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Bible study classes, lectures and notes, 1964.

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Third Bible Study Class

October 11, 1964

but it has some things which are food for thought and I'd like to turn with you today to some of them. We read together last week, you will recall a liturgical formula which our ancestors recited on .

They came to the temple in Jerusalem and when they offered there as a sacrifice, the first cuttings of the harvest and the first fruit of the vineyard. This is a very old piety which recreates the history, the simple line of history of the Jewish people as these our forefathers in the ninth and tenth centuries before the Common Era knew it. I'd like to begin by reviewing it with you, it's in Deuteronomy, the fifth Book of the Bible, chapter 26. Skipping for a moment, the preamble which simply tells when this was said, the liturgical formula itself begins in verse 5. And thou shalt speak and say before the Lord thy God: 'A wandering Aramean was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous. And the Egyptians dealt ill with us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage. And we cried unto the Lord, the God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice, and saw our affliction, and our toil, and our oppression. And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders. And He hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. And now, behold, I have brought the first of the fruit of the land, which Thou, O Lord, hast given unto me.' Now, bondage and redemption, slavery and the exodus are the watershed points in Jewish history. Judaism, as we know it and as our ancestors knew it 4000 years ago, really begins with Moses. With experience of oppression with the of deliverance and with the responsibilities of a free people undertaken at Mt. Sinai. The commandments. Four thousand years ago our fathers already dismissed what went before Sinai with half a sentence. A wandering Aramean was my father and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there few in number. Now it's to that half a sentence that I want to turn ~~xxx~~ our attention to today because

fortunately the Bible tells us a good deal more about this "wandering Aramean" or rather the wandering Aramean because the term is generic, refers of course to the patriarchs, the early fathers, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and their various and sundry wives. I say that last not in any derogation of their wives but these were days of plural marriages and to separate out the many wives and the levels and grades of wives that each man had is something of a trick in Biblical scholarship. So let's turn then to this period when our forefathers were wandering Arameans. What does this term Aramean mean? If you'll look on the map here there is a land here called the Land of the Emerald. It's at the watershed of the Euphrates River and the rivers which flow into the Mediterranean. Into this land in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries before the Common Era there came a group of conquerors, of tribes people, of hills people really, known as the Arameans who became known throughout the near East as the great travelers, the merchants, the , the people who were as likely to appear way down in Egypt as way over in Babylon. It is to these people that this liturgical formula relates our ancestors. Now the exodus, this crucial moment in our history took place some time around the year 1250 before the Common Era. The dating is a matter of conjecture, it may have been a hundred years before or a hundred years later. The Bible tells us that the Jews were in Egypt for some four hundred plus years. There is some discrepancy in the Biblical dating but it is apparent that the Bible considers the age of the patriarchs as having been in the second half of the second millennium before the Common Era. It was roughly between the years two thousand B.C.E. and 1500 B.C.E. We're back then in the days which the story was called the Middle Bronze Age. By that they mean that men had learned to work with the more malleable of metals, they had not learned yet to sharpen iron, to develop instruments of war which iron permits. This is the age in which the beast of burden was the donkey, the camel had not yet been domesticated. This is the age therefore where attack on these areas tended to come from the sea coast and from the hill lands rather than from the desert - no one could cross the desert. Cecil B. DeMille

whenever he does his Bible pictures tends to get these very lumbering dromedaries in and forgets that nobody two thousand years before the Common Era, had a camel, cigarette or otherwise. We simply hadn't learned to domesticate them. These were years in which men had raised a number of the arts of civilization rather high. In the Mesopotamian valley men were building these gigantic mud brick ziggurats, these squared off towers to the Gods. They ~~xxxx~~ had developed the systems of irrigation they had developed art forms of various kinds, pottery, sculpture. Memphis and

in Egypt were great cities and the pharaohs had built the first of their death chambers underneath the great pyramids. We're therefore not quite back at the dawn of history. Indeed there was a long tradition of civilization in both the Nile, Tigres and the Euphrates valley. This summer Del and I were in the British Museum, and we saw there in one of the upstairs back rooms the treasure store of the city of . is by biblical tradition a sign of the birthplace of Abraham. It's way down here. the mouth of the Tigres river.

It was then right near to the Persian Gulf which inundated this whole delta land. From the year two thousand twenty-five hundred B.C.E. back to about the year three thousand B.C.E. the and the Acaadians had raised this type of high civilization. You can see a magnificent statuary, silver and human gold encrusted, of animals and of ~~xxxx~~ forms. There was a lyre that some men had excavated in the graveyard at , seven feet long, encrusted with all kinds of ribbon and metallic inlay, a nine stringed instrument. A very beautiful and advanced musical instrument. There was all manner of jewelry and we know ~~xxxx~~ from the few records that survive these people were able merchants, men of commerce, they knew something about deficit financing, they had contracts all forms of negotiable instruments and banks, in a very primitive form. So the Middle Bronze Age is not nearly as archaic as it sounds when we read of it in a text book. Our fathers, way back when, inherited a rather advanced civilization. The Bible tells us that [&] first Jew, Abraham, left this town of Ur on the delta of the Persian Gulf, traveled up the Euphrates River a land situated just south of the hill country of Turkey, the watershed land, over the Mediterranean sea coast,

down through the central hills of Judea, down to the town in Israel which many of you have visited, Bersheba, which was one of the ancient and important settlements, and from then to the Nile valley itself into Egypt. We know now from a number of clay tablets which have been found that it was entirely possible for men to take this journey and to make it frequently in a lifetime. There have been commercial letters found, sent from Egypt, Ur to Babylon and back again and you know the names of the merchants who carried them back and forth. This was a well traveled route. We call it historically, the fertile crescent. They couldn't cross the desert directly, they lacked a camel so they packed on the back of their donkeys their goods, and they would go up along this crescent shaped farming area, sufficiently fertile because of the river beds, and they would come up the Euphrates, over to Syria, Lebanon, Canaan and then down into Egypt itself. We know the names now of a number of the peoples who acted as merchants and the intermediaries in this trade, and the like. We know that they were something more than traders in our modern sense. These were armed caravans. Each had its own fighting force. Each tribe was organized as a fighting unit. They hired themselves out as mercenaries if they could get a good contract to be fighters, or they pillaged the local city states if they couldn't get a good contract. They bought cheap and tried to sell dear. They were the agents of civilization and of negotiation throughout this entire area. One people particularly interest us as far as our Bible is concerned. We find them mentioned in documents from this entire area. In Egypt they are called the and in Acadia they are called the and they are known from about the year two thousand down to about the year twelve hundred. The name is interested because it is made up of the same sounds as go into the word (Hebrew) Hebrew. All the languages of the Near East depend ultimately on words which have a three letter base. These three letters are the same three letters which appear in . We know this word to have referred not so much to a particular tribe or group as to have referred to a status of people, the people, the wanderers, the commercial people. We know furthermore that a number of these had names similar to the names which appear in our Bible. There are

Jacobs among them. was the father of Abraham. We find the name among them. Was also a collateral relative of Abraham and we find the name mentioned as one of these people. We also find something else that's interesting. When in the twelfth century the word disappears from the documents in the Near East, it also disappears from the Bible. You very often pick up a history which will be called The History of the Hebrews and it may take you down to the close of the Bible period or some other time. Actually the Bible, after the patriarch period never refers to the Jews as Hebrews. They are called the sons of Israel, , the Israelites, but never the Hebrews.

The Bible itself knew of an end to this status of people called the and they tend to disappear from history. We know furthermore, something of what they look like. In a nineteenth century death chamber in Egypt they found . They found on the walls a number of these illustrations, these silhouette like illustrations which show whole tribes of Amorites , or western in the many colored garments which they wore, which the Bible tells us Jacob and Joseph wore, with their asses, coming down with goods to Egypt. One of these shows us, thirty-nine of these Semites, men women and children, the asses have on the back the of the Smiths. They have all the metal working and forge equipment and obviously came down to sell their skills as craftsmen. Another one of these seen, will be of particular interest to you women because it is the first known incident of mascara in history. They show some forty or fifty of these western Semites come into Egypt bringing with them jars of the black substance which is known as stibium. Stibium was a substance beloved in the beauty parlors of Memphis and because they used it as eye shadow and to build up their good looks. It was mined in the marsh country, down here at the edge of the Persian Gulf, and carried by some Max Factor some four thousand years ago all the way into Egypt. Max Factor was a Jew and these ancient Amorites were our forefathers. What is it the Book Ecclesiastes says - "There's nothing new under the sun." Now the Bible portrays our ancestors for the most part as shepherd people. As , as peaceful people. There is one chapter in Genesis which indicates to us the rougher qualities of this early age and simply so that we will remind

ourselves of the kinds of people that our ancestors were I will have you turn to it. It's not one of the literary gems of the Bible but it's one of the more interesting chapters historically. It's chapter fourteen of Genesis. Now, this chapter is an old one and it tells of a war, some little tribal war of city states down near the Dead Sea with some other city states further to the north. The details of this war are ~~unusually~~ utterly irreverent but it so happens according to the biblical narrator that Abraham's family was involved in one of the intermittent conquests involved. Beginning in verse 12 we read And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed. And there came out that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew--now he dwelt by the terebinths of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner; and these were confederate with Abram. And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued as far as Dan. So we have here first of all a reference as Abraham as and secondly we see that a trained army, ready to protect his relatives near and far. What was done then apparently, was what was done in later times - a family would settle, a nephew here, a uncle here, a relative there it's reminding of the Rothschilds in nineteenth century. They would pass on the from one station to another throughout this ~~entire~~ entire fertile crescent area. They would of course have to defend these people if they were attacked and carted away as slave labor. Lot was captured and Lot had to be defended by his merchant prince of the clan, namely Abraham. So we have some indication of their function, as warrior merchants and some of the reasons why they tend to be . They're moving around rather rapidly over this entire fertile crescent area. Now I've assumed in what I've said that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph and the like were historical figures. The burden of nineteenth and early twentieth century, biblical scholarship denied this fact. To most of the academics of 1890 to 1940 Abraham was fiction, so was Isaac and all the rest, an invention of later Hebrews to give themselves what? Well, some said to give themselves a long family pedigree. Others said that they were inventions designed to pull the teeth out of pre-mosaic , the belief in many Gods. They took as their

analogy here the experience of the Catholic church in Latin America and in Africa. They're faced with very primitive religions. The Catholic church rather than saying "You may not believe" simply coopted and adopted these primitive voodoo Gods into the pantheon by making them saints and then allowed the churches to be dedicated to the same name as the holy people with whom they've been dedicated in time and brought them all in under the umbrella of Catholicism. They said in essence that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were probably originally Gods, Gods of various tribes and that what later writers had done once Israel had arrived at the state of the belief in the one God was to allow the Jews the dignity of these names. That the oaths, loyalties which remain. It would tell purely human stories about them to make them clan heroes rather than Gods themselves. Unfortunately there is no indication that the Jews desired a long family tree and if they had, they certainly would have come up with more noble figures than most of these early ancestors. No where else in the Bible will be found a single indication the Jews were interested in blood line. We're all descendants, according to the Bible, of the tribes that went out into Egypt. When they came out of Egypt, about the only thing the Bible can say that's good about us is that we were a motley. The Bible makes no claim as to the purity of blood or origin or the like. As you can see in the liturgical formula which I began, it says no more than we were a group of wandering merchants, way back when. No more, no less. Secondly, the idea that way back when there was a or a faith that these Semitic tribes share, has been shattered by historical research. We now know that the vulgarity and the crudeness of many of the fertility cults, which surrounded Israel later, were in no way similar to the rather advanced religions that were held earlier. In the history of the world you often get periods of fresh insight followed by periods of decline in civilization. The ancient Near East came closer to strict morality, to democratic government, to a high degree of law in the year 1800 B.C. than it had in the year 800 B.C. The early and Amorites had a rather advanced form of worship and if these ancestors really lived there is no reason to assume that these ancient

who were our fathers were really worshipers of many Gods. What led these scholars then, to this assumption that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Sarah, Rebecca, etc.

Fact one - we can find no reference in extra biblical literature or history to any single character mentioned in the Book of Genesis and no archeological

Secondly -

research has found any such reference. These scholars had learned by of preceptive research that the Bible was, as we agreed last week, made up of many layers. They assumed that the layers that were the more advanced religiously were the latest and they reconstructed the biblical text on this basis. The histories say as we learned later did not confirm this assumption. It's as if we said that Shakespeare had to come in the nineteenth century because the sixteenth, seventeenth century represents the beginning of English literature and he couldn't have lived there since he is at the of English literature. On top of it, a little bit of prejudice, as always entered the scene. Most of the good nineteenth century biblical critics were German and God bless the German for nothing because the German's cannot and have never been able to allow to our people, any ingenuity, any honesty, any creativity and these were the things which apparently the German race has in plus degree. So they said that if we came to the idea of the one God we had to borrow it, the Jews are the greatest borrowers of mankind, where do we borrow it. They found some reference in Egypt. If we were the great ^{legalists} ~~liberalists~~ of the Early Ages we had to borrow this, and where do we borrow this. We borrowed it from ~~into a~~ and from Mesopotamia. We couldn't have had any originality. We're not an original people, we're a parasite people. Since this was true of nineteenth century German Jews as they say it, it had to be true of nineteenth century B.C. Hebrews. Refusing to allow us the simple truth that the Bible is a unique document unparalleled in its insight and its revolutionary cultural quality. They simply assumed that we had to borrow. Now the legal concepts in the Bible are not parallel until about the fifth century B.C. Therefore, the Jews couldn't

instance, to push back ancient history into the distant past. We learned about the whole early history of the people, the history of the and the and the others that I've talked to you about this morning. They

have written these legal chapters until that time. The idea of ~~disappears~~ comes ~~from~~ for a moment in the thirteenth century in Egypt, it disappears then until about the fifth century in both Greece and Egypt. Therefore, it had to be that the Jews waited till this time, got ~~in~~ to the idea of ~~and later~~ peoples simply read back and re-wrote history to suit themselves. Then too, the Germans as you know delight to create ancestors. The biblical scholars came to the generation which venerated Wagner and were the early ~~heroes~~, had all the heroic qualities which the German race was presumed to have. ~~the~~ Jews had done the same thing. Unfortunately our biblical heroes ~~are~~ simply are not cut of that heroic mold as we shall see and why we should create the kinds of heroes that the Bible writes about, remains unsolved. There came a time in biblical criticism where we lacked reference points outside the Bible. You can take the various layers of the Bible and play games with it of almost any kind, but what you need is a point of reference, in time, historical fact. I'll illustrate what I mean.

Years ago, when I was in Hebrew Union College, we took a document which had been written in the early nineteenth century by a German merchant in Savannah, Georgia, to another merchant someplace in the south. We cut up this document the way it is assumed biblical materials were, and we read it, one to another to another ~~in~~ 'til there would be the usual mistakes of transmissi~~on~~ and then we put it down in a biblical scroll and let the strings fall apart and all the various cards in the deck fell into a different order and we gave it to the biblical scholar at the Hebrew Union College. We said now give us the original document. ~~He~~ ^{He} ^{us} gave ~~us~~ a document using all the research tools of biblical scholarship had available which was far more literary, far more beautiful than the document which we had given him, but was in no way relevant to the text or context of the original document itself. Fortunately, in the last 30, 40 years the scientists ~~and of~~ and of archeology have given us some points of reference in time. We have learned, for instance, to push back ancient history by a full thousand years. We learned almost the whole early history of the fertile crescent, the history of ~~and~~ and the others that I've talked to you about this morning. They

knew nothing of this. Much of what they wrote was simple conjecture and it followed from some of their rather simple prejudices. Now what have we learned and where do we stand today. We've learned a great deal more about language. We know a great deal more about what the Bible really means. Where have we learnt this. Because we have deciphered. Most of the ancient Near Eastern languages and because we have some 50, 60, 70 thousand clay texts which give us a rather remarkable vocabulary, reveals to us idioms, idiomatic phrases and what they meant. Now let me try and illustrate this dramatically as no immediate relevance to our history. It will show you how biblical text changes. In ~~xx~~ your Bible, turn to chapter 49, Genesis you'll read there what is the familiar blessing by Jacob of the twelve sons, in verse 22, the blessing of Joseph and it begins "Joseph is a fruitful vine, A fruitful vine by a fountain; Its branches run over the wall." (Hebrew) There has been a great deal of questioning as to what this originally meant. If you go back into the world of , you know that this blessing has been used to devise shields for the ancient tribes. Many of you have seen the pictures of the windows which Mark designed for the Hospital in Jerusalem. This is a picture of the design which he made for Joseph. You can see the wall, and you can see the vines, and the pastoral scene and all the rest. The text reads Joseph is a fruitful bough, Even a fruitful bough by a well and his branches run over the wall. Unfortunately, this is an old and outdated translation because from comparative languages we now know that the text should read Joseph is a wild colt, a wild colt by a spring. Now we've learnt this simply by seeing the use of . This tribe, again a three letter word which had appeared only once in the Bible and it gets that from its meaning in the sister languages of Hebrew. Now Mr. or whoever advised Mr. could have known this. As a matter of fact, ~~ix~~ if you go into our chapel and you look in the windows of our chapel done by Arthur in 15 years ago, you see at the bottom there the shields of various tribes. There you see that Joseph is indeed a wild colt, or a wild ass. Dr. Silver knew his biblical scholarship. Mark did not or at least he got bad advice as to ~~his sons and his wives upon the camels, by the way that's an~~

how to do it. Now it isn't so important that it's a colt instead of a vine but it is important as I shall show you that we have been able to retranslate whole sections and we have been able to understand whole sections which could not be understood before, only by the use of comparative linguistics. We've learned, for instance, of the relationship of the ~~Hebrew~~ ~~language~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~original~~ ~~Hebrew~~ ~~language~~, which helps us to date them. We've learned also certain historical facts. The Bible tells of the destruction of ~~the cities of the plain~~. It's easy to say ~~that~~ ~~and~~ ~~were~~ just fictions, inventions in the wicked cities of the world, they never lived. Then someone researching at the southern end of the Dead Sea found that under the Dead Sea there are roads and other remains of villages and that apparently in way back when, in the second millennium B. C. Some kind of natural catastrophe overtook these villages. It may have been a volcanic eruption or something of that type. This memory lingered and then became the history of the destruction of ~~the cities of the plain~~ and ~~the cities of the plain~~. In other words, nothing was invented out of ~~thin air~~. Indeed, from what we know now almost all of the details of Genesis twelve thru fifty of this patriarchal age are taken exactly from the details of history as we know them now of that period and could have applied to that period only. Neither earlier nor later. Let me illustrate then in a few ~~more~~ ways, how our new knowledge helps us to understand the Bible better. Turn if you will to Genesis thirty-one. Genesis Book 31, verses 17 and on. Jacob, you remember, went to his uncle and fell in love with ~~Rebecca~~ Rebecca and tried to make a bargain with Laban, his uncle, to get Rebecca as his wife and you recall that the uncle said all right you work for seven years she will be your wife. So he worked for seven years and instead of giving him Rebecca he brought in her older sister into the Bridal tent and finally Jacob had to work a second seven years to get the girl he really wanted. If that isn't persistence, I don't know what ~~it~~ is. In any case, the Bible tells us that Laban and his son-in-law didn't get along too well. Each was always trying to out-manuever the other. Finally after he got the girl of his dreams Jacob decided it was time to ~~he~~ decamp - go home. The Bible tells us when Jacob goes off and set his sons and his wives upon the camels, by the way that's an

