

## SIXTH LESSON

### Leviticus - Numbers - Deuteronomy

With this lesson we finish the last three books of the Torah, or Pentateuch, also called the “Law” by the Jews. The book of the Exodus brought back the history of the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt. These last three books of the Law stop right before their entry in Palestine with the death of Moses.

#### I. Leviticus (Lv)

This book is indigestible and obsolete. It should however be known to acquire a good biblical formation, but without stopping at the strange rites which are prescribed therein. They are all well outdated today. Read this book without delaying, then take again the reading of the course.

The Leviticus was written by the scribes and Levite priests, from whom its name derives. It stops the account of the events of the Exodus by presenting all the rites prescribed by the priests in their interest. To give weight to these rites, the priests ascribed them to God. According to them, it is He who asked Moses and Aaron to apply these rituals of sacrifice (Lv. 1-7), the ceremonial of investiture of the priests and the material advantages returning to them (Lv. 8-10), the rules relating the pure and the impure, etc...

To grasp the meaning of Leviticus, we must keep in mind that the scribe and priests wrote it to safeguard their material interests and their spiritual and psychological hegemony on the Jewish community. This attitude is noted today in all the clergies who monopolise, in the name of God, “the spiritual economy” and psychological hegemony.

Chapters 1-7 flaunt the variety of the products offered “to God”, that is to say, to the priests. We can distinguish:

**The sacrifices of animals** are to be offered either in **holocaust** (the victim is completely consumed by fire, nothing left to the priest), or **for the sin** (the priests take parts of the victim for themselves), or in **praises** or **communion** to make a vow (the flesh of the victim is taken by the sacrificer priest of course...and the fat is burnt offered to God...).

**The oblation** consists in offering a handful of the products of the soil to God, but the remainder “will revert to Aaron and his sons, an especially **holy portion** of the food burnt for Yahweh” (Lv 2,1-3). One distinguishes among the offerings the “holy things”, and the “very holy things” which purify all those who touch them (Ex 29,37).

I already reported that the prophet Jeremiah had denounced these fraudulent practises as not being prescribed by God, but by the scribes (Jr 7,22 / 8,22). Other prophets also announced their uselessness (Os 6,6 / Am 5,21-24). Psalm 51,16-17 quotes: “Sacrifice gives You no pleasure...A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit (by the repentance), a broken contrite heart, You never scorn”. And Jesus still points out that God had said “Mercy is what pleases Me, not sacrifice (of animals)” (Mt 12,7).

Chapters 8-10 speak about the rites of investiture of the priests. These ancient and ridiculous ceremonies are inspired by paganism (especially Egyptian paganism) and they are

impregnated with superstitious gestures. They have nothing of divine. In fact, the clothing of a priest is interior and, in our apocalyptic era, we are all called to be priests by faith and compassion... without theatrical rites of investiture (Rv 1,6 / 5,9-10).

Chapters 11-27 explain in meticulous details various recommendations regarding the cult. Among these, we find what, according to the scribes and priests Levites, is pure or impure, and warnings against the violation of the Sabbath (Lv 19,2/19,30/26,2). This had already been prescribed in Exodus 20,8-11/35,1-3. The believers were overloaded by quantity of precepts allotted wrongfully to God. All these laws have no sanctifying or salutary powers. On the contrary, as the prophets had revealed it initially, then Jesus and his Apostles after them, they are a dangerous obstacle to the spiritual evolution. They make stumble those who practise them: "Precepts over precepts, precepts over precepts, rule over rule, so that when they walk they will fall over backwards and so be broken, trapped and taken captive" under the weight of such laws, Isaiah said (Is 28,13). Jesus also warned against the scribes and the clergy who "tie up heavy burdens and lay them on people's shoulders..." (Mt 23,4). "Listen, and understand. What goes into the mouth does not make anyone unclean" Jesus had still taught; and that had shocked the Jews (Mt 15,10-12).

The warning against the violation of the Sabbath is solemnly repeated in the books of the Law. In the event of infringement, the punishment is the stoning to death (Ex 35,1-3). The book of Numbers reports the case of a man who dared to collect wood one Saturday. He was simply stoned (Nb 15,32-36). The Gospel reveals that the Jews flew into a fury against the Apostles who had gathered ears of corn on a Saturday (Mt 12,1-8). Jesus was even persecuted because He healed a man one Sabbath (Jn 5,16-18). For the fanatics, that represented a work, therefore Jesus deserved the death penalty. They were irritated even more against Jesus when they heard Him saying that He was "Master of the Sabbath" (Mt 12,8) and that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mk 2,27).

Moses could not give of God the right image. By the murders he committed in the name of Yahweh, he disfigured the true Face of the Creator. Thereafter, scribes and priests tarnished even more the divine Visage. They did not understand His Spirit.

To know God is **to understand** God. Only Jesus revealed us the true Face of the Father. By Him only we reach the penetration of the divine Spirit completely opposed to the spirit of the Law (Torah).

God is the Father of all races. He opens His arms to all men pure in hearts, not only to the Jews. This is why John wrote: "the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, it is the Only son, who is closer to the Father's heart, who has made him known" (Jn 1,17-18). Moses thus neither saw nor understood God. Otherwise he would not have prescribed murders on His Behalf. The Law he prescribed was not inspired by God.

Was it really Moses who, on behalf of God, wrote all these laws or was it rather the scribes and the priests? Surely Moses wrote or prescribed a small part, the greatest part having been added by the scribes and the priests Levites for their own advantage...in the Name of God. And the two parts are enormous, and terribly serious. And the consequences are heavy along the centuries, until our days...

The book of the Acts of the Apostles describes the bitter fights carried out by the Apostles to show the vanity of the Law. Paul, in his letters to the Romans and the Galatians, explains that

salvation is obtained by the faith in Jesus, not by practicing such prescriptions, the Law being ineffective and being nothing but dead words useless for the Eternal Life (Read Rm 3,28-30/ Ga 3,10-24/ Ep 2,14-16/ Heb 10,10).

The book of Leviticus contains certain lessons of current value, that belong to the hidden gold in the books of the Old Testament.

## 1. Spiritism

This harmful practise is a human attempt to contact the Afterlife by different material means. It was condemned: “You will not practise divination or magic (Lv 19,26)... If anyone has recourse to the spirits of the dead or to magicians, to prostitute himself by following them, I shall set my face against him and outlaw him from his people (Lv 20,6)... Any man or woman of yours who is a necromancer or magician will be put to death (Lv 20,27)”. This shows that spiritism was practised since long time ago as testified further in the Bible, in the history of king Saul with the necromancer who conjured for him Samuel (1S 28).

Spread throughout the world still today, spiritism mislays a great number. The biblical explicit condemn of this practise will remain always valid, because one conjures good spirits (angels, saints), but in fact malignant spirits arise, spirits or souls attached to the earth. God does not intervene, because those who practice it, generally, have no thirst for spiritual matters nor do they have the major genuine desire to seek the divine Truth in order to submit themselves to it. They seek answers of temporal, emotional or economic nature. Or still they ask questions concerning the intimacies of others just for curiosity. That is why God and his saints never interfere, and even allow bad spirits to intervene in these meetings.. St Peter said “Keep sober and alert, because your enemy the devil is on the prowl like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour” (1P 5,8).

On the contrary, it happens that God Himself takes the initiative to contact people of His choice, whom He sees thirsty for Light and Truth. He reveals Himself to those who sincerely wish to know and love Him, ready to give up everything to follow Him. In these cases, the result is always salutary, because the intervention comes from God, not from the man and only for reasons of spiritual, not material, interest. This celestial contact takes place either by God Himself, or through one of His envoys (angels or saints).

God or His envoys appear in dreams, visions (Jl 3,1-2), or even in the state of total awakening: apparitions of Christ resurrected to her Apostles (Lk 24) and of the Virgin Mary in Lourdes, La Salette and Fatima.

The Bible is rich of divine interventions, dreams, visions and of apparitions. The celestial message can be communicated either in a symbolic or in a clear way.

**In dreams** (during the sleep): dreams of Joseph (Gn 37,5 etc...), of the cupbearer and the baker (Gn 40,5 etc...), of the Pharaoh (Gn 41,1 etc...), of Nebuchadnezzar (Dn 2,1 etc...), of Daniel (Dn 7,1 etc...), of Joseph, the husband of Mary (Mt 1,20/2,13-22), of the wife of Pilate (Mt 27,19).

