



Jewish Congregation of Marco Island

## A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF TORAH

EXCERPT FROM THE WEEKLY PORTION

January 15, 2022



בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לַעֲסוֹק בְּדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה:

### Torah Stats

Weekly Portion: *b'Shallach*

Consists of: Exodus 13:17-17:16

Sequence—

in annual Torah-reading cycle: 16<sup>th</sup> of 54

in the Book of Exodus: 4<sup>th</sup> of 11



### - A Salient Selection from the Portion -

Exodus 15:11-18

Context: *Exodus, second of the Five Books of the Torah, is an account of how God liberated the Israelites from Egypt and entered into a Covenant with us at Mount Sinai, and a record of the legislations they undertook for the conduct of the society they were to establish in the Promised Land.*

Content: *This week's portion details the dramatic crossing of the Sea—the Israelites' first direct experience of God's might revealed, which prompts them to burst into a song of praise. But we focus on one core element of that Song, in order to zoom out and look at some geopolitical realities shedding light on the ensuing conquest of the Promised Land.*

מִי-כְמוֹכָה בְּאֵלִים יְהוָה

15:11] - **Who is like You**, among the gods, O Eternal One?

נוֹרָא תִהְיֶה עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא

מִי כְמוֹכָה נִאֲדָר בְּקִדְּשׁ

**Who is like You**— majestic in holiness;

awesome in splendor; working wonders?!?

תִּבְלַעְמוּ אֶרֶץ

נְטִיתָ יְמִינָךְ

15:12] - You reached out Your right Hand,  
and the earth swallowed them up!

נִהְיֶה בְּעֵזְךָ אֵל-יְיָ קִדְּשׁךָ

נְחִיתָ בְּחִסְדְּךָ עַם-זוֹ גְּאֻלְתָּ

15:13] - In Your loving-kindness, You have led this people whom You redeemed;

in Your strength, You lead them to **Your holy abode**.

חֵיל אֲחֵז לְשָׁבֵי פְלִשְׁתִּים

שָׁמְעוּ עַמִּים יְרֵגוֹן

15:14] - **The nations, having heard it, are agitated:**  
anguish grips the residents of **Philistia**,

אֵילֵי מוֹאָב יִאֲחֲזוּמוּ

אֶז נִבְהָלוּ אֱלֹהֵי אֲדָוָה

15:15] - At which the chieftains of **Edom** become dismayed;

- more over

the leaders of **Mo'av** are gripped by trembling—

רָעַד נִמּוּגוֹ כָּל יֹשְׁבֵי כְנָעַן

Tremors have seized **all the inhabitants of Canaan**.

בְּגִדְלֵי זָרוּעַד יִדְמוּ כָאֶבֶן

תִּפֹּל עֲלֵיהֶם אֵימָתָה וַפְחַד

15:16] - Terror and dread have fallen upon **them**;

through the mightiness of Your Arm **they** are struck dumb as a stone—

עַד-יַעֲבֹר עַם-זֶה קִנִּיתָ

עַד-יַעֲבֹר עַמְּךָ יְהוָה

Until **Your People** will have crossed in,  
until **this People** You ransomed

O Eternal One;  
will have crossed in!

מִכּוֹן לְשִׁבְתֶּךָ פָּעִלְתָּ יְהוָה

תְּבִיאֵמוֹ וְתַטְעֵמוֹ בְּהַר נִחְלָתֶךָ

מִקְדָּשְׁ אֲדָנִי כּוֹנֵנּוּ יְדִידְךָ

15:17] - You will bring **them** and **plant them in the hill-country** which is Your legacy;

The foundation of Your residence which You have made, O Eternal One;

The Sanctuary of The Lord, which Your Own Hand has founded.

יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד

15:18] - The Eternal One will rule, ever and always!

### **The Peoples Named in the Song of the Sea**

**Edomites** — a **Semitic nation**, first-cousin to Israel through descent from Jacob's older twin brother, Eisav (Genesis 36).

