

# Chastity, Fidelity and Conquest: Biblical Rules for Women and War<sup>\*</sup>

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For Abeer Qassim al-Janabi ... because the consequence of life need not end with death.

## Abstract

The Bible instructs men to take a proactive approach to their problem with paternity — the possibility that a man's putative child may be another man's genetic offspring — by stoning brides who do not bleed on first penetration, by burning women who have become pregnant out of wedlock, by torturing and poisoning wives who are suspected of adultery, by executing women who have committed adultery and by murdering female prisoners of war who are not virgins. In addition to enhancing men's assurance of paternity, control of women reduces conflict between men over women, which enhances male-male solidarity and so a society's capacity for military conquest. Concomitant to instructions for controlling women, the Bible commands adherents to commit absolute genocide against people whose land they wish to occupy, kill men in surrounding nations unless they agree to be slaves, and take their virgin women and girls as booty.

Although some non-Western cultures also sanctify such practices, in other traditional societies women have been “very free and at liberty in doing what they please with themselves” (Barbosa 1500/1866) and military conquest has not been a religious obligation. It follows that the Bible's dark legacy is not a requirement of human nature.

**Key Words:** adultery, anal intercourse, Bible, Canaan, chastity, Christianity, Codes of Maimonides, fidelity, genocide, Greater Israel, human sacrifice, Israel, Judaism, Muslim Civilization, Midrash Rabbah, murder, Onanism, One State Solution, paternity, Palestine, rape, sexual repression, slavery, Talmud, Torah, Two State Solution, torture, virginity testing, war, War Against Terrorism, Western Civilization, World War III, Zionism.

## **Introduction: Blood and Stone**

There are passages in the Bible that should make every woman wary ... and tell every man who has plumbed the darkness of his soul how close he came to fathoming its bottom. Deuteronomy 22:13-21<sup>i</sup> can be better understood by knowing that “tokens of virginity” are stains on bed linen that has been bloodied by breaking a bride’s hymen:

If any man takes a wife, and goes in to her, and then spurns her, and charges her with shameful conduct, and brings an evil name upon her, saying, “I took this woman, and when I came near her, I did not find in her the tokens of virginity,” then the father of the young woman and her mother shall take and bring out the tokens of her virginity ... and they shall spread the garment before the elders of the city ... but if the thing is true, that the tokens of virginity were not found in the young woman, then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she has wrought folly in Israel by playing the harlot in her father's house; so you shall purge the evil from the midst of you.

Bloodied sheets are still nailed to brides’ fathers’ doors,<sup>ii</sup> and in other contexts, the god of the Bible still inspires some of his followers to stone people to death (*Haaretz*, 1991).

## Judah and Tamar

Newlywed women notwithstanding, the precedent for executing a prospective wife who might be pregnant by a man other than her fiancé was set by Jacob's son Judah, whose descendants' religious sect, Judahism, was amalgamated into Judaism while its adherents lived in Babylon (Iraq ... the homeland of Abraham ... from whom Judaism, Islam and Christianity claim spiritual descent). Tamar was the mother of Judah's twin sons, Perez and Zerah, but Tamar was not Judah's wife. She was his daughter-in-law, twice over, with plans for a third. That is, Judah had three sons when he arranged to have Tamar marry his first son, Er. Unfortunately, according to the Talmud, Er had such a persistent predilection for anal intercourse that Tamar was prevented from becoming pregnant (Talmud: Yebamoth 34b; cf. 59b w/ note 17, page 396).<sup>iii</sup> This circumstance caused Israel's god to strike Er dead (Genesis 38:7), whereupon Judah implored his second son, Onan, to engage in the common tradition of levirate marriage ... a marriage that ended badly (Genesis 38:8-11):

"Go in to your brother's wife, and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother." But ... when he went in to his brother's wife he spilled the semen on the ground ... And what he did was displeasing in the sight of the LORD, and he slew him also. Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your father's house, till Shelah my [third] son grows up" ... So Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.

Judah did not keep his word regarding Shelah, which eventually caused him great embarrassment and almost cost Tamar her life, but she was clever and things ended well (Genesis 38;13-19 ... 24-27):

And when Tamar was told, "Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep," she put off her widow's garments, and put on a veil, wrapping herself up, and sat at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah was grown up, and she had not been given to him in marriage. When Judah saw her, he thought her to be a harlot, for she had covered her face. He went over to her at the road side, and said, "Come, let me come in to you," for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. She said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?" He answered, "I will send you a kid from the flock." And she said, "Will you give me a pledge, till you send it?" He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" She replied, "Your signet and your cord, and your staff that is in your hand." So he gave them to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him.

Then she arose and went away, and taking off her veil she put on the garments of her widowhood.

... About three months later Judah was told, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; and moreover she is with child by harlotry." And Judah said, "Bring her out, and let her be burned." As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, "By the man to whom these belong, I am with child." And she said, "Mark, I pray you, whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff." Then Judah acknowledged them and said, "She is more righteous than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not lie with her again. When the time of her delivery came, there were twins in her womb [Perez and Zerah].

## A Virgin Marry

Every man knows two things about every virgin — she is not pregnant and she will not know how he stacks up as a lover. The latter reality is not discussed, but the former issue inspires customs, rules and laws in most traditional (read ‘anthropological’) societies. Where men bequeath wealth primarily to their putative children by their wife (patrilineally, Hartung 1976, 1982), as distinct from leaving wealth to their sisters’ children (matrilineally, Hartung 1981, 1985), they tend to be concerned about, if not hysterically obsessed over, the sexual fidelity of their mates (Kaighobadi et al, in press; Kaighobadi & Shackelford, 2012; McKibbin et al, 2011; Platek & Shackelford, 2006; Buss, 2000; Easton, 2009).<sup>iv</sup> Thus we have practices like infibulation (near total surgical closure of the vulva), claustration, foot-binding, chastity belts, psycho-social sexual terrorism and a husband’s right to murder his wife for infidelity (Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22-23).<sup>v</sup> A grip on the nether reaches of this reality can be gained by contemplating current practices among some tradition-bound people whose Christianity and Judaism go back more than a millennium — among Christians in Ethiopia, among Ethiopian Jews in Ethiopia and Israel, and among some Coptic Christians in Egypt — where control of women is facilitated by disrupting one of their positive feedback loops ... by cutting out their clitoris, traditionally with a shard of glass, but more recently with a razor blade.<sup>vi</sup>

Even contemporary first-world patrilineal societies evidence stark symptoms of biblical sexual repression. From the wide-spread sentiment that AIDS is their god’s punishment for promiscuity and homosexuality<sup>vii</sup> to an American church group that thanks its god for killing U.S. soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan as punishment for their nation’s “immorality and tolerance of homosexuality and abortion” (*Guardian*, 2010; Walsh, 2011), one can see a connection between the roots and the branches — between what is written in the Bible and the way that many people think today.