away
it couldn't have been, and he carried all his cattle and all his substance which he had gathered, the cattle he was getting, which he had gathered in to go to Isaac his father, and to the land of Canaan. Now Ladan was gone to shear his sheep and Rachel stole the, the hearth Gods that were her father's. Then they left. Now why should Rachel steel these Gods? We never know. Some said that these were like dolls, and she was a girl and like to play with her dolls. She didn't want to leave her teddy bear behind. That's not a very enlightened explanation I must say. Others said that a woman is the carrier of religion. That Rachel liked her, she wanted to raise her children as and she took the dolls so that they should never forget. This might get us in an interesting discussion of what happens inter-marriage but in any case this is a rather expose fact of had explanation at best. We have no good explanation until we found some years ago in a collection of laws which were unearthed at a place called, the fact that in these very ancient times the, one of these wandering peoples, in fact allowed a woman to inherit the land of a father. This is unheard of in later times. That a woman could inherit and the symbolic act by which the father sealed the contracts, signed the will, was to give over to her the family Gods. She held these Gods as proof of her later claim on the inheritance. So in essence of Rachel is essentially saying is this - I don't trust my father. My husband deserves something of the inheritance. I'm going to take the family Gods and later on when my father dies I'll come back and go to the court and I'll present the dolls as my proof when I contest the will. Now what looked to be a bit of peave or of childish whim becomes in fact an important element in the story. Let's take another example, turn to Genesis chapter 15. You find there a childless Abraham concerned over the lack of a son and what's going to happen to his state if he dies. Wills were a problem which gave men grey hair a long time ago. After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying: 'Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, thy reward shall be exceeding great.' And Abram said: 'O Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go hence childless, and he that shall

sheep, and asses, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses,

be possessor of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' Now Eliezer of Damascus is a steward, he's a non-Jew and he's a slave. According to Jewish law a slave may not inherit and a non-Jew may not inherit the property of the head of the tribe. This portion gave us a great deal of trouble. What does it mean? How can it be understood? It is an invention. And then again we found in one of these ancient law codes, which ~~xxx~~ ^{has} now been unearthed, that in fact it was a practice, around the year 1800 B.C., for the head of the tribe to ~~xxx~~ as his legal heir, if he had no son, an able man. One of the few who was literate, because you had to be literate, one who was strong and a good leader and to declare this man his heir. If a son was later born, the man lost his rights, but if no son was born, he became the head of the tribe. So in fact, Abraham's worry is understandable and realistic and part of the context of the time itself. Now let's ~~xxx~~ turn to what is one of the least pretty, least moral chapters of the Bible, not only to illustrate how new learning helps us to understand the Bible better, but I think because - I think you will understand through this chapter, how these stories were put together and what is old and what is new and which will lead us into some other things. If you will turn to chapter 12, the very first chapter, you find there the commission of Abraham to leave Ur and they go very quickly across the whole fertile crescent into southern Judea and then beginning in verse ten we find "And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife: 'Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon. And it will come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they will say: This is his wife; and they will kill me, but thee they will keep alive. Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister; that it may be well with me for thy sake, and that my soul may live because of thee.' And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair. And the princes of Pharaoh saw her, and praised her to Pharaoh; and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. And he dealt well with Abram for her sake; and he had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses,

and camels. And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said: 'What is this that thou has done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? Why saidst thou: She is my sister? so that I took her to be my wife; now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way.' And Pharaoh gave men charge concerning him; and they brought him on the way, and his wife, and all that he had." Now here we have a strange story, indeed. Abram takes his first wife, Sarai, with him into Egypt and he passes her off as a sister and allows her to be taken into the harem of the Pharaoh and she is used there and God in great indignation plagues Pharaoh until he sees the evil of his ways and he lets Sarai go back to Abram who boots ~~both~~ both of them unceremoniously out of Egypt. Why is this in the Bible?

Certainly a story which has little moral value to it, I wouldn't know how to preach on it, but we found something interesting. At a place called , we found a record of a wandering group of tribes people who had not only a right of marriage but a rite of marriage which included the taking of one's wife as one's sister. Why? In a poly society, where man had many wives. He had many, many children. It was important for the tribe to survive, the leadership passed on only to one. Only to a limited few. So the problem was always, who is the first wife, who is the wife whose children have the rights of inheritance?

This tribe had a special ceremony in which the first wife was not only married but brought into the blood family. Taken by an and made legally his sister, and when you said in this tribal area "She is my sister", about the one who was with you meant, she is not only my wife but she is my first wife, my precious wife, the wife with whom there can be no tampering. The wife through whom the blood line of the tribe would go. So that what we have here is this. When Abraham says "She is my wife", he's not , he's not trying simply to pass off Sarai to the Pharaoh so that he will survive, he's actually increasing the value of Sarai.

The Pharaoh wouldn't understand this and apparently incident occurred.

Interestingly it would appear that the biblical editor himself didn't understand what had happened. He had to protect Abraham in some way and to protect Pharaoh, and

protect Sarai and make a moral story out of the whole thing. So he took an original tradition . Abraham went into Egypt and Sarai was very beautiful and he said when he was asked about Sarai, she is my wife, meaning she is the most precious to me, and he added this whole morality play to the end of it. God plaguing the Pharaoh and being very angry about all that had happened. He himself, the editor, was ~~very~~ angry with Abraham for having done this, so far had a tenth century B.C. editor grown away from the traditions of 1800 or 1900 B.C. Why was the story first told? Because in Genesis there is a great concern for the right blood line coming down to the Joseph tribes of . Genesis tells the story not only of men, but of tribes. Out of , the twin, come all of the Arab tribes. Out of all the nephews and great nephews of Abraham come all of the other peoples of the entire Near East. There's an history writ into this text. What the author and original story of Genesis was to say Isaac is the proper son because he came from the proper wife. She is my ~~ix~~ sister. In fact the same story is told about . Isaac. He went down to Egypt and he passed off Rebecca as his sister. Again, she is the proper wife, therefore the sons that come from her are the proper ones within our tradition. So what we see here is this. There was a gap of time between the transmission of early legend, probably orally and probably in poetry, down through the long centuries, to say the tenth century probably, in which these were set down more or less in the form that we know that we know them today. Now, they kept the details and when they thought it necessary to moralize it then moralize and they added certain things and we'll see. But basically the kernel of the story is very old. It is probably to be put right back in the century about which it is told. Does this mean that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph really lived? We don't know. There is little reason to believe they didn't live but it is certain that the Bible uses them both as individuals and as tribal heads, tribal figures to tell history. Did they do the things the Bible tells us that they did do? More or less. There's no reason to believe that the biblical writers did not, in fact, embellish and tell a good tale. To close this afternoon I want to read you

what I think is one of the greatest of the short stories in world literature and the earliest short story that I know of in world literature. But in any case what we have got is an early ~~transmission~~ transmission from say the eighteenth century. This transmission was refined and developed in the telling and finally around the tenth century B.C. it was told in the story form in which we have it. What is the Book of Genesis attempt to lay out. Basically it attempts simply to set down the tribal history as it was remembered of the early father figures. Emphasizing two things - a promise and a covenant. When Abraham is told, "get thee out," he is also told "And I will make of thee a great nation and I will bless thee and thy name will be great" and then in chapter 12 in verse 7, "And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said: 'Unto thy seed will I give this land'; and he builded there an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him." The promise of a history and a promise of the land are elements of this story told again and again in the Genesis narrative. The Jews needed some claim on Palestine. Peoples had lived there for centuries. What was their right to the land? That Abraham ten centuries before had wandered through it and established altars and God had made them this promise. Israel ~~had~~ would be a people. A people with an identity. This is written back into the story. And what is the covenant? When a little boy reaches eight days of age, he has a (Hebrew), Hebrew for covenant and the prayer which the father recites is (Hebrew) Praise art thou Lord our God, King of the universe who has ordered for us to cause this youngster to enter into the covenant of Abraham, our father. In the Abraham story we have the first requirement of a circumcision. Now the circumcision is the external symbol of a contract between God and these ancestors. Between God and these people. Most contracts of ancient times simply said, we will bring the sacrifices to the Gods and we ask the God's protection upon us. We know of many similar covenants between these peoples and their Gods. The Jewish covenant is something more. It's an open ended thing. It is not only the bringing of sacrifices, but the obedience to a certain kind of Godly law, a certain requirement. See I have set before thee this day, life and death, good and evil, choose life. We call it the covenant of . A series of moral and religious obligations imposed upon

the Jew. God can break his covenant. As a matter of fact when the prophets later on thunder against the people and pronounced their doom, it is not because they are evil but it is because they are in their wickedness they have broken the terms of the covenant and God will not just destroy the people but God will set the terms of the covenant way back when, in the desert, or with Abraham. Because the people were unfaithful, then God is free from his responsibilities under this contract. So what you have is a moral contract assumed way back here in the biblical story which says that the Jew must not only worship God but obey the moral law of God. If he does, I will make thee a great nation, I will return thee to this land - this will be a land of flowing with milk and honey. If he does not, I will break the terms of this covenant and I will be more angry to you for you only have I known from among all the peoples of the earth, therefore will I inflict upon you this outrage or this punishment. The later writers certainly took these two theological elements - the promise to the land and the building of the covenant and he wrote them large into this early patriarchal story. Well, there you have it. I've emphasized the technical things, the history, the background, the theology and the like after a question period I want to get back to the literature because so often in the things we forget that this is among the greatest of the literature of mankind. These are well told stories. They are not only important religiously and interesting historically and critically, they are just good literature and it's good to ~~read~~ read them as such. I'll pause now and fire away - Question -

The word Jew never appears in the Bible. It comes from the tribe of Judea the Hebrew word would be Jew. You will recall that there were originally twelve tribes named after the twelve sons of Joseph. Ten of these tribes got lost. By that we mean that in the year 722 when the Assyrians conquered Israel, they were taken in exile and they simply disappeared from the face of history. That left only two tribes from which all subsequent Jews were descended. Juda and Benjamin. Juda was the state of New York and Benjamin was the state of Rhode Island. They were not comparable in size. In time Juda became the name for the entire

lifted up? and if thou dost not walk, sin abounds at the door; and unto thee is

Jewish kingdom and those who were descendants of this kingdom became to be called Jews. (Hebrew) which was reduced to Jew. Question - This is something I wanted to get into next week but our belief now is that the conquest of Canaan by these tribes began long before Joshua. The year 40 is a symbolic number and it simply means a generation. The biblical explanation of course is that you had to kill off everybody who had lived in Egypt because they were not vigorous/and manly enough to merit being part of the group that attacked the Promised Land. The Bible asks the same question, by the way. The Bible says it's a three day journey from Egypt up the coast to Canaan. Why did it take them 40 years. They give a psychological answer for the problem. What apparently happened was this. The tribes came in after some kind of Egyptian experience from the trans-Jordan area. Some never made it across the Jordan. Two and a half of the tribes we know settled in the trans Jordan area and were never able to conquer land in Canaan itself. Others came in over two or three hundred year period from about the year 1200 to about the year 1000. They came in piecemeal and they made piecemeal conquests. Apparently the idea of a 40 year wandering in the desert simply reflects the recognition. It didn't all happen at once. They didn't burst out of Egypt all of a sudden to descend upon the Promised Land. ~~Why~~ This is historically accurate and it's also a reflex of what they knew to be good history at the time is that another people did burst out of Egypt, or rather were repulsed by Egypt, the Philistines and did make a very dramatic wave in this area, southern Palestine etc. and established themselves there almost over night. The Jewish conquest had not been of the same type. Question - Chapter 4 is the story of Cain and Abel. Right? And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain: 'Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? Why are ~~you~~ ~~out of sorts~~? If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up? and if thou doest not well, sin croucheth at the door; and unto thee is

research historians do today. So they cut down, it isn't very important what their calendar was. There were a number of biblical calendars but their year is our year essentially and when they assume a thousand years of these ten generations is impossible. I would suspect they knew it too. It's as simple as that. Question - Moses we believe to have lived around the year 1250 B.C.E. and the dating is largely done on the basis of the known dates of Egyptian Pharaohs. And the congruence of the fact that Raamses III built tremendous fortifications in the land, and that's what the slaves were put to doing and that , his son, led a rebellion against the priest Gods of the Raamses, of the God Ra, and ordered some kind of vague, belief in one God and it was believed that Moses reflected that in his coming out. Now the date can be wrong by a hundred years either way. No one will insist upon it.

Question - A father could give the inheritance, which was unusual because only boys technically could inherit. He could give it of his own free will and symbolize this contract. Let's say he had a wastful son and a fine daughter. He could give it to the daughter by giving her the tribal Gods and these were her pledge. The normal methods of procedure were that the son inherited and there were fixed rules. The first son inherited so much than the second, third and fourth. This was very much out of the ordinary as it occurred. Question - There is a tribe of people who came out of the Turkish mountains called . Around the fifteenth century B.C. these people conquered Egypt. We're not quite sure of ethnic origin. They may have been west Semetic and one of the assumptions of biblical scholarship has been that one of the reasons that Joseph was welcome in Egypt was because of ethnic similarity. This may be but we also know of the rise of some of these

among in places where they had no ethnic identity with the local rulers. We do not know, in fact, we cannot prove the were Semites. It's an assumption for which there is no scholarly proof as yet. Maybe there will be. Question - I spoke of the covenant. You can see by this who writes the lectures in our family. I tried to indicate that the original stories came down but that some of theology had been written later. The theology of the covenant ~~was~~ was certainly written into the stories later, after the Mosaic experience. There may have been some primitive contract between Abraham and his God. We have Abraham dedicating an altar at Bethel.

We have Isaac consulting the oracle at Mamre and dedicating a shrine there. They may have had some concept of a brith, of a covenant which was then enlarged into this concept of which is a moral, give and take. It is also probably true that the Semitic peoples practice circumcision and that they wrote back a religious exclamation of a purely tribal practice or gave a tribal practice a religious explanation with one of these stories. I would assume that most of the conflation of the idea of a covenant is later and was read back into these stories. Now have I gotten myself in hot water? Let me move on, not to shut you off, cut you off but simply because I do want to tell a story, have the Bible tell a story and let you see the (End of tape)

Let's to turn to chapter 25, verse 19, this is the framework of the story of Genesis. This is the framework of the story of Jacob and Esau. It was finally edited in ninth and tenth century B.C.. The basic elements of the story are much older, as a complete narrative, it's a wonderfully told tale. These are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begot Isaac. And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, to be his wife. And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord let Himself be entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said: 'If it be so, wherefore do I live?' And she went to inquire of the Lord. We have almost a Greek concept of the function of here. There's a premonition, you're forewarned as to the tension between the two which is going to take place. The drama within two sentences, is upon us. Now there's a little poem here And the Lord said unto her: Two nations are in thy womb, And two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels; And the one people shall be stronger than the other people; And the elder shall serve the younger: That's probably later. And when the tribal poets told this story this was probably the poetic refrain which everybody knew or which was sung by the people as projecting now the history. By this time Jacob had become the forerunner of the Jews and Esau had become the forerunner of the great enemies of the Jews, those who

And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came forth ruddy, all over like a hairy mantle; and they called his name Esau. Esau means, reddish, redhead, the easily angered. "And after that came forth his brother, and his hand had hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob." Now there's a play here because in Hebrew idiom, the basic root of this word means heel. They had also the same kind of idiom we have, somebody could be a heel and no. ~~Esau~~ They are forewarning you that this is going to be in part, Jacob's role. "And the boys grew; and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents." Now the man moralizes. We can moralize even a little bit. ~~father~~ Father loves who, the boy can play football with and take to see the Browns. Who does the mother love? The boy that she can fondle and draw in close, and read to - the quiet one. Dwells in tents. Now Isaac loved Esau and this is the way it happened. He loved the physical type because he did eat of his venison and he was a hunter and he went out and brought in good. Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob was well domesticated. He'd been around the maid in the kitchen. He knew how his mother cooked. "And Jacob sod pottage; and Esau came in from the field, and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob: 'Let me swallow, I pray thee, some of this red, red pottage; for I am faint.' Therefore was his name called Edom." That's another play on. "And Jacob said: 'Sell me first thy birthright.'" Shrewd, he's to make a bargain. "And Esau said: 'Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall the birthright do to me?'" And ~~Esau~~ Esau probably thinks he's playing games with him, you know. Sure, I'll go along. "And Jacob said: 'Swear to me first';" Jacob's dead serious. "and Esau swore unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. And Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. So Esau despised his birthright." The Bible moralizes. What. A man shouldn't be so shortsighted as to sell his life long investment in a farm simply because he wants to go on a vacation or to sell his investment because his wife wants to give a big party. He ought to have a little sale about the relative importance in things. But whose is the crucial evil here, wickedness?

Jacob's. Obviously. The heel. The crafty one who demanded something that should not be between brothers or between friends. Now the story goes on in chapter 27. Here we get more of the character of the two. "And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his elder son, and said unto him: 'My son'; and he said unto him: 'Here am I'. And he said: 'Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death. Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me venison; and make me savoury food, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.'" Death bed scene - father wants a last savoury taste of the good things of life and he calls his favorite son to go out and to get it for him.