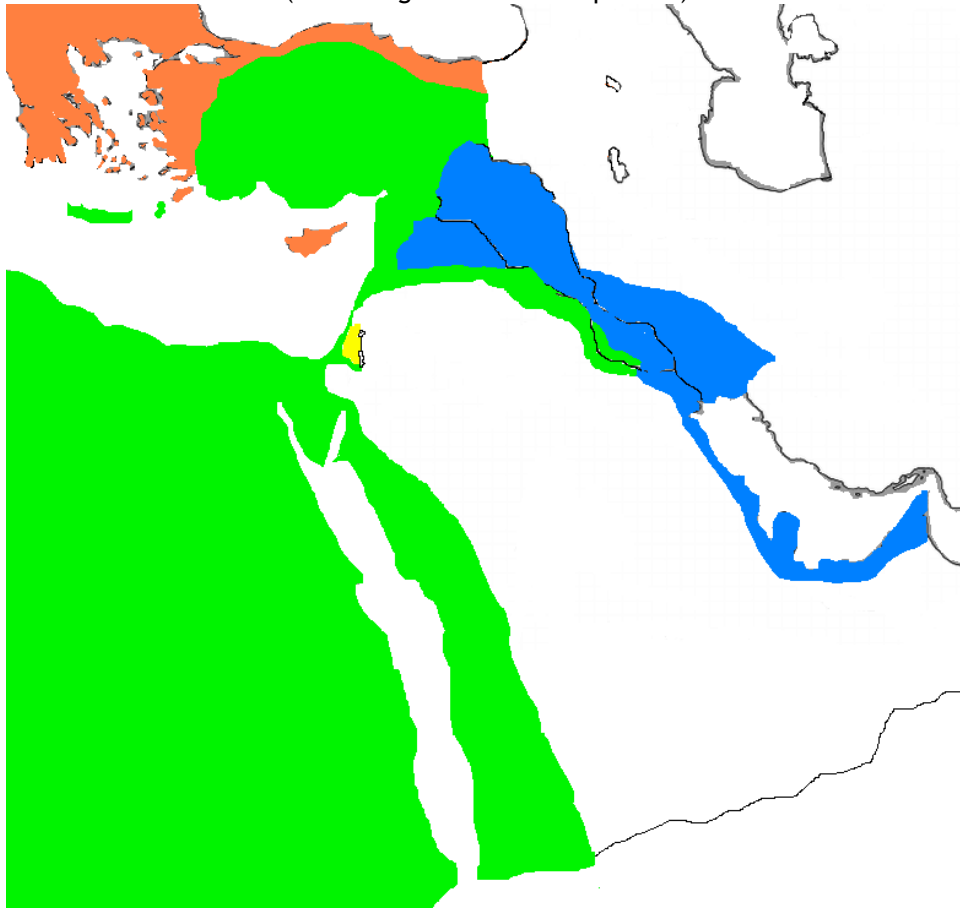
**Moabites** — a **Semitic nation**, distant-cousin to Israel through descent from Abraham's nephew, Lot (Genesis 19:36).

**Philistines** (“rootless”) — a **Hamitic nation unrelated to Israel**, made up of sea-raiders from Crete (Amos 9:4) who had colonized the coastal region at an early date (Genesis 20), and who— until Israel united under King David— exercised hegemony far inland by maintaining a monopoly on iron (I Samuel 13:19ff).



“**all the inhabitants of Canaan**” — an array of **Hamitic peoples** from southwest Anatolia and western Syria (Genesis 10:15ff), **unrelated to Israel**, who— independently of each other— had over the course of centuries colonized an array of individual townlets and city-states in the neglected Egyptian territory west of the Jordan, in order to gain commercial control over the caravan routes linking southwest Asia to the Arabian Peninsula and Africa.

**The Table Of Nations**  
(According to Genesis chapter 10)



<b><u>Progeny of Yafet</u></b>	<b><u>Progeny of Cham</u></b>	<b><u>Progeny of Shem</u></b>
<p>Gomer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ashkenaz</li> <li>• Rifat</li> <li>• Togarmah</li> </ul> <p>Magog</p> <p>Madai (Medes)</p> <p>Yavan (Ionians = Greeks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elishah</li> <li>• Tarshish</li> <li>• Kittim (Cyprus)</li> <li>• Dodanim</li> </ul> <p>Tubal</p> <p>Meshach</p> <p>Tiras</p> <p><i>“...from which branched out all the maritime nations.”</i></p> <p>(cf. Egyptian <i>ekwesh</i> “sea peoples”)</p>	<p>Put (Libya)</p> <p>Egypt (cf. Psalm 105:23)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lud</li> <li>• Anam</li> <li>• Patros</li> <li>• Crete (Philistines)</li> </ul> <p>Kush (Sudan &amp; Ethiopia)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sheba</li> <li>• Havilah</li> <li>• Deidan</li> <li>• Nimrod (Babylon, Kal-nah, Uruk, Nineveh)</li> </ul> <p>Canaan (“merchant”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sidonians</li> <li>• Hittites</li> <li>• Jebusites</li> <li>• <b>Amorites</b></li> <li>• Girgashites</li> <li>• Hamatites</li> </ul>	<p>Elam</p> <p>Asshur</p> <p>Arpachshad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>‘Ever</b> (Hebrews)</li> <li>• Yoqtan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diqlah</li> <li>- Ophir</li> <li>- Chavilah</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Lud (the Lydians)</p> <p>Aram (the Arameans)</p>

