*via* trial and error – and successes, i.e., via the scientific method) would promote their own and their group's survival (e.g., the desirability of helping one another, sharing, empathy, detection of cheaters, prohibition of adultery and incest, etc., including prohibitions against eating certain foods), as well as various customs that served to distinguish the group (e.g., various modes of dress and the Egyptian custom of circumcision). Not realizing that such regulations and customs had a natural advantage (for the survival of individuals and the group), the people concluded that their god must have dictated “the laws”.

And thus the authors of the *Pentateuch* have their god specify a huge number of laws (most of which were, almost certainly, already the customs of the people), including laws about how to sell your daughter into slavery

¹³ At http://zenofzero.net/docs/M1_The_Mntnous_God_Lie.pdf.

¹⁴ At http://zenofzero.net/docs/M4_Morality_without_Gods.pdf.

(*Exodus 21, 7–9*), about the acceptable way to beat your slaves to death (*Exodus 21, 20–21*), and about sexual activities acceptable to the priests (e.g., *Leviticus 18, 6–23; 20, 9–21*). Here, though, I don't want to again go through the barbaric laws that the clerical authors claim were dictated by their god and that religious fools still consider to be appropriate (e.g., dealing with misogyny, slavery, and sexuality). Elsewhere,¹⁵ I've commented on serious inadequacies even in the famous Ten Commandments and posted five chapters¹⁶ on some of the horrible policies promoted in the laws that Ezra & C-C claim were stipulated by their god.

In a later post, I plan to comment a little on some similarities among the alleged “law givers” of many different cultures, including Moses, Manu, Minos, Bacchus, and Numa. Here, I'll just quote a little from T.W. Doane's book (available on the internet) *Bible Myths and Their Parallels in Other Religions* (p. 59):

Bacchus [or Dionysus, who originally (~2,000 BCE) seems to have been an Indo-European god] was called the ‘Lawgiver,’ and his laws were written on two tablets of stone. This feature in the Hebrew legend was evidently copied from that related of Bacchus, but the idea of Moses receiving the commandments from the Lord on a mountain was obviously taken from the Persian legend related of Zoroaster [or, better, Zarathustra, the name I'll use in what follows]. Prof. Max Muller has said:

What applies to the religion of Moses applied to that of Zarathustra. It is placed before us as a complete system from the first, revealed by Ahuramazda (Ormuzd), proclaimed by Zarathustra.

The disciples of Zarathustra, in their profusion of legends of the master, relate that one day, as he prayed on a high mountain, in the midst of thunders and lightnings (“fire from heaven”), the Lord himself appeared before him, and delivered unto him the “Book of Law.” While the King of Persia and the people were assembled together, Zarathustra came down from the mountain unharmed, bringing with him the “Book of the Law,” which had been revealed to him by Ormuzd. They call this book the *Zend-Avesta*, which signified the *Living Word*.

According to the religion of the Cretans, Minos, their lawgiver, ascended a mountain (Mount Dicta) and there received from the Supreme Lord (Zeus) the sacred laws which he brought down with him. Almost all nations of antiquity have legends of their holy men ascending a mountain to ask counsel of the gods, such places being invested with peculiar sanctity, and deemed nearer to the deities than other portions of the earth.

¹⁵ At http://zenofzero.net/docs/M2_Misconceived_Morality.pdf.

¹⁶ Starting at http://zenofzero.net/docs/Qx05_Policies_in_Exodus_-_1.pdf.

That ancient people came to such conclusions is understandable. That, to this day, all Muslims, all “good” Mormons, most Christians (all Christian “fundamentalists”), and maybe the majority of “practicing” Jews (some day they’ll get it right!) still “believe” that their god is “the great legislator in the sky” (if, now, no longer involved in specifying traffic laws, yet, He’s still in charge of “the moral law”) is also understandable – when the power of childhood indoctrination and the weakness of some people’s intellectual capabilities are considered. Nonetheless, it’s saddening.