"And Rebekah heard when Isaac spoke to Esau his son." You notice that the Bible says Esau, his son. He was also her son but by this time he had become only his son. "And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. And Rebekah spoke unto Jacob her son," not his, hers "saying 'Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying: Bring me venison, and make me savoury food, that I may eat, and bless thee before the Lord before my death. Now therefore, my son, hearken to my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury food for thy father, such as he loveth; and thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, so that he may bless thee before his death.' And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother: 'Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy fellow, and I am smooth skin. My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a mocker; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing." And his mother said unto him: 'Upon me be thy curse, my son; but listen to me, go fetch me what I ask'. And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother; and his mother made savoury food, such as his father loved. And Rebekah took the choicest garments of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son. And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck. And she gave the savoury food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

And he came unto his father, and said: 'My father'; and he said: 'Here am I; who art thou, my son?'" He had a little bit of a suspicion. "And Jacob said unto his father: 'I am Esau thy first-born; I have done according as thou badest me. Arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my deer, that thy soul may bless me.' And Isaac said unto his son:" he's again suspicious, "'How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son?' And he said: 'Because the Lord thy God sent me good speed.' And Isaac said unto Jacob: 'Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son," and again he's suspicious "whether thou be my very son Esau or not." And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said: 'Thy voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.'" He was deceived, but not quite. There's almost a King Lear quality in all of this. "And Isaac discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands;~~there~~ so he blessed him. And he said: 'Art thou my very son Esau?' And he said: 'I am.' And he said: 'Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's deer, that my soul may bless thee.' And he brought it near to him, and he did eat; and he brought him wine, and he drank. And his father Isaac said unto him: 'Come near now, and kiss me, my son.' And he came near, and kissed him. And he smelled the smell of his garments, and blessed him and said:"

Isn't this a wonderful tragedy? Simply told. Everyone is involved. Father and mother played favorites, Jacob has gone along with a deceit, he has lied deliberately to his father, the ancient

between the two brothers is told again. The father falls into the trap because the blessing of the first born implies inheritance, as well as just the words. So let's skip the words because they only interrupt for the moment, the story and beginning again on verse 30. "And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting." We have the completion of the story. "And Esau without knowing what had happened, made his father good food, and brought it unto his father; and he said unto his father: 'Let my father arise, and eat of his son's deer, that thy soul may bless me.' And Isaac his father said unto him: 'Who art thou?' And he said: 'I am thy son, thy first-born, Esau.' And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said:

'Who then is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all beforethou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.'" I can't take it back. "When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceeding great and bitter cry, and said unto his father: 'Bless me, even me also, O my father.' And he said: 'Thy brother came with guile, and hath taken away thy blessing.' And he said: 'Is not he rightly named Jacob?" Which means also in Hebrew, the cunning one. "for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing.' And he said: 'Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?'" Pitiful? You can imagine the anger of the son and the other abashed feeling of the father and his absolute frustration. The father dies with the sons still bitter and Esau determines to have his revenge upon his brother. Rebekah can no longer protect her beloved and so she, like all mothers who keep children too close is forced to send him ultimately away. Jacob leaves. He flees. He's gone, the Bible says almost twenty years. During that period of time he meets the world of men. He goes back to his uncle, to Rebekah's sister, sister. Falls in love and he's tricked. We talked about that earlier. He finally gets his wife and then he and his father-in-law have tremendous battles, the Bible describes them, over who owns what in the flock, how much is he to be paid, and what kind of labor contract does he have, and is he to be paid vice president of the corporation or only secretary-treasurer? Tremendous battles. In the process of this, Jacob grows up. He comes to the realization that the good things in life aren't worth very much if you don't have your family. The story now rounds out to its completion. Turn to chapter 32, Genesis, verse 4. A man who wants to , wants to make peace with his family has to pay a price. What's the price? That's what this chapter asks. "And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the field of Edom. And he commanded them, saying: 'Thus shall ye say unto my lord Esau: Thus saith thy servant Jacob: I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed until now. And I have oxen, and asses and flocks, and men-servants and maid-servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favour in thy sight.'" I've done well. Isn't that enough to welcome me home. I've just been

elected United States Senator, you've got to forgive me. "And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying: 'We came to thy brother Esau, and moreover he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.'" Esau didn't say a word. He wasn't impressed. "Then Jacob was greatly afraid and was distressed. And he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and the herds, and the camels, into two camps. And he said: 'F Esau come to the one camp, and smite it, then the camp which is left shall escape.'" He was a realist and not quite sure how he should act so he divided his worldly possessions, so he'd have at least a half left and then he appeals to God. "And Jacob said: 'O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, O Lord, who saidst unto me: Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will do thee good; I am not worthy of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast shown unto Thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two camps. Deliver me, I pray Thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, the mother with the children.'" And the prayer goes on. Then in verse 14, "Jacob lodged there that night; and took of that which he had with him a present for Esau his brother: two hundred she-goats and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams; ~~thirty~~ ~~thirty~~ fifty shares of American Tel and Tel. "And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself; and said unto his servants: 'Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.' " So that my brother can see how much I'm really sending. It won't be mixed up in one big mass. "And he commanded the foremost, saying: 'When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying: Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee? then thou shalt say: They are thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord, even unto Esau; and, behold, Jacob is also behind us.' " Peace offering. That's what this is. And then, he wasn't quite sure if 50 shares of American Tel & Tel ~~were~~ were enough so he told his broker to make a second 50, and a third 50 and to send them off by the next mail. In other words, he's going to beat him down with the good things of life. "And he commanded also the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying: 'In this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him; and ye shall say: Moreover, behold, thy servant Jacob is

behind us.' For he said: 'I will appease him with the present that goeth beforeme, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept me.' So the present ^{Jacob} passed over before him; and ~~he~~ himself lodged that night in the camp." One by one, all his ^{are} are being expended. He started off by telling his brother what a worldly success he has been, then he tried to get God on his side with a prayer, and finally he tried to bribe his brother. We're getting down here to essentials. What's left of the man who steel up his courage to meet the brother he has so wrong. Now we come to one of the most beautiful, I think ^{chapters} chapters in the Bible. "And Jacob rose up that night," he couldn't sleep, he was worried, "and took his two wives, and his two hand-maids, and his eleven children, and passed over the ford of the Jabbok. And he took them, and sent them over the stream, and sent over that which he had." In other words, he realized he had to face this moment alone. He couldn't jeopardize the safety of family and those closest to him. This is one of the signs that we have a mature man to deal with here. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, the man touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was strained, as he wrestled with him. And the man said: 'Let me go, for the day breaketh.' And Jacob said: 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.' And he said unto him: 'What is thy name?' And he said: 'Jacob.' And he said: 'Thy name shall be called no more Jacob," the cunning one, the heel, "but Israel; for thou hast striven with God and with men, and hast prevailed.'" Now we don't have an actual battle here and the Bible didn't assume that there was one. This is a man fighting his conscience. This is a man fighting all of his anxieties and all of his worries. He's been stripped bare of every pretence, of every assumption of status or power. He ultimately has to grow up and this is the way all men grow up. By fighting at night alone, the real battles of their lives. Out of that comes a new man. There's psychological truth in that. After you've conquered your weaker self you're never quite the same. The Bible gives it a new name. We're not quite that agile but we feel ourselves

to be different. We know that somehow we've grown up. That the world will never be as childish, as whinning, as demanding, as selfish as it once was. And then the story goes on and they reconcile and they live happily efer after. Now I submit to you that three thousand years ago, when this story was written, based on a story told around the campfires of a thousand years before that, you're dealing with one of the truly beautiful literary creations of early man. This is fine literature. In any language and at any time. This is a good story told rather simply, there's no excessing language. Hemingway would have been happy. It's a story about people. Did it happen to Jacob? It could of. It could happen to any man at any time. This is why we read the Bible. Not ultimately to ask ourselves , was there a Jacob?, wasn't there a Jacob?, was he a ?, was he ?, what was he? This kind of literature is in it. It grips us - it's part of our cultural tradition, it gives us our own name , Israel, a name that we can be proud of because of its symbolic association and it gives rabbis texts galore with which to their congregation. Well, next week we tie this all up together. I think that more and more of you are beginning to do your homework. What I'd like to do is have you read the Book of Genesis or as much of it as you can, we've concentrated on Genesis this term. Jot down your questions, I'll try to answer then next week during our question period and take us a little further into the wanderers and the beauties of the Bible and thank you very much.

We need to get the 20th week after 11th in Germany - section
in old German families as remembered ~~in the past~~ ^{which was} "a summary
German was my father, and he was born in Egypt", particularly,
the ancient history of Israel, was not limited to that single half century
celebrated some ancient Western family traditions - from 1122 to 1166
and gave the same rather remarkable different about "German summary
Chronicles" which was also father.

We take the English word 1250 A.D. The Bible tells us
that the descendants of Joseph remained in Egypt until all were
400 years - [40 hundred years in a symbolic number - 40
means rough 10 generations - the ancient mentioned a generation
at 40 - 40 x 10 = 400, and that the symbolic number in the understanding - and
the for one generation to the next - and the symbolic number has not been the
psychological number of generations might be seen]. My point is and
that the Bible assumes the patriarchs were born around 1700
the earliest half of the 2nd millennium before to 1.8.

We are back in what is called history with the middle
Brass Age - now has seemed to form a transition of middle Brass,
but not yet of classical and ancient times. Techniques are well developed
but the human mind has only recently been dominated - and the mind
is still very young and not yet fully developed - the ship of the ancient - the new Brass Age is just
born of birth. These new high civilization is characteristic
and also Egypt - and civilization commencing in middle Times -
the Zigzag - the old the stone and clay clay of the
pyramids. This new the age of humanity and in human life

Bible Study II
"Meaning, Metaphor and Mystery"
November 4, 1964

Madam Chairman - Last week I was so preoccupied aat ssssshing you that I did not pay the usual and meant respects to your chairlady so that my greeting today may be double, first to Mrs. Leo ~~Neumark~~^{Neuman}, secondly to Mrs. Norman ~~Bernon~~^{Berman} for the very lovely way in which they've organized these programs and shared them last week and this week too.

Now, let's get down to work. We spoke last week of the variety of literature which is included in the Bible. The variety of literature which is represented by the various Biblical books. Of the correspondingly different quieties of judgment and criticism which each require. Today I'd like to begin by ~~Refining~~^{Refining} this statement a little further. Not only are there various separate Books in the Bible and not only do these Books differ in style, purpose, the kind of literature represented. Not only are these Books written over a period of time reaching back into the second millenium before the Common Era, running down from there to the second century before the Common Era, a period of time twice as long as the entire scheme of English literature from Baowolf to our own day. In most of the Biblical Books are themselves composite, made up of different strands or chapters submitted by different men. Turn with me for a moment, then, to the Book of Proverbs, to the first chapter in the Book of Proverbs. I wrote you ~~notes~~^{memorized} this last week on how to find your place in the Bible. Did you all memorize the Books of the Bible so you could dip through and find them? You'll notice that the Book of Proverbs begins with a verse which tells us its presumed authorship. The Proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; And after that we ~~get~~^{get} the list of sayings which were attributed to the wisest of all of Israel's kings, Solomon. Now, ~~dip~~^{dip} over to chapter 29 in the Book of Proverbs. Chapter 30 rather, and you'll notice the first verse "The words of Agur the son of Jakeh; the burden." I have no idea who Agur, the son of Jahek was, ~~but~~^{but} he certainly wasn't Solomon. What we have here in this chapter is a tied on set of proverbs ascribed to some other man. Tied

on is not a metaphor but a quite literal use of the English language, because you will remember we are dealing not with books but with scrolls. The way in which scrolls were put together was to take the hide of the goat or of the sheep, dry it, write on it, tie it together with the next hide, write on that and add a third. So the meanings of conflation or of addition was simply to tie on one scroll to the next.

Now skip to the next chapter, chapter 31. We found another author. "The words of king Lemuel; the burden wherewith his mother corrected him." King Lemuel had many of *the same problems* we still have today. But in any case, these are his particular thoughts and they include that magnificent poem and praise of woman-kind, which you all know "Woman of valour who can find?" Those of you who have a Jewish Publication Society Bible, and this is simply an aside, will notice that beginning on verse 10, in chapter 31, the Hebrew alphabet is printed down on the left hand side of each succeeding verse. This is a separate poem, these last 21 verses, known as *an acrostic*. Each line begins with the succeeding letter in the Hebrew alphabet. It really makes no point in English translation to print them this way. It is simply an indication to you of the kind of poetry involved. My point is simply this - that in the Book of Proverbs we have the work of at least three different writers, two of them are utterly unknown to us, we have no idea of the time and place of the actual writing, why were these *actual* ~~new~~ additions added? Possibly for very practical reasons. A small scroll tends to disappear and to get lost. They may of simply been trying to preserve originally the words of Agur and of Lemuel. More probably, they wanted to include these words in the Bible. The Bible was not about to canonize three books and write of common sense and *proven* ~~preserved~~ wisdom so they all simply made them into one book and we now have them. How do we know that the editors of the Bible were not about to canonize three different books at this time? Well, there's a much better book of proverbs than the biblical Book of Proverbs. It's called the Wisdom of Ben Sura. It was written in the second century

before the Common Era by a merchant philosopher from Jerusalem, it's a long book, biblical
it's sharp, perceptive, ⁱⁿ its style, I think is superior to the Book of Proverbs
which had however the virtue of a ^{heavy} antiquity of having been ascribed to
King Solomon. They didn't want to put into books of this type of wisdom that shows
the Book of Proverbs and the book of the Wisdom of Ben Sura was kept in the Apocrypha
in the books which were not included. My point then - to repeat - each Biblical
Book may be a composite of a variety of works. This is true also of the biblical
Psalms Book of ~~Solomon~~. There are 150 psalms in this anthology. Some of them are titled
the Psalm of David, ascribed by tradition to King David. Some of them are ascribed
to the sons of Korah, some of them are ascribed directly to a man named Asaph,
others are anonymous. What they did was simply to draw together the spiritual literature,
the hymns ^{very} song in the ancient Temple, the ^{literary} of Jerusalem. They bound
them together in this little Book of Psalms. Interestingly we now find a 151st psalm.
A psalm that somehow got lost. In the literature found in Cave, they found
a scroll of the Book of Psalms which include a psalm which is not in our Bible.
Either the string got unraveled or somehow we got a copy of a scroll which did
not include this particular psalm. So things have been lost in transmission,
there are omissions in the Bible, and things were added, in the process of trans-
mission. ^{if this were all} ^{if all we had to do} was to look for the super scription of ~~Solomon~~
David, ^{psalm of Korah} or Proverbs of ⁱⁿ Lemuel, Our interpreted task
would be a relatively simple one. But all too often the Bible does not give us
such clear signals as to composite authorship. We have to resort to our own
power of logic, discrimination, and reason. Since most of us are a little bit
blurry eyed this morning, we spent last night watching political ^{thing} news, let me
give you an illustration from the Bible in the realm of political theory. I
must first give you some background so that you understand these two chapters.
In the eleventh century before the Common Era, and in the century before that,
our fathers came out of this area of the Trans Jordan desert and they moved across
the Jordan river and settled in the highlands and then in the farming lands of
Canaan. They hardly had a chance to settle on the land when a new threat came

at them from an unexpected direction. A sea people attacked Canaan. The Philistines. They are believed to have originally come from Crete. They are known to have attacked Egypt, in the eleventh century before the Common Era. They were repulsed by Egypt, and moved up the coast *Ashkelon*, , and these other cities which are now in the southwestern sea area, the ^{sea} coast area of Israel. They settled there, they raised the cities, they built own and then they began to expand inland. They were a powerful people, an advanced civilization, an excellent military folk. Israel had originally been ruled as a loose tribal league. Each of the tribes had its own tribal council, government was done by meeting of the chieftans. The tribes came together only in time of danger. Then they elected a man who was called a *shofete*. He translated judge. Judged in the English language is a misleading translation. The judge was a general. He was a general whose , whose commission of office was good only for a period of the emergency. Once the raiders had been repulsed, he lost his power and became only one of the Council of one of the tribes and the tribes went back into their own states right way. Now as the Philistines began to ^{encroach} ~~approach~~ more and more of a greater and greater military success against Canaan, against our forefathers, it was apparent that they needed some kind of centralized military ^{authority} ~~force~~. They needed a centralized government and the only form of centralized government which was known was a King. Pressure was brought to have such a King, in *power*. Now, if you will, turn to the first Book of Samuel, Chapter 9. If you'll turn to verse 15 we will read the one account of the entire reign of the first King who was Saul, of course, in Israel. "Now the Lord had revealed unto Samuel a day before Saul came, saying: 'Tomorrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be prince over My people Israel, and he shall save My people out of the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon My people, because their cry is come unto Me.' And when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord spoke unto him: 'Behold the man of whom I said unto thee: This same shall have authority over My people.'" Now, in these very few verses, we have a very direct statement. God rules the Kingship. Samuel ^{who is} ~~rules~~ the religious

authority chooses the man at God's will who is to be king. The king is mandated and he is the utterly legitimate source of authority. We have another rule for the basis of monarchy in these few ^{verses} chapters. Now turn to Chapter 8, the chapter which immediately preceeds. I'd like to read this whole chapter with you because it is a crucial one in the development of our religious thought. 'And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his first-born was Joel; and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beer-sheba. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted justice. Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah. And they said unto him: 'Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.' But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said: 'Give us a king to judge us.' And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel: 'Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not be king over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, in that they have forsaken Me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice; howbeit thou shalt earnestly forewarn them, and shalt declare unto them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.' And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king. And he said: 'This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: he will take your sons, and appoint them unto him, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and they shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint them unto him for captains of thousands, and captains of fifties; and to plow his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and the instruments of his chariots. Man will no longer be master of his own destiny. And he will take your daughters to be perfumers, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. He will have a harem, and a court, and your daughters will all have to be concubines. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. They will be ^{expropriated} ~~expropriated~~. He will take a tenth of

your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. He will have to reward his favorites and he will have to reward from that which is yours. And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks; and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king whom ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not answer you in that day.' But the people refused to hearken unto the voice of Samuel; and they said: 'Nay; but there shall be a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.' And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he spoke them in the ears of the Lord. And the Lord said to Samuel: 'Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king.' And Samuel said unto the men of Israel: 'Go ye every man unto his city.' Here we have an utterly different account of the legitimacy of monarchy. It is *illegitimate*. Israel required a king not for legitimate defensive purpose but for no better reason than that everyone else had them. You have to keep up with the Joneses. In this case, with the Philistines, with the Moabites and the *Edonites*. And Samuel took great pains to *clear* two things. First *this*, power corrupts and often *absolute* power corrupts absolutely and secondly that God would not ~~make~~ *order the* establishment of a royal monarchy, in fact that God agreed to it only because he had already despaired of the *faith*fulness of Israel and he knew them to be a *wagward* people. Now these two chapters could not have been written by the same ~~man~~ *hard* man. They represent two diametrically opposed philosophies of government. They are tied together in the Bible in ~~two~~ *context* succeeding chapters. It is patently evident from their inner-*concepts*, that they are inconsistent. *It is* ~~Abilition~~ of the job of the biblical scholar to try and put each into its own place. Chapter 9, the consensus has it, is earlier. It represents a need, a need *to have a king*. Saul was indeed pointed king, Saul faced the Philistines and when he failed, David was appointed instead, and David had enough success and destroyed the Philistine menace. It is an assumption by a world house which has achieved power, ~~by~~ of legitimacy of its power. It is assumed that the second chapter that you read is about a hundred years later. David has

enhanced his power. Solomon has come along and has demanded more power yet and Solomon of you will remember, is the man ~~that~~ many wives, many palaces, of great armies and of course all this excess which is described in Chapter 8, springs up, the scholars believe, as a protest against the Oriental which Solomon and some of the later kings established over Israel. If you are going to make a theory of biblical political practice, which chapter do you rely on? The whole Bible is sacred. You've got confusion. If you lived in medieval ages then the kings have the divine right to rule badly, you take chapter 9. If you are in modern times, you take Chapter 8. When we talk about the balance of power, and the dangers of un power and the like. If your criteria is precedence, chapter 3 precedes chapter 9. If your criteria is relevance in truth, chapter 8 precedes chapter 9. That's a judgment on fact. In this case, the concept that the whole Bible is sacred or the idea that the Bible is somehow consistent leads us to absolute confusion because the Bible often argues against itself. We have here really a classic example, I could choose many others, I took this only because I too watch television last night.