**In visions** (during the sleep or in the state of semi-consciousness): Abraham (Gn 15,1), Samuel (1S 3), the centurion and Peter (Ac 10), John for the Revelation, visions of Isaiah (Is 6) etc...

**In apparitions** (in the state of awakening): Abraham (Gn 18), Zechariah (Lk 1,11), the Virgin Mary (Lk 1,26), the Apostles (Lk 24/Jn 20/Jn 21/Ac 1,3-9), Paul (Ac 9), etc...

In addition, the apparitions of the Virgin Mary in La Salette, Lourdes and Fatima etc... are biblical signs of the end of time announced by Jesus: “There will be great signs from heaven” (Lk 21,11), “a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman...” (Rv 12,1 etc...).

Meditation inspired from the book of Job: To rectify someone, “God speaks first in one way, and then in another...in dreams and in night-visions...to turn him from what he is doing and to put an end to his pride. And thus he preserves his soul from the abyss...” (Jb 33,14-18). Such are the reasons for which God contacts men.

Likewise,, Jesus promised to show Himself to those who love him: “Whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him and **reveal myself to him**... Anyone who loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall **come to him** and make a home in him” (Jn 14,21-23).

Therefore, since God wants to show Himself to us, why do we do not put ourselves in the conditions He requires? Why do some people insist on calling doubtful spirits, when the Holy Spirit asks us to call Him? Why go to unreliable people, when the Master calls you?

If the invocation of the spirits is condemned, the invocation of the Holy Spirit, on the other hand, is recommended. It is necessary to contact God for supernatural reasons. This divine-human bond is an intrinsic need in the human nature, a thirst that some have choked, replacing it with the spiritism which is only a dangerous phoney, a “counterfeit money” that the advised souls recognise easily and don’t want to exchange with the celestial treasure, that is the manifestation of God and His Messiah, Jesus, within us.

We can contact our pious dead by meditation and prayer. We can have recourse to them in order to obtain their support in the daily spiritual combat. The souls of the saints and the spirits of the angels burn with the desire to contact us and to support us spiritually. Saint Theresa of Lisieux said: “I will spend my time in Heaven doing good on the earth”. We should therefore be docile and receptive to the celestial solicitations and appeals to us. This is the opposite of spiritism. Let us believe in the power of intercession of the celestial souls and in their complicity.

## **2. Homosexuality**

It is explicitly condemned. This shows that this sexual deviation is ancient as it can be noted in the history of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gn 18,20;19,25).

“You will not have intercourse with a man as you would with a woman. This is a hateful thing” (Lv 18,22).

“The man who has intercourse with a man in the same way as with a woman they have done a hateful thing together...” (Lv 20,13).

In his letter to the Romans, Paul resumes this condemnation, applying it also to the sexual intercourse between women: “... that is why God abandoned them in their inmost cravings to filthy practises of dishonouring their own bodies. Their women have exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural practises; and the men, in a similar fashion, too...” (Rm 1,24-32).

In the XX century, that is ours, some movements of support of homosexuality have risen, claiming, in the name of freedom (?), that these practises would be allowed as natural and normal. Yet nature feels reluctant and rejects them as opposite to its vital and evolutionary rush towards sublimation. With Paul we recall that these “degrading passions are **unnatural** practises” (Rm 1,26). We cannot consider natural what is against nature, because with Isaiah, we proclaim: “Woe to those who call what is bad good, and what is good bad, who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness” (Is 5,20).

In the name of the Creator, in the name of real and responsible freedom, in the name of nature and of its width, we blame those who support an alleged natural right, even moral, of homosexuality. Certain “religious” known as Christians have even “wedded” homosexual couples, forgetting that the Bible denounces and condemns these practises and “those who not only do it, but even applaud others who do the same” (Rm 1,32).

### **3. The incest**

This sexual deviation, in all its forms, is known since ancient times. The “Oedipus complex” is not a prerogative of modern times as Leviticus testifies: “You will not have intercourse with your father or your mother. She is your mother you will not have intercourse with her” (Lv 18,7).

The paternal incest is not explicitly mentioned. But this moral decay, so often present in the families with the psychological destruction it implies, is indirectly and implicitly denounced, since it is ordered: “None of you will approach a woman who is closely related to him, to have intercourse with her. I am Yahweh” (Lv 18,6). If it is necessary to move away from the “closely related”, even more so from one’s own daughter, especially as it is still clarified that “you will not have intercourse with your son’s or your daughter’s daughter; for their sexual privacy is your own” (Lv 18,10).

The fraternal incest, other insidious practise which secretly strikes millions of victims, is condemned: “You will not have intercourse with your sister, whether she is your father’s or your mother’s daughter (half-sister)” (Lv 18,9). Similar deviations have all been condemned by Leviticus, because of their practise within the Jewish community, as the history of Amnon and his half-sister Tamar testifies (2 S 13), and that of Reuben with the concubine of his father Jacob (Gn 35,22).

The fraternal incest extends to the brother’s wife: “You will not have intercourse with your brother’s wife; it is your brother’s sexual prerogative” (Lv 18,16). Supported by this strong highly moral principle, John the Baptist condemned king Herod (Mt 14,3-4).

### **4. Human sacrifices**

This pagan worship was largely practised within the Jewish community however monotheist: “The people of Judah have done what displeases me, Yahweh declares...they have built the high place of Topheth in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, to burn their sons and daughters: a thing I never ordered, that had never entered my thoughts ” (Jr 7,30-31; 19,5; 32,34).

The human sacrifices are explicitly mentioned in 1K 16,34: “it was in his times that Hiel of Bethel rebuilds Jericho. Laying its foundation cost him his eldest son Abiram (sacrificing

him) and erecting its gates cost him his youngest son Segub". King Ahaz himself made his son "pass through the fire of sacrifice" to entreat the fate (2K 16,3).

It is in such a climate of paganism that the priests Levites prescribed in Leviticus: "You will not allow any of your children to be sacrificed (passing through fire) to Molek..." (Lv 18,21), "Anyone, be he Israelite or alien resident in Israel (the Palestinians were regarded as foreigners), who gives any of his children to Molek, will be put to death..." (Lv 20,1-5).

We note with regret, that the Jews were contaminated by the pagan habits instead of clarifying the others with the faith in the unique God.

## 5. Impediments to the Jewish priesthood

The physical defects were and are still an impediment to the Levite priesthood: "None of your descendants, for all time, may come forward to offer the food of his God if he has any infirmity...be he blind or lame, disfigured or deformed, or with an injured foot or arm etc... He will not go near the curtain or approach the altar, since he has an infirmity and must not profane my holy things ..." (Lv 21,16-24).

The Mosaic law confuses between body infirmity and moral stain. The handicapped people do not soil the objects of worship. The impure man is the sinner. But if the sinner repents himself, he is purified by the divine grace. The grace is more powerful than the stain and, according to the word of Paul: "However much sin increased, grace was always greater" (Rm 5,20).

The physical impediments to the Levite priesthood were adopted by the Christian churches who refused to ordain priests physically handicapped people of healthy spirit. Furthermore, they deny to priests the right to marriage. By doing this, they regard the matrimonial union as a stain. On the contrary the marriage is a sacrament which purifies the soul.

The impediment to the priests' marriage falls under a divine judgement revealed by St Paul in 1 Tm 4,1-3. The female sex is still, in itself, an obstacle to the Levite priesthood. The clergymen are attached to these human precepts, but they do not hesitate, alas, to ordain priests men of deformed psychology, of doubtful morality, people cut off from love, without heart nor human compassion. The words of Jesus formerly addressed to the Pharisees are applicable today to the Christian clergies of all denominations whose worships are as useless as those of their predecessors, the Levites (see Mt 15,1-20).

The Apocalyptic priesthood fortunately disregards all these Judeo-Christian considerations. Christ Himself, **alive among us** (Emmanuel), chose us like the first fruits of His new sacerdotal people. All those who "open the door to share a meal with Him" (Rv 3,20) belong to his sacerdotal people. The physically handicapped persons can take part to it, if they want, thus forming the living Apocalyptic Temple invisible to men. This divine Temple is deprived of infirmities and of spiritual taints, because "nothing unclean may come into it: none who does what is loathsome or false, but only those who are listed in the Lamb's book of life" (Rv 21,27). In this Book are registered all those who will have recognised and fought the apocalyptic Beast (Rv 13,18; 13,8; 20,12).