9. Perks for the priesthood

This, too, is old stuff. As Voltaire said, “[The first priest was the first rogue who met the first fool.](#)” No doubt the authors simply copied the list of perks that Persian, Egyptian, Sumerian... priests had perfected – although the authors probably changed some of the details about their “sanctuaries” to suit their own style (e.g., *Exodus 24 – 27*), adjusted specifications for their attire for their own comforts (e.g., *Exodus 28 & 39*), revised the required rituals for their own conveniences (e.g., *Exodus 29 – 30*, *Numbers 29*, *Deuteronomy 16*), modified the demanded menu items to placate their own palates (e.g., *Numbers 15, 18, & 28*; *Deuteronomy 14, 22–29*; *18, 1–8*), and of course, set tax rates (e.g., *Exodus 30*), suitable sin and other offerings (e.g., *Exodus 35 & Leviticus 1 – 5*), and collection rates for the “[spoils of war](#)” (e.g., *Numbers 31*) – sufficient so their extra expenses could be easily met. In summary, what the authors of the *Pentateuch* did was simply provide the reader (or, originally, the listener) a revealing summary of just how avaricious, bogus, bombastic, covetous, despicable, extortionist, fraudulent, greedy, hideous... all clerics are. Who but a priest, I wonder, can read such crap without disgust that any human would be such a parasite.

Meanwhile, it’s unknown, of course, what might have been the exact source of both the “laws of Moses” and “priestly perks” described in the *Pentateuch*. There are hints, however, both in the Bible and from archeological discoveries, that both the “perks” and “laws” originated during the 7th Century BCE during the time of King Josiah of Judah. Thus, during Josiah’s reign (as given at *2 Kings 22, 8*):

[The high priest](#) [of the Yahweh religion] [Hilkiah told Shaphan the adjutant-general that he had discovered the book of the law](#) [of Moses, i.e., the “[Book of the Covenant](#)”] [in the house of the Lord](#) [allegedly built by Solomon, approximately 200 years earlier].

I suspect that most skeptics respond to such a claim with something like:

Sure you did! You're the high priest. Somehow, the single most important document in your religion (containing the laws of Moses) was misplaced for 200 years! And now, conveniently, you just happen to find all these laws – which will enable you to slaughter the priests of competing religions, regain control over the people, and live off them as the parasites that you are? Riiiiight. And is there any chance that you have some great, oceanfront property for sale in North Dakota?

Meanwhile, though, archeological evidence suggests that major religious reforms did occur approximately during the time of King Josiah. That (and more) is summarized in the following quotation from an author who uses the pseudonym “M-theory”:¹⁷

To trace the foundations of this ongoing Biblical bonfire, we must go back to 1999. All hell broke loose in Israel in November of that year when Prof. Ze'ev Herzog of Tel Aviv University announced: “The Israelites were never in Egypt, did not wander the desert, did not conquer the land, and did not pass it on to the twelve tribes.” Moreover, the Jewish God YHWH had a female consort – the goddess Asherah!

His conclusion that the kingdom of David and Solomon was at best a small tribal monarchy, at worst total myth, has made enemies for him in the camps of traditional Jewish and Christian belief systems. He asserts: all evidence demonstrates that the Jews did not adopt monotheism until the 7th Century BCE – a heresy according to the Biblical tradition dating it to Moses at Mount Sinai...

Modern historical disciplines studying the biblical era uniformly conclude that *Exodus* could not have been written earlier than the 7th century BCE, and certainly not by the Biblical Moses who at best is a fictional combination of Egyptian personalities.

In Israel itself, 7th Century BCE is the period in which the archaeological evidence presented by Herzog suggests the emergence of Jerusalem as a cultural centre occurs. By all accounts, it is a cultural centre struggling to find an identity and nationality for itself and, given the discovery of the Jewish texts displaying Yahweh having a consort in the form of Asherah, it is not difficult to piece this jigsaw together.

In 639 BCE, Josiah, king of Judah, is known to have introduced wide-ranging religious reforms and brought additional areas of “Israel” under his control. It is during this period that “polemics” against and “inversion” of a wide variety of religious and cultural sources are brought together to form a religious and political unity.

¹⁷ From <http://pegasus.dancehallreggae.com/forum/archive/index.php?t-50272.html>.

Consequently, it seems reasonable to conclude that the “perks and laws” that Ezra & C-C were working from (to construct their Moses tale) were likely whatever the high priest Hilkiah claimed he had found – although that’s not to suggest that Ezra & C-C didn’t adjust the “perks and laws” to suit their own purposes, tastes, and deviances!