Nevertheless, even in traditional patrilineal societies, exceptional arrangements and rules allow for the marriage of women who are known to be non-virgins. The ancient Israelites were sophisticated in that regard. Based on the account that three months elapsed between Tamar’s intercourse with her father-in-law and the discovery that she was pregnant, the rabbis of the Talmud made the following provision, as summarized by Maimonides (1195: 2:11:18),<sup>viii</sup> whose 12th Century synopses of the Bible and the Talmud are generally regarded as most authoritative: “A divorcee or widow may not become betrothed without waiting ninety days ... in order to determine whether she is or is not pregnant, and in order to distinguish between the seed of the first husband and the seed of the second.” The following clarification is added in the Talmud (Yebamoth 42a): “A woman conceals the fact [of her pregnancy] in order that her child may inherit his share in her second husband’s estate,” with further explanation in an editor’s footnote: “She makes

every effort to conceal all signs of pregnancy which might lead to the discovery that the child's father was her first husband.”<sup>ix</sup>

The rabbis of the Talmud (traditionally called The Sages) were keenly aware that men's aversion to raising children born of cuckoldry could jeopardize those children's and their mother's lives, as remains the case today (Miner et al, *in press*; Daly & Wilson, 1988). Accordingly, no accommodation could be made to marry a pregnant or nursing woman unless the prospective groom was the brother of her deceased husband, in which case the child would be genetically half his (Maimonides, 1195: 2:11:25-27):

The Sages have also enacted that a man should not marry another man's pregnant or nursing [previous] wife, even though it is known who had impregnated her, lest the child should be harmed during subsequent intercourse, since the child not being his, he will not take proper precautions.” [A clarification is added in the Talmud (Yebamoth 42a): “This is a preventive measure against turning the foetus into a *sandal* (an abortus) ... due to intercourse or abdominal pressure.”] In the case of a nursing woman [a man should not marry], lest her milk should spoil, since he will not take care to remedy the milk with such things as are helpful in such an event.

As is often the case, the devil was in the details. At this juncture in the Talmud, a student of The Sages asked about the conjectured woman with spoiled milk whose husband would not help correct the problem: “His own child [his by her] she would sustain with eggs and [purchased] milk. Would she not sustain her own child [hers, not his] with eggs and [purchased] milk?” The answer came back, “Her husband would not give her the means” (Talmud, Yebamoth 42a).



## The Law of Divorce

Whether in a tenement or in a temple, “Her husband would not give her the means” is key to understanding the hollowness that grips women who face divorce and have no opportunity to make a living. As stipulated in Deuteronomy 24:1-5, a man could divorce his wife at any time for any reason (in distinction, a woman could not divorce her husband for any reason, as remains largely the case in Israel today): “When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, he writes her a bill of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house.” The Talmud put a point on this (Gittin 90a): “He may divorce her even if she has merely spoilt his food, since it says, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her. He may divorce her even if he finds another woman more beautiful than she is, as it says, it cometh to pass, if she find no favor in his eyes.”

Fortunately, women had some legal safeguards under biblical law. A one-time alimony payment called *kethubah* was stipulated in premarital agreements. The standard agreement for a virgin was 200 *zuz* (gold coins), and 100 *zuz* for a non-virgin (widow or divorcee at the time of marriage). A wealthy man could afford to keep a less desired wife and still marry “another woman more beautiful than she,” but a common man could not support two wives, and 200 *zuz* was enough to prevent him from divorcing his wife on a whim. But not to worry, if she was not performing her wifely duties, he could beat her (Maimonides 1195: 1:21:7&10):

There are five kinds of work that any wife must perform for her husband: she must spin, wash his face, hands, and feet, pour his cup, spread his couch, and wait on him. And there are also six kinds of work that some wives must, and some need not, perform [depending upon whether their husband retained female slaves or maidservants]: attend to the grinding, cook, bake, launder, nurse, and give fodder to his mount ... A wife who refuses to perform any kind of work that she is obligated to do, may be compelled to perform it, even by scourging her with a rod.

However, for the man who had a sustained desire for divorce, but did not have, or did not want to part with, the required sum of money, there was an alternate route: “A woman who is divorced on the ground of ill repute takes only what is hers and departs” (Talmud: Kethuboth 101a). The operative clause in this most operative sanction is “on the grounds of ill repute.” Only the charge of infidelity, only a feeling of jealousy on the part of a husband, was required to make a woman forgo her *kethubah*, or undergo an ordeal that might cost her life.

## **The Law of Jealousy**

And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to the people of Israel, If any man's wife goes astray and acts unfaithfully against him ... and if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him, and he is jealous of his wife who has defiled herself; or if the spirit of jealousy comes upon him, and he is jealous of his wife, though she has not defiled herself; then the man shall bring his wife to the priest ... and the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD ... and in his hand the priest shall have the water of bitterness that brings the curse. Then the priest shall make her take an oath, saying, 'If no man has lain with you, and if you have not turned aside to uncleanness, while you were under your husband's authority, be free from this water of bitterness that brings the curse. But if you have gone astray, though you are under your husband's authority, and if you have defiled yourself, and some man other than your husband has lain with you, then ... may this water that brings the curse pass into your bowels and make your body swell and your thigh fall away.' And the woman shall say, 'Amen, Amen.' Then the priest shall ... make the woman drink the water of bitterness that brings the curse, and the water that brings the curse shall enter into her and cause bitter pain ... then, if she has defiled herself and has acted unfaithfully against her husband ... her body shall swell, and her thigh shall fall away, and the woman shall become an execration among her people. But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, then she shall be free and shall conceive children" (Numbers 5:11-28).