In the parable of the wedding feast, Jesus said to His servants: "The wedding is ready; but as those who were invited proved to be unworthy, go to the **main crossroads** and invite everyone you can find to come to the wedding" (Mt 22,7-10). In this end of time, the servants

of Jesus (who we are) realised -with bitterness and sadness how- much unworthy the alleged ecclesiastical priests are. We, Pioneers of the Apocalyptic Alliance, were gathered at the **road's starting point**. We were at the crossroads leading to the supernatural life, in search of a way out. The hand of God seized us there, for a new birth. Pioneers of a new way, we started the construction of the “new Heaven and the new Earth” seen by Peter (2P 3,13) and John (Rv 21.1). With us, Jesus involves “the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame” according to the world (Lk 14,21) to confuse those who rejected these “disabled persons” from their human priesthood ineffective for the safety of the soul. As signs of our new departure towards the building of the new divine society on earth, women, as well as the “disabled persons” also take part in the Priesthood of Jesus, conscious of the fact that “there can be neither male nor female in the Kingdom of God” (Ga 3,28).

According to the Mosaic law, Jesus, not belonging to the tribe of Levi, is not considered a priest (Heb 8,4). On the other hand, according to the divine Spirit, He is “the Supreme High Priest” of the New Covenant (Heb 4, 14 to 5,10; 9,11 etc...). In the same way, even you, men and women, Apostles and priests of the Apocalyptic Alliance, are not recognised priests of God either by the synagogue or by the Churches. According to the divine Spirit, you are indeed the “Kingdom of priests” funded by Jesus “for His God and Father”, who is also our Father (Rv 1,5-6).

The Apocalyptic Priesthood knows only one impediment: the stain of the soul by the bad faith (Rv 21,27). The body infirmity is not an obstacle.

Happy and holy are those who take part to the first resurrection! They will be “priests of God and of Christ” (Rv 20,6). The logical conclusion of our faith is that we are these priests. Our faith in the apocalyptic message is the witness and the guarantee of our participation to the First Resurrection and, consequently, to the priesthood of God and of His Christ Jesus. A witness and a guarantee are still found in these words of Paul: “You have been buried with him by your baptism; by which, too, you have been **raised up** (First Resurrection) with him through **your belief** in the power of God who raised him from the dead. You were **dead**, because you were sinners and uncircumcised in body: he has brought you to life with him, he has forgiven us everyone of our sins...” (Col 2,12-13). “In all truth I tell you, the hour is coming –indeed it is already there- when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and all who hear it will live” (Jn 5,25). We heard this divine voice a first time in the Gospel to reveal to us the face of Christ, and a second time in the Book of Revelation to reveal us the face of the Antichrist. And we believed in both voices! And our faith turned us, at once, from dead to living priests, as Lazarus come out from his tomb at the voice of the Son of man (Jn 11). The vivifying divine lightning struck us to raise us from the dead and, on the spot, we came back to life: “because the coming of the Son of man will be like lightning striking in the east and flashing into the West” (Mt 24,27). This flash “which strikes in the **East** and flashes into the West” is launched by “the Angel rising where the sun rises” (Rv 7,2).

We are priests to prepare this return of Jesus by announcing it...first of all to ourselves and by welcoming His “Return” within us. He launches us from the crossroads towards where He destines us “to extract souls from perdition”, saving what can be still saved of this poor wretched humanity.

“Be like people waiting for their Master to return from the wedding feast, **ready** to open the door **as soon as** he comes and knocks. Blessed those servants whom the Master finds awake when he comes. In truth I tell you, he will do up his belt, sit them down at **table** and wait on them ” (Lk 12,36-37). We confirm these words of Jesus by adding: “Blessed those who

opened the door to him with promptly, with love and simplicity, without complicating things with useless rites in these apocalyptic times of the XX century. For it is He, Jesus Himself, who asks us to sit near Him, around his Table” (Rv 3,20). The book of Revelation thus confirms what Luke’s Gospel had already announced. Everything turns around the apocalyptic priesthood; its high spiritual level cannot be compared to the materialistic Levite and ecclesiastical priesthood. They are both so far from God’s intention and from the hearts of the true believers who already share the Spiritual Supper in the intimacy, without theatrical worship, with the divine Bridegroom.

We are priests, but our priesthood is hidden to the world because, said Paul, “the life you have is hidden with Christ in God” (Col 3,3), and with Christ in us. Because “the Star of the morning” **already** rose, radiant, in our hearts heated by his divine glare which, like “the flash”, brought back to life our wounded souls (1 Pt 1,19 / Rv 2,28 and 22,16).

## 6. Justice

The Leviticus did not neglect the principles of social justice. However, it is a quite relative justice and aims at privileging the Jews to the detriment of others, placing them above all the other nations. The Divine Justice, on the other hand, puts all men, all nations, all races on the same level.

It is true that it is written that: “You will not exploit your fellow... You will not keep back the labourer’s wage until next morning” (Lv 19,13). The point is: Who is considered as a “fellow” by the scribes? That’s the whole point!

According to the Leviticus, the Jew must have a special regard towards his fellow, who is a Jew like him. The other inhabitants of the country (Palestinians) being considered “foreigners” or citizens of second class, as it is the case -still today- in Israel: “You will not go about slandering your own family, nor will you put your neighbour’s (Jewish) life in jeopardy. You will not harbour hatred for your brother (Jewish)... You will not exact vengeance on, or bear any sort of grudge against, the members of **your race**, but will love your neighbour as yourself” (Lv 19,16-18). This “fellow one” is the Jew; the none-Jewish (Palestinians and other “goyims”) are considered strangers not to be loved.

There is however only one verse in favour of the foreigner: “If you have resident aliens in your country, you will not molest them. You will treat resident aliens as though they were native-born and love them as yourself...” (Lv 19,33-34). It is necessary to underline that the foreigner in question is no other than the original inhabitant of the country, expropriated by the Jewish colonists.

The Jewish prophets rose against the chauvinism of their co-religious. They denounced unjustified vexations against the foreigner, proclaiming that true justice was “do not exploit or ill-treat the **stranger**, the orphan, the widow...” (Jr 22,3). Ezekiel even says: “The people of the country have taken to extortion and banditry..., and ill-treated the settler in a way that is unjustifiable” (Ez 22,29). That still applies to modern Israelis who deprive the Palestinians of their elementary rights.

Jesus himself rose against the Israeli injustices: “You have heard how it was said: You will love your neighbour (Jew) and hate your enemy (all the none-Jews; precept mentioned in the talmudic tradition, not in the Bible). But I say this to you: Love your enemies (Palestinians and other none-Jewish people), and pray for those who persecute you (nowadays called

“terrorists”. Love them because they are right, not **you!**...). For if **you** love those who love you, what reward will you get? Do not even the tax collectors do as much? And if you save your greetings for your brothers (Jews), are you doing anything exceptional? Do not even the gentiles do as much?” (Mt 5, 43-47). Christ addresses his words to all the fanatic crowds, but not to His disciples: “But I say this to **you who are listening**: Love your enemies... etc... (Lk 6,27). In fact, those who were listening to Him, were nationalist Jews eager to proclaim Him the political king of Israel (see Jn 6,15). They did not understand His “pacifism” towards the foreigners, those who were not Jewish living in Palestine.

The justice taught by Jesus is found in His sermon on the mountain (Mt 5 - Mt 7). It invites to overcome the discriminatory conception of the scribes: “If your uprightness does not surpass that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven” (Mt 5,20). Jesus binds indissolubly justice and love for the “fellow” neighbour to all none Jewish people without distinction of race, color or creed (Lk 10,27). Jesus gives us an example of who, according to God, is the “fellow”, not in the person of a Levite, nor a Jewish priest, nor a Jew, but in a Samaritan, considered an enemy by the Jews (Lk 10,29-37). He knew well, of course, that “Jews do not associate with Samaritans”, explained St John (Jn 4,9). By this parabola, Jesus confuses and condemns the Jewish chauvinism and tries to rectify what, in the name of the mosaic Law, the scribes and the Pharisees had distorted: “Do not imagine that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish, but to complete them” (Mt 5,17). This completion takes place by opening one’s heart to all men of goodwill, whether they are foreigners or not to one’s people, and rejecting all men of bad will, even if they belong to one’s people.