10. Atrocities committed on God’s behalf

Now, whereas I’m finding it difficult to contain my disgust with the Bible and all clerics, then similar to Thomas Paine, I “[hasten to the end of it.](#)” But before terminating this two-part post, I feel compelled to add some comments in response to something else Paine wrote in his book (which is available on the internet) *The Age of Reason*:

Whenever we read the obscene stories, the voluptuous debaucheries, the cruel and torturous executions, the unrelenting vindictiveness, with which more than half the [OT] is filled, it would be more consistent that we called it the word of a demon, than the word of God. It is a history of wickedness, that has served to corrupt and brutalize mankind; and, for my own part, I sincerely detest it, as I detest everything that is cruel. We scarcely meet with anything, a few phrases excepted, but what deserves either our abhorrence or our contempt...

My sentiments are similar to Paine’s, but it seems appropriate to point out that, even in their descriptions of such evils, the authors of the OT demonstrated little originality, since similar descriptions were available for their plagiarizing. That is, to be fair (even to the contemptible Ezra & C-C), I propose that they probably weren’t so psychotic as their stories suggest: history had informed them that such horrors (as they claimed were perpetrated by the mythical Moses) had been committed by earlier rulers.

For example, Ezra & C-C probably had heard (or read) about the atrocities committed under the leadership of the Egyptian pharaoh Thothmes III (c.1480–1425 BCE, commonly regarded as the most powerful Egyptian king, “the Alexander the Great of Ancient Egypt”) and committed under the leadership of the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser (who ruled from about 1115–1076 BCE). Courtesy archeological research, descriptions of such atrocities are available. For example, the following is a portion of the “Discourse of Amen-Ra, Lord of Thrones”, claimed by Thothmes III to be praise of him by the “supreme god” Amen-Ra. This “Discourse” was recorded on a stone tablet, and as per usual, to the quotation I’ve added some notes in brackets.¹⁸

¹⁸ From <http://www.online-books.library.upenn.edu/women/edwards/pharaohs/pharaohs-6.html>.

Come unto me! Tremble thou with joy, Oh my Son, my avenger, Ra-men-Kheper, endowed with life everlasting [i.e., as with the rest of the pharaohs, Thothmes III claimed to be a god and therefore claimed to be “endowed with life everlasting”]!

I [the god Amen-Ra] am resplendent through thy love, and my heart is dilated on beholding thy joyous entrance into my Temple. My hands have endowed thy limbs with living strength; thy perfections are pleasant in my sight [i.e., it’s not enough that Thothmes III considers himself to be “beautiful”; he claims that the “chief god”, Ra, considers him beautiful!].

I am established in my Abode. I give thee victory and power over all the nations. I have spread the fear of thee throughout all lands [i.e., Thothmes III ruled by fear – just as Ezra & C-C chose], and thy terror unto the limits of the four props of heaven [in the days when the sky was held up by “four props”, as described in the OT].

It is I who magnify the dread of thy name, and the echo of thy war-cry in the breasts of the outer barbarians. I stretch forth my arm, and I seize the people of Nubia [i.e., modern-day Ethiopia] in myriads, and the nations of the North [including the Canaanites] in millions, and I bind them for thee in sheaves!

I have cast thine enemies under thy sandals, and thou hast trampled their chiefs under thine heel. By my command, the world in its length and its breadth, from East to West, is thy throne!

Joyful of heart, thou dost traverse the lands of all the nations, none daring to oppose thee. Thou hast sailed the waters of the great sea [i.e., the Mediterranean], and thou hast scoured Mesopotamia in victory and power.

I have made the nations to hear thy war-cry in the depths of their caves, and I have cut off the breath of life from their nostrils. I made their hearts to turn back before thy victories.

My glory was on thy brow, dazzling them, leading them captive, burning them to ashes in their settlements. [And he calls them “barbarians”?!] Thou hast struck off the heads of the Asiatics, and their children cannot escape from thee [similar to the atrocities claimed to have been committed by Moses, Joshua, et al.].

Every land illuminated by thy diadem [i.e., his crown] is encircled by thy might; and in all the zone of the heavens there is not a rebel to rise up against thee. The enemy bring in their tribute on their backs, prostrating themselves before thee, their limbs trembling and their hearts burned up within them...