Now why are all the critical Jews then decide as to the various strands and layers of the Bible. First is inconsistency of treatment. Second is inconsistency of philosophy. Repetitiousness and finally we know Hebrew questions of style and language and form. We must do this separating out of various parts of the Bible as carefully as we can. An ancient documents have put together this rather haphazard way ~~we~~ has long been known. The ancients little used the quotation marks and footnote referencing, copyright regulations the same way we do. For a long time the sacredness of this Book, the idea that it was holy, that it was taboo kept people, for the most part, from treating the Bible critically. However, they began to recognize early in the middle ages that the author of the last chapters of Isaiah could not be the first man who wrote the first chapters. The burden of the first chapters can be simply put - the anger of the world is kindled against his people. It's a bitter book. A denunciatory book. Chapter 40 begins "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, Bid Jerusalem take heart, And proclaim unto her, That her time

word here for law is And as you know has come to mean the entire

of service is accomplished, That her guilt is paid off;" In the First Isaiah, the guilt is hardly begun to be ~~paid off~~ penalized. In the second Isaiah, we call now the Isaiah, the guilt now has been paid off and people must be brought back to their land. So we have to use concepts of content. We have to analyze the subject matter and try to understand what it means.

With the five Books in Moses, I'm gradually narrowing in on the subject matter I want to lay bare before you this morning. In the five Books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy men held off, applying the critical standard of composite until very late. Why, because there was the ancient piety that these five Books had all been given by God to Moses in the desert, at or near Mt. Sinai and during the wanderings. Now, where does this piety begin? In this case, the Bible itself is to blame. Turn to Chapter 31, if you will, in the Book of Deuteronomy. The fourth last chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy. This is Moses's valedictory. He's been told by God he must die, he will not cross into the Promised Land and he ^{summons} ~~summons~~ the family together at the bedside and he gives his last will and testament. "And Moses went and spoke these words unto all Israel. And he said unto them: 'I am a hundred and twenty years old this day; I can no more go out and come in; and the Lord hath said unto me: Thou shalt not go over this Jordan.'" Go out and come in, by the way, is an idea meaning to lead out and back. "The Lord thy God, He will go over before thee; He will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt dispossess them; and Joshua, he shall go over before thee, as the Lord hath spoken." Moving to verse seven "And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel: 'Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt go with this people into the land which the Lord hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it. And the Lord, He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee; fear not, neither be dismayed.' And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, that bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel." And Moses wrote this law. The Hebrew word here for law is . And as you know has come to mean the entire

five Books of Moses in our ark. As a matter of fact, it tends to mean, the entire Bible itself. Piety had it that the was the entirety of scripture. Actually, in the Bible does not mean the scroll in ark, it means simply a law. An law. A law given thus sayeth the Lord, thou shalt not murder. Thus sayeth the Lord, thou shalt not kill. That a . It's a statement, a law, a define . This chapter means no more than this. And Moses wrote this law. What law? ~~XXXX~~ Verse ten tells us. 'At the end of every seven years, in the set time of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose, assemble the people, thou shalt read this law for all Israel in their hearing.' Now there is a time, the leaders from then on were to read the law, the base of constitution of Israel before the people. But because of this slippery meaning to the word , the piety grew up that the entire five Books of Moses were in fact of Mosaic, which means a divine authorship. With this we too have trouble. What do we do for instance with the last chapter of Deuteronomy. Turn to it, it's chapter 34. "And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land, even Gilead as far as Dan; and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah as far as the hinder sea;" That's the Mediterranean, "and the South, and the Plain," etc. "And the Lord said unto him: 'This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying: I will give it unto thy seed; I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.' So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he was buried in the valley in the land of Moab over against Bethpeor; and no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." How could a man write about his own death? How could a man describe a yet unchanging place of burial and most of all, how could a man say "and no man knoweth of his grave unto this day". What's this day? How would Moses have written this? This mystery is

the torah which could not be given a specific color. In the last hundred years

called the Mystery of the Twelve. It's a classic of biblical criticism and as early as the , fifteen hundred years ago, a rabbi said that Moses wrote the entire law, excepting for this last chapter which was written by Joshua, and had that piety and was tied into the Book of Deuteronomy simply out of respect for a good story completely told. The story of Moses in Deuteronomy would not be complete until he had his death. But that's evading the issue, because it is in the Book of Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy, the piety claims, is entirely , this patently cannot be.

In the twelfth century of the Common Era, a Jewish scholar, Abraham Eben Ezra, went through the five Books of Moses and he pointed out a number of verses, like this verse "and no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day", which gave him pause. Though he was afraid to come out directly and say that he doubted the divine authorship of these five Books, he alluded to it. Let's see how good you are as biblical critics. Turn to Deuteronomy, chapter 1, verse 1. "These are the words which Moses spoke unto all Israel beyond the Jordan; in the wilderness, in the Arabah, over against Suph, between Paran and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Di-zahab." Why could Moses not have written that? Over the Jordan, exactly. Over the Jordan would imply that Moses had never crossed the Jordan, Palestine. The text is talking about places that are trans Jordan. We have an obvious inconsistency here. If Moses had written this, he would have to have been in Canaan. The Bible tells us directly, he was on the other side of the Jordan. There are about 15 such classic illustrations of inconsistencies within the text itself. The work of unsticking the parts, is a subject of many variables and great scholarship. We have yards and yards of books in our shelves and library which are attempting to separate out the various strands. A hundred years ago, German scholars were the first to work at this - thought they had the job completed. With usual German efficiency they printed what they called poly ~~stran~~ Bibles. These are Bibles printed with various color type. Yellow meant that it was an author from a certain century, the blue from another century the red from another one and there were very few words and phrases from the torah which could not be given a specific color. In the last hundred years

largely because of the advances in the study of linguistics, because we have learned more and more about what words meant two thousand and more years ago and because of the study of archaeology we have become less and less sure of what they were sure about. We intended to date back what they dated late. We intended to see historical truth where they saw only myth. We intended to understand the Bible far better.

What remains clear and what cannot be this late in the game is that.

The five Books of Moses are made up of a number of separate strands. That means that they are a copulation of a number of separate traditions, some reaching back to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries B.C., some perhaps as late as the fifth, perhaps the sixth century B.C. These various traditions have signatures. You can tell differences in style. You can tell differences in language. The classic difference is in the name of God. In one of the oldest and one of the most complete ^{of the} versions of which the Bible is made up God is always referred as or

with that awkwardness that modern German scholars love. There never was such a God as. This is a creation of the, but there is in the Bible this Hebrew word. This is a word which was never pronounced.

It was called the ineffable name of God, it comes from the ~~name~~ root to be. It means simply that which is pure essence. It had an imaginable quality to it. Let's not get around that. It was not pronounced and what they did was put some vowels under it, and they made it say and then they printed this which

you see - like this and that became an archaism which meant somehow that our God wasn't God and was something way back when. This earliest strand uses outer mind and whenever you tend to find outer mind in a text in Hebrew you can recognize that this is probably that strand. Another strand which is almost as old but not quite uses the name, which also means God. Why one strand should use

and one strand should use, we don't know. It may have been that one was a familiar form in a northern Israelite tribe and the other maybe a ^{familiar} form in Judean tribe. These are ~~name~~ signatures, signatures which help us in the interpretation. What am I getting at? I'm getting to the point

where we were at last week that you cannot assume the antiquity of chapters in the Bible simply because of their place in the Bible. This by the way is no .

The forbidding tradition already new to the principal (Hebrew). There is no chronological principle of placement of chapters in the torah. So that the Genesis one as I said last week is very late. Some of the earliest chapters in the Bible, parts of the Bible appear in Joshua and Judges and elsewhere. Well, then rabbi, what are the earliest sections in the Bible? The earliest sections in the Bible appear here and there, little snippets of verse. People wrote poetry before they wrote pros. Why? because they didn't write - they recited. Poetry is far easier to remember than pros. In the ancient tribes, each tribe had its rememberer. A man who remembered the traditions of the tribe in a poetic form and who would sit before the tribal council at various days, shuffle back and forward. They chanted because this was the movement of the camel on the desert. Often he would go before the cameled troops and recite the war songs and the valarious history and the heroics of the tribe. He would recite these ancient tribal liturgy. Some of them were war chants, some of them were lamentations with dead heroes, some of them were wedding poems, some of them helped the tribe to remember its pasture land - the wells that belonged to ~~mark~~ it, the places it was allowed to visit and to move, the places where it could not go. I'll give you one example of a very early portion of the Bible - Numbers, Chapter 21. If you turn to verse 16 this is a geographical description of certain places the tribes were wandering in the desert. "And from thence to Beer; that is the well whereof the Lord said unto Moses: 'Gather the people together, and I will give them water.' Then sang Israel this song: Spring up, O well -- sing ye unto it -- The well, which the chieftans dug, Which the nobles of the people started, With maces, and with their own staves." That's it. It's a short . We believe it to have been written originally to give the location of the well by the placement of certain words in the text. It is very old, it antedates Moses, it goes back into the patriarch period, into

the wanderings, and you have little bits of verse here and there, they're very difficult to understand, man is just beginning to understand the principal of semetic poetry, but these are the oldest of the portions of the Bible. All of this is to get you to some of the later portions of the Bible which come first. To disabuse your mind once and for all - of their earliest. Genesis 1 thru 11 - this is what we are going to deal with today. The first eleven chapters of Genesis are the great Books of beginning, the cosmic myths, the story of origins, creation, Adam and Eve, the Garden Eden, the tree of light, the forbidden fruit, Cain and Abel, the two brothers who squabbled, the first murder, Noah and the flood, the ark, the animals two by two which your children so love, and the story of course of the Tower of Babel. These stories have been usually interpreted as part of the ~~innocence~~ innocence of the race. As among the things, the juvenile things, the childhood things. They are in fact, late. We won't appreciate them unless we really understand that they are cultivated, heavily theological, serious minded and philosophical. They are anything but naive tales, told way back when at the beginning of time. Genesis one which we touched on last week, is something far more than bad science. If you've seen the early writing of Genesis one, it seems to be nothing more an accurate description of the creation of the world. When you realize its lateness, it's one of the latest chapters in the Bible, you realize it does many things. It established the philosophical principle that God is the Creator. It establishes the philosophical principle which was revolutionary in that day that life is good. "Never refrain and behold it was good". Life was good and the world was to be enjoyed and life on earth was to be made the most of. It establishes the principle that man and woman were created somehow in the image of God, that there is a spiritual thing within us God like, conscious or of the capacity to feel, the mind. It establishes that man is made dominant over the other animals of the world and these are to be cultivated and these are to be for man's specific purpose. Finally it establishes the fact that

these to have been the earliest forms. What we find when we deal with the Bible is that almost all of the crudeness and the violence and the vulgarity and the sexuality of early myths has been purged. Not completely, we still have Cain and Abel.

the seventh day is a mandatory day of rest in which you may not work or slave labor, your animal, or the like. This is the philosophic matrix of Genesis one. It is written to underscore and to establish all of these purposes. Jewish history will make this part of it difficult. Jewish history - the Bible really begins with Genesis twelve. With Abraham. Abraham is not only the legendary first Jew but the Jews themselves believe that their history began with Abraham. How do we know this?

We know this from the Bible itself. There was told in _____ and we've even turned to it, _____ 26 tells us that when our ancestors came to

Jerusalem, on _____, and they brought there the fruits of their harvest.

They recited in ancient formula, and what did this formula say? My father was a wandering Arameian. He left off his home, and he went to search a new land and he came to the worship of God and God promised him seven within the Promised Land and now, we too, members of that covenant of Abraham are allowed to enjoy the bounty of this good earth - the land flowing with milk and with honey. This is one of the ancient liturgical formulas of our people. It is revealing in that it insists that Jewish history begins with Abraham. Why then the first eleven chapters? The answer is a simple one, it's a matter of cultural condition. All the people of this entire near Eastern area, in the Mesopotamia area, the water sheds of the Tigris and the Euphrates began their history by going back to creation telling the history of the world down to their progenitors. The framework which the early writers used, a creation story ten generations of _____ between creation and the

flood. A flood story and then some generations since the flood to the

of the tribe is a classic form which is known from Sumerian, and Accadian, Assyrian, and Babylonian mythology in writing and is uniform - universal, in the literature of the Middle East. They all then, had these myths of beginning. What is crucial is to see how the myths of beginning of our people were different, if they were. Since Mr. Freud and some of the men who have gone about delving into the sub-conscience, men have tended to take the literary forms of myth and to assume these to have been the earliest forms. What we find when we deal with the Bible is that almost all of the crudeness and the violence and the vulgarity and the sexuality of early myths has ~~has~~ been purged. Not completely, we still have Cain and Abel.

I'll show you, I hope, as we go along how we have vacuum cleaned these ancient myths and fumigated them and made them serve a more spiritual purpose. I don't propose to read Genesis one, we know it too well, but I would like to read to you Genesis one as it was known in Babylon in the sixth century before the Common Era by the greatest empire of the world then, the great God of the Babylonians, the head of the , this is the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar and the great hanging gardens of Babylon and the great wonders of the world. This is the kingdom that defeated the Assyrians and this is a kingdom which lived some three, four hundred years perhaps after Genesis as we know it was written. Their Genesis epic is called the let me read just a few paragraphs from it to you. Notice first of all, it is pantheistic. Secondly, it is . It tends to see force in nature and tends to see many Gods in the world. When the heaven ~~and~~ Gods above were as yet uncreated and the earth Gods below not yet brought into being, Alone there existed , who engendered them, only the Gods and who brought all of them forth. Their waters could mix together in a single stream, unrestricted by reed beds, unimpeded by marsh. For since none of the Gods at this appeared these have not yet been formed or . In the depths of their waters the Gods were created. There appeared and . They first were given name, but only to a point of size did they grow and become larger, and were born bigger than they. As lengthen the days and multiplied the years produced produced his first born. This their son was the equal of his parents and the likeness of himself. Aha is the great mother . Now what do we have? We have simply an evolution of Gods who themselves represent a cosmic structure of evolution. What do we have in Genesis one? We have first the , then the firmament then the world itself. There are no spirits represented in each of these worlds. The spirit world has been completely erased and our forefathers were the only ones ~~able~~ to see the world wholly naturistically because they saw only one founding principle. Only one creative force in the world. ^{But there} ~~It~~ is another great difference between these

common myths and our own . That is what these men made of man himself. Man according to the Bible is creating the image of God and the image of God created in him. Man is given dominance over the creatures of the world and man has set out to make the most of this great world of ours. Let's look at the ~~HEBREW~~ Babylonian myth. As acknowledged this appeal of the Gods he decided to create another wonder of wonders. Opening his mouth he spake forth to Aha, invited him to comment on the theory he proposed. This is 's proposal. Blood will I compose, bring a skeleton into being, produce a lowly primitive creature, man shall be his name, I will create , an earthly puppet man. To him you charge the service that the Gods may then have rest. Man is of low state, man is a puppet in the hands of God, man's sole purpose is to be charged with the service, charged with ritual and right with a bringing of sacrifice that the Gods may be pleased and that their duties may be performed. Here again we have the evidence of an amazing religious revolution. Man in the Jewish tradition and alone in the Jewish tradition, is a thing of some stature. Thing of some dignity. Man's purpose on earth is not simply to bow before the Gods but to bring them the sacrifice, but man's purpose on earth is to establish the just Kingdom of God, here. This vision of Genesis one presumes, first of all Isaiah, who said I don't want your sacrifices in the name of God. Bring no more , there are an unto me. Your new moons and all the things that you do bring. Why ~~xxx~~ you tramp in my courts? What do I demand of you? To do justice, to love righteousness, to establish justice in the gates, etc. This was the Jewish view and it's remarkably reflected in Genesis one - in some. Genesis one is a creation myth. Genesis one is a creation myth within the forms known throughout the near Eastern world. But it is a myth which has been radically changed. There is no parallel in ancient times to the way in which we tell this myth. Why do we use a myth? Some of us who have outgrown the fairy stories and who like everything is simple logical and scientific equation wonder, why did they resort to such a telling. Why couldn't they have come out and simply stated the loss of it? We'll admit it

is attractive, it gets interest. A myth is a weak way of teaching. When we look at the equations of the physical scientists of our day most of us simply close the page and in absolute confusion. We don't know where to begin. A myth drives science home - drives theology home. But I would remind you that the greatest of the innovators of science, the Greeks, told myth about the creation of the world. They

in the world of myth. Unless we feel that our ancestors were somehow archaic or naive, let me read to you one brief paragraph from the Greek myths which describe the creation of the world. Not from the earliest of the Greek myths but from the Greek myths of the classic age of Athens, at and

. Heaven and earth have been created . The sea ebbed and flowed beneath it between its shores and the fish frolicked in the waters. ~~IN~~ IN the air sang little birds and the earth swarmed with animals. As yet there was no creature whose body the spirit could house and from there govern the world around it. Down to earth came , the name means in Greek .