Detailed accounts of the above procedure are scattered throughout the Talmud and the Midrash Rabbah (The Great Exposition, a compendium of biblical exegeses which is less extensive but not less authoritative than the Talmud). Again, the devil is in those details, and being appraised of them would not only have discouraged sexual infidelity, it would have compelled women to constantly reassure their husbands in that regard. Indeed, according to the Midrash, a woman could be guilty without having touched another man ... she could even commit adultery while having sexual intercourse with her husband: "When a woman is secluded with her husband and is engaged in intercourse with him, and at the same time her heart is with another man whom she has seen on the road, there is no adultery greater than this" (Midrash Rabbah: Numbers 9:34).

## The Details

Maimonides pieced together a description of the ordeal, leaving out, as was his habit, instructions that were not politically correct even by 12th Century standards. What follows is from Maimonides (1195: 5:3:1-16) with explanatory inserts from The Midrash (underlined, Numbers 9:14-33) and the Talmud (*in italics*, Sotah 19b):

The Great Court seated the woman in their midst, and with her husband absent, endeavored to inspire her with great awe, in order to avoid having her drink of the water. They said to her: “My daughter, much is wrought by wine, much by levity, much by childishness, and much by evil neighbors ... They said to her further: “My daughter, many have preceded thee, and have been swept away. Great and worthy men have been overcome by their inclination to evil, and have stumbled.” They then recited to her the story of Judah and Tamar ... All this in order to ease the way for her, so that she might confess.

If she thereupon said, “Yea, I have been defiled,” she was dismissed without her kethubah, and went her way.

If she stood upon her plea that she was innocent, they took her to the East gate of the Temple Court, which is opposite the Holy of Holies, made her go up and down from place to place, and led her around, in order to tire her out so much that she might become sick of it and perchance confess ... They then gathered a great throng of women around her, for all women who were there were in duty bound to behold her, as it is said, “that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness” (Ezekiel 23:48). Also any man who wished to come and behold her, was allowed to do so. The while she stood among them stripped of wrap and kerchief, and clad only in her body clothes and head cap, like a woman in the privacy of her home ... Thereupon one of the priests of the Temple Court approached her, grasped her garments at the front, and ripped them apart until he laid bare her bosom. He then uncovered her hair and loosened her tresses, after which he fetched an Egyptian rope, to remind her of the Egyptian doing that she had committed, and tied it above her breasts ... He then brought a tenth of an ephah of barley flour, provided by the husband, put it in an Egyptian basket and placed it in her hands in order to make her weary.

During all the time that the woman’s head was uncovered and the tenth of an ephah held in her hands, the water of bitterness was in the vessel held by the priest, so that she would be made to see the water ... He must let her see the water so as to instil terror into her ... He then made her drink the water ... if she says ‘I will not drink,’ they beat her with the flat side of a sword and chide her and make

her drink by force ... *They insert iron tongs into her mouth, so that if she says 'I refuse to drink,' they exert influence upon her and make her drink by force.*

If the woman was innocent, she came out and went her way, remaining permitted to her husband. If she was defiled, her face immediately turned pale, her eyes bulged, and her veins filled up ... her mouth would emit an evil odour; her neck would swell; her flesh would decay ... And all those present cried, "Away with her, away with her!", lest her menstrual blood should start flowing, seeing that a menstruating woman would cause the women's section of the Temple Court to become unclean. Thereupon she was removed from that section, where she was standing. After this, first her belly became swollen, then her thighs fell away, and finally she died.

A woman who survived The Ordeal Of Bitter Waters was still in jeopardy (Maimonides 1195: 5:3:23): "If after she had drunk of the water witnesses came forth to testify to her defilement, she was dismissed without her ketubbah ... even if none of the aforementioned tokens of guilt had manifested themselves in her." Indeed, as stipulated by commandments given in the Torah (first five books of the Bible) and illustrated by examples given throughout the Holy Scriptures, an overall approach to women's moral status was summarized in the Talmud (Sotah 28b): "A woman about whom there is doubt whether she is immoral is treated like an immoral woman," and the mother of this invention was men's concern about paternity. That is, if reproduction was not at issue, a woman could be divorced at no cost and without ceremony (parenthesis not added, Sotah 24a): "A woman incapable of conception, one too old to bear children, and one who is unfit to bear children (by taking some drug and not just barren or too old to bear children) do not receive the marriage-settlement and do not drink."

## Every Woman Who Has Known

The first mass murder of non-virgin prospective wives was inflicted upon the Midianites — people who invented the god adopted by Moses on instruction from one of his fathers-in-law, Jethro, who was a Midianite priest (see Exodus 2-3 & 18). Since gods of that era were worshipped first-and-foremost for their ability to confer victory in war, having exclusive access to a powerful god was a requirement for conquering Palestine and establishing Israel's prophesied dominion over surrounding nations (e.g., Psalms 2:8-9, Isaiah 14:2, 45:14, 60:1-12). The destruction of the Midianites made the Israelites their god's only people — a jealous god for a jealous people (truncated from Numbers 31:7-35):

They warred against Midian, as the LORD commanded Moses, and slew every male ... And the people of Israel took captive the women of Midian and their little ones ... Then they brought the captives and the booty and the spoil to Moses ... And Moses was angry with the officers of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, who had come from service in the war. Moses said to them, "Have you let all the women live? ... now kill every woman who has known man by lying with him. But all the young girls who have not known man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves<sup>x</sup> ... the booty remaining of the spoil that the men of war took was ... thirty-two thousand persons in all, women who had not known man by lying with him.

Only 31,968 of those virgins could be made available to Israelite men because 32 of them were given "to Eleazar the priest" as an "offering for the Lord" ... that is, for human sacrifice (Numbers 31). These women were to be "an heave offering" (see Numbers 31:29 & 41, King James translation) ... which means that after dismemberment, their body parts were to be "heaved up," or thrown in the air, in celebration.<sup>xi</sup> To this day, in their daily morning prayer, observant Orthodox Jewish men thank their god for having not made them a non-Jew ('Baruch shelo asani goy' – 'Blessed is He that did not make me a non-Jew') and for having not made them a woman ('Baruch shelo asani isha' – 'Blessed is He that did not make me a woman'). No wonder.

Heave offerings aside, if there were 32,000 virgins, it seems reasonable to assume that there were a large number of non-virgins. Sorting out who to keep and who to kill would have been a major undertaking. In a tale too fanciful to warrant discussion of its plausibility,<sup>iii</sup> but one that clearly reveals prevailing attitudes, the rabbis of the Talmud explained how the necessary virginity testing was accomplished. Anatomy not being the forte of these 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Century exegetes, the diagnostic procedure was to have the woman in question straddle a cask of wine so that her vagina covered the hole in the side of the

cask. According to Rabbi Kahana son of Rabbi Nathan, one only needed to smell the woman's breath to decipher whether her hymen was sufficiently intact to prevent a bouquet from rising (Talmud: Yebamoth 60b): "They made them sit upon the mouth of a wine-cask. Through anyone who had had previous intercourse, the odour penetrated; through a virgin, its odour did not penetrate."

This simplified matters: smell wine, pull the woman off the cask and cut her throat ... don't smell wine, pull the girl off the cask and rape her. Putting 60-some thousand women through this process in a reasonable amount of time would have required far more casks of wine than the Israelites would have brought with them on a military campaign, but there was no limit to the imaginations of The Sages of the Talmud. Nevertheless, as American soldiers who rape and murder captive Muslim civilians (*Aljazeera*, 2006, 2009; *New York Times*, 2010) have proven, The Sages were right to assume that such levels of brutality are within the male repertoire (*Washington Post*, 2006):

An Iraqi medic who responded to a home where U.S. soldiers allegedly raped and killed a teenage Iraqi girl and murdered her sister and parents described on Sunday a display of carnage so horrific he said it made him sick for two weeks. In the opening day of testimony in a military hearing in Baghdad to determine whether there is enough evidence to hold a court-martial for five U.S. soldiers, the medic, whose name was withheld for security reasons, testified that he saw smoke when he arrived at the family's home in Mahmudiyah on the afternoon of March 12. Inside, on the floor of the living room by the window, a teenage girl lay dead on her back, her legs spread, her clothes torn off, her body burned from her waist to her head, a single bullet hole under her left eye, he said.

Her mother also lay dead on the floor with bullet wounds in her chest and abdomen, he said. In another room, the medic found what remained of the girl's father in a pool of blood. "The brain was on the floor and parts of the head were all over the place," the medic said. Next to him was his other daughter, who was about 6years old. It appeared to him as if a bullet had "entered the front of her face and out the back of her head," he said.



Iraqi ID card issued in 1993 to Abeer Qassim al-Janabi.



Abeer, age 7.



Abeer, age 9.

And sometimes, after a plea-bargain to avoid the death penalty, they confess without feeling that they have done something wrong (*Associated Press*, 2006):

One of four U.S. soldiers accused of raping a 14-year-old Iraqi girl last spring showed little remorse and even smiled during a confession to charges he conspired to kill her and her family.

Even before the hearing Wednesday to announce a plea agreement, Spc. James P. Barker, 23, slapped hands with other soldiers and grinned as he smoked a cigarette in the rain. A bailiff scolded him. And when he described for the judge the assault in his own words, he gave vivid details of the rape with a deadpan delivery.

"That's pretty much all I have to say," Barker muttered with a shrug after describing raping the screaming girl.

Barker agreed to plead guilty to the charges to avoid the death penalty, his civilian attorney David Sheldon said. The agreement requires him to testify against three other soldiers and a former Army private also accused in the March 12 attack in Mahmoudiya, 20 miles south of Baghdad.



## So What?

It seems unlikely that any of these VFW murdering rapists took license directly from the Bible. Nevertheless, they were raised in a culture that diminishes, entirely ignores or celebrates offenses that it commits against non-Judeo-Christian nations — whether the commandment to vanquish the original inhabitants of Canaan (Deuteronomy 20:16-18, see below), the Crusades, or the re-creation of Israel at the expense of Palestinians — while continuously propagandizing offenses committed against it in retaliation.<sup>xii</sup> Under that condition, for the simplistic-minded, and especially the simple-minded simplistic-minded, having been told who the ‘bad guys’ are, and that they are the ‘good guys,’ is all that is needed to drive a connection between the Bible, the cultures that it has spawned, and the moral disinhibition that disinhibited the gang rape and murder of Abeer Qassim al-Janabi.

Regardless of its ontogeny or etiology, rape and murder are wrong — but rape and murder are not evil in and of themselves. There is a distinction between what is wrong and what is evil. Evil is committed when clarity is taken away from what is clearly wrong, allowing wrong to be seen as less wrong, excusable, right, or an obligatory commandment of a Lord God Almighty. The god of the ancient Israelites was a conceptualization of men. Those men's attitudes toward women were common and remain common, in both senses of the word. Then as now, the perception of women as sexual outlets whose behavior must be controlled by overwhelming force wells up from the dregs of a fetid hole into which any man can sink.

Israelite women and women captured by Israelite men were not worse off than most women in the ancient Levant, but Israelite men were ahead of their time in extensively codifying the regulation of women into written laws attributed to their god. Recording and sanctifying rules that promote the interests of rulers at the expense of the ruled gives inertia to injustice. So it matters that rules for torturing and murdering women are promulgated in the Torah, which lies at the heart of the Bible, which lies at the heart of Judaism, which lies at the heart of Christianity. A wolf, no matter how big and bad, cannot be evil. In distinction, a wolf in sheep's clothing is pure evil.

### **Another Mother of This Invention**

In addition to serving men's reproductive interests, laws that increase chastity and fidelity facilitate male-male solidarity by reducing a major source of within-group adversity among all fundamentally polygynous primates — competition between males over females who would otherwise have some capacity to choose their mates (Chagnon 1968, 1979, 1988; Daly & Wilson, 1988; Buss, 2000). Male solidarity was critically important for accomplishing the biblical commandment to subjugate people in surrounding nations and annihilate the native inhabitants of the Israelites' to-be-conquered homeland — making Israel a land without a people for a people without a land, as was attempted again in 1948. That original Zionism is the overarching theme of the Torah (Deuteronomy 20:10-18) ...<sup>xiii</sup>

When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. And if its answer to you is peace and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you.<sup>xiv</sup> But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it; and when the LORD your God gives it into your hand you shall put all its males to the sword, but the women and the little ones, the cattle, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as booty for yourselves; and you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God has given you. Thus you shall do to all the cities which are very far from you, which are not cities of the nations here.