## 7. To be your God

After four centuries in Egypt, the Jews forgot the One who had appeared to Abraham. Surrounded by the Pharaonic idols and worships, they turned to idolatry. The Messianic plan of God was thus in danger. So, God led the Jews out of Egypt in order to bring them back to Him: “I who brought you out of Egypt, **to be your God, I Yahweh**” (Lv 22,33/25,38).

The Jews selfishly interpreted the expression “**your God**”, as an exclusive possession of God. They believed to be privileged, adulated and to be the only ones chosen by Him. Jealous of this possession, they wanted God just for them. He must not also be the God of other peoples. The divine intention was, instead, to tear the Jews from the idols in order to continue His Messianic plan.

They had received the knowledge of an unique God. They had the mission to let other peoples know Him by revealing the divine plan of sending the Messiah. Instead, after leaving Egypt, they thought to be the only ones called by God. The Messiah came to rectify this deviation, teaching that many will come to God from the four corners of the world, but that the Jews, because of their fanaticism and misbelief in Him, will be rejected by the One who made them leave Egypt: “And I tell you that many will come from east and west and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven; but the children of the kingdom (of Israel) will be thrown out into the darkness outside” (Mt 8,11-12). Jesus, the Messiah, revealed this upsetting fact to His disciples, asking them to proclaim it in their turn. That’s why Peter, after the resurrection of Christ, proclaimed in front of the Jews: “... God, who can read everyone’s heart...giving the Holy Spirit to them (the none Jews) just as he had to us. God made no distinction between them and us” (Ac 15,7-9). “Do you think God is the God only of the Jews, and not of gentiles too? Most certainly of gentiles too...” Paul also revealed (Rm 3,29).

God let the Jews out of Egypt not for the glory of Israel, but in order to be able to send the Messiah who will let the whole world know Him. The prophet Ezekiel exclaimed: “The Lord Yahweh says this: I am acting not for your sake, House of Israel, but for the sake of my holy Name, which you have profaned” (Ez 36,22). God also proclaimed by Isaiah: “Listen to this, House of Jacob, you who are called by the name of Israel...who invoke the God of Israel, though not in good faith or uprightness ... I knew how treacherous you were; you have been called a rebel since the womb. **For the sake of my Name**, I shall defer my anger, for **the sake of my honour** I shall be patient with you, rather than destroy you... For **My sake and My sake only** shall I act, for why should my Name be profaned? **I will not yield my glory to another**” (Is 48,1-11).

If the Jews had remained in Egypt, they would have continued to practise the Egyptian worships and would have forgotten God completely. The universal plan of God, began with Abraham, would not have been achieved to arrive to us. The Messiah could have been sent only through a community that knew God and His Messianic plan. Without this community, the prophecies concerning the Messiah could have never been revealed since there would have been no prophets to whom God could entrust them. A base was needed, even imperfect, to receive the Messiah. God watched over His plan and let the Jewish community out of Egypt. His plan was fulfilled in the Messiah Jesus, not in the Israeli people or State.

The Messiah has already come, 2000 years ago. He has addressed Himself -and He is still addressing Himself today- to the whole world: “Jesus stood and cried out: Let anyone (Jews and others) who is thirsty come to me and drink...He was speaking of the Spirit which those who believed in Him were to receive” (Jn 7,37-39). All those, who are sincerely searching for the Truth, who are at the “crossroads” of the spiritual life, will discover Jesus and receive this divine Spirit. By receiving it, they come to life again and become sons of God (Jn 1,12). This is the first resurrection (Jn 5,25/Rv 20,6), the return of the soul to Life. It is a marvellous experience that is known only by those who try it. We owe to the exit of the Jews from Egypt in the XIII century BC our faith in God and in Christ. God let them out of Egypt to be the God of all believers, to be **our** God and **our** Father... as well as the Father of all the Jews who believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

We must be quite conscious of the existing intimate link between the “Exit” from Egypt and us. The Exodus with Moses is not a simple passage from a country to another, but it is the symbol of the change from a **state of mind** to another, the exit from ignorance to knowledge of God. This knowledge gives life again to our souls by the rediscovery of the eternal life: “Eternal life is this: to know You, the only true God...” (Jn 17,3).

To institute the Eucharist, Jesus chose the feast of the Jewish Easter, which celebrates the “Exit” of Egypt (Mt 26,17). This Bread of eternal Life tears our souls from death: “Anyone who does eat my Flesh and drink my Blood **has** eternal life (in Him)... he lives in Me and I live in that person... he will live forever”, Jesus said (Jn 6,51-58).

Without the exit of Egypt, the plan of God would have failed: we would have had neither the Messiah, nor the Bible, nor the Gospel, nor the Book of Revelation. We would have been unaware of the “first resurrection” which is Heaven found on earth. This is the true Promised Land, not the geographical Palestine, as believe those who have their hearts attached to the matter and to the earth.

With Abraham was accomplished the first step towards the first resurrection. The following step was the exit of Egypt. Then there was the call launched by Jesus, inviting the believers of the whole world to join Him. With the Book of Revelation this promise becomes a living reality, a royal priesthood. We owe our apocalyptic priesthood to the divine initiative to pull the Jews out of Egypt, thus saving us from the spiritual ignorance and from the death of the soul. How to thank Him? By Jesus!

Without this exit of Egypt, what would we be? Worshippers or priests of the gods Ra, Baal, Jupiter, Zeus, Diane or Astarte...!

## Reflection

Do you think we are saved by the faith in Jesus or by the practise of the mosaic Law (circumcision, Sabbath, clean and unclean etc...)?

Do you think that the sacrifice of animals and their offering in holocausts can reconcile the sinner with God?

According to the answers to these questions, one is disciple or enemy of Jesus.

## II. Numbers (Nb)

This book begins with a census of the Jews in order to define their “number”, whence its name. One should not linger over these figures. Initially, only the Levites were not registered (Nb 1,48) to be enrolled to the service of the “Dwelling of Testimony”. This Dwelling is the Tent of Meeting where the sacrifices were offered **in testimony** to the unique God. “Aaron and his sons”, and no other, “will carry out their priestly duty. But any unauthorised person who comes near must be put to death” (Nb 3,10); they made Yahweh say that to safeguard the material rights of the priests, the sons of Aaron...

It is necessary to read this book quickly, then to return to the Biblical Course where the most important points to remember are revealed and explained.

The story of the walk of the Jews in the desert reported here was put in writing approximately three centuries later. As already explained, the scribe-priests highlighted the indisputable role of the worship and of the priesthood of Aaron and his descendents. The community spent forty years in the desert, a sufficient time to organise a worship around the “Dwelling of the Testimony”, considered as their Temple. Inside it was the Ark of the Covenant which contained the two stones of the ten commands. It meant the Presence of God, whence its importance (Nb 10,33-35). It preceded the march of this people as certain modern religious processions are preceded by religious symbols.

The Levites had a role of service in the worship, but priesthood was reserved to Aaron and his sons. This privilege is often repeated in the Torah and the Numbers with insistence. In Nb 3,1-4 Aaron and his sons are designated as **unique priests** in the exclusive Levite tribe, excluding from priesthood all the other tribes. The remainder of the tribe of Levi has only one task to carry out in the worship, that to serve Aaron and his sons: “Muster the tribe of Levi and put it at the disposal of the priest Aaron: they must be at his service etc... (Nb 3,6 etc...). In exchange, “as heritage I give the Levites all the tithes collected in Israel in return for their service” (Nb 18,21). This is a considerable sum of money. However, the tithe of this tithe had to return to Yahweh (Nb 18,26), i.e. to fill the pockets of the Aaron the priest since, the scribes specify, what is offered to God is to be given to the priest: “Thus you too will set a

portion aside for Yahweh out of all the tithes you receive from the Israelites. You will give what you have set aside for Yahweh to the priest Aaron”, requiring moreover that “out of all these things, **you will set aside the best**, the sacred portion ...” (Nb 18,28-29). The first products of the harvest represented the best share.