, a descendant of the ancient race of Gods which Zeus had dethroned. Now was crafty and nimble wit. He knew he was heavenly, sleeping in the earth so he scooped up some clay, moistened it with some water from the river, kneaded it this way and that and shaped it into the image the Gods, the Lords of the world. To give life to this earth formed figure he took both good and evil from core of many animals. He locked them in man's breast. He had a friend ⁱⁿ⁻ among the mortals , the Goddess of wisdom who

and she breathed the spirit, the Divine spirit into this creature which is yet only half alive. Now this is myth. Pure myth. Pregnant in meaning, rich in meaning. As we read this myth we can understand what meant when he said "The myth taken as a whole is false." But there is truth in it also. I want you to know that when our ancestors wrote these first eleven chapters of Genesis they knew that the history taken as a whole was false. But there is truth, deep truth in it also. They understood what meant, they used myth and they were not at all disabused by it. Now before we get to some of the actual readings of some of these myths, let me stop and try and answer some questions which I may

have raised and then we'll go on from here. How did we get this calendar which says we are in the year 5725? The answer is that this dating is a very late one. The earliest calendar which we know in ancient Israel dated from the

years of kings, you dated it the third ~~of~~ year of King Uzzi, the fourth year of King Solomon and you dated each king's year by his ascension, by his being a king which was done on one particular day of the year. Then we Jews began to date as did all peoples in the ancient Near East in the year 333 B.C.E. which was a great year in which Alexander the great completed his conquest of what was then the known world. This is called the , the date of contrast. For about a thousand years this remained the classic dating among Jews. Then the Jews who still lived most in the Near East and in the African world began to date as did all the Muslims from from 632 of the Common Era. When Mohammad fled from Mecca to Media and established a , this is a classic date of

world. So therefore we had no compunctions about using any and all calendar systems until we ran into the Christian world. Why did the calendar of the Christian world give us a problem? Because it is dated not in terms of historical events, but in terms of belief in Christ. B.C. means before the Christ. A.D. , the year of our Lord. Both assume what is for the Jew an impossible theological assumption. And so in the Middle Ages when our people moved into Europe in great numbers they had to devise a new calendar system. In the Middle Ages, which was the Dark Ages among our peoples, among all others they had to come up with a new system. Alexander the Great didn't mean anything, Mohammad was the great enemy of the crusades they couldn't still use that date so someone sat down and tried to figure out what was the date of the creation of the world from the Bible and he came up with a certain date and that's what the date that we still have on our calendar . I doubt if this date has been used for more than 600 years. Jewish history dates back 3800 years so for the better part of our history we've used quite other calendars. Certainly no one in the Bible knew of this date. Another question? Seven is one of the classic magical numbers of mankind. It's indivisible, it's a taboo number, if you

have a dice player, seven come eleven, these are sacred numbers originally. They were taboo numbers. Seven is one of the classic ways of simply dividing time, dividing things - three, seven, eleven, etc. In Israel, the seventh year was an important year because Jewish law established the seventh year was to be a year of release. On the seventh year any debts which was owed to you, had to be forgiven. The principle wasn't repaid, this debt was canceled. This was an early law of design to prevent the farmer, who had very little capital, from falling in debt to the city slicker who came out at 11% interest and let him the grain for ~~ix~~ his crop for that year. If he couldn't repay it at the end of the seven years the contract which established the debt became invalid. On the seventh year, the slave had to be set free. It was a year of release and it therefore was an important year in the figuring. Since it was a year of release, and since it was a year of , it also became a year in which an agricultural practice was enshrined. The seventh year was the year in which the fields were not to be sown. They didn't know much about crop rotation but they did know that you could have used the land. And so what they said was one year in seven the land was to lie foul, whatever grew was simply plowed back into the land. You couldn't plant a crop. This was a way of seeing to it the land became a certain fertility. On that seventh year people had plenty of time. So the seventh year was a good time for assembly, for meetings, for war and for the reading of torah. And that's how it all came about. Question? No, it's perfectly right. What we used to do was wrong. What we used to do was to say it's a story and we stopped there. For two reasons. First of all, most of us were not quite sure we could explain evolution and secondly, most of us tended to be self conscious about the Bible. The Bible was old, it was archaic, it was blood lust, and we took over all the preconceptions of this scientific world, the cynical world, our Christian interpretation to the Bible, all chosen in one line from the Bible. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. We didn't know where it was said, how it was qualified but this is what the Christian world made us remember. Make people understand what is involved in the story, the beauty

schoolroom and for the woman. Let us give you an example. I didn't want to be

their meaning, their place in the history of thought. Judaism has its limitations has its anachronisms, its ugly parts of the Bible but by and large, the Bible stands up better than any other ancient document to our own modern critical standards. That's what I'm trying to do to make you understand these. Question? Revelation is a basic kind of Judaism for Judaism insisted on being orthodox only on a revelation of the ~~xx~~ law. When an orthodox boy, a hundred, two hundred years ago, and of any Jewish boy at that time, was set to read in the Bible, and you know where he began? He began with Leviticus one. Now Leviticus one is about as dry, uninteresting a part as you could possibly have. It has to do with temple rules, regulations and one thing or another. "When any man of you bringeth an offering unto the Lord, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd or of the flock." That's the first sentence in Leviticus, that you're supposed to bring sacrifices of feast. Now why do they begin there rather than with the stories of Genesis, which are much easier reading, better Hebrew to start off with, much more exciting to youngsters. Because the piety of Jewish life insisted on the authority, on the authority of Jewish law. This 613 commandments in the Bible. It never insisted on the same degree of revelation for these early myths and legends and tales. It saw a great meaning in them. An orthodox person would say that these first chapters of the Bible must be read , which means this way. Reading in and reading out, interpretively. I know none except the , who would insist on a literal interpretation and certainly among , any of the good rabbis of the Middle Ages would not have insisted on the literal interpretation of these first chapters. This has never been a in the Jewish life unlike that of Christian life. We insisted on the dogmatics of the law. That's our great difference from Christianity. We insist on discipline, on law, on rules and regulation. Now there have been advantages and disadvantages but that's what means to us. The torah means law. The legendary parts, the historical parts, the quasi historical parts we took as edifying. As instructive for the schoolroom and for the women. Let me give you an example. I didn't mean to be

masculine at the moment but do any of you know what or was?

There has been was a Yiddish copulation of all the wonderful stories in the .
 It was written for women. Saturday afternoon your great grandmothers were all left
 alone by your great grandfathers went to the to hear the rabbi talk
 about Jewish law, they were told . This was all the
 instructive material, about homely things and imaginative and it was wonderful and
 this is why women have always been wonderful
 story tellers. They knew stories far better than the men did. When they got down
 to serious business in the you talked about the law. The parts of the
 which had been ex from the . The practice,
 the day to day routine and regulations. Question - I was going to get to
 as we read the legend because blood is a very important concept in Jewish life.
 In Jewish life, life is in the blood and we'll see this in some of the early
 legends. The blood is no problem. As you know, you must salt the meat so that
 all the blood disappears. It is drawn out of it
 of life. The fat is a bad translation, basically in English here and what it really
 means is the entrails. The talk of the whole chapter three talks about the sweet-
 breads and the kidneys and all the other things that are occasionally made into
 delicacies but otherwise we try and avoid them. This is the implication here.
 Question - No, as a matter of fact. What they're saying here is that Moses died
 and probably laid on a plank in the ground someplace and in making a point which
 was instructive to our Jewish attitude towards death. No man, no hero was to be
 revered. We were not to have those darkened caves to which we would bring candles
 as of offerings. The tradition grew up that God had specifically
 ordered that Moses's place of death would not be known. To set an example, Moses is
 the great hero . No other man's grave is to be ~~an object of~~ a shrine.
 Now, we have been pretty good about that although if you go through the North African
 Jewish communities you will see places where their Jewish saints have been buried
 translated by someone way back when for ages and they got a pair of axes when they

in which shrines, candles have been offered. But by and large we have said, and there has been a consistent Jewish attitude toward death, once the death is over, the man's worth lingers in what he produced and the love he left behind, in his memory and in the history of man, not in the place of death. There is nothing holy, there is nothing holy about a place of death. About a sepulcher, or a coffin or a shrine or anything of this type. Question - When Moses is described in the Bible as having come down from Mt. Sinai he's described as alive and alight with the sacredness of his mission. One of the phrases which is used is which means literally a halo, the rays of light going out from him. Now, Jerome in the third century translated into Latin for the Christian world, the Bible, he took another meaning of, which in Hebrew may also mean horn. Nobody bothered is still true today. Nobody bothered to read the original anymore. So this idea that Moses came down from Mt. Sinai with horns remained and you saw it in Michaelangelo's statue. You see it also in certain early church painting. It comes from a simple miss translation of the Bible. This is one other point I'd like to make on this, so much of Bible scholarship is made on the basis of the English text. And you can't do it. Anymore than you could of a Latin text and a Greek text. To be a scholar in the Bible you have to read Hebrew. There's no way around it and one of the things which the Hebrew ~~reading~~ Union College are trying to do is to teach the non-Jewish Biblical scholar to read the Bible in Hebrew because so much of the miss-interpretation is based on the fact that they can't read the text and they don't know the nuances, the subtlety of the meaning. There are other interesting miss-translations. In the New Testament, ~~Moses~~ Jesus is said to have entered Jerusalem sitting on two white asses. Why he would need such a bumpy and no one quite knows except that in the Hebrew has as a plural sometimes the plural of a plural which can also be translated as a pair. One eye is, and the plural ~~pair~~ is which means both eyes etc. The Hebrew was miss-translated by someone way back when for asses and they got a pair of asses when they

meant only the female of the ass and you've got that much translation. Let me bring this part of it to a close and let's read some Bible. That's our purpose. I went into the question of composite authorship because there are basically two strands in the first eleven chapters. One earlier than the other. Genesis one to Genesis two, verse four comes from what we call ^{it's a rather late seventh, maybe} eighth century source. Beginning in verse two of chapter two we get an earlier source which goes back to the tenth and eleventh century, which means we have reading material which was written really before the Illiad was set down, long before the Greek myths had been reduced to writing, when the Egyptian books of the dead were known, the Hindu Vedes, but that's ~~not~~ ^{about} all that's come down into modern times. Now Genesis two, beginning in verse four is the story of the Garden of Eden and begins with a different story of creation. "These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven. No shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up; for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground; but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. Then the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward, in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became four heads." That's not important for us. Now, going down to verse 15. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying: 'of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' And the Lord God said: 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help mate for him.'

And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them; and whatsoever the man would call every living creature, that was to be the name thereof. And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; But for Adam there was not found a help mate for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the place with flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from the man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And the man said: 'This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.' Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh."

At the same time that this was written we have these stories of Marduke and these complicated visions of the fights of Gods in heaven for control of man. What have we here? In the first place, recognizing we have a very different story of creation than in Genesis one. In Genesis one, if you will look back for a moment, you see in verse 26. "And God said: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;" and then in verse 27 "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." Man and woman were created at the same time. Here we have a quite different story of creation story verse. Puts the creation of woman later in time than the creation of man and for rather obvious and rather sermonic purpose. The playing with names throughout this chapter, this is a great name giving chapter of the Bible. To give somebody a name, the ancients believed, was to gain a certain control of him because you must live up to a name. They gave names which had meaning, not like Kelly and Amy and Beth and Sue and all the other movie stars that we use - their names meant the fountain of strength, the living God, the source of wisdom, the laughing one. In a sense, by giving a child a name, by giving a thinging name you give him a personality. I wish more mothers would realize that today when they name their children because you are giving a child a personality. A Hortense has a far different personality

than a "Sue". But in any case, man establishes his domination and look at the names. The name of man, Adam. The name comes from Adama, the Hebrew word for ground. If we used earthling as a direct name, Adam ~~was~~ means earthling, that which ~~is~~ ^{was} of the earth. This is man's world, the earth. Eve, whom we haven't met yet, but we will, you will have this etymology then, means in Hebrew which comes from the Hebrew word Hai, life. She is life, she is the woman ~~in~~, is the source of life. Again we've found a sermonic interpretation. Then they played with the fact that in Hebrew and are other words which are used for man and for woman. Why the similarity. Because the one comes out of the other and then they become husband and wife, they must become one. The rabbis went one step further and they said what's left out, what's the difference?

It is God that makes these two one, and this is a good wedding sermon if you ever want to give one to your children. There's also a good bit of psychology here - "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." The essence of a happy marriage is to get out from under your mother-in-law. The less I be accused of male sentimentality let me insist that it's the man who must leave his mother and that it is the man who is most attracted to remain with his mother. She has made the home and she has made warmth. So the Bible doesn't talk about the girl leaving. That's assumed. Girls want to get cut from under and mothers want their girls to get out from under. But as Freud has told us subconsciously want us to stay and to be your second husbands, therefore this good bit of sound wisdom. So we have here, then, a creation story which in essence is naming, which has an etymological purpose to explain man and to explain woman, which explains something ^{more} physically - the floating rib. All ribs are paired and yet you have the strange phenomenon within the floating rib. How do it all happen? Well, we know that ~~with~~ ^{what} they did, they took an old Mesopotamian legend which said ~~that~~ ^{that} one of the Gods planted a garden and put in that garden ~~eight~~ unique kinds of vegetation and then prohibited all the other Gods from eating any of those trees, fruits. So, one of the Gods being curious, and ~~being~~ ^{being} getting curiouser and curiouser went down and then ate from all the eight different trees.

af

Instead of getting a stomach ache, this God was ~~inflicted~~ immediately with eight different kinds of diseases. One for each of the eight fruits that he had eaten. One of these diseases attacked his ribs. When the Goddess who owned the garden finally got compassion on this poor sufferer who had rifled her garden, she created a good fairy for each of the eight illnesses and she created one to take care of the rib. Well, the seven took care of the seven other illnesses, did their job. The eighth fairy, the lady of the rib, did not. The lady of the rib became a favorite story. She is the misplaced good fairy and apparently it was a favorite story and they knew about the importance of the rib and they played it up from there. Now this is not primitive. This is written by highly litterate, conscious a sophisticated man. He took myth and he reworked it. Let's go on because the next chapter is crucial in theology and in philosophy. "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman: 'Yea, hath God said: Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent: 'Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said: Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.' And the serpent said unto the woman: 'Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.' And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves girdles. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden toward the cool of the day; and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto the man, and said unto him: 'Where art thou?' And he said: 'I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.' And He said: 'Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the

tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?' And the man said: 'The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.'

What's the French translation

. "And the Lord God said

unto the woman: 'What is this thou hast done?' And the woman said: 'The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.'" Man blames woman and woman blames her nerosis. "And the Lord God said unto the serpent: 'Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou from among all cattle, and from among all beasts of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; they shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise their heel.' Unto the woman He said: 'I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy travail; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.' And unto Adam He said: 'Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying: Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.'

Adam, the earthly out of dust, to Adam. And the man called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them. And the Lord God said: 'Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.' Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubim, and the flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way to the tree of life.

Now if you're reading it in a Christian Bible, this is called the fall of man. It's an interesting legend that has parallels in the Mesopotamian mythology but none quite like this one. What actually happens? The ancients believed that the world

once clean, pure, wholly good. Moderns have believed that Civilization perverts. Man has fallen from some early key pious state. Now where was this greatest state. This greatest state was in something called the garden of Eden. Eden itself is a word which has a meaning. Eden in Hebrew means the joyous things, the happy place. And they knew of a of the world. The great rivers of the Mesopotamian world flow down into the Persian Gulf. They are the four great rivers. There are only two left but there were four. These four in this area once had a fertile land. A land which has burst forth with vegetation. This is the land which the scholars now believe was overwhelmed once upon a time by some kind of flood, a tidal wave which created the basis of the Noah story. But it put back the early men, the first men into this paradisaical world. What happened to this world? It's obvious it's gone. How did it desert us? What happened? We didn't deserve it. They developed a whole number of stories to explain it. Now there was, they said, a tree. A tree in the middle of the garden. Then they tell a story about this tree. The tree is the forbidden fruit and God tries to deny man this fruit. He denies it successfully to man - but not to woman. Woman is put upon by something called a serpent, a satan, a devil, a principle of curiosity, that which bites us, you know and fights our curiosity. Makes us go on. The serpent gets the woman to eat of the fruit and the woman doesn't want to do it alone. She wants both people to sign the income tax form that's forged - and so she gives it to the man- he takes a good taste and their eyes are opened. Instead of dying, they rise. Really it's the story of the rise of man, not of the fall of man. Man rises because he learns something. He learns moral judgement. They put it in crude form - he learns his own nakedness. He begins to see that there must be dress, things which protect him, which discipline him from his self. Man recognizes between good and evil. The beginning of moral judgement, the beginning of the intellectual search which is civilization .

But man is obviously not a God. What separates man from the God? The punishment for having eaten of this tree of life which is the punishment, the withdrawal of immortality. In the garden of Eden, man was immortal. He was born full grown and he would have

remained happy and at peace. But in the world of man there is birth and there is death. This is the world ~~that~~ the author of this legend knew. So the penalty for having gained this rich prize is the penalty of our own mortality. We are not of the Gods ~~xxxx~~ anymore, we are of the earthlings.

Man has now become as one of us and now lest he put forth his hand and take ~~the~~ also of the tree of life and eat and live forever he will drive them out of the garden of Eden. This story is an interesting story, it says something about what early man felt - he suffered under and something of his own feelings, of his own powers of mind and of thought. It's been taken up by Christianity and wound around ^{to} a position which we cannot accept and which I cannot believe is indicated by the text. In the old McGuffey's reader, you read "In Adam's fall, we ^{all} all." By that, the Christian world meant that when Adam ate of the ^{fruit of the} tree good and evil. He became hobbler, emotion, psychological. Not only the fact he must die, but the fact that he cannot achieve unaided his own salvation. He required for salvation, not the common effort of all men, not the one world and a just society and the good family which we talk about. He requires the intercession of God. This took a concrete form. He requires the death of a God who takes onto himself in this death the burden of man's original sin and frees him of that sin and then since man is now free of it by belief ~~in~~ the God who has died and who has taken onto him this burden, man can achieve again, salvation. This is part of the fundamental theology of Christianity. It rests ultimately on this text and on a rather pessimistic view of man - of man's vulgarity, of man's viciousness, of man's violence, of man's cruelty to his fellow which seems to indicate that we are born something less than Godly. Now there's nothing of that in the Bible. You will find the occasional phrase in the Bible "sin crouches at the door". There is no man so righteous that he sinneth not. The Bible looks squarely at evil in the world and does not deny it. The Bible denies that there is a metaphysical quality of the evil in man. The Bible refuses to say that the animal in man, the jungle in man, must always hobble man from achieving decency, in his life or in the life of his family or of his city. And certainly, quite a part from this theology, this early

text, in no way offers the proof which Christian theologians tended to place on it of what they called the fall of man. Now are there any questions on these two tenth-eleventh century stories? Question - Where did the apple come from? They had to devise a fruit so they pictured an apple. In the Book of Job they don't tell us it was a whale. Just a big sea monster and artistic stories tend to embellish this. ~~Now~~, Question - Everybody has to think abstractly. What you have to ^{have} do is ~~have~~ to abstract your theology from your critical reason when you read the Bible. That's important. You read the Bible with as fresh eyes as you can bring to it so that you don't read it with any preconceptions.