But in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God gives you for an inheritance you shall save alive nothing that breathes, but you shall utterly destroy them, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites [the people of Jerusalem], as the LORD your God has commanded; that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices which they have done in the service of their Gods, and so to sin against the LORD your God.

... and the implications of this original Zionism for contemporary Zionism are correctly perceived by more than a few contemporary rabbis, but only a small number of them have had the courage to commit those implications to writing (Estrin, 2010, Popper, 2009) ... nevertheless proving that Zionism is not racism only in the sense that Zionism makes racism look like a transgression of etiquette.

Evidence that laws regulating the behavior of women can also subserve the territorial ambitions of a state comes from examples in which women are excused from those regulations for the good of the state. Citing the biblical precedents of Ester and Yael,

Rabbi Ari Shvat formulated the ruling that "Illicit sex for the sake of national security" is permitted to female Mossad agents (*Haaretz*, 2010; Kalman, 2010).<sup>xv</sup>

## Future Directions

Humans have invented hundreds of gods over the past several thousand years. Those gods were designed to serve their inventors' purposes. Those purposes have often included vicious control of women and the correlate objective of military conquest. The reigning god of Western Civilization, the god that Jesus prayed to,<sup>xvi</sup> commanded his followers to stone non-virgin brides, torture wives suspected of adultery, murder captured non-virgin women, perform ritual human sacrifice of captured virgin women, enslave distant nations of people, exact tribute from those enslaved people, and commit absolute genocide in pursuit of land and resources.

Although modern cultures seldom invent new gods to help shape public policy, many of them are saddled with religious legacies that reinforce the darker inclinations of human nature. Whether the barbarity of cultural ancestors is manifest today in unequal pay for equal work (which wreaks profound psychological havoc, Hartung 1988), or the inchoate notion that it is OK to make Palestinians pay for what Germans did to Jews during World War II (which also wreaks profound psychological havoc — most Arab terrorists being crazy because we have driven them crazy) ... ongoing reverence for the god of the Bible increases the probability that humans will self-destruct.

The gender inequality issue requires strengthening and enforcing laws that are on the books of most Western nations ... and encouraging their extension and enforcement around the world. Unfortunately, in that regard, the world is currently in a state that is analogous to the time when some of its dominant cultures realized that slavery and indentured servitude are immoral, but none of them had rid themselves of both. So until we develop some G7-size shining examples, gender equality will be a hard sell. Somewhat paradoxically, that means we need to focus most forcefully on areas where the most progress has already been made ... and avoid acquiescing to critics who would have that pressure reduced on grounds that conditions for women are worse in many Third World nations.

The Middle East issue requires Western Civilization to stop perpetrating the crime that Harry Truman initiated in 1947 and was, per John Kennedy's account to Gore Vidal, rewarded for in 1948.<sup>xvii</sup> Just as the Treaty of Versailles invited World War II, so the recreation of Israel invited the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the Sinai War, the Six-Day War, the War of Attrition, the Yom Kippur War, the First and Second Lebanon Wars, the Gaza War, the Gulf War, the Iraq War, the war in Afghanistan, the war in Libya, the drumbeat for war against Iran (Chomsky 2011a) and the amorphous War Against Terrorism — whose efforts range from America aping Israel by celebrating extra-judicial assassinations (Chomsky 2011b) and by torturing prisoners ... to removing shoes in airports.<sup>xviii</sup>

That string of comparatively small wars seems likely to lengthen and points toward World War III. If WWIII should occur within the next 20 years, civilization (humanity's

capacity to preserve, implement and extend knowledge thus far accumulated) would almost certainly survive because the world's arsenal of nuclear weapons has been substantially reduced over the past 20 years. However, if WWII occurs subsequent to the much-sought-after technological breakthrough that will lower the cost of nuclear bombs by a game-changing magnitude, scores of nations will have them, delivery systems will range from ICBM's to trucks, and WWII could damage civilization beyond repair. Even if civilization could be salvaged after such a war, in the Middle East, even if the Zionist-to-anti-Zionist kill-ratio were 1-to-10, only Israelis (Zionist and non-Zionist alike) would face annihilation. As such, now is the time to dissuade people who claim a right to behave in a barbarous manner because barbaric instructions are given to them by a god invented by their ancestors to serve the same purposes today that he served back then — theft of other people's liberty, lives and land (*Haaretz*, 2009, *EU Times*, 2009). Christians and Jews should "purge the evil"<sup>xix</sup> that lies at their foundation and advocate the One State Solution for Israelis and Palestinians ... a One State Solution that offers expedited citizenship and help finding homes, schools and jobs for Israeli Jews who would prefer to live in the United States (Hartung, 1997 b, c & d; 1998; 2006).

The Two State Solution is simply 'Reformed Zionism' — a matter of somewhat reduced injustice so steeped in self-righteousness that it is not less evil than the Zionism of Moses. Contemporary orthodox Zionists (as distinct from Reformed Zionists) call for disabling and expelling Palestinians in order to steal everything they have. In distinction, Reform Judaism encourages the Two State Solution, which, self-righteousness aside, amounts to the following: "Don't disable the Palestinians completely, Give them a 'country' under our control and leave them just enough to survive. After all, Israel needs an underclass to do the scut work and heavy lifting,<sup>xiii</sup> like the Gibeonites in Joshua's time (Joshua 9:27) ... and what could be better than having them go home each evening to a different 'country'?" In complicity, contemporary Reformed Zionist Christians (Obama, 2011), view the prospect of 'giving' the Palestinians 22% of what should be theirs (Abbas, 2011) as *noblesse oblige* ... but Reformed Zionism, whether promoted by Christians or Jews, is ultimately as much an oxymoron as 'Reformed Fascism' ... so abject betrayal of Palestinians by Reformed Zionists like Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton and Susan Rice, should come as no surprise (Ephron 2011, Falk 2011). And whether Reformed Zionism brings WWII in twenty years, or forty years or eighty years — whether before the implementation of a Two State Solution, during its implementation, or after its failure — the hatred necessarily generated by any form of Zionism is cumulative, irreducible and inescapable.