**- more over**

וַיֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָם יָדַע תֵּדַע כִּי-גֵר יִהְיֶה זְרַעְךָ בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא לָהֶם וַעֲבָדוּם וְעָנוּ  
אֹתָם אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה

A) Genesis 15:13-16, 15:18-21 - [God] told Abram: “You are to know of a surety that your descendants will be foreigners in a land not their own for four hundred years.

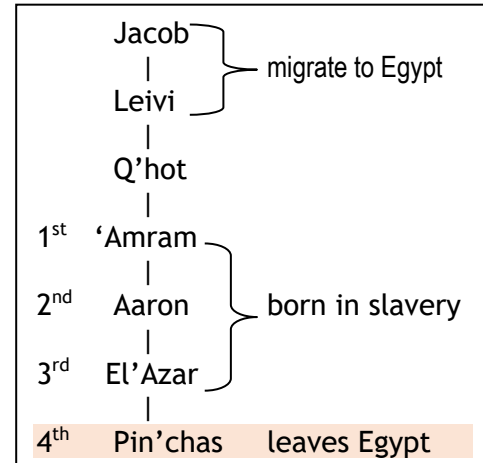
וְגַם אֶת-הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲבֹדוּ דָּן אֶנְכִּי וְאַחֲרֵי-כֵן יֵצְאוּ בִּרְכֻשׁ גָּדוֹל

They will enslave and persecute them (although I will be enacting punitive judgment upon that people!), after which [your descendants] will go forth with great wealth.

וְאַתָּה תָּבוֹא אֶל-אַבְתֶּיךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם תִּקָּבֵר  
בְּשִׁיבָה טוֹבָה וְדוֹר רַבִּיעִי יָשׁוּבוּ הֵנָּה כִּי  
לֹא-שָׁלֵם עוֹן הָאֱמֹרִי עַד-הֵנָּה

“You, yourself, will go to your forebears in peace, and be buried at a good old age; but it will not be until the fourth generation that [your descendants] shall return here, for the sin of the Amorite is not yet complete.”

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כָּרַת יְהוָה אֶת-אַבְרָם בְּרִית