I want to talk today with you about these first eleven chapters. I want to suggest to you that they are late myths, and they are not as late as they were put by the early scholars, but they are deeply philosophical, pregnant in meaning, that they were written by highly civilized and highly cultured men who took the fancy of myth and wrote into it the fundamentals of Judaism. I want to suggest to you all also that the two levels of history of lines of myth. That they can be separated out. That Genesis one is one story and ones that we have read, another. If you read through these eleven chapters, and I hope you will, before next week, you will see that there is some repetition. The genealogies of the kings, ~~now~~ I repeat it twice. One is by the early author and one is by the later author. The story of Noah, instead of being separated has been all mixed together. Notice as you read the story of Noah, that at one point in the Bible says Noah's command to bring in the animals two by two into the ark. At another point it says he is to bring seven of the clean animals and two of the unclean animals. We've other indications that they've simply dove tailed as best they could the two stories together. Read these stories with an eye as to what they say philosophically. What they say spiritually. They were not believed as they were written as accurate descriptions of the early beginnings of the world. If you remember that fact, you have the crucial fact for interpreting these stories.

originally of this wandering stock. Now as you read Genesis

11, in Genesis, in which we see Abraham at the court of the king of Elam, the

defence of one of the sub-chiefs of the clan, the king of Elam, the king of Elam

in war by sending parties of petty tribes, the king of Elam, the king of Elam

TWA Bible Study
November 18, 1964

An End Which Is A Beginning

Last week we got as far down in history as the Middle Bronze Age, which means that we're moving at a snails pace down the corridors of time. I frankly don't intend to pick up that pace much today. Looking ahead, I'd like to take you as far as first Jewish experience of the Bible. The climatic and essential fact of the exodus and Sinai. When this course ends, we're just at that point where Judaism really begins and what we have done is really to give you a background with which to read the rest of the Bible, the bulk of the Bible itself. Last week we dealt primarily with the years two thousand fifteen hundred B.C.E. and we saw during that lecture that our ancestors were wandering tribes people, probably western Semetic origin, that they along with their wives and children, with their worldly goods laden on asses walked the highways and the biways of the fertile crescent, which stretches, you remember, from the Persian Gulf, up Tigris and Euphrates valley, across to Syria, underneath what is today Turkey and then down the Mediterranean coast into Egypt. Our ancestors were only one of any number of these wandering tribes people were well known to us from the documents of the time as , which we found was a status name, a legal description rather than description, which emphasized that these were men from outside the boundary. That these were men who had no stake in the land and could not buy or purchase land. Men who earned their livelihood first off by trade, by offering their good right hand and sword as mercenaries, by selling their various skills, smiths or whatnot and who were not above attacking a city if it looked to be an easy mark. We found that the word , the root of the word Hebrew is derived from the same three letter root as , and that our ancestors knew themselves to have been originally of this wandering stock. Now we read together a few lines from chapter 14, in Genesis, in which we saw Abraham as the senior chief of the tribe, running off defence of one of the sub-chiefs of the clan, Lot his nephew, who has been captured in war by raiding parties of petty Syrian kings who have overrun the city state of

Sodom, where Lot had a quasi permanent trading center. We saw Abraham in chapter 14, able to put in a field at a moment's notice some three hundred plus, armed and trained men and to affect the rescue of Lot for a chief must always be responsible for the welfare of his tribes people. What I'm suggesting to you then, is that the usual Sunday School image of our fathers as smiling , walking behind flocks of sheep, the women kneeling down on their knees before a black skin tent with camels walking off in the distance, is a very inaccurate one. They were members of a far more sophisticated and far more cultured, and far more commercial civilization. Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and so far as we can make out the details of their lives, were the senior chiefs - a far ranging Hebrew clans people who were essentially merchant traders, who essentially inhabited the areas of the hill country, in the of Canaan and Palestine and who came in time to have a rather permanent, or semi-permanent relationship with this land rather than any other along the fertile crescent. What of the men themselves? What do we know about Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their wives and the like. We reviewed last week the rather extreme school of biblical criticism which assumes that these men are inventions - fictions made out of , or at most that they represent tribes. We have a personification of tribes. There was an Abraham tribe, a Rachael tribe, a tribe, and the like. These stories were simply made up to mask historical circumstance. What happened way back when in that early tribal days. There is no doubt that some of these stories do mask tribal events. There is a very ugly story in Genesis which tells of the rape of one of the daughters of ~~my~~ Jacob , by one of the local country people, a Hitite, and it tells that two of her brothers, Simon and Levi, went to her aid and after a number of tricks played upon the local people, they massacred them, one and all. Now we know from later history that both Simon and Levi were punished for this act in the sense that they did not inherit specific lands. They seemed to have disappeared largely from the face of history and the tribe of Levi reappears much later as a group of minor attendants attached only to the temple shrine. What we apparently have in this story is a personification of a breach of faith by two tribesmen, tribes of Israel, against the expressed wish of their

father, the senior tribes person, because what they did was to go in and massacre the local people, therefore destroying the bonds of friendship, treaty and trade which existed between them. This was made up into this story which helped, presumably to explain history to drive home the point. Does that mean that all of these stories are fictitious? Not at all. It simply means that some of them are. That we are not reading here attempts at complete biography. I would have you remember that the ancient historians had no qualms about quotation marks the way we do. A thousand years after this story, the most famous of the Greek writers,

and will put whole speeches into the mouths ~~xxxxxxx~~

of or of . Why? Because these speeches help them to dramatize the forces at work. The issues being acted about and on. Their hope as historians was to make history come alive rather than to deaden it as do so many of our modern very scrupulously truthful and accurate people. So the ancients had no qualms about inventing speeches if to do so meant that they helped to dramatize what had indeed happened. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, then in my humble opinion were real human beings. We saw that there were stories about these men which could have taken place only in the times described. Remember the story of Abraham going down to Egypt and passing off Sarai as his sister. The Bible writer in the tenth century B.C. no longer understood what Abraham was saying, and he felt, if you'll recall, to be a matter of shame, that Abraham should be trying to pawn off Sarai, his wife, as his sister apparently he thought, as he read the story, to protect his own life. We saw that in the 15th-16th century B.C. terms - the word sister didn't mean simply a sister and not a wife, but was a specific legal contract by which the first wife, the wife through whom inheritance passed, in the tribe, was taken in wedlock in a special way. Abraham was not saying not I'm trying to hide the fact she is my wife, he was saying to the Pharaoh and according to the story, she is my first wife. Now the later editor no longer understood this and then he goes into a long invented story to explain God's outrage at Abraham

act, Abraham's punishment, the Pharaoh's punishment for taking Sarai and the like.

Now, let's move down a little bit from this early age. An age in which our ancestors lived, were merchants, tradespeople, shepherd people, sophisticated people, living in and among tradespeople, city people and sophisticated people. But an age about which we can reconstruct very little. Down some three centuries to the period of the Exodus itself. I'll try and defend this later but accept it now as a statement. The Exodus probably took place between the year 1300 B.C.E. and the year 1250 B.C.E. Which means that we are now in the late Bronze Age, the early Iron Age and we are now at the events which are climatic in the history of Jewish life. You will recall then Deuteronomy 26, we we've read twice, the statement made by our fathers on Succoth when they brought the first fruits to the sanctuary, the statement is a very simple one which begins A wandering Aramean, a wandering tradesman, was my father, and then he goes right on. He went down to Egypt and all of these things happened to him in Egypt and Moses brought him out of Egypt and this is obviously the focus of ~~the~~ events. They dismissed in other words, the patriarchal period with a shrug of the shoulders, there were Hebrews, there were ancestors but religiously - spiritually these are not the climatic events. Indeed the founding trinity of ideas in Jewish life all relate to Egypt. Bondage, freedom, responsibility under freedom. , the going into Egypt, the Exodus, the going out of Egypt and Sinai, the binding of our people to a covenant, a set of commandments. Almost everything in the Bible, almost everything in Jewish life was made to relate to these three basic elements in our faith. In ancient times, the high holidays, which we consider to be

and Yom Kippur were not and Yom Kippur, in fact for the first four, five hundred years of Jewish life, and Yom Kippur did not even exist. They were the three pilgrimage festivals. Passover, and Succoth. Each of these festivals were originally agricultural and has a history which goes far beyond Hebrew history. The Jewish took these over and made each of them relate not to any episode in Abraham's time or Isaac's time but episodes in Moses's time. Passover was the ~~rehearsal~~ rehearsal of the going out of Egypt.

became the holiday which celebrated the giving of the law to Moses at Mt. Sinai.

became the holiday which commemorated the dwelling in the temporary
during the wanderings in the desert. All of these three historical associations are artificial but the important thing is that they were made. God is defiant in terms of I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt. Out of the house of bondage. That's our first commandment. Not I am the Lord thy God who created the Heavens and the earth, or not I am the Lord thy God who created man and woman, or not I am the Lord thy God who brought Abraham out of the paganism of Ur, but I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Now what was there so critical about these three events? In the first place, they seem to have given these rules for the first time, an identity. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob are not essentially dissimilar in their ideas, in their religious practices, in their way of life from the people among whom they lived. They have a God with whom they have a covenant, whatever he was called. Other people had covenants with a God who was presumably the senior God of the heavens. There were there were tens of hundreds of these wandering tribes throughout the area. But once Moses comes along and once the Jews have felt the oppression, the bondage of Egypt. Once they have felt that they have no hope and are miraculously saved, and Moses by the force of his personality transforms his enthusiasm for the God into a new religious orientation which is symbolized by the ten commandments. Once this happens, Jewish life becomes Jewish life. It becomes something defined of it. It becomes something that is different than the world about. They're no longer, they are now Israel. They're no longer the landless, they are now the possessors of a covenant. Their way of life, way of religious stalk at twelve fifty or so was not ours today. If Moses were to come down to the temple today he would shake his head in disbelief at many of things that we do and we would wonder at some of the things that he might want to have done. After all, they offered animal sacrifices, and we no longer consider that to be an important

element in religious life. But it is crucial that this sense of having been worth little, having been a slave people and having suddenly been free. God freed them, the miracle and the use of this miracle to forge the bands of the covenant - this remains the key element in our religious life to this day. Now, let's go over a little bit of detail than the going down and the going out. What happened? How much of it is history? How much of what the Bible tells about it is history?

I'd like to first of all, give you a little bit of historical ^{second}, of the world at this time. We saw first off that during the ~~first~~ half of the second millennium before the Common Era these rather easily across the whole length and breadth of the fertile crescent. When we get to the Joseph story, the story of going down into Egypt, when we get into the Moses story, the story of the going out what happens from Syria east disappears from the Biblical perspective. It's as if Persia, Iraq, Iran, what was then Babylonia and the Syria no longer exist. We know now some of the reasons for this. In the sixteenth century before the Common Era two great tribes people came down out of the Turkish, the Anatolia highlands and began to establish empires that stood a fort in the middle of the fertile crescent. First the people known as the and then the people known as the . These people effectively interrupted trade. At the same time that the old Babylonian kingdom of was torn by desertion from within and on the other side of the fertile crescent, the kingdom of Egypt was being taken over by other of these hill warriors, the who ruled it for two centuries on their own. So we have a period of destruction and we have a period in which it is very likely that Hebrew life no longer flowed the whole breadth and length but concerned itself only with Egypt itself. Now these , are a strange people . They come into Egypt around the year seventeen hundred and twenty before the Common Era and they remain as lords of Egypt to about the year fifteen hundred and thirty. The remind me very much of the Normans. Of our own European history. You know that in the eight, ninth and tenth centuries the peoples of Scandinavia all of a sudden began

to take their long boats and they would be found at harbors as far west as Vineland as Greenland and the American shores as far south as in Central Africa, as far east Palestine and Egypt. The Normans coming from this bare and bleak climate conquered first off, Denmark the northern seacoast towns of Germany, all of the lowlands, all of France, from France they conquered England, from England they conquered Sicily, Crete, Northern Italy, Southern Italy, then they established the great kingdoms in Palestine itself. All of a sudden you get an eruption of a rather wild, violent group, Northmen, the Vikings and the like who are good warriors ~~and~~ who have nothing to lose. They leave their women and children, their chattel behind and they go out and conquer and they take new women and ~~chattel~~ children and chattel where they manage to settle. And so it was with the Hyksos. These people come down out of the Anatolian hills, they come down just the men, they have very effective war chariots and they have trained horses to lead these chariots for the first time. They have developed a sense of composite it's a forerunner of the European long bow. They conquer Egypt. The one and only time Egypt was conquered from the outside in ancient history and they ruled Egypt for two centuries. Egypt then comes back to its own. Egypt has always been two kingdoms, an upper kingdom and a lower kingdom. The Pharaohs of the upper kingdom at the headwaters of the Nile near the Sudan, come down and under a Pharaoh named Anosis reconquers Egypt and there begins then around 1530 what's known as the great Egyptian Age of Empire. This is the age that you see whenever you see an Egyptian historical display in a museum. This is the age of the treasure of King Tut. This is the age of the great pyramid building. This is the age of that wonderful swan necked, high foreheaded statue of Queen which you always somehow see. This is the age when the Temple of Karnak was built with its magnificent lead columns that come up and hold this gigantic building. Egypt ruled what was to all of Libya, all of the Sudan, all of Egypt, Ethiopia, all of Palestine, Syria, Lebanon to the Turkish border. It was a powerful, rich, civilized state and the roads, the people and the

people would come constantly into contact with this general sovereignty. Now this Egyptian world, which we know much, left its imprint on the Bible and on Bible events which are depicted from the fifteenth century down to the Exodus. You know that the religion of the Egyptians was , it was complicated, it was conducted at temple centers, there were powerful priests , who had powerful and rich endowments, they offered sacrifices of all kinds, there was sorcery and magic as usual, but most of all and uniquely, the Egyptian faith was centered on mortality. Physical resurrection. The Pharaohs literally buried the national wealth of Egypt in the ground. And the great barrel of chambers for their Pharaohs and for their noble people. You know of the embalming and the many caskets in which the people were finally put and how all their earthly possessions were buried beside them and the complicated rites and the like. Now you also know that in Jewish life we bury simply, we bury immediately we bury in a simple pine coffin traditionally. When Moses dies, the great Jewish hero of the Bible, Moses is buried in an unknown grave without any significant funeral rites at all and that's it. That's in the traditional Jewish way. Life belongs to the living. God will protect and take care and we leave to God that which is of God. But I would like you to turn to Genesis chapter 50. This is the story of the death Jacob after he has been reconciled with his son Joseph who is now the , the second in command to the Pharaoh. "And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father." Embalming by the way was outlawed in orthodox Jewish life. "And the Egyptians wept for him threescore and ten days. And when the days of weeping for him were past, Joseph spoke unto the house of Pharaoh, saying: 'IF now I have found favour in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying: My father made me swear, saying: LO, I die; in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come back.' And Pharaoh said: 'Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.' And Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of

his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, and all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house; only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen; and it was a very great company. And they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, and there they wailed with a very great and sore wailing; and he made a mourning for his father seven days. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said: 'This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians.' Wherefore the name of it was called Abel-mizraim," it's just the Hebrew translation of that, "which is beyond the Jordan. And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them."

Now this is an exact description of Egyptian funeral rites. The embalming process which was a very complicated and chemical one took, traditionally according to

, who was a Greek traveler who watched some of this, between 30 and 40 days. We know from the book of the Dead, the Egyptian Book of the Dead, that when a Pharaoh died, the funeral rites occupied seventy-two days. The Bible here tells us seventy. And we have long descriptions of the funeral ship which was taken up the Nile with the Pharaoh's four or five caskets inside and all of his wealthy possessions were going to be buried with him, to the port of the pyramid which was right on the Nile itself and all the elders of Egypt and all the princes of the land would make ceremonial procession. Now the Bible writer has described Egyptian funeral rites exactly one change. He's had to put Jacob back into the land of Canaan. So, instead of being a ship on the Nile they have a ship of the desert with his great funeral procession carrying the embalmed body of Jacob back to Canaan. We have then, one of the impresses of Egyptian life in this period in which Egypt ruled Canaan, Egypt ruled whatever lands the Jews lived in. The same thing, by the way, will happen to Joseph. Joseph orders his body to be embalmed and later when Moses takes the Jews out, according to the story, they take the casket of Joseph back with ~~them~~ him, and if you remember the movie, Mr. Cecil B. DeMille had a great deal of fun with that. Now there are other indications of

Egyptian influence, there are other indications that these stories have a certain degree of accuracy. The name of Moses. The word ^{be} ~~for~~ gotten one. The king ^{be} ~~for~~ gotten one, means he who is begotten of Tut, who was one of the Egyptian Gods. So Moses was originally an Egyptian name. The Jews didn't know it - had lost the understanding of this Egyptian root and the Bible explains it as he who is drawn out of. They have to invent the complicated story of the cradle being tossed about in the water of the Nile to explain the name that Moses is given finally in the court of Pharaoh. What's an Egyptian name? The name of the two midwives, who according to the Bible, saved the Jewish boys. One is called ^{be} ~~for~~ gotten one and the other is called ^{be} ~~for~~ gotten one. These names have no meaning in Hebrew. Both names have been found in Egyptian text from this period of time. So we have an indication of a prolonged stay by Jewish elements, or Hebrew elements in Egypt. We also see this in the way in which the Exodus story in its legendary form is finally told. When God tells Moses according to the legend, to go back into Egypt, Moses says What will you send with me that will give me power and will make the Pharaoh listen to me? In other words, how am I going to get into the door? I need a letter of introduction. Well, God couldn't write a letter of introduction so he said, take your staff and throw it on the ground and the staff becomes a snake. He says grab the snake by the tail and the snake becomes a staff again. And then God says, put your hand in your vest. He puts a hand in his garment and he takes it out and it's white with leprosy. He says, now put your hand in your garment again and he does, he takes it out and his hand is clean and whole. Now the sorcerers and magicians of Egypt are famous. Apparently the Bible wanted to tell a story where we were one up them. And then when we would outdo them at their own skills. If you'll turn to chapter seven of Exodus, you'll find that this one up is taken to rather ridiculous extremes. Chapter seven of Exodus, the second Book of the Bible beginning in verse 8. "And the Lord spoke unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying: 'When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying: Show a wonder for you; then thou shalt say unto Aaron: Take thy rod, and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it become a

serpent.' And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so, as the Lord
 had commanded; and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants,
 and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called for the wise men and the sorcerers;
 and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did in like manner with their secret arts.
 For they cast down every man his rod, and each became serpents; but Aaron's rod
 swallowed up their rods." My Daddy's stronger than your Daddy. The Bible of
 course is filled with all manner of law which prohibits magic,
 sorcery and the like, to the Jews. So this kind of a legend is obviously designed
 to return to the Egyptians on their own terms but it draws definitely on this
 Egyptian kind of background. Now all Egyptian influence on Jewish life is not
 negative and . The Egyptians had, as I have said, a high degree of
 civilization. And they had a high religion, considering the
 elements of the time in certain respects. One of these cults, was a cult of the
 God Atan. God Atan was a sun God who was worshiped as a solar disc, you may have
 seen images of this. It's a bright piece of metal with hands reaching out from the
 rays of the sun and each hand holds a serpent in it. The God can sting, the God has
 power, it is essentially the life giving power of the sun. Now in the fourteenth
 century a young man came to the throne of Egypt, by the name of IV.
 He came to the throne at the age of nineteen, he died before he was twenty-six.
 He didn't rule very long. What we can tell of this young Pharaoh, is that he was
 a religious fanatic, he was very much caught up with and involved in the religious
 elements of his time, that he worshiped the God Atan, this sun God, that he changed
 his name in fact to , after his God, and that he went after the major
 sanctuaries of the other major and that he pulled down the
 sanctuary and he left , which was his capital, a city dedicated to
 and that he in fact established a new capital of Egypt at a place
 called . Now brought about then, a revolution in the
 practices of Egypt on two counts. The first he insisted that his God
 alone was a supreme God. We call this monolatry. This does not mean that there

could not be lesser Gods but this God alone has power. And he also said all the magical, the dark things which take place inside of the temple must be , and he brought worship out into the open. It had to be out in the open, in an open temple court so that all might see and might take part so that it would be closer to his own patron God Atan. This is an amazing religious revolution. It takes religion out of the level of sorcery, witchcraft, the using of incantations and spells to made the God do what you want and it becomes the focus of the national life of the people. We have from the inscriptions, on this new capital which he built some of the hymns which were written by priests of the time or perhaps by this young man himself, , to the God Atan, which are high in quality and fine in spirit. Perhaps so that we don't come to believe that all virtue, wisdom, creativity and spirit belongs to our people, Let me read you a few verses. This is a hundred years before Moses. Thou dost appear beautiful on the horizon of heaven, oh living



