

BEHOLD THE BIBLE

The Origins of Scripture *TORAH*

Covenant (“treaty, contract”)

- Influenced thinking about history
 - Religious changes = new covenants
- Influenced thinking about governments
 - Mutual, written agreement
 - Can Israel have a human king?
 - Should kings also sign covenants?

Torah & ancient law

- Biblical law uses Mesopotamian traditions (e.g. Hammurabi’s law code)
- Adjusts for Israel’s
 - Theology & politics
 - Social setting



Hammurabi’s Code

Suzerainty Treaty → Sinai Covenant

- **King promises:**
 - Protection
- **God promises:**
 - Protection
- **Vassal promises:**
 - Fidelity (one king)
 - Taxes
 - Non-aggression vs. other vassals
- **Israel promises:**
 - Fidelity (one God)
 - Sacrifices & tithes
 - Personal ethics

The Ten Commandments



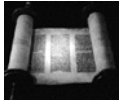
“Moses” by Rembrandt

- **Stipulations of the covenant**
- **First 4 on relations with God (overlord)**
- **Last 6 on relations with each other**
- **Typical in Bible: legal + moral + ritual instructions**

Three different legal collections in the Pentateuch

- **Covenant Code (Exodus 21-23)**
- **Holiness Code (Leviticus 17-27)**
- **Deuteronomistic Code (Deuteronomy 12-26)**

Problem: How to reconcile contradictions?



Interpreting *Torah*

Deut 6:5 “You shall love the LORD ...”

Judaism (usually):

- Keep every law (Deut 6:6, 25, etc.)
- Reinterpret laws to apply them to new situations

Christianity (usually):

- Two basic laws (Deut 6:5, Lev 19:18)
- Reinterpret these principles to apply them

Moses, the lawspeaker



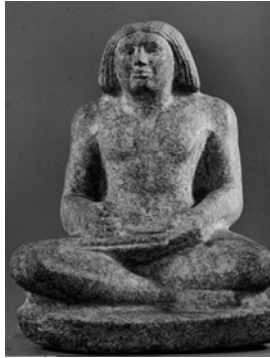
“Moses proclaiming law”, medieval miniature

Moses, the prophet



“Moses” by Ivan Mestrovic

**Moses,
the scribe**



Egyptian scribe