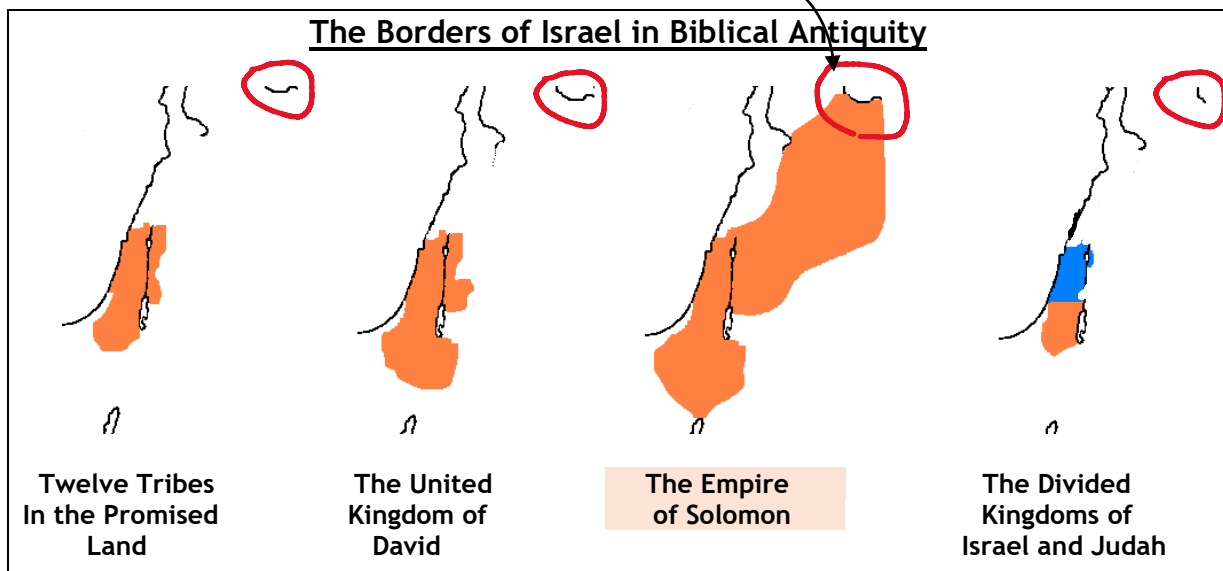


לֵאמֹר לְזַרְעֲךָ נָתַתִּי אֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת

On that day did The Eternal One swear an oath to Abraham: “I have given your descendants this land,

מִנְהַר מִצְרַיִם עַד-הַנָּהָר הַגָּדֹל נְהַר-פְּרָת אֶת-הַקִּינִי וְאֶת-הַקְנִזִּי וְאֶת  
הַקְּדָמֹנִי וְאֶת-הַחִתִּי וְאֶת-הַפְּרִזִּי וְאֶת-הַרְפָּאִים וְאֶת-הָאֱמֹרִי וְאֶת-הַכְּנֻעִי  
וְאֶת-הַגִּרְגָּשִׁי וְאֶת-הַיְּבוּסִי

from The Brook of Egypt to the great River **Euphrates**: [all the territory of] the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the other easterners; of the Hittite and the Perizzite and the R'fa'im; of the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Girgashite, and the Jebusite.



B) Exodus 23:31-33 -

וְשֵׁתִי אֶת-גְּבֻלְךָ מִיַּם-סוּף וְעַד-יָם  
פְּלִשְׁתִּים וּמִמִּדְבָּר עַד-הַנָּהָר

I have established your boundaries  
from [the Dead Sea] to [the Mediterranean  
Sea], and from [the Negev] to the Great  
River;

כִּי אֶתֵּן בְּיָדְכֶם אֶת יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ  
וְגִרְשָׁתֶמוּ מִפְּנֶיךָ

for I have given into your power all the  
inhabitants of that land, whom you are  
to drive out from before you.

לֹא-תִכְרַת לָהֶם וְלֵאלֹהֵיהֶם בְּרִית

You cannot enter into treaty with them  
and their gods;

לֹא יֵשְׁבוּ בְּאֶרֶצְךָ פֶּן-יַחֲטִיאוּ אֶתְּךָ  
לִי

nor may they dwell within [what will  
now be] your land, lest they bring you to  
sin against Me—

כִּי תַעֲבֹד אֶת-אֱלֹהֵיהֶם כִּי-יִהְיֶה  
לְךָ לְמוֹקֵשׁ

for should you come to worship their  
gods, that will be a snare to you.

C) Deuteronomy 7:1-4 -

כִּי יָבִיֵּאֲךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ  
אֲשֶׁר-אַתָּה בֹּא-שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ  
וְנָשַׁל גּוֹיִם-רַבִּים מִפְּנֶיךָ הַחֲתִי  
וְהַגִּרְגָּשִׁי וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַפְּרִזִּי  
וְהַחִוִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי שְׁבַעַה גּוֹיִם רַבִּים  
וְעִצּוֹמִים מִמֶּךָּ

When The Eternal One, your God, will  
have brought you to the land which you  
are coming to inherit, and will have  
cast out nations more numerous than  
you—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amor-  
ites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivvites, and  
Jebusites, seven nations more numerous  
and mightier than you—

וַיִּתְּנֶם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְפָנֶיךָ  
וְהִכִּיתָם הַחֲרֹם תַּחֲרִים אֹתָם

The Eternal One will have given them  
into your power. So, once you have van-  
quished them, you are to have abso-  
lutely no further relations with them  
at all.