That's good poetry and it's an image, religiously, of a God who was supreme, in the cosmic sense, in the heaven, whose force is imaged as that of this basic life giving spirit of the sun. Now there are those who have argued, biblical critics, Mr. Freud and a few others, that Moses had grafted every idea he'd had from Ikhnaton . There are certain problems, however, it's this belief. First of all, the reformation of Ikhnaton lasted only five or six years. When his successor came to power, Tell el Amarna was deserted, the God Aton was reduced to a second level in the heavens, all the other priests reassorted their ancient prerogatives, rites were taken back into the dark places of the Temple and Egypt never again, in all its history came to position where Ikhnaton had taken it to - a ~~like~~ belief in the oneness. One power supreme. Moses lived a hundred years later. Did he know of this? We do not know. We also know that even though Ikhnaton worshiped Aton as the one God, he insisted that he be worshiped as a God. Have we a monotheism here? It's questionable. In addition to this we know that that from the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries before the Common Era, many of these west Semetic peoples had come to monolatry, to an idea of a supreme God, to whom all other Gods must be subservient if they are believed at all. "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me." There's almost that principle - doesn't say there are no other Gods "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me". This principle was certainly enunciated before Jewish life became Jewish life. It's here - in the hymn of the sun, of Ikhnaton. We find it hundred of years before among some of the west Semetic peoples. The Jewish contribution was to go one step further. They say not only there are no other Gods before me but I am the Lord. There are no other Gods. What I'm trying to get at is a simple proposition that religious creativity is never a unique thing. It doesn't belong to any one people. The test of one's religious significance doesn't necessarily rely on ~~the~~ ^{who had the} idea first but in what group made the most of it and was able to teach it to subsequent generations. Monolatry was a fossil development in Egypt. It never went further than this little period of time. The west Semetic peoples died and we have no trace of their faith. It was only Israel which took this idea,

embroidered, developed it, refined it, which passed it on to the western world and western civilization. Enough has been said, I think, about the kind of world in which the Jews were living this period to try and give us the Jews who lived there themselves. To talk a little bit about history. Now I want to give you ^{the} a scheme about what I've been trying to say. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob come as these wandering peoples to the holy land, to Canaan. They come as mercenaries, they come as craftsmen as one thing or another, and some of them settle. I'm going to suggest to you today that not all of those who settle, not all of the Hebrews who settle in Canaan went down to Egypt. That not all Jews took part in the Exodus. That this was limited to certain tribes, to certain people. I can't tell you who they were but I'll tell you the reasons why I want you to keep this scheme in mind. In the first place, in the Book of Judges and in the Book of Joshua, which describes the conquest of the Holy Land we learn that in addition to the legendary stories, how Jericho blew down when Joshua blew his horns about them, which seems to talk of a single, direct and immediate conquest of Canaan, it actually took several hundreds of years, it was a piecemeal thing and very often during this we find Jews fighting against Jews. We find Jewish tribes fighting with the local people against the tribes who have been brought over from across the Jordan under Joshua, Caleb and the other leaders. It would seem to be that these settlers who remained were of an old Hebrew stock who had so assimilated, so identified, that they no longer feel themselves a part of the earlier experience. I think this explains too, in part, why Israel broke up into not only separate tribes, but two separate kingdoms later on. Next year, or the year after, whenever we get down to the eighth century before the Common Era, we'll see that there are two very definite religious traditions. One belonged to the northern kingdom, one belonged to the southern kingdom. One which makes much of Moses, one which makes much of Aaron. One which makes much of Sinai, one which makes much more of David and Solomon as the founders of the kingdom. I want to suggest to you that not all Jews went down into Egypt and that Moses didn't take all Jews up

out of Egypt. Now I'd like to return to Genesis, chapter 23. This is a lovely story. This delicate sensitive story apparently, of how when Sarah dies, the local people ~~xxx~~ have no tribe relationship with Abraham, allow him, at his own named price, seemingly for a pittance, to buy a burial plot, a grave in Mayfield cemetery, for her. "And the life of Sarah was a hundred and seven and twenty years; these were the years of the life of Sarah. And Sarah died in Kiriatharba--the same is Hebron--in the land of Canaan; and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. And Abraham rose up from before his dead, and spoke unto the children of Heth, saying: 'I am a stranger and a sojourner with you; give me a possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.' And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him: 'Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us; in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.' And Abraham rose up, and bowed down to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth. And he spoke with them, saying: 'If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field; for the full price let him give it to me in the midst of you for a possession of a burying-place.' Now Ephron was sitting in the midst of the children of Heth; and Ephron ~~the~~ Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying: 'Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee; bury thy dead.' And Abraham bowed down before the people of the land. And he spoke unto Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying: 'But if thou wilt, I pray thee, hear me: I will give the price of the field; take it of me, and I will bury my dead there.' And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him: 'My lord, hearken unto me: a piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead.' And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver,

which he had named in the hearing of the children of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant. So the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the border thereof round about, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city." Now, it sounds on the surface like a morality story designed to impress the point that when a person is in mourning, you should go out of your way to be helpful and considerate to them and that Ephron did everything he could and more to be gentle with and generous with Abraham and he gave him for a pittance, the burial place which he specifically requested. Nothing I'm going to say now should make you see that I don't believe the moral of this story to be true but the story simply doesn't hang true from what we know ~~of~~ historically. The phrase, current money with the merchant, is our clue to unraveling the story. We know this term. It appears in many form tablets and we know the value of a coin involved. We know also that the four hundred pieces of coin, which he names as a price for this cave, would lead us to the fact that Abraham is buying, obviously a cave and a small piece of land before, for a fantastic sum. It's as if he were paying for a piece of property worth ten thousand dollars - hundred thousand dollars. We don't have here from the surface the minute we know that, a story of a bargain among grieving friends. What have we? We seem to have a very carefully worded legal document. , lawyer language. Look at seventeen and eighteen - which defines every jot and tittle of land involved in the sale of , the trees, the was made sure and it was done in public. We know this legal form because we find it in many of the land grants, the mortgage title searches, of tablets, from or from from other places in the area. So again there is a formality to this. There is a sense of an arm's length contract which would again say the feeling, the first feeling of the story. Let's put it together then as we unravel it. In the first place, Abraham as , could not purchase land.

This was the way in which the local peoples protected themselves from these creditors. They were allowed, if they could pass an admissions test, to purchase land and what was the admissions test? The public meeting of the city state where they wanted to purchase land. We don't know what the blackball procedures were but it was very much like the admission to an American fraternity or club. The possession of land gave you a permanent residence, gave you rights, legal and economic, which Abraham as an alien lacked. Abraham, in other words, used the death of his wife to make a public appeal for admissions to the people of Heth for the right to be of them and among them and to have a stake, an anchor. He was no longer a landless person. but he got the land. The importance of this little cave comes back time and again. Every one of the great patriarchs are buried there. Jacob insists that his body be brought back all the way from Egypt there. Why? This apparently was the first claim the Jewish had to Canaan. Their first legal title. It's just as wanderers they had no ~~title~~ type but now they have been admitted. They had as much right here as anyone else. We have a similar story told about another piece of land as far as Jacob is concerned later on in the Bible. What we have here is an indication, then that the Hebrew's owned ~~only~~ land in Canaan long before the desert experience. We have also indication that they fought for land. I told you the story of Leah, Simeon and Levi. Back in the eighteenth, seventeenth, and sixteenth century we know of large scale settlements. We know that Abraham took three hundred plus armed men in the field. Now put all of this together with what Exodus one, the first chapter of Exodus tells us about the going down to Egypt and we get a strange picture. Exodus one tells us that only seventy men. "And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls;" These are the people who went down to Egypt. Only seventy men went down with Jacob to Egypt. There must have been far larger settlements in Canaan and these must have remained during whatever was the period of the Egyptian experience. Having established this, when did the Jews, when did Jacob and the Jews go down into Egypt. The Bible tells us in Exodus, in chapter 12, in one highly legendary source,

that the Jews were in Egypt for four hundred and thirty years. If we except, for the time being, the date of 1250 or 1300, this puts us back into the seventeenth century, maybe the eighteenth century before the Common Era. This is patently too early. A small group ~~xxx~~ would assimilate over four hundred years of time. This always happened in Jewish history. They had no identity as yet. They had nothing to hold them together. There is another indication that we were for a much shorter period in Canaan. If you turn to Genesis, chapter 14, you find a strange little bit of information that's buried in the text. Chapter 15, I'm sorry. God is making a promise here of what will happen and the promises all made obviously long after the things happened. In verse 13, "And God said to Abram: 'Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;' Here you've got one text, but go on. "and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance. But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. And in the fourth generation they shall come back hither; for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full.'" Here we have a tradition that says four generations. Eighty years, seventy years, ninety years, was the length of the stay of the Jews in Egypt. It's really an academic point because the Bible doesn't tell us a single fact or give us a single line as to what happened during this prolonged period of time. Slavery never makes history but it is interesting and try to place these things historically. I would accept the four generations as a much more workable figure than the four hundred and thirty years. In fact we can explain why it came to four hundred and thirty years. Because that very same legendary source tells us that when the Jews left Egypt six hundred and five thousand five hundred and fifty two men, not counting the women and children and the Levites, went up with Moses. Now you'd have to be rabbits, in four generations, to have multiplied 70 people into into six hundred and five thousand etc. They obviously needed a longer breeding season. Why did the Jews go down? For obvious reasons. For grain and for water. Palestine depends on the

rainfall. The great Gods of Palestine were always the rain Gods. There are still rain prayers in our traditional liturgy. Egypt is free of dependence upon the rain. The Nile overflows every year and brings down all the silt and all the rich topsoil of the mountains of and of the Sudan. So Egypt was always a rich and fertile land and when they could no longer pasture the free and open pastures of the hill country of Judea the Nomads came down into Egypt. Egypt had a regular procedure. There was an area of land, that the Bible calls Goshen. The Egyptians had other names for it, which was lowland, which could not be cultivated. It is now land which is cut through by the Suez Canal. It's precisely that area where the people were allowed to come and to rent pastures for a year or so at a certain price. We found a piece of papyrus written in the thirteenth century before the Common Era and about this time, by a lieutenant on the border between Egypt and the Sinai wilderness. He writes back to his commanding officer that a group of

herdsmen had just passed through with so many cattle, so many sheep, so many women and children that going through this pasture area and they would pay him the toll and the passport tax and the visa tax and the rental for the land for one year and he's going to forward it by military messenger back to headquarters. There was a regular procedure, regular well known procedure that brought the Jews down. Abraham said to them going down during a time of famine, Isaac went down, Jacob went down and unfortunately stayed. What happened? We don't know. Exodus one tells us two things and it's our only source as to the events of these years. Beginning in verse 8. "Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people: 'Behold, the people of the children of Israel are too many and too mighty for us; come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there befalleth us any war, they also join themselves unto our enemies, and fight against us, and get them up out of the land.' Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh store-cities, Pithom and Raamses." The crucial elements in this

period He reigned from eight years. His father lived to be 94 and he was about 76 when he came to the throne, he died a good old age. He reigned for

paragraph are first of all, a new king and second of all the words Pithom and Raamses. One explanation of a new king, takes it to be not a new king but a new dynasty. the story of the first century explains it this way. He said that the Jews came in with the Hyksos who were Semites, when Hyksos rode the throne, the Jews suffered and were reduced to slavery along with all the other attendants of this foreign rule. This is the new king and flows from it. Perhaps, although other possible explanations would be any change of rule. Why are the words Pithom and Raamses important. Because we can locate Raamses. Raamses was a city in the delta region, built the Pharaoh Raamses II, who reigned from 1280 to 1224, as his capital and to his vanity. He named it after himself. Within eight years of his death, its name was changed, it was no longer referred to as Raamses. It was called from that time or . Any ~~more~~ reference to Raamses can be only in the thirteenth century and we know now too that something happened in the thirteenth century, to this great Egyptian empire. That is an encouragement of people from the Mediterranean. When Troy fell, we can relate two great legends, at about that same time a whole group of peoples began moving across the island regions. Sardinians, Cretan people, people, the and they came down about the year 1230 and attacked Egypt. They were repulsed. They came down again about 1215 and attacked Egypt and they were repulsed again and this time they came up and they found the Philistine empire. There was a repulse in the first attack, spread out again into the Mediterranean and they settled the great island kingdoms. Crete, Cyprus, the cities and even some went so far as Sicily and Sardinia. It may be that this paragraph refers to a time after the first attack when the Egyptians were worried. This almost threw the Egyptian empire over. That a group of armed slaves within their borders might be a fifth column and they had better see to it that it doesn't happen to them. So we can date then hard work that the Jews were put to doing during the thirteenth century. This fits in with one bit of extra biblical evidence we have. The king of was a man named . He reigned from eight years. His father lived to be 94 and he was about 76 when he came to the throne, he died a good old age. He reigned for

only eight years. left two great obelisks, two black steels, one at Karnak and one at Thebes. You've seen these big black meteorites stones, hard rock into which the ancients carved the records of their dynasties. He says in there, at one point talking about a campaign which he waged in the year 1220, in Canaan. The people of Israel laid waste. Its seed is not. Palestine has become a widow for Egypt. We know that by the year 1220, Israel must have been in Canaan. One might comment on the irony that the first reference to the Jews in all history is that we're no more. Others have said the same thing and we somehow still are. What is this? In all probability its hyperbole. The Pharaohs loved to claim great victory. It's like the ~~XXXXX~~ communiquees that some of our generals sent back during the second ~~XXXXX~~ world war. They had great victory after great victory during 1940 and '41, you will recall, always moving backwards.

was a weak king. In many cases this is a date, a date in time which helps us fix the events of the Exodus. This is a day I've spent very little time with the text itself. Very frankly, the story of the Exodus, leading up to the great events at Sinai, it's myth, it's legend, it's pious fancy; it's richly embroidered. We don't know a single historical fact behind it. We do know events could not have been as they are described in the first chapters of Exodus. We do know that the historical imagination, the rather fervent historical imagination is at work. We can explain some of the elements but it's very obvious that this is all later, written back to explain something the Jews couldn't understand themselves. The miraculous Exodus from Egypt. How did our ancestors get out? We don't know any more than they did, but they got out seems to be sure. Now what are some of the elements that we can explain. I spoke of the story of Moses and his name and the reason ~~he~~ they had the cradle tossing about the waters of the Nile. What about the story of the tenth plague. God tells Moses that Pharaoh will be made to listen. He says, now each time he doesn't listen we're going to get a little tougher with him. First we're going to call in the Better Business Bureau and they we'll call in a lawyer and then we'll ~~subdue~~ haul him into court, etc, etc. The tenth plague is a plague that is to destroy the first born in each Egyptian home. The Jews, to

escape from the angel of death are to paint with the blood of the sacrifice some mark on the of their door and the angel of death presumably would pass over. Now what's the background of this. We know now that in the centuries long before the Exodus, among shepherd people, there was a holiday on the first full moon after the spring equinox, which was about , where there was a watch night, on that full moon night, which was taboo night, fearful night. God must be offered, whichever the God was, the first lamb from the flock of the new season's crop. That was the duty to God. As a sign that you had performed the duty, these bedlam people would take the blood of this sacrifice and would actually mark up the of their doors. Now this is not Jewish. This is common among Semetic shepherd people of the time. Somehow or other the story of Passover got all of the Exodus got put into this ancient Passover holiday. They wove the story of the old shepherd custom into the story of the deliverance from Egypt and God was then ~~xxxx~~ made the angel of death, was taken that night, the first born of the Egyptians and to have spared the firstborn of the Jews. Why the ten plagues themselves? The Egyptians had a literature which was called the literature curses. All kinds of quasi and magical incanations, which were designed to ward off all manners of diseases. We use doctors today. Sometimes I think it is a curse when we get the bill but they had the curses first. Spells, magical incanations and the like. One of their favorite curses involved ten plagues and the Jews apparently just took the symbol and turned it back on their own.