The scribes wrote these texts ten centuries after Aaron; they were themselves priests, descendents of Aaron. They wanted to safeguard their privileges, they hastened to include verses in their favour, ascribing them to God: “Yahweh spoke to Moses and said: Speak to the Israelites and say: When you have entered the country to which I am bringing you, **you will set a portion aside** for Yahweh (*i.e. for the priests*) when you eat that country’s bread ... You will set one cake aside as the **first fruits** of your dough. **For all future generations** you will set a portion of your dough aside for Yahweh” (Nb 15,17-21). By doing this, the scribe-priests perpetuate their “divine rights” over the descendents of the community.

Let us not believe that God asks to found a priesthood of exploitation of the best of others; again we can see in this point “the lying pen of the scribes” (Jr 8,8). The christian clergies and moslem chiefs fell in the same economic abyss. In the Book of Revelation, God invites His followers to receive “freely” the flood of graces which He pours on those who believe (Rv 21,6/22,17). “You received without charge, give without charge”, Jesus recommended (Mt 10,8/Lk 9,2).

### **1. The putting to death of two sons of Aaron**

The book of the Numbers laconically reports about the death in the Sinai of Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, the first and the second born. The death of these two brothers is ascribed to Yahweh. Indeed, it was a dead sentence: “Nadab and Abihu died in Yahweh’s presence, in the desert of the Sinai, when they offered unauthorised fire before Yahweh” (Nb 3,4). The Leviticus is more explicit: “Aaron’s sons Nadab and Abihu each took his censer... and presented unauthorised fire before Yahweh ... At this a flame leapt out from Yahweh’s presence and swallowed them up and they perished before Yahweh” (Lv 10,1-7).

These two men, Levites and priests, died the day of their sacerdotal nomination (Nb 8,13). The fire which devoured them is no other than the armed arm of Moses and his band. What was their crime? They wanted to offer to Yahweh, in their burning censer containing incense, a fire considered irregular, not as prescribed by Moses. Did they want to make the offer in the place of Aaron? In same way, they had excited the fatal anger of their uncle Moses, who, decreed their putting to dead by “order of Yahweh”, according to his habit. Moses was also irritated later against the two other brothers for a dispute of food: “Why did you not eat this victim for sin in the holy place?... Since its blood was not taken inside the sanctuary, you should have eaten its meat there, **as I ordered you**”. Moses calmed down only after the explanatory and timorous intervention of Aaron (Lv 10,16-20).

The death of his two sons left Aaron terrorised in front of Moses. At the explanations given by his brother “Aaron remained dumb” paralysed by fear because of such an unexpected violence. The shock caused by the execution by surprise of his two sons priests, the very day of a merry ceremony, chilled Aaron and his two other sons. Moses, seeing the anguish seizing his brother and his two nephews, tranquillises them: “Do not disorder your hair or tear your clothes; or you may incur death (like the two others)... To avoid incurring death do not leave the entrance to the Tent of Meeting” (Lv 10,1-7). This happened outside the tent, where there was a popular riot, carried out by Moses, against all those who did not yield to the rigorous

requirements of the worship that he required. Aaron and his two surviving sons were likely to be lynched.

If a flame had devoured Nadab and Abihu, it would have reduced in ashes their sacerdotal tunics. However, “they came and carried them away, still in their tunics, out of the camp, as Moses had said” (Lv 10,5). Actually, the fatal flame can only be the armed anger of Moses. Believing to be charged by Yahweh to organise a worship, he does not tergiversate, imposing a “regular” cult by the force of the sword. Let us not forget that Moses was a violent man, able to kill. Hadn't he already killed an Egyptian before fleeing from Egypt? (Ex 2,11-15). Did he not personally order the Jewish chiefs: “Each of you will put to death those of his people who have committed themselves to the Baal of Peor... Thus the plague which had struck the Israelites was arrested. In the plague twenty-four thousand of them had died” (Nb 25,1-9). Nowadays, politicians are condemned, in the name of the humans rights, for lesser crimes! In addition, the expression “a flame leapt out to devour...” is clarified in Nb 21,28: “For fire has burst from Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon, devouring Ar of Moab”. This “fire” is no other than the battle in which Sihon, the king of the Moabites perished (Nb 21,21-30).

However, the scribes have presented Moses like “ extremely humble, the humblest man on earth” (Nb 12,3). This humility is only by comparison with the externe violence. If such is the legal case of “the humblest of the men”, what would have been that of the more violent one? What would be the degree of softness and humility of Jesus of Nazareth? He was right to say about John the Baptist: “Of all the children born to women, there has never been anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he” (Mt 11,11). The violence of Moses places him very far compared to John.

## **2. Revolt of Miriam and Aaron against Moses**

“Miriam and Aaron criticised Moses because of the Cushite woman he had married... They said: “Is Moses the only one through whom Yahweh has spoken? Has he not spoken through us too?!...” (Nb 12,1-3). The irritation of Miriam and Aaron against their brother cannot be explained only by the marriage with a none Jewish woman. They claim to be also interlocutors of God. And this claim is legitimate. It should be understood that Moses has assumed the exclusive right to speak with God and to listen to Him. From this point of view, it was necessary to accomplish all that Moses requested and the way he asked. Otherwise there was the putting to death decreed by God. Thus, in the name of Yahweh, an atmosphere of terror had been established. This is why, taken by fear, Aaron does not know how to hide from Moses, begging his pity for himself and his two remaining sons (Nb 12,4-15).

## **3. The Rebellion of Korah**

The irascibility of Moses is still noticed in the revolt of the clan of a Levite, Korah. The excessive material privileges granted by Moses (not by God) to his brother Aaron and to his nephews created much discontent as they did not represent God's will, but a human lucre. The Levites themselves felt frustrated because they had to give to Aaron and his sons “the best portion” of the tithes they took. Also the other tribes felt negatively the effect of this abuse, made under the cover of God's name. From that the revolt of Korah, the Levite of noble birth, to whom two princes of the house of Ruben, Eliab and Abiram and much of others had associated. Revolted by the devouring appetite of the priests, “they rebelled against Moses with two hundred and fifty Israelites, who were **leaders** of the community... (who thus represented all the community). They banded together against Moses and Aaron and said to them: “You take too much on yourselves! The whole community, all its members, are

consecrated, and Yahweh lives among them. Why set yourselves higher than Yahweh's community?" (Nb 16,1-3). They were right!

In front of this revolt, Moses chose to dialogue separately with Korah initially, then with Dathan and Abiram. They refused with contempt to present themselves to Moses, causing his "rage" (Nb 16,12-15). Moses reproached Korah not to be satisfied with the privileges of the Levites, and to "want to be priests as well"(Nb 16,8-10).

The scribes pretend that the ground opened miraculously to swallow the revolted and that a "fire then shot out from Yahweh and consumed the two hundred and fifty men offering incense" who accompanied them (Nb 16,28-35). This "fire" is the same one that had already killed Aaron's two sons: they were killed by Moses and his men.

Why did the scribes bring back similar stories? It is because, writing three centuries later and being themselves priests, descendants of Aaron, they were jealously keen on their prerogatives. They had reported these events as "they are a reminder to the Israelites that **no unauthorised person, no one not of Aaron's line**, may approach and offer incense before Yahweh, on pain of suffering the fate of Korah and his party, as Yahweh had said through Moses" (Nb 17,5).

I do not believe in the historical reality of this history. I do not believe that the ground opened to swallow Korah and "his band" to which I belong spiritually. Because I believe, like Korah, that "the priests have taken too much on themselves! The whole community, all its members, are consecrated", that Our celestial Father is in the middle of us, that we live the Emmanuel and that we may all practise the apocalyptic priesthood desired by God and His Messiah, Jesus.

The truth is that Moses and his armed band wanted the death of Korah and his men. The "ground which opened" to swallow these latter and the "flame" which had consumed both sons of Aaron were only the bloody swords of Moses' mafia. This provoked the reaction of the community against Moses and Aaron after this butchery: "On the following day, the whole community of Israelites were muttering against Moses and Aaron, and saying: "**You are responsible for killing** Yahweh's people ..." (Nb 17,6)

One must be mentally weak to believe indistinctly in all that the scribe-priests in the historical books of the Old testament wrote. The prophets showed this mental deficiency while saying on behalf of God: "Israel does not know, my people do not understand...etc..." (Is 1,3). And Jeremiah: "This is because my people are stupid, they do not know me, they are slow-witted children, they have no understanding, they are clever enough at doing wrong, but do not know how to do right" (Jr 4,22).