Whether foundational texts advocate persecution of women or serial genocide, we cannot combat evil and simultaneously give it sanctuary. We should not give evil a place to hide — not in the Bible, not in the tortuous discourse of the Talmud, not in the propaganda of people who disguise an assumption of divine privilege behind a

presumption of bequeathed victimhood (Hartung ms<sub>3</sub>; Finkelstein 2003, 2005; Etkes 2006; Levey, 2010, 2012), not in the blather of Christians who imagine that they will bring heaven to earth if they support those claims, and not in the fatuous speech of politicians who pander to those people (Lederer, 2011).

Western civilization cannot be the ‘light unto the nations’ that it fancies itself to be — whether through Moses or Jesus — nor even a respectable example of a civilization that upholds human rights, until women have full equality of opportunity, until we stop violating the rights of Palestinians as a special case, and until we stop violating much of the Muslim world in secondary consequence. To break cleanly into an enlightened future (Hartung 1996) ... a future that is free of gods, clerical goblins and their attendant scriptures ... we need to break cleanly with a fettered past (Paine 1794, Hartung 1995, 1996, 2006; Dawkins 2006; Hitchens 2007).

## Notes

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i. Except where otherwise noted, all biblical quotations are from The Revised Standard Version — see *Bible, The Holy* in REFERENCES.

ii. Traditional Christian families in Ethiopia still display this sheet on the door of a bride's father's house for several days after her wedding as an advertisement of his family's honor — i.e., that they delivered an intact bride in exchange for her brideprice (personal observation).

iii. The historical/empirical veracity of biblical/talmudic/midrashic stories, or of any story told in earnest, is independent of the messages, both implicit and explicit, that they convey. Throughout this essay, those messages are considered to contain valid information about prevailing attitudes, mores and perspectives. In addition to conveying the message that the god of the Bible was, in the eyes of the Sages of The Talmud, justified in killing Er, this whole-cloth invention of Er's predilection for anal intercourse illustrates the antiquity of the extremes that apologists for the Bible, both Jewish and Christian, will go to in order to discredit objective readers who might influence indoctrinated readers who might otherwise take umbrage.

References to the Talmud are given by Tractate and Folio number. All quotations are from the Soncino Press translation — see *Talmud, The Babylonian* in REFERENCES.

iv. For additional Darwinian interpretations of male sexual jealousy, see Dickemann 1981; Daly, Wilson and Weghorst 1982; Buss 1988; Buss et al 1992; Flinn 1988; Geary et al 1995. For additional perspectives on matrilineal versus patrilineal inheritance, see Alexander 1974; Flinn 1981; Gaulin and Schlegel 1980; Green 1978; Kurland 1979.

v. Read out of context, the rule given in the Torah for adultery appears to be symmetrical, e.g., Leviticus 20:10: "If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death," but a woman was guilty of adultery if she had sexual intercourse with any man other than her husband while a man was only guilty if he had intercourse with the wife of a fellow Israelite ("neighbor" = Israelite, cf. Hartung 1995).

vi. I recall an Ethiopian woman's explanation that a properly curved shard from a shattered Coke bottle is preferable to a razor blade because, skilfully used, it minimizes inclusion of

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non-clitoral tissue (circa 1969, personal communication). The suggestion that clitoridectomy is a paternity strategy (Hartung, 1976) is denied by the duly enculturated, who refer to it as female circumcision and explain the practice as sexually egalitarian, i.e., “something for the girls,” despite knowing that the clitoris is anatomically and neurologically analogous to the glans penis rather than the foreskin of the penis. Although many Christians and Jews are under the impression that female genital mutilation is primarily a Muslim practice, because it currently occurs most frequently in Muslim cultures and is not mentioned in the Bible, there is also no mention of any such ritual in the Koran (Hartung 1997a). Nevertheless, Muslims, Christians and Jews who clitoridectomize consider the practice to be a religious obligation ... undoubtedly because the practice existed as a paternity tactic long before the invention of abrahamic religions.

vii· While sexual behavior between women seems to have been beyond the imaginations of the men who crafted the laws which they ascribed to their deity, the ancient Israelites were typically decisive about sexual behavior between men: “If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death, their blood is upon them” (Leviticus 20:13). Nevertheless, according to the Talmud, men were deemed not punishable for pederasty with a boy under 9 years of age (Hartung ms<sub>1</sub>).

viii· Citations to Maimonides’ *Book of Women* (see REFERENCES) are given by Treatise, Chapter and Section.

ix· One wonders whether women, like female Langur monkeys in this predicament (Hrdy 1977), increase solicitation of sexual intercourse with their new mate as a facultative response that would be naturally selected because it could cause the would-be father to behave like a genetic father.

x· Several sacred Jewish texts written subsequent to the compilation of the Torah express second thoughts about the genocide of the Midianites ... not because of the colossal evil of the deed, but because the sudden influx of so many shiksas was perceived by The Sages to have had dysgenic effects (Hartung, ms<sub>2</sub>).



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<sup>xi</sup> Human sacrifice of Canaanites, Midianites and other non-Israelites was common (for a poignant example see 1st Samuel 15:31-32), but sacrifice of Israelites by Israelites in order to appease or cajole their god was rare subsequent to rescission of the commandment to sacrifice all first born children (cf. Exodus 13:2; 22:29-30 and Leviticus 27:28-29 with Exodus 13:13 and 34:20) ... a commandment for which the god of the Israelites eventually apologized (Ezekiel 20:26). Nevertheless, ritual sacrifice of a virgin Israelite woman was still well received and well rewarded (e.g., Judges 11:12 through 12:8).

<sup>xii</sup> We have all heard stories of torture, rape and murder committed by Arab regimes. An entirely fabricated and exceedingly effective story about Iraqi soldiers murdering babies in Kuwait was used to 'manufacture consent' (Herman + Chomsky, 2002) for the Gulf War ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nayirah\\_\(testimony\)#Incubator\\_allegations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nayirah_(testimony)#Incubator_allegations)), but we seem to be at peace with Biblical stories about Israelites murdering the babies of their enemies (Psalms 137:9, Hosea 13:16, Isaiah 13:15-18, 2 Kings 15:16). Although some reports of torture, rape and murder committed by potential Muslim adversaries are true, what every American needs to remember is that we too have committed torture, rape and murder. And on a grander scale, we need to realize that each of us, Zionist and anti-Zionist alike, is responsible for the torture and/or murder of every Palestinian that has been tortured or murdered by Israel and every Muslim of any ilk that has been tortured and/or murdered by the United States [including Samir Kahn as collateral damage during the murder of Anwar Al-Awlaki ... both American Citizens (New York Times, 2011)].

<sup>xiii</sup> For additional examples of the commandment to commit genocide and boasts of having done so, see: Numbers 21:2-3; 21:34-35; 24:8; 24:19-20; Deuteronomy 2:34; 3:2-6; 3:21; 7:12; 7:16; 7:23-24; 9:3; 11:24-25; 31:35; 33:27; Joshua 2:10; 6:21; 8:2; 8:24-26; 10:1; 10:28; 10:35; 10:37; 10:39-40; 11:11-14; 11:20-21; Judges 1:17; 3:29; I Samuel 15:3; 15:8; 15:15; 15:18; 15:20; and I Chronicles 4:41. See also Hartung 1995.

<sup>xiv</sup> One of Israel's highest ranking religious authorities, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, reiterated the precept that "Goyim [non-Jews] were born only to serve us. Without that, they have no place in the world — only to serve the People of Israel" (Haaretz 2010b, Haaretz 2006) ... a point of view iterated throughout The Bible, reiterated throughout the Talmud, and at least partially subscribed to by most post-Roosevelt U.S. Congresspeople and, with the exception of Eisenhower and post-term Carter, most U.S. Presidents.

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xv. There was no conflict between the commandment “Thou shalt not kill” and the commandment to commit genocide. In distinction, the former facilitated the latter (Hartung, 1995). An original Torah scroll required about 70 goat skins and a great deal of manual labor. Because page-space was such a primary concern, the only punctuation marks developed by phonetic languages of that time were small, sub-script tick marks, as required to designate where one word stopped and the next word began. Otherwise, ancient Hebrew writing was a continuous set of block letters (all caps) read right-to-left. There were no periods, no commas, no first-word capitalization and no paragraph breaks. In modern translations, decisions about where sentences and paragraphs begin and end are courtesy of the translator. Accordingly, instead of being spaced as five separate paragraphs of one sentence each (the only place in the Bible where this short-sentence-paragraphing occurs), highlighting what has come to be interpreted as 5 of the BIG TEN out of 613 commandments, as follows ...

Thou shalt not kill.

Neither shalt thou commit adultery.

Neither shalt thou steal.

Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Neither shall you covet your neighbor's wife and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's.

... without changing any of the words, Deuteronomy 5:17-21 should be translated:

Thou shalt not kill, neither shalt thou commit adultery, neither shalt thou steal, neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour. Neither shall you covet your neighbor's wife, and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's.

In this translation, the question, "Thou shalt not kill who?" is answered by the ‘Love Commandment.’ Here are four translations of Leviticus 19:18:

- Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. — First Jewish Publication Society translation (JPS '17) and the King James Version (KJV).

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- You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself. — Revised Standard Version (RSV).
  - You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against your countrymen. Love your fellow as yourself. — TANAKH (JPS '85).

In context, the word translated as *neighbor* meant "the children of thy people," "the sons of your own people," "your countrymen" — in other words, fellow Israelites — and "Thou shalt not kill" meant 'Thou shalt not kill thy neighbor — the children of thy people, your countrymen' ... your fellow Israelites ... because, among other objectives, just as modern Zionists need to cooperate in order to accomplish Greater Israel, ancient Zionists needed to cooperate with each other in order to fulfill the genocide commandments (For details and corroborative interpretations in the rest of the Bible, the Talmud and from Maimonides, see Hartung, 1995).

<sup>xvi</sup> When Jesus prayed "Our Father who art in heaven ..." he was not talking to himself. Vermes (1973) has presented persuasive evidence and arguments that Jesus had on-days and off-days regarding his confidence that he was the Jewish Messiah. Although the Christian church invented the Nicene Creed (3 is 1 and 1 is 3) some 300 years after Jesus' death in order to resolve Christian adherence to the First Commandment, Jesus never had an 'on' day regarding whether he was the god that he prayed to. Indeed, he would have considered the question, let alone the assertion, to be blasphemous.

In Jesus' time, the job of the Jewish Messiah was to recreate the Kingdom of David ... when Jews had complete dominion over Greater Israel and reputed themselves to have received spectacular amounts of tribute (protection money) from all surrounding nations [e.g., 666 talents of gold (I Kings 10:14-15) is about 60,000 pounds ... almost certainly an exaggeration of biblical proportions, and three times the amount that Attila the Hun was able to extort from Rome per annum prior to sacking it for late payment]. Although Jesus was only one in a long line of Messiah candidates [having been preceded, for example, by John The Baptist ... and most recently succeeded by Menachem Schneerson ([www.rickross.com/reference/lubavitch/lubavitch1.html](http://www.rickross.com/reference/lubavitch/lubavitch1.html))], his *modus operandi* may have been unique. Jesus' strategy was to create brotherly love among all sects of Jews — right down to the Samaritans — in order to provide a united front against Roman colonialism. This love did not extend to goyim unless they served Israel in some extraordinary

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individual capacity (as in ‘but some of my best friends are goy!’ see: Luke 7:1-10 for an example), and he only blessed a left-over Canaanite woman because she was willing to accept herself and her kind as having the status of dogs in comparison to Israelites (see Matthew 15:21-28 and Hartung, 1995). It should be noted that, thanks to Saul of Tarsus (Saint Paul), Jesus accomplished his ‘on-day’ objective ... except that the enormous tribute paid to the reconstituted Israel comes from the United States instead of being sent by surrounding nations.

Anyone who doubts the depth of Christian allegiance to Zionism, or thinks that it only pertains to right-wing fundamentalist Christians, should contemplate the conflict between the drive to “stabilize” world oil prices (Chomsky 2011a) and allegiance to Israel. These two pursuits are antithetical, but for most Christians and Jews — i.e., the vast majority of Americans — Zionism even trumps oil.

<sup>xvii</sup> Gore Vidal and John F. Kennedy were great friends. Vidal recounted Kennedy’s account of Truman’s reward for his support of Israel in the Forward to Israel Shahak’s *Jewish History, Jewish Religion: The Weight of Three Thousand Years* as follows (also available at: [www.abbc.net/historia/shahak/english.htm#foreword](http://www.abbc.net/historia/shahak/english.htm#foreword)):

“Sometime in the late 1950s, that world-class gossip and occasional historian, John F. Kennedy, told me how, in 1948, Harry S. Truman had been pretty much abandoned by everyone when he came to run for president. Then an American Zionist brought him two million dollars in cash, in a suitcase, aboard his whistle-stop campaign train. ‘That’s why our recognition of Israel was rushed through so fast.’ As neither Jack nor I was an anti-Semite (unlike his father and my grandfather) we took this to be just another funny story about Truman and the serene corruption of American politics.

Unfortunately, the hurried recognition of Israel as a state has resulted in forty-five years of murderous confusion, and the destruction of what Zionist fellow travelers thought would be a pluralistic state - home to its native population of Muslims, Christians and Jews, as well as a future home to peaceful European and American Jewish immigrants, even the ones who affected to believe that the great realtor in the sky had given them, in perpetuity, the lands of Judea and Sameria. Since many of the immigrants were good socialists in Europe, we assumed that they would not allow the new state to become a theocracy, and that the native Palestinians could live with them as equals. This was not meant to be. I shall not rehearse the wars and alarms of that unhappy region. But I will say that the hasty

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invention of Israel has poisoned the political and intellectual life of the USA, Israel's unlikely patron.

Unlikely, because no other minority in American history has ever hijacked so much money from the American taxpayers in order to invest in a 'homeland'. It is as if the American taxpayer had been obliged to support the Pope in his reconquest of the Papal States simply because one third of our people are Roman Catholic. Had this been attempted, there would have been a great uproar and Congress would have said no. But a religious minority of less than two per cent has bought or intimidated seventy senators (the necessary two thirds to overcome an unlikely presidential veto) while enjoying support of the media.

In a sense, I rather admire the way that the Israel lobby has gone about its business of seeing that billions of dollars, year after year, go to make Israel a 'bulwark against communism'. Actually, neither the USSR nor communism was ever much of a presence in the region. What America did manage to do was to turn the once friendly Arab world against us. Meanwhile, the misinformation about what is going on in the Middle East has got even greater and the principal victim of these gaudy lies - the American taxpayer to one side - is American Jewry, as it is constantly bullied by such professional terrorists as Begin and Shamir. Worse, with a few honorable exceptions, Jewish-American intellectuals abandoned liberalism for a series of demented alliances with the Christian (antisemitic) right and with the Pentagon-industrial complex. In 1985 one of them blithely wrote that when Jews arrived on the American scene they 'found liberal opinion and liberal politicians more congenial in their attitudes, more sensitive to Jewish concerns' but now it is in the Jewish interest to ally with the Protestant fundamentalists because, after all, 'is there any point in Jews hanging on dogmatically, hypocritically, to their opinions of yesteryear?' At this point the American left split and those of us who criticised our onetime Jewish allies for misguided opportunism, were promptly rewarded with the ritual epithet 'antisemite' or 'self-hating Jew'.

Fortunately, the voice of reason is alive and well, and in Israel, of all places. From Jerusalem, Israel Shahak never ceases to analyze not only the dismal politics of Israel today but the Talmud itself, and the effect of the entire rabbinical tradition on a small state that the right-wing rabbinate means to turn into a theocracy for Jews only. I have been reading Shahak for years. He has a satirist's eye for the confusions to be found in any religion that tries to rationalize the irrational. He has a scholar's sharp eye for textual contradictions. He is a joy to read on the great Gentile-hating Dr. Maimonides.

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Needless to say, Israel's authorities deplore Shahak. But there is not much to be done with a retired professor of chemistry who was born in Warsaw in 1933 and spent his childhood in the concentration camp at Belsen. In 1945, he came to Israel; served in the Israeli military; did not become a Marxist in the years when it was fashionable. He was - and still is - a humanist who detests imperialism whether in the names of the God of Abraham or of George Bush. Equally, he opposes with great wit and learning the totalitarian strain in Judaism. Like a highly learned Thomas Paine, Shahak illustrates the prospect before us, as well as the long history behind us, and thus he continues to reason, year after year. Those who heed him will certainly be wiser and - dare I say? - better. He is the latest, if not the last, of the great prophets."

Whether Truman was promised that suitcase of cash in advance remains unknown, but that he squandered America's supreme post-WWII influence by twisting every arm at the United Nations to force the re-creation of Israel has been copiously documented.

Issue should be taken with Vidal's perception that "a religious minority of less than two per cent has bought or intimidated seventy senators (the necessary two thirds to overcome an unlikely presidential veto) while enjoying support of the media;" Zionist Jews, who number fewer than 16 million, are the sparkplugs of Zionism ... but the rest of the engine is drawn from 2.2 billion Christians, most of whom range from vaguely philo-Semitic (Mead 2008) to frank Zionists (Haaretz 2010c). Many Christians have difficulty appreciating this, but it should be kept in mind that the Jewish Bible comprises about two thirds of the Christian Bible and Christians worship the god of the Jews (the god that Jesus worshipped) and Jesus himself (who was a Jew and, with the help of Saul of Tarsus, the most effective Zionist in history).

<sup>xviii</sup> More than a few talking-head apologists for Zionism have argued that Israel is not a primary cause of America's wars against Muslims by conjecturing that if Israel were to disappear, those wars would continue. That conjecture is overstated but largely true ... because those wars have taken on a life of their own. However, just because a cancer metastasis generates a new primary tumor that sends out its own metastases, it does not follow that the mother tumor stops generating metastases.

<sup>xix</sup> The Bible is not evil by virtue of its barbaric objectives or even its glorification of cruelty, murder, rape and genocide (Hartung, ms<sub>2</sub>). Many ancient works do that — The Iliad, the Icelandic Sagas, the tales of the ancient Syrians and the inscriptions of the ancient

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Mayans, for example — but no one is selling or buying *The Iliad* as a foundation for morality. -Therein lies the problem. The Bible is sold and bought as a guide to how people should live their lives. And it is, by far, the world's all-time best-seller. But the effort to make the Bible a universal guide to morality is impossible, because only orally transmitted myths can make 180-degree turns across a series of generations and get away with claims to authority based on antiquity. In distinction, distortions and selective dismissals of written myths can only, at best, fool some of the people most of the time or most of the people some of the time ... such that deep-seated cultural reinforcement of evil perpetuates evil behavior beyond where it would go without that reinforcement.

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