When the Jews left Egypt, they're said to have stolen gold - all the jewelry of the Egyptians that night. Why? Because later on in the desert they had to have enough gold to make the golden calf. Where else would a group of exiles get the where withall in the middle of the desert. We can put together some of the parts. We know for instance, how Matzah came to be involved in the Passover story. There is an old spring agricultural festival observed by most of the peoples where they took the first cutting of the barley harvest, of the spring crop, and they baked this quickly into some kind of hardtack, Matzah. They offered this to their God and they would eat this then, along with their sacrifice. This holiday

took place at the Spring equinox. This Matzah holiday was tied in also to the Pass-
over holiday later off

In the Bible is a Beginning

(Second Part)

which is all the more so. But we have been to a people who later went out
and established a way of celebrating the great event of their liberation and they
were full of the memory of ancient practice. It's hard sometimes to know, but
we can see it. Thanksgiving? Thanksgiving is religiously important.
If we go back to the Bible it's no more than a biblical holiday. Now
the Bible is very clear that they were very determined to keep their religion, they were
all very religious. But they didn't know quite how to do it and they had
very much to do with a great feast, and they weren't sure what feast was required in
the Bible. The Jewish season is different than it is in the ancient world.
But that is what we have. We have the Bible's way as we got to our present holiday
giving. Now the Bible is very clear that this thing historically
but it is not a feast. It is a feast. They are a
late holiday of the Bible. I want to try and analyze
them. I think they are very important. They are probably not born in Egypt
at all. He was an old man, a Kenite woman, his son was outside of Egypt.
His father-in-law was the Hebrew tribes, he is a leader of the Kenite
tribe. He was a leader, although we never hear of them anymore, and he was
out in the desert. He's one of the Hebrew peoples who is not part of the main group.
Therefore from him, therefore of the palace. All the stories of palace life are
being related to the palace's house and so on, these are traditional stories that
people tell about their great heroes. After all, there was a great hero, the birth
of Jesus, etc. This is familiar. So, he probably is a man who was a subject, or
was an opportunity to bring the Jews out. What that opportunity was, we don't know.
How they affected it, we don't know. A miraculous escape over some water route
played some part. There are a number of boggs, of one kind or another, low lying
water areas near what is now the Sea. They were more or less connected with the

An End Which Is A Beginning
(Second Half)

which is our Exodus story. What we have here is a people who later went out and searched of a way of celebrating the great event of their tradition and they wove into it all manner of ancient practice. It's hard sometimes to unravel, but we can. How does Thanksgiving? Thanksgiving is uniquely American. If we were to trace it back we'd find it's no more than a biblical Succoth. When the Puritan fathers came over they determined to their Succoth. They did all the biblical holidays. But they didn't know quite how to do it and turkey was more available than a roast lamb, and they weren't sure roast lamb was required in the first place. Our growing season is different than it is in the ancient and Near East. We honor this and Mr. Roosevelt's dating we got to our present Thanksgiving. Now the important thing really is not to unravel this thing historically but it is to see these first 15-18 chapters of Exodus are (Hebrew). They are a late telling of events which no one could explain. If I were to try and analyze Moses I would give you this reconstruction. Moses probably was not born in Egypt at all. We know his wife is a Kenite woman, his has his vision outside of Egypt, his father-in-law is not among the Hebrew tribes, he is a leader of the Kenite tribe. He has children, although we never hear of them anymore, one named , out in this desert. He's one of the Hebrew peoples who is not part of the subjection. Therefore free man, therefore of the palace. All the stories of palace birth and being raised in the Pharaoh's house and so on, these are traditional stories that people tell about their great heroes. After all, three wise men attended the birth of Jesus, etc. This is familiar. So, he probably is a man who saw this subjection, saw an opportunity to bring the Jews out. What that opportunity was, we don't know. How they affected it, we don't know. A miraculous escape over some water route played some part. There are a number of boggs, of one kind or another, low lying water areas near what is now the Suez. They were more or less connected with the

Mediterranean and may have been that the one all of a sudden was flooded. Who knows. They had an historical memory, some kind of miraculous escape. Moses's personality comes into its own in the desert. It is here that he binds the covenant. It is here that he welds a rabble into a people. It's here that he imposes a structure on the tribes. It's here that we get a full blown Jewish life for the first time. So, I would say to you that of all the history we've read so far, these first nineteen chapters of Exodus are the least historical. They are pious imagination at best and I don't think it matters much. Moses's role is not so much the liberator, as the law giver. The importance to the Jews was not how they got out but THAT they got out. This is a legend. Pure and simple. Some day we can roll back the camera and I'm proved all wrong, I'll be delighted. The story doesn't hang together and it's too easy to pull this story apart and to see its historical base. Well, let me stop now and let you ask questions. I've been a little more technical and historical today than heretofore but I think you're ready for it. Question - First of all, it hasn't been proven untrue. We can't prove it. We can assume it to be untrue. Second of all it's a good story and it's a story which - we have the same purpose with our kids that the Bible had in writing these nineteen chapters. We want to emphasize the importance of these events. This is a way of driving it home. Our children tell it another way. Another famous story. I'm sure the child that came home from Sunday School and talked of the Jews split from Egypt and Moses was followed by the Pharaoh's horsemen and so on except he talked about tanks and the half-tracks and the armored cars. Mother shook her head and wondering said "Is that ~~about~~ the way you were told in Sunday School?" He said "No, Mom but you wouldn't believe the way I was told." Question - I'll start it by saying no competent biblical historian that I know of believes Moses received the ten commandments as we know them. After that shock sets in, we'll go on. There're three or four numberings of ten commandments in the Bible. The two, one in Exodus and one in Deuteronomy, which are classic ones are slightly different. It would seem that these are the latest of the covenant words. There is argument some ~~arguing~~ which is the first. It's probably Exodus, chapters 21 thru 23. How Moses received these laws, we don't know. Part of them we can trace earlier, to

earlier law codes. The religious ones seem to have been unique, Israel. What Sinai, seems to have been originally was simply the place at which a symbolic assent took place by the people to this new responsibility, A contract must be signed. When your husband and another man are in business deal, they go to one or more lawyers the offices, and there's a symbolic signing. Sinai is a symbolic assenting. The crucial words of Sinai are now said (Hebrew). We have heard, and we will obey. That's what happened. The symbol of Sinai is the symbol of this assent. I cannot say to you that the ten commandments as we have them, were the commandments that Moses received. In all probability, they were not. Although most of the laws of the ten commandments were basic social practice long before Moses. Murder, theft, adultery - these are the common rules of all mankind. The precise enumeration we can't accept on the base of the Bible we have. Question - This question, I think goes to the basis of what I've been trying to get across to you in my own way, these last four weeks. Somehow we feel the Bible must be wholly pure, wholly acceptable and wholly moral in our terms. It is not. There are many things in the Bible which couldn't be accepted in the Bible's own times. , the adulterer, , etc. among the laws. There are stories in the Bible which perhaps do not fit with our current state of morality. There's a law in the Bible, for instance, in the seventh year the Hebrew slave must be let free. Now this is in advance because there was no mandatory freeing for any slave in any law code at any time until long after our own. But on the seventh year there was mandatory freedom. We were obviously fighting against slavery. The Sabbath law is an anti-slavery law. One day in seven a slave his soul his own. You can't work him. It's the original bit of labor legislation. But it's not enough for us, is it. Man must be free from the very beginning and he must remain free and there is to be no slavery. So we've gone morally far beyond the point at which the Bible could leave us because there was no laboring class, there was no middle class in those days. You needed slave labor in a sense to keep the economy going. That's so little money in commercial exchange. So, they went as far as they could but it doesn't mean we accept it but we don't try

and go further. They have some strange rights associated with slavery. When, if a man refused his freedom, they took him to the public square where all government business was contracted, and they pierced his ear with an . Now you girls would know that this is not so serious, you do it to yourselves for cosmetic reasons. What were they saying? They were saying that the ear which had heard God proclaim freedom, and refused to accept it, its own freedom, was somehow an imperfect ear and should be seen as such. Its attempt to drive home, that you must have the guts to stand up on your own two feet and to make your own way as best you can. Many prefer to be ordered about, to be guaranteed their three square meals a day etc. . Slavery, of course was not a uniformly evil thing. Many were house slaves, tutors were slaves, the artists of the world were slaves, many of them, technically for they had fine lives. So many of them didn't want to leave this. Man's proper state is freedom. That's the idea behind this ancient and to us archaic, and

rather violent, custom. But, it was their world. So what am I saying to you about Jacob. I'm saying to you that tell a story . That there are certain things we can find in this story which are moral, there are certain things which are not. There are certain things which may fit my morality, and not yours, or my code and not yours. To the Jew, I think these stories were simply, and they emphasize the importance of reconciliation, the courage of struggling within yourself and very much, I suspect, the same level of morality which Hollywood imposes on our current literature. Somehow in the end, they must live happily everafter. That's what sells a movie. That a pound of flesh has been exacted for Jacob, perhaps we're not so determined to exact pounds of flesh. Perhaps you want it more than the Bible wants it, I don't know. There are many stories of the Bible that have no morals to them whatsoever. I suggested to you the story about Dema, about the attack to which she was subjected and the plunder of the two boys, the two brothers and their murder of those who had attacked their sister. There's no morality. The Bible says as much. So what is this. Why is this precious? It's precious because it's a founding document, it's precious because it evolved - it grew. We've taken only the very rudimentary beginnings. I said I would go in four weeks just to the point where Judaism begins. The Jacob

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stories were told long before Jewish life began. Certainly none of us would ~~have~~ want our children act the way Cain acted to Abel. And certainly none of us would want our children to act the brothers acted to Joseph or Joseph acted to his brothers originally. The Bible heroes are not heroes in the sense that we throw them up and say "Now this is what you must be." A gentle Jesus, meek and mild, you be that somehow yourself. They're not perfect people. They are people struggling with their destiny and we recognize certain things in them and that's all. Now, when our ancestors studied the Bible, grandfathers, grandmothers, they didn't begin as I've begun with you historically. They began with Exodus twenty, with the ten commandments and the law. The thing that makes Judaism unique is its discipline, ~~its~~ its way of life. We can laugh at the struggle between the sourcers of Pharaoh and the sourcerers of Moses. Whose servant is going to attack whom? This is ridiculous. It's more ^{that} important in the Bible legislation ~~it~~ says that sorcery has no place in the Jewish scheme of things. You'd have to consult the person that looks at the palms, or the ^{even} crystal ball. I wish some of our people would believe ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ that in this day. But that's three thousand years old and more in our scripture and it's the law which made Judaism into something we need. Because we found a way to go beyond myth, beyond story telling and to institutionalize this new way of life, Others had some of the same ideas but couldn't last. With us it did and , to be frank with you, the only reason that I began this way is that(A) we're all pretty well trained historically and (B) that literature is much more interesting than law. Law tends to be dull, law tends to be involved and I wanted you to get a taste of the Bible and to love it just as a book. To learn to open and read it before I got you down into more mundane things. As you ~~xxx~~ saw today, the more we get into it, the more complicated it gets and the less lift, really, we get from it. Question - It's possible except Mediterranean has not tides. You know, there's a tendency to try and rationalize all miracles in the Bible. We tend to say that were tides here, that the ~~back~~ was really the ~~xxx~~ or something called the ~~xxx~~ tree which somebody found in the Sinai peninsula. Actually gives off a little white and

moss like substance which is if you're dying and you've had nothing for three years to eat, it's edible. You remember ? A few years ago they wrote a book, they tried to prove there was actually a comet that came on the day that Moses held his hands up to make the sun stop in the heaven so the Jews would have a good chance to slit a few more throats of their enemies. I think that this whole attempt to make miracles reasonably is a silly one. There may be a kernel of truth at the bottom of it, but it's useless. A miracle is simply an embellishment of an historical fact which you can't explain in natural terms and primitive peoples believed it to being so. Those are the two statements you need to . I don't think you need to say more. We don't have to agree that the miracles took place. I believe in miracles , but not in the miracles of the Bible. Life is a miracle, conscience is a miracle, love is a miracle, civilization is a miracle. The exodus is a miracle. But, not the ten plagues, the Red Sea and in fact I wouldn't appreciate the story of the exodus anymore if somebody could prove high and low tide, of course which they can't, than this way. Somebody once proved at great length that the Nile sometime actually looks red and at one point it was supposed to have turned red, one of the plagues. Because of a certain immediate substance which comes out on the Nile in certain years and it gives it the phosphorescent look and makes it look red. So what. If It doesn't add to what the Bible is all about. Question - It's a good question. No, would be a simple answer, but I would suggest to you that I given you, in these four weeks, an interpretation of the origin of Bible which would be which would largely fit into the concensus of sober, academic scholarship in 1964. Now, every man who reads the Bible gets his own interpretation and I try consciously to filter mine out so that they don't reflect - you don't in this. The Bible that I've gotten across to is essentially what a good biblical scholar would and is trying to be as accurate as he can. Now as far as inter-pretations, it would depend upon the man's knowledge, number 1, what's he's after. If I wanted to teach you what Judaism circa 1860 felt about the Bible, I'd approach the Bible in the which is an entirely different way. I'd examine every jot and tittle of letter, for its hidden meaning. For example, (Hebrew)

In the beginning God created the heavens and earth. Now obviously, no one will disagree that you're going after God creator idea in there. What else is involved? Here the rabbis played all kinds of interesting games. Why did the heavens come before the earth? Because man's aspiration should always be heavenward. We are of the earth, yes, the priority is on the heavens. Why does it say With the first God creator. Well, they said that first thing in the world is wisdom.

in some other verse means wisdom. God created the world with wisdom. Now the opening of the revelation according to John, in the New Testament, says in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and God was the word. That's exactly the I just gave you and it's based on this grammatic use of Hebrew. Then they went so far as to play games. Why does the Bible begin with B?

Why doesn't it begin with A? It's the first letter of the alphabet. Well, they answered in class and life you're always ranked alphabetically. It's not very important that your name begins with B or C or D and not A. God chose something besides A to show you your name doesn't mean that much. They went further. Every little jot and tittle, why the B. B in Hebrew is, it's an open letter. It's the only letter that opens toward the rest of the alphabet. All the other letters go up, or down to the side. The lesson is man should always be great hearted and generous. Open minded etc. Now If I wanted to ~~subjoin~~ ^{play} this kind of traditional game you would have it from Bible course and we'd still (Hebrew)

By the way, there's a wonderful interpretation. S means the, the direct object in Yiddish it means thee. In the beginning God created S. In the beginning God created eat. So you Jewish mothers are not so far off. Many man will eschew this kind of historical scalping of the Bible because they say the crucial things ^{derive} the Bible simply for what you can ~~derive~~ out of it rather than as an historical document. I prefer it as an historical document and the other. But I don't think you'll find anybody today arguing the old direct revelation concept, except perhaps, this kind of approach. But that's it. It's not even an orthodox approach today. Then you get into theological questions of revelation and that fits into the question Henrietta asked, "What happened at Sinai?" Well, the Bible says what happened, ~~at~~ *that*

something directly was revealed and what I said - that the ten commandments that we now have were not the original ten commandments would be some traditions to shy away from. Most do not ~~but~~ how, if we search for truth we can blind ourselves to these facts. Question - What's a synagogue called in Yiddish? Schul, which means a school and learning is fundamental. If a man is studying the Talmud, according to the rabbis, and time for prayers come he can keep studying the Talmud and he's fulfilled his obligation for prayer. Talmud, Midrash, anything that has to do with Torah, with learning, with Jewish . He's excused from public worship. If the community has only enough money to build synagogue or a school house they must build a school house. You can worship anywhere, but you need the proper kind of surroundings for your children. Modern Jewish congregations tend to reverse the law, but this is still the basic practice of our people. Question - Besides, what would rabbis do if one rabbi wrote the only interpretation of the Bible and none of us had a chance. Before we leave, turn this off, I'd like to read with you, some material of the kind which ^{you} ~~we~~ have not read before, purely legendary material, which I think is in many ways is the original Passover Haggadah. Turn to Exodus chapter 12, you'll see a section which we'll read which is liturgic, prayer book in character, probably from the eighth or ninth centuries B.C. and was the kind of literature that our forefathers used around there, I wouldn't say they were Seder Tables because ~~they didn't have a~~ ^{they didn't have a} Seder Tables yet, around their paschal sacrifice. The ancient practice was to, on the night of Passover, to slaughter the lamb, and roast it. Then as the lamb was roasting they sat around fire and told the wonderful story of the Exodus and its meaning and then as the climax event, they ate of the sacrifice which was shared by all and this was the night, the watch night as ~~for~~ our fathers knew it. "And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle." Now this idea of a mixed multitude, since we're talking of Midrash, plays a very important role in Jewish law. We've never been purest as far as blood is concerned. We have no compunctions about working with anyone, about checking their family trees.

The Jews were slaves and everybody else went up with them. "And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual. Now the time that the children of Israel dwelt in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. It was a" (Hebrew) "night of watching unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt; this same night is a night of watching unto the Lord for all the children of Israel throughout their generations." By the way, this is another one of those indications that this is all much later literature.

"And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron: 'This is the ordinance of the passover: there shall no alien eat thereof; but every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof. In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land; but no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.'" Now, I would have you notice something.

Verse 49 is a direct contradiction of all that comes before. The verses before ~~of~~ exclusive of apartheid legislation, the Jews . Then you get to this strange edition. One law for the stranger and the home born. The Bible is arguing with itself. There was an old tradition that this was a clan experience, no one not of the clan could take part in this sacred meal. The sacred meals played an important part in the literature of the world down to the ~~passing~~ Passover feast of Jesus and the gospel stories. Down to the room in which the joint meal was held the Dead Sea scrolls. Down into ~~the~~ monastic practice in the Catholic church. You join a holy partnership and the meal was the symbol of the joining.

None who had not gone through the initiatory were accepted. The Bible first reflects it and then argues against it. "Thus did all the children of Israel, as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. And it came to pass the selfsame day that the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts. And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying: 'Sanctify unto Me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast, it is Mine.'" Here we get what we still have in some quarters the custom of . The first born belongs to God symbolically, and you redeem the first born from a priest by paying of a symbolic token of money. That's the way it was carried out in ancient times. This was your tithe in a sense, from the field, from the vineyard, from the womb itself. The first belonged to God goes over to the old Passover practice which we spoke of explains a question - I got a call a few years ago. Rabbi, is it true that Jews don't eat ham? Yes. Well, rabbi, then what's the ceremony pig in the pen? "And Moses said unto the people: 'Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place; there shall no leavened bread be eaten. This day ye go forth in the month Abib. And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, which He swore unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the Lord. Unleavened bread shall be eaten throughout the seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee, in all thy borders. And thou shalt tell thy son in that day, saying: It is because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thy hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the law of the Lord may be in thy mouth; for with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year." Here we have the reason the grandmother went through the house with a broom two days before Seder, looking for the last bit of leaven, put it all in a bag

and burn it. Here we have the proof, really, that there were two original holidays. One this old tribal Passover holiday around the sacrifice, the other a Matzah holiday, seven days long which is still the practice with us today. Both of these holidays have been apocopated together. But the crucial line here, and the line I want to leave with "And thou shalt tell thy son in that day, saying: It is because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth out of Egypt." Now, a rabbi said isn't this gramatically inaccurate sentence. I wasn't in Egypt. How could I say to ~~you~~ my son it was because of what the Lord did for me. Well, the crucial thing is that it was done for me because we are the inheritors of all the spiritual anguish that went into making this book, and this faith and leaving behind the polytheism, the paganism, the sorcery, the ~~witch~~ witchcraft which is the world with which we've been walking for a long time in coming to this civilization which we now have. Why do we read the Bible? The Bible is the Lord gave to me at Sinai or wherever else he gave it because it has meaning and ~~history~~ relevance to my own life. Now that's it and before you leave I'd like to suggest something. If, as I hope, you're filled with desire to go out and read the Bible, I hope you'll do me the favor of beginning the Bible, the English Bible as if it were a Hebrew book. The best rule I know for reading the Bible is to concentrate for the first year that you're reading it in the third section of the Bible, the section that begins with the Psalms. Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, etc. These are the sections of the Bible which ~~are~~ require no historical explanation whatsoever. They are exactly what they say on the surface. The hymns of the great poems and the great prayers of our fathers. The Proverbs, is common sense wisdom of our fathers. Job is the deep philosophy of our fathers. Song of Songs is a love poetry. Lamentations is some of their elegaic poetry. Ruth is a Thomas Costain the historical romance of the day. Ecclesiastes is their stoic literature. A wise man who's lived a little bit too long and eaten a little bit too much and has little too few hairs . These parts of the Bible can and should be read and it can be read really without any kind direction save you own good clear eyesight. Read them first and you'll see what the faith in the Bible

led into. And then as we come to our torturous snail pace way, down through myths of pre-history and into Jewish history and see how this thing was put together, and what they fought against and what they managed to wrench out of it, the blackness around them, I think it will gradually come together and a mid point, perhaps in the Prophets. You'll have gotten a good background in the Bible and I hope that together we will have gotten a good background as to its historical setting.