לֹא-תִכְרַת לָהֶם בְּרִית וְלֹא תִהְיֶנּוּ  
וְלֹא תִתְחַתְּנוּ בָם בְּתֵדָה לֹא-תִתְּנוּ  
לְבָנְךָ וּבִתְּךָ לֹא-תִקַּח לְבָנָהּ כִּי-יָסִיר  
אֶת-בְּנֶךָ מֵאַחֲרֵי וְעָבְדוּ אֱלֹהִים  
אַחֲרִים

You may not enter into treaty with them,  
nor make any accommodation with  
them; nor are you to intermarry with  
them (giving your daughter to their sons,  
nor taking their daughters for your  
sons)— for that will turn your child  
away from following after Me, so that  
they worship other gods.

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי אֶל-תִּצַּר אֶת-מוֹאָב וְאֶל-תִּתְּגֹר בָּם מִלְחָמָה כִּי לֹא-אֶתֵּן  
לְךָ מֵאֶרְצוֹ יִרְשָׁהּ כִּי לְבָנֶי-לוֹט נָתַתִּי אֶת-עֵר יִרְשָׁהּ הָאֱמִים לִפְנֵים יֵשְׁבוּ  
בָּהּ עַם גָּדוֹל וָרַב וְרָם כַּעֲנָקִים

D) from Deuteronomy 2 - The Eternal One had told me: “You are not to harass the  
Moabites, nor attack them in any way— for I will not give you any of their land; I have  
assigned it as the legacy of the descendants of [Abraham’s nephew] Lot. The Eimim pre-  
viously lived on that land, before them, a great and mighty people as tall as giants.

- more over

וַיֵּשְׁבוּ הַחֲרִים לְפָנִים וּבְנֵי עֵשָׂו יִירְשׁוּם וַיִּשְׁמְדוּם מִפְּנֵיהֶם וַיֵּשְׁבוּ  
תַּחְתָּם כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֶרֶץ יִרְשָׁתוֹ  
אֲשֶׁר-נָתַן יְהוָה לָהֶם

In Sei'ir the Hurrians dwelt in former times; but the clan of Eisav dispossessed them and obliterated them, and subsequently have dwelt there in their stead— even as the Israelites will have done to the land of their legacy, which The Eternal One has given to them.

וְקִרְבַּת מוֹל בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן אֶל-תַּצְרִם וְאֶל-  
תַּתְגָּר בָּם כִּי לֹא-אֶתְּנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ בְּנֵי-עַמּוֹן לָךְ  
יִרְשָׁה כִּי לְבָנֵי-לוֹט נִתְּתִיהָ יִרְשָׁהאֶרֶץ-  
רַפָּאִים תַּחֲשֹׁב אֶף-הוּא רַפָּאִים יֵשְׁבוּ-בָּהּ  
לְפָנִים וְהָעַמִּימִים יִקְרְאוּ לָהֶם זַמְזֻמִּים עַם  
גָּדוֹל וָרֹב וְרַם כְּעַנְקִים וַיִּשְׁמְדוּם יְהוָה  
מִפְּנֵיהֶם וַיִּירְשׁוּם וַיֵּשְׁבוּ תַּחְתָּם

You have approached opposite the borders of the Ammonites— but you are not to harass nor attack them, for neither will I will be giving any of the territory of the Ammonites to you as your legacy; it is the portion of the descendants of [Abraham's nephew] Lot. It, too, was formerly a land of titans (whom the Ammonites called “Zamzumim”)— a great and mighty people as tall as giants; but **The Eternal One obliterated them from before** [the Ammonites], **dispossessing them** so [the Ammonites] **have dwelt there in their stead**.

וְהָעַיִים הַיֹּשְׁבִים בְּחִצְרִים עַד-עֵזָה כִּפְתָּרִים הַיִּצְאִים מִכְּפָתוֹ הַשְּׁמִידִם  
וַיֵּשְׁבוּ תַּחְתָּם

As for the Avvim, residing in the coastal lowland all the way down to Gaza: **Cretans, come forth from Crete, obliterated them**, and have dwelt there in their stead.

Isaac's blessing to Eisav

Genesis 27:40

עַל-חֶרֶבְךָ תַּחֲיָה וְאֶת-  
אָחִיךָ תַּעֲבֹד

You will live by your sword,  
and are to be a servant to your brother.