These serious faults of the Jewish "priests" deformed the true Face of God, making it unrecognisable by men. The knowledge of the true divine character would have been impossible without Jesus. If the Jews, as the prophets revealed, were unable to know God, on the other hand, Jesus was quite conscious to have really known Him: "Father, Upright One, the world has not known you, but I have known you", Jesus had said, adding: "I have made your Name known to them and will continue to make it known" (Jn 17,25-26). Jesus had revealed the true Face of God, His true "Name".

If we have well understood this essential point of the spiritual life, the principal concern will be to pray, like Jesus taught us, so that in us "the name of God is sanctified", that is to say that

we know God and that we make Him known as He really is, not as some present Him. Because the eternal life is to know God: “Eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (Jn 17,3). This is why the first prayer taught by Jesus was as follows: “Father... your Name be sanctified”. Our mission is to sanctify this holy, this marvellous Name of Our divine Creator and Father.

#### **4. Some other important points**

##### **a. Gift of the Spirit (Nb 11)**

Seeing the bewilderment of the Israelites in the desert, Moses got discouraged. He thought that his mission was too heavy. He then addressed to God: “Why do you treat your servant so badly? In what respect I have failed to win your favour, for you to lay the burden of all these people on me?” (Nb 11,10-11). The Lord asked him to choose 70 among the elderly of Israel and some scribes to whom He will give His Spirit, to help him in his task. After having gathered them, “When the Spirit came on them they prophesied - but only once” (Nb 11,24-25). Why didn't they prophesy again? Probably because Moses decided later to be the only one to prophesy, that is to say the only one to control in the name of God. To prophesy mean to speak in the name of God, being his spokesman, to reveal the divine opinion about the events. That can not be done without a direct assistance of God. This is why God gives His Spirit to the ones He chooses for a mission.

It should be noted that two men, Eldad and Medad, prophesied independently of the 70 joined together around Moses. Joshua, the servant of Moses, wanted to prevent them, but Moses retained him saying: “If only all Yahweh’s people were prophets, and Yahweh had given them his spirit” (Nb 11,26-29). This did not prevent Moses from being angry against Aaron and Korah for saying that God had spoken to them. The attitude of Joshua is similar to that of John in the Gospel: “John said to him: ‘Master, we saw someone who is not of us driving out devils in your name, and because he was not one of us we tried to stop him’...But Jesus said: ‘You must not stop him; no one who works a miracle in my name could soon afterwards speak evil of me. Anyone who is not against us is for us’” (Mk 9,38-40). This example of the gift of the Spirit apart from a traditional framework illustrates the words of Jesus to Nicodemus: “The wind blows where it pleases; you can hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is of everyone who is born of the Spirit” (Jn 3,8).

The Spirit of God often spoke to Moses. This is undeniable! But it is true that Moses often take personal decisions believing them to be inspired by God. Furthermore, to distinguish in the books of the Old Testament, between what is inspired by God and what comes from Moses, it is necessary to have recourse to the lights that Jesus has given us in the Gospel.

##### **b. Joshua**

The first mention of Joshua is in Ex 17,9: “Moses said to Joshua, ‘pick some men and tomorrow morning go out and engage Amalek’”. He was the only one to go up with Moses on the mount Sinai (Ex 24,13). He served him faithfully, being attached to the worship and the Tent (Ex 33,11). The book of Numbers mentions him for the first time when he wanted to prevent the two men, Eldad and Medad from prophesying (Nb 11,26-29). This fact reveals his great jealousy for Moses. He belonged to the twelve men sent by Moses to explore the Country of Canaan: He is that “Hoshea, son of Nun, from the tribe of Ephraim” (Nb 13,8),

whose name Moses changed into Joshua (Nb 13,16). Moses designated him as his successor (Nb 27,15-23). The book of Joshua, the first book after the Pentateuch (the 5 first Books of the Bible), bears his name and reports how he introduced the Jews in Canaan.

### **c. Reconnaissance mission in Canaan**

Moses sent twelve spies in Canaan, one from each tribe to explore the ground and to probe the population in order to invade the country. Joshua was one of them. They started from Kadesh, a name to remember. On return from their expedition after forty days, the spies reported that the country of Canaan was civilised and strengthened: “It does indeed flow with milk and honey; here is what it produces”. They had brought back with them samples of grapes, pomegranates and figs. The bunches of grapes were so big that “two men had to carry them away on a pole...” (Nb 13,23). There was a major disadvantage: “At the same time its inhabitants are a powerful people; the towns are fortified and very big...” (Nb 13,28). That had frightened the ten spies, who advised to give up the invasion: “We cannot attack these people; they are stronger than we are...all the people we saw there were of enormous size... we felt like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them” (Nb 13,31-33). Only Joshua and Caleb had opposite opinions.

The people submitted to the opinion of the majority of the spies (Nb 14,1-4) and prepared, in spite of the encouragements of Joshua and Caleb, to stone Moses and his clan: “The whole community was talking of stoning them” (Nb 14,10). On the contrary, Moses ended up by putting them to death: “The men whom Moses had sent to reconnoitre the country and who, on their return, had incited the whole community of Israel to mutter about him by disparaging it, these men who had disparaged the country were all struck dead before Yahweh...only Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh were left alive” (Nb 14,36-38).

Palestine has thus never been a desert as some claim. Since millennia, it did not cease to be civilised and planted of all kinds of fruit trees. Claiming to transform the “Palestinian desert” into the “Israeli garden” is a lie that seduces only the ignorants.

In front of the power of the Canaanites, only Joshua and Caleb wanted to enter the country. Later even the Israelites decided to enter there, but it was too late, God being no more with them: “The Amalekites and Canaanites defeated them and harried them all the way to Hormah” (Nb 14,45). The moral of this story: one should never hesitate to act when it is the hour of God, and one should always abstain from undertaking an action, even if seemingly good, when it is accomplished without God. This is why Moses had advised to give up the project (Nb 14,41-42). According to the scribes, they were defeated because “neither the Arch of the Covenant of Yahweh nor Moses left the camp with them” (Nb 14,44).

Being unable to enter through Kadesh, by the most direct road, the Israelites had to go round the territory of Edom. The King of Edom, fearing to let pass such a great number, refused them the passage (Nb 20,14-21). They thus gave up this short cut and went down towards the south, then turned up to the north towards Moab, an immense, difficult and dangerous way that took 38 years to cross it. Many did not enter Palestine, even Moses and Aaron did not see it (Nb 14,29-38).

### **d. Various precepts about the worship**

The report of the stay in Kadesh is stopped by a series of precepts pertaining to worship. They are described in chapters 15-19. I point out the most important:

## **Sabbath**

Any work is forbidden on Sabbath. A man collected wood during the Sabbath and that was regarded as a violation of the “divine” law of the Sabbath. The man was put to death “as Yahweh had ordered Moses” (Nb 15,36). Such a rigid attitude does not correspond to the spirit of God. Compare that with the attitude of Jesus in front of the Pharisees who criticised the Apostles to have torn off ears of corn on Saturday (Mt 12,1-8).

## **The tassels**

Moses claims that God requires “for all generations to come, to put tassels on the hems of their clothes and work a violet thread into the tassel at the hem...” (Nb15,37). These **ridiculous** “religious” fashions were followed by the Christians, in particular in the Catholic Church (cardinals and bishops). Jesus condemns these habits about clothing (Mt 23,5) and insists on faith and simplicity, not on clothing.

## **The red heifer**

According to a disposition of the Law prescribed by Yahweh, ashes of a red heifer mixed with water by the priests, is able to purify (Nb 19,1-10). Ashes “will be kept for the ritual use of the Israelite community for making **water for purification**; it is a sacrifice for sin (Nb 19,9). Once again a pagan rite which passes, with its superstitions, into the Jewish worship. The moral purification by water is a practise known in the ancient religions. Its correspondent nowadays are the “blessed water” for the Christians, the ablutions for the Moslems, the river of Gange for Hindus etc...

It is clear that this “purification” is illusory, being material and soiled by sorcery and pagan superstition. Think of the religious importance given to the “white” cow in India (the colour of the cow differs, but not the spirit of the worship). The difference is that the scribes ascribed this worship to...Yahweh! The real reason is that it suits the priests, because one paid a lot to be purified by a “red” cow, not easy to find. Lately some Jews announced with joy that the Messianic time is near, because they have found in Spain a red heifer which, finally, corresponds to the requirements of the Torah...!