Another example of the despicable behavior of ancient tyrants is the following, which is a small portion of the text written for the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser I, who reigned from 1114–1076 BCE:¹⁹

Ashur (and) the great gods, the guardians of my kingdom, who gave government and laws to my dominions [i.e., another case of a god allegedly dictating the laws] and ordered an enlarged frontier to their territory [as Ezra & C-C claimed their god ordered], having committed to (my) hand their valiant and warlike servants, I have subdued the lands and the peoples and the strong places, and the Kings who were hostile to Ashur [the one true god!]; and I have reduced all that was contained in them. With a host of kings I have fought... and have imposed on them the bond of servitude. There is not to me a second in war nor an equal in battle. I have added territory to Assyria and peoples to her people. I have enlarged the frontier of my territories, and subdued all the lands contained in them.

In the beginning of my reign 20,000 of the Muskayans and their 5 kings, who for 50 years had held the countries of Alza and Perukhuz, without paying tribute and offerings to Ashur my Lord, and whom a King of Assyria had never ventured to meet in battle betook themselves to their strength, and went and seized the country of Comukha. In the service of Ashur my Lord my chariots and warriors I assembled after me... the country of Kasiyaia, a difficult country, I passed through. With their 20,000 fighting men and their 5 kings in the country of Comukha I engaged. I defeated them. The ranks of their warriors in fighting the battle were beaten down as if by the tempest. Their carcasses covered the valleys and the tops of the mountains. I cut off their heads. The battlements of their cities I made heaps of, like mounds of earth, their movables, their wealth, and their valuables I plundered to a countless amount. 6,000 of their common soldiers who fled before my servants and accepted my yoke, I took them, and gave them over to the men of my own territory. Then I went into the country of Comukha, which was disobedient and withheld the tribute and offerings due to Ashur my Lord: I conquered the whole country of Comukha. I plundered their movables, their wealth, and their valuables. Their cities I burnt with fire, I destroyed and ruined...

Thus, the atrocities that Ezra & C-C advocated and that Moses and Joshua allegedly committed were apparently “the norm” for megalomaniacs of the time. Examples in the *Pentateuch* include destroying villages, killing all males and married women but taking virgin girls as “spoils of war” (as described at *Numbers 31*, 9–18) or killing everyone (*Deuteronomy 2*, 34 and 3, 6). Also, for people of “distant lands”, offering “peace” if they would become slaves of the Jews, but killing all males and taking their women and little children as “spoils” if they refused (*Deuteronomy 20*, 11–14). For the Canaanites, however (*Deuteronomy 20*, 16–17):

¹⁹ From <http://mcadams.posc.mu.edu/txt/ah/Assyria/Inscra00.html>.

...you must not allow a single living thing to survive; instead, you must utterly annihilate them...

Such hideousness continues past *Deuteronomy* (meaning “second law”) through the *Book of Joshua* (which some scholars suggest was part of the same crazy production that led to the *Pentateuch*, which then should be called the *Hexateuch*).

So, given that such horrors had historical precedent, one might be inclined to be lenient in one’s criticism of the authors of the *Pentateuch* (or *Hexateuch*), but I’d argue that the authors deserve unconditional condemnation, because:

- 1) With the deceitful purpose of ruling the Jewish people for the Persians, Ezra & C-C lied (in reality, Moses et al. didn’t engage in the atrocities described in the OT),
- 2) Ezra, in particular, added racism to the evils attributed to Moses, and
- 3) With their writings, Ezra & C-C not only bolstered but prolonged such abominable behavior.

To end this post, I’ll try to justify those three indictments.

That the *Pentateuch* authors lied follows not only from the most established “fact” that humans have been able to discern (namely, nothing is “supernatural”; therefore, neither gods nor “miracles” exist or have ever existed) but also from recent archaeological research. For example, in their book *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology’s New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts* by Israel Finkelstein (director of the Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology at Tel Aviv University) and Neil Asher Silberman (director of historical interpretation for the Ename Center for Public Archaeology and Heritage Presentation in Belgium), a book well summarized in an article in *Sunrise* magazine (February/March 2003) by Sarah Belle Dougherty, the authors conclude:²⁰

...the emergence of early Israel was an outcome of the collapse of the Canaanite culture, not its cause. And most of the Israelites did not come from outside Canaan – they emerged from within it. There was no mass Exodus from Egypt. There was no violent conquest of Canaan.

²⁰ From <http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sunrise/52-02-3/xt-sbd2.htm>.

Most of the people who formed early Israel were local people – the same people whom we see in the highlands throughout the Bronze and Iron Ages. The early Israelites were – irony of ironies – themselves originally Canaanites!