Genesis 36:6-8

וַיָּשָׁב עֵשָׂו בְּהַר שְׁעִיר  
עֵשָׂו הוּא אֲדוֹם

So Eisav settled in the hill-  
country of Sei'ir; Eisav is the  
forebear of the Edomites.

E) Psalm 24:1 –

לִיהוָה הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהָ  
תִּבֹּל וַיֵּשְׁבִי בָּהּ

**The earth—** and all that fills it! — **belong to The Eternal One;**  
the world, and all who dwell upon it.

F) Deuteronomy 32:8 -

בְּהִנָּחַל עָלֵינוּ גּוֹיִם

בְּהַפְרִידוֹ בְּנֵי אָדָם

When the Most High assigned the  
nations their legacies,

and apportioned the world  
amongst the human families,

יָצַב גְּבוּלוֹת עַמִּים

לְמִסְפַּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

**He defined the borders of the peoples  
proportionate to the number of  
the Israelites!”**

בהנחל עליון וגוי יצב גבולות עמים -

G) Chayim ibn-Attar (1696-1742), *Or haChayim* on Exodus 20:2 - “When the Most High apportioned” *etc.* “He defined the borders of the nations” -

- continued



ואמרו ז"ל כי ה' חלק מקומות העולם לשרי מעלה זולת ארץ כנען אשר בחר לו לשמו  
כביכול

Now regarding this passage our sages of antiquity have said [in Midrash Sifrei on Numbers and Deuteronomy] that The Eternal One assigned the various places of the earth as being each under the dominion of its respective Celestial prince— **with the exception of the land of Canaan, which God chose for His Own Glory** (as if!).

והוא אומרו בית עבדים פירוש מקום שהוא של עבדים של ה'

And the reason Scripture makes reference [in the Ten Commandments - Exodus 20:2] to “the place of service” is [that this Promised Land was to be] **the home of a nation of servants of The Eternal One.**

פירוש שממשלתו ממשלת שר אחד מעבדי ה' ולא רצה ה' שיהיו ישראל תחת ממשלת השרים אלא תחת ממשלתו יתברך בכל

The meaning being that their governance would be under an authority unique to all the agents of The Eternal One— for **The Eternal One did not wish Israel to be under the authority of any of the celestial princes, but rather under the Authority of The One Who Is Blessed Above All Others.**

		----- Talmud-----			
		TaNaCH	Mishnah	Babylonian	Jerusalem
אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל	“the land of IsraEil”	11	31	282	140
יִשְׂרָאֵל	“the people IsraEil”	2,515	375	2,832	1,785

וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֹתָם אֶת-חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת-מִשְׁפָּטַי וְלֹא תַעֲשׂוּ מִכָּל הַתּוֹעֵבֹת הָאֵלֶּה  
הָאֲזָרָח וְהַגֵּר הַגֵּר בְּתוֹכְכֶם כִּי אֶת-כָּל-הַתּוֹעֵבֹת הָאֵל עָשׂוּ אֲנָשִׁי-הָאָרֶץ  
אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵיכֶם וַתִּטְמָא הָאָרֶץ

H) Leviticus 18:26-28 - You are to keep My rules and My laws, and are not to do—neither you members of the nation nor the foreigners who live among you!— according to those abhorrent things (for **the peoples of the land who were before you practiced all these abhorrent things, so that that the land became defiled**),

וְלֹא-תִקִּיָּא הָאָרֶץ אֶתְכֶם בְּטִמְאַכֶּם אֹתָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר קָאָה אֶת-הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר  
לִפְנֵיכֶם

so that the land not vomit you up, for having defiled it, **the way it vomited out the nation which was before you.**

I) W[olf] Gunther Plaut (1912-2012), *The Torah: A Modern Commentary* - [When Moses speaks in Deuteronomy,] his warnings are directed to people whose fathers and mothers had perished in the Wilderness, because by their lack of faith they had shown themselves unworthy of God’s trust. But while Moses speaks to the people before him and recites to them the sins of the past, he slips into a remarkable identification of past and present. Instead of using “them” and “they,” Moses uses “you,” addressing the new generation as if they had been the sinners, who must now be cautioned not to repeat the earlier transgression.

**This views the past and present as a single continuum.** The history of the Jewish people possessed then, and has continued to exhibit, a quality which identifies past and present, in that **the obligations of the people are in fact ahistorical.** They are not bound by time.