

## Our Jewish Roots: Biblical Insights from the Rabbis, Part 2

Paul says that we Gentile Christians have been grafted on to a tree with Jewish roots, which provide the rich sap that feeds us and produces fruit in our lives (Rom. 11:17-18). Jesus suggests that all you need to know for salvation is in Moses and the Prophets (Luke 16:29-31), and when he is asked about eternal life, he points people to Torah (Matt. 19:16; Mark 10:17; Luke 10:25; 18:18). Yet the anti-Judaism of our Christian tradition has blinded us to those fundamental biblical truths. In this class I want to continue looking at Torah with the help of Jewish rabbis, both ancient and modern, whose insights will enlighten and challenge us with different perspectives on the Scriptures, on God, and on our place in the world. We will take hold of (more than one) Jew and walk with them because we have heard that God is with them (Zech. 8:23).

### I. Introduction: Course Purpose

### II. Review of Major Themes

- A. The Rabbis
- B. Torah: Radical Responsibility
  - 1. A Revolutionary Story
  - 2. God's Faith in Us
    - a. Created in God's Image
    - b. Partners with God in the Creation
    - c. Covenant: Law and Love
  - 3. Doing Something for God
    - a. Making a Home for God
    - b. "Justice, Justice You Shall Pursue"
    - c. Faith as Protest
    - d. Sacrifice: the Gift of Giving

### III. Rabbi Heschel, Rev. King, and the God Who Suffers

- A. Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1973)
- B. The Shoah and the Divine Pathos
- C. Heschel and the Civil Rights Movement
- D. King and the Anti-War Movement
- E. Two Prophets

### IV. A Closer Look (cont.)

- M. *Shabbat Shalom*
  - 1. Torah on the Sabbath
  - 2. The Prophets on the Sabbath
  - 3. Jesus on the Sabbath
  - 4. The Rabbis on the Sabbath
    - a. On Healing
    - b. On Work
    - c. On Rest
  - 5. Judaism on the Sabbath
  - 6. The Uniqueness of the Sabbath

### N. Keeping Kosher and Creation Care

1. In Torah
  - a. "Be holy"
  - b. "Don't kill"
  - c. "Don't muzzle the ox"
  - d. "The land must keep a Sabbath"
2. In the New Testament
3. In Contemporary Jewish Practice
4. As Instruction in Righteousness

O. Arguments for the Sake of Heaven

P. The Fear of the Lord

V. Conclusions: Life Before Death

## Bibliography

Robert Alter

*The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary*, 2004

R. Elyse Goldstein, ed.

*The Women's Torah Commentary*, 2000

R. Shai Held

*The Heart of Torah: Essays on the Weekly Torah Portion* (2 vols.), 2017

R. Abraham Joshua Heschel

*God in Search of Man*, 1955

*Heavenly Torah*, 2007

*The Prophets* (2 vols.), 1962

*The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man*, 1951

R. Norman Lamm

*Derashot Ledorot: A Commentary for the Ages*, 2012-2014  
(5 Volumes: Genesis-Deuteronomy)

R. Kerry Olitzky

*Jewish Rituals: A Brief Introduction for Christians* (2005)

*Jewish Holidays: A Brief Introduction for Christians* (2007)

R. Jonathan Sacks

*The Chief Rabbi's Haggadah*, 2003

*To Heal a Fractured World: The Ethics of Responsibility*, 2005  
Covenant and Conversation Series

*Genesis: The Book of Beginnings*, 2009

*Exodus: The Book of Redemption*, 2010

*Leviticus: The Book of Holiness*, 2015

*Numbers: The Wilderness Years*, 2017

*Deuteronomy: Renewal of the Sinai Covenant*, 2019

*Essays on Ethics*, 2016

*Ceremony and Celebration: Introduction to the Holidays*, 2017

R. Jeffrey K. Salkin

*The Modern Men's Torah Commentary*, 2009

Meir Tamari, *Al Chet: Sins in the Marketplace*, 1996

R. Joseph Telushkin, *Jewish Literacy: The Most Important Things to Know about the Jewish Religion, Its People, and Its History* (2008).