But although, essentially certainly, the atrocities allegedly perpetrated by Moses et al. never occurred (and therefore, consistent with my first indictment, Ezra & C-C lied), yet (consistent with my second indictment, that Ezra was a racist), the OT reports that Ezra, himself, instigated a horrible “ethnic cleansing” campaign. Thus, at *Ezra 9, 2*, Ezra complains:

They [the Israelites] have taken women of these nations as wives for themselves and their sons, so that *the holy race* [italics added] has become mixed with the foreign population...

Then, after Ezra introduced his horrible “**holy race**” concept, he says to the Israelites (at *Ezra 10, 10*):

You have committed an offence in marrying foreign wives and have added to Israel’s guilt. Make your confession now to the Lord the God of your fathers and do his will, and separate yourselves from the foreign population and from your foreign wives.

And so, good-little sheep that they were depicted to be, the Israelites obliged, abandoning their “foreign” wives and children, so that (*Nehemiah 13, 3*):

When the people heard the law, they separated from Israel all who were of *mixed blood* [italics added].

Setting aside (at least for the moment) the evil of Ezra’s racism, it seems rather amazing that, thereby, he was surpassing his alter-ego’s alleged barbarism, because clearly his mythical Moses wasn’t racist. Thus, as an example and assuming Moses wasn’t black, recall his marriage to the black (Cushite) woman – which, however, stimulated condemnation from Moses’ brother (Aaron) and sister (Miriam). But then, God reportedly punished them for their racism (*Numbers 12, 1*), seemingly suggesting that Ezra concluded that his (and Aaron’s and Miriam’s) racist views should take precedence over God’s views!

Yet (perhaps strangely), I think the more serious indictment is neither that Ezra C-C lied nor that Ezra was a racist, but that the damnable lies they fabricated were so effective! That is, the result (the OT) prolonged the evils that they depicted.

* Go to other chapters via

For example, to this day (approximately 2,400 years later!), the OT is still used as a “manual” for ideologues and megalomaniacs (be they Jews, Christians, Muslims, Mormons, or even atheists such as Stalin and Mao) to force their “truth” on other people. Would that all people would appreciate that the concept of “truth” is applicable only for “closed systems” (such as pure math, games, and all religions), whereas for “open systems” such as reality, the most that can be determined are estimates for the probability that any statement is true.²¹

As for how Ezra & C-C’s production (the OT) “prolonged the evils”, consider this. In contrast to statements in the Bible (and in the Koran, the Book of Mormon, etc.), the proclamations (written on tablets or stelae) of earlier megalomaniacs, such as Thothmes III and Tiglath-Pileser I, were (most likely) generally ignored by subsequent people (most of whom couldn’t read, and even if they could, they probably were either not interested in the braggings of earlier tyrants or purposefully tried to destroy the writings of such maniacs).

But not so for the Jews (and subsequently, Christians, Muslims, Mormons, etc.). Instead, the horrible writings in the “sacred scriptures” of their “holy books” were (and still are!) listened to eagerly, memorized, recopied, revered... and horrors of horrors, children were (and still are!) indoctrinated with such hideous behavior, being solemnly told that the fictitious stories are “true” and that such evils are approved by no less than the creator of the universe.

Thereby, such horrible stories were, not trampled into the bloody dust of history (where they belong), but instead, they stimulated the horrors of such monsters as “Saint” Constantine, Muhammad, the popes of the Inquisition era, Hitler, and so on.

A case in point is Hitler and the Holocaust. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler stated:

I believe today that my conduct is in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator.

Where did he possibly get such a crazy idea? And of course the answer is: from the Bible.

²¹ See http://zenofzero.net/docs/T1_Truth_&_Knowledge.pdf.

As for the Holocaust, Jews to this day understandably proclaim: “Never again.” But to try to insure “Never again”, then “for cryin’ out loud”, why don’t the Jews do something about it – besides arming themselves to the teeth? Don’t they see that Hitler’s mentors were Moses and Ezra?! If the Jews want an end to racism, ethnic cleansing, extermination... then disown, disclaim, destroy their damnable “holy book” (save for a few copies, tucked away in secure corners of obscure libraries, available for select scholars to study how horrible humans once were).

Another case in point is Muhammad. Think about where he got his horrible ideas and where “modern” Muslim maniacs get their ideas (that destructive fanatics should rule). In the Koran, it’s clear that Muhammad got his ideas from Ezra & C-C’s fabricated stories about Moses, Joshua, and other fictional megalomaniacs – and “modern” maniacal Muslims treat Muhammad’s machinations of Ezra’s stories as “the truth”!

And though one can appropriately describe the current president of Iran, Ahmadinejad, as an idiot for “believing” such nonsense, yet one can equally blame religious Jews, for not only “believing” the nonsense in their “holy book” but for continuing to do so for more than 2,400 years. In particular, if the Jews want maniacal Muslims to regain some humanity, then the Jews should be shouting from their rooftops:

**The stories in the *Pentateuch* about Moses are a pack of lies!
The Tanakh is wrong.
Therefore, so is the Koran.
And so are all the other, so-called
“Holy Books” of the so-called “Abrahamic Religions”.**

And to think that the stories fabricated by Ezra & C-C about such a monster as Moses have polluted not only the Jewish people but also Christians, Muslims, Mormons, and others for more than 2,400 years, stories loaded with lies, which gullible people swallowed, poisoning entire cultures and the abilities of people to think and to imagine for themselves. Consequently, I’d take Paine’s condemnation of the Bible one step further and maintain: **the Bible is the worst concoction in the history of the world.** I reach that conclusion, not just from the evils it depicts, but because it (or more accurately, the clerics who promote it) has managed to convince such a horrible number of people that it’s “true”!

In contrast to what has happened, what (I wonder) might have been the history of the world if the brilliant ideas of the Greek philosopher Xenophanes (c.570 – c.480 BCE) had been promoted instead of the damnable ideas of Ezra & C-C. Xenophanes' wrote:

If cattle and horses, or lions, had hands, or were able to draw with their feet and produce the words which men do, then horses would draw the forms of gods like horses, and cattle like cattle, and they would make the gods' bodies the same shape as their own.

Would that everyone in the world would understand what Xenophanes said! Aristotle (384–322 BCE) repeated Xenophanes' idea in simpler terms:

Men create gods after their own image, not only with regard to their form but with regard to their mode of life.

And thus, Ezra & C-C not only drew the literary character Moses as a megalomaniac (“after their own image”), they similarly drew their god (Yahweh) as a beast, a picture that Richard Dawkins aptly describes in his book *The God Delusion* as follows:

The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynist, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.

But even more importantly than understanding that all gods were created by humans in their own images, would that Xenophanes' ideas about “truth” were universally acknowledged as valid:

But as for certain truth, no man has known it, nor will he know it – neither of the gods nor yet of all the things of which I speak. And even if by chance he were to utter the final truth, he would himself not know it, for all is but a woven web of guesses.

But most unfortunately, Xenophanes wisdom didn't enlighten the majority of the people of the world. Instead, a huge number of people truly “believe” that “God” (i.e., the creator of the universe, i.e., the first symmetry-breaking, quantum-like fluctuation in the original void that led to the Big Bang) was involved in communicating the crap in their “holy books” to humans, whether their “sacred scripture” be the OT, the NT, the Koran, the Book of Mormon, or whatever.

Say it isn't so! How could people be so dumb?!

And the answer seems clear: people want answers, they want to think that they're special, they want to think that their lives have some grand purpose (beyond the purposes that people decide for themselves), that their death can be avoided, and so on. As a result, people fall in love, not with their imagined god, but with their "holy books", their "sacred scripture", their story books, their fables concocted by con-artist clerics – because their books tell the people what they want to hear.

They believe because they want to believe – consistent with the meaning of "belief", which with 'lief' the Anglo-Saxon root word meaning 'wish', 'belief' means "wish to be." But as my mother used to say:

If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride.

In reality, and in summary, Moses was just a mythical tyrant in a line of infamy that stretches from Tiglath Pileser to Pol Pot and from Genghis Khan to Stalin. Moses was a mentor for Muhammad and Hitler. Who but the insane would want to follow the morality of Moses? He ruled by fear; he was a homophobic, misogynist, murderer, and genocidal war monger, who promoted slavery, ordered the raping of virgin girls, and the execution of mothers and their children. But he was God's favorite – which should tell everyone about the character of the Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Mormon god – or more accurately, the clerics who concocted him.

It's enough to make what-we-hope-are-average humans scream:

Religious people of the world: smarten up! All religious crap is just that: crap.
You've been had – by a bunch of lame-brain but conniving clerics.