To know about the **spiritual** purification through repentance, a new evolutionary stage was needed. Jesus, at the price of His sacrifice, teaches us to purify ourselves by the sacrifice of our evil thoughts and the request for forgiveness, not by an illusory external worship. It is God who forgives and purifies the repented heart.

## **The water drawn from the rock**

As water and food ran out, once again the community revolted against Moses. They regretted to have left Egypt for a deserted place (Nb 20,1-5). God thus said to Moses: “Take the Branch (that of Aaron, supposed to have flowered instead of that of Korah at the time of the revolt of the latter against Moses: Nb 17,21-26), and **call the community together**, you and your brother Aaron. Then, in full view of them, order this rock to release its water... Moses and Aaron then called the assembly together in front of the rock... Moses then raised his hand and struck the rock twice with the branch; water gushed out in abundance, and the community and their livestock drank” (Nb 20,6-11). The place of this **gathering** is disputed as we will see further: was this around a rock or a well?

After this miracle, God was irritated against Moses and Aaron: “Because you did not believe that I could assert my holiness before the Israelites’ eyes (to manifest my Almightyness), you

will not lead this assembly into the country which I am giving them” (Nb 20,11-12). Indeed, it was Joshua to lead them into Palestine (Nb 27,12-22). What was Moses’ and Aaron’s fault? Why this divine wrath against them? It is not easy to understand such a reaction by God after a miracle. Moses struck the rock twice. Should he have struck it **only once**, with confidence, not a second time after having hesitated. Shouldn't he, to whom God had spoken, have acted with conviction and force knowing that God “could assert His holiness” in front of all?

The answer is in the place where the gathering for drinking water was to be held: was this really around a rock as the scribes claim in Nb 20,1-13 to make believe in the miracle? This place is contradicted in Nb 21,16-18 revealing that the gathering was done around a well: “... from there they went to Beer (name of a place meaning “a well”)...**being the well** in connection with which Yahweh had said to Moses: ‘Call the people together and I will give them water’. Then it was that Israel sang this song: Spring up, well! Sing out for the well, sunk by the princes” (Nb 21,16-18). In Hebrew, as in Arabic, the word “beer” means “a well”. This place thus draws its name from the well which is there.

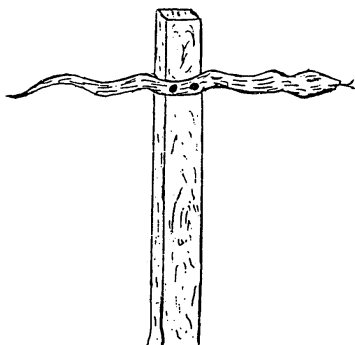
Thus, “the gathering” for drinking was done not around a rock, but quite simply around a well. In addition, by drinking the water of the well, Moses did not respect his commitment “not to drink the water of the wells” of the areas which the community would have crossed (Nb 20,17/21,22).

The reason for the anger of God against Moses and Aaron wouldn't it rather be their extreme violence and the institution of an intransigent worship, copied on paganism, never prescribed by God. And this being done in His name!

### Death of Aaron (Nb 20,14-21)

We saw that Edomites prevented the Jews from crossing their territory. Thus they had to take the long and painful road southward. Aaron died on the way on the mountain “Hor”. His son Eleazar succeeded to him as high priest.

### The bronze serpent (Nb 21,4-9)



Built up at the request of God, this bronze snake was hung **horizontally** on a **vertical** pole, thus forming a cross. Those bitten by snakes in the desert, who would have looked at this bronze snake with faith, would have been physically healed, forgiven to have revolted against God.

This cross prefigures another more important one, whose power of healing is of a spiritual, not a material, an eternal not a temporal level. The cross formed by the bronze snake on the vertical pole announces the crucifixion of Christ and the healing of those who believe in Him. Jesus took this story, ascribing to His crucifixion the same vivifying values, this time on the hearts. The bronze snake in cross symbolised His passion: “As Moses lifted up the (bronze) snake in the desert, so must the Son of man (Christ) be lifted up (on the cross) so that everyone who believes may have **eternal** life in him”, Jesus had said (Jn 3,14).

This bronze snake was venerated by the Jews for a long time, so much so that they even adored it. This is why, 600 years later, king Hezekiah destroyed it (2 K 18,4).

### **The rite of “Urim and Tummim” (Nb 27,21: see also Ex 28,30)**

Urim and Tummim were two stones or two dices which the high priest carried to consult God about a problem; the priest threw the Urim and Tummim and, according to the position after their fall or the inscriptions which they carried, the high priest interpreted “yes” or “no” the divine answer to the question. It is a bad system to consult God that often gives disastrous results.

### **Yahweh’s food destined to the priests**

Chapter 28 repeats some rules of the mosaic law. Concerning sacrifices, “God” said to the people: “Take care to bring me my offering, **my sustenance** in the form of food burnt...” (Nb 28, 1-2). All this food “offered to Yahweh” came laid on the tables of the priests and the Levites who wrote these texts (read 1S 2,12-17). It was thus convenient for the priests, for the scribes and for the Levites to have the greatest number of sacrifices to be offered to... Yahweh... a food they consumed themselves, in the name of Yahweh!

### **5. Balaam and his prophecies on the Messiah (Nb 22-24)**

The most important text in the Numbers is that of the prophecies of Balaam on the Messiah, a none Jewish soothsayer.

To enter Palestine, the Israelites had to pass by the country of Moab (the current Jordan). Balak, the Moabite king, wanted to prevent them with force. He called upon Balaam, a wizard of the area. He asked him to cast a bad fate to the Israelis, to curse them so that he could overcome them easily: “The elders of Moab and the elders of Midian set out (towards Balaam) taking fees for the divination with them (for the curse against the Jews)” (Nb 22, 7).

God prevented Balaam from cursing them :“There is no omen whatever against Jacob, no augury at all against Israel” (Nb 23,23). Why? Because, Balaam the soothsayer explained “A **hero** arises from their stock, he reigns over countless people...(Nb 24,7)... I see him - but not in the present. I perceive him – but not close at hand: a **Star** is emerging from Jacob, a sceptre is rising from Israel... (Nb 24,17)”.

The only reason why these people were then protected by God was that the Messiah will come from them. He is this “Hero” who comes from their descent and this “Star” that Balaam sees not in the present “not close at hand”. Indeed, Jesus will come 13 centuries later. He is “the Star of the morning” as names Him the Revelation (Rv 2,28 / 22,16). It is clear here that the only vocation of the Jews was the arrival of the Messiah. Today, after the Advent of this Messiah in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, any Jew who denies Him cannot claim anymore a divine blessing, neither does any man who turns his back on this Star-Hero.

Balaam is a figure to be remembered because, unable to curse the Jews, he pushed them to the prostitutes of Moab in order to arise the divine anger against them (Nb 25,1-3). Notice that the Moabite and Madianite women are both accused by the Jews (Nb 25,6-16), but Balaam was the first responsible in this case of Shittim. This is why the Israelites killed him later (Nb 31,8). The Book of Revelation also mentions Balaam comparing the irreligious people of the end of time with this “Balaam who taught Balak to set a trap for the Israelites so that they committed adultery”, thus deserving the divine anger (Rv 2,14). These irreligious people are

the subjects of the apocalyptic “Beast, whose subjects corrupt the disciples of Christ to move them away from God, as Balaam did (read the book “Protocols of Wise of Sion”).

## **6. Borders of Israel**

The book of the Numbers ends with the Israelites at the doors of Palestine, in the East of the Jordan at the Nébo Mount in front of the Palestinian town of Jericho (Ariha). Moses died there (Dt 34,1-5).

According to the scribes, the borders given to the Jews - again by God - , start from the Sinai to the town of Hamat, in the North of Syria (34,8), and stop in the East at the Jordan river and the Dead Sea (34,12).

These borders are imaginary and don't depend on God, but on the changeable ambitions of the Israeli scribes who, according to their more or less voracious appetites, sometimes place the borders from the Sinai to the Jordan, as it is the case here, sometimes from the Nile to the Euphrates, as indicated in Joshua 1,3-4. If God had fixed the borders to the Israelites, they would not have varied from one scribe to another, they would have been stable, well defined and - above all - historically permanent.

The modern Israelites are not very satisfied with the country that “God” gave them, described by Moses as being the country where “runs milk and honey” (Ex 3,8/Nb 13,27). Formerly, in the desert, the Jews already regretted “good fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onion and garlic” which they ate “free” in Egypt (Nb 11,5-6). In 1977, the late Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meïr said: “Israel will never forgive to Moses his improvidence: he led the Jews out of Egypt and struck the rock to refresh them: but he made them walk during 40 years in the desert to establish them in the only area deprived of oil”.

## **III. The book of Deuteronomy (Dt)**

### **1. Meaning of the word**

This word comes from the Greek “deftero” which means “again”, “once more” or “a second time”, and “noma” which means “law”. Deuteronomy thus means “Second Law” or “the Law a second time”. This book is so named, because it is a recapitulation of the four preceding books of the Law. It is a collection, a summary or a synthesis of the Torah.

### **2. When and by whom was it written?**

The Deuteronomy was written eight centuries BC, approximately 200 years after the four books which precede it, and at least 400 years after the entry of the Jews in Palestine. It was written by a group of scribes and priests in order to gather, in just one volume, the main part of Moses' teachings. They added to it what they would have wanted him to prescribe in their favour. To give more weight to the precepts therein, the authors make Moses himself speak. The successive speeches constitute his moral will. Apart from the laws and the ordinances, the Deuteronomy contains the accounts of the principal events which took place in the desert.

The drafting of the book was made after the institution of the Israeli Kingdom. Its goal is to avoid in the future the faults already made in the past: “If, having reached the country given by Yahweh your God and having taken possession of it and, while living there, you think: ‘I should like to appoint a king to rule me like all the surrounding nations’,... Nor must he (this

king) keep on acquiring more and more wives (like David and Solomon had already done),... Nor must he acquire vast quantities of silver and gold. Once seated on his royal throne, and for his own use, he must write a copy of this Law (Dt) on a scroll, at the dictation of the levitical priests...he must read it every day of his life..." (Dt 17,14-20). Note the importance of the priests in the biblical drafting. This text has to be compared to that of 1S 8,5-19 where the Jews, when there was no kingdom eleven centuries BC, had asked Samuel for a king: "Give us a king to judge us like the other nations". Elsewhere, in 1K 10,14-18 and 1K 11,1-8, we find mentioned the gold, the horses and the numerous women of Solomon. The Deuteronomy aims at avoiding the recurrence of similar abuses in the future. An entire volume has been written to remind everyone, especially the kings, their duties towards God: "Hence, grasp this today and meditate on it carefully: Yahweh is the true God, in heaven above as on earth beneath, he and no other. Keep his laws and commandments as I give them to you today..." (Dt 4,39-40).

The Deuteronomy was neglected a long time after its drafting. It was found hidden and neglected in the Temple under king Josiah in 622 BC. This is "the Book of the Law found in the Temple of Yahweh" (2K 22,8) and the "book of Moses", which Ne13,1-3 refers to.

To give more weight to their words, the scribes Levites endeavoured – manifestly- to give the impression that Moses himself had written and entrusted it to the Levites: "When Moses had **completely finished** writing the words of this Law in a book, he gave this command to the Levites...:'Take the book of this Law... etc..'" (Dt 31,24-26).

The text of the Deuteronomy demonstrates that its author was not Moses. He cannot be the author of the final chapter which deals with his death and his burial (Dt 34). He would not have written: "These are the words which Moses addressed..." (Dt 1,1), but: "These are the words which I addressed...", nor "Moses then set aside three towns in the east" (Dt 4,41), but "I then set aside three towns...". All indicates that the priests and the scribes committed themselves busily to write the Deuteronomy under the monarchical regime in Israel, before the Babylonian invasion of 586 BC. Andre Chouraqui, author of the French Bible which bears his name, in his introduction to Deuteronomy recognises that "indices prevent from seeing in this book the work of the great Legislator (Moses)".

Now it is necessary to read the entire Deuteronomy, then to return to the explanation of the important points in the continuation of the Biblical Course.

### 3. Dispossession

The duty to dispossess the nations often returns in the Deuteronomy. The Jews were pushed by Moses, not by God, to drive the occupants out of Canaan and to seize their goods in the name of God who is: "**Dispossessing** for you nations who were larger and stronger than you, to make way for you and to give you their country as your heritage" (Dt 4,38).

- "Listen, Israel; here today you are about to cross the Jordan, to go and **dispossess** nations greater and stronger than yourself" (Dt 9,1).

- "When Yahweh has brought you into the country which He swore to your ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that he would give you, with great and prosperous cities you have not build, with houses full of good things you have not provided, with the wells you have not dug, with the vineyards and olive trees you have not planted, and then, when you have eaten as much as you want, be careful you don't forget Yahweh" (Dt 6,10-12).

One is impressed by the number of times the order to dispossess and to ransack the other nations is repeated ... in the name of God! In only one verse, this duty of dispossession is repeated twice: “When Yahweh your God has annihilated the nations confronting you, whom you are **going to dispossess**, and when you **have dispossessed** them and make your home in their country...” (Dt 12,29).

But to dispossess was not enough: “When you advance on a town to attack it, first offer it peace-terms (!!). If it accepts these and opens its gates to you, all the people inside will owe you forced labour and work for you (!!). But if it refuses peace and gives battle, you must besiege it. Yahweh your God having handed it over to you, you will put the whole male population to the sword. But the women, children, livestock, and whatever the town contains by way of spoil, you may take for yourselves as booty. You will feed on the spoils of the enemies... But as regards the towns of those peoples whom Yahweh your God is giving you as your heritage, you must not spare the life of any living thing” (Dt 20,10-16). Dispossession, vandalism and crimes in the name of God. The list of the texts to compare is very long. This is what profanes the holy Name of God.

However the Ten Commands contain three clear precepts: “You shall not kill. You shall not steal. You shall not set your heart on your neighbour’s house. You shall not set your heart on your neighbour’s spouse, or servant, man or woman, or ox, or donkey, or any of your neighbour’s possession” (Ex 20,13-17). To avoid these commands, the scribes and the priests have subtly interpreted the meaning of the word “neighbour”. For the Jews, the neighbour is the Jew. These commands were valid only among Jews themselves. The goyim were the enemies whom He has recommended to spoil, even to kill. That did not prevent Moses from ordering the putting to death of his own nephews and of a great number of Jews. The Samaritans themselves were regarded as enemies. The Pharisees, to insult Jesus, treated him like a Samaritan: “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and possessed by a devil?” (Jn 8,48). “Jews, of course, do not associate with Samaritans”, John wrote (Jn 4,9). Jesus corrected the interpretation of these commands by designating a Samaritan, a traditional enemy of the Jews, as an example of love for the neighbour (Lk 10,29-37). Furthermore Jesus praised a Roman Centurion, a Pagan, but blamed the Jews: “When Jesus heard this he was astonished and said to those (*Jews*) following him, ‘In truth I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found faith as great as this. And I tell you that many will come from east and west and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the kingdom of Heaven; but the children of the kingdom (of Israel, the Zionist Jews) will be thrown out into the darkness outside, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth” (Mt 8,10-13). That is why Jesus has invited the Jews to love **their enemies** and to stop reserving their salvation only to **their brothers**: “Love your enemies... For if you love those (*Jews like you*) who love you, what reward will you get?” (Mt.5, 42-48).

This insistence on the dispossession and on the homicide clarifies, without any doubt, the reason for which Jesus told those who denied him: “You are from your father, the devil, and you prefer to do what your father wants. He was a **murderer** from the start” (Jn 8,44). These orders given by Moses have attracted the divine anger against him. After having led the Jews out of Egypt, he wanted to possess the nations from the Sinai to Lebanon and beyond. He admitted before the community “to have pleaded with Yahweh: My Lord Yahweh,... may I not go across and see this fine country on the other side of the Jordan, that fine upland country and the Lebanon? But, because of you”, he reproached the people, “Yahweh was angry with me and would not listen: ‘Enough!’, he said, ‘Do not mention this subject again!’” (Dt 3,23).

The sharp anger of God was not due to the people, as Moses thought. The Lord aimed at limiting Moses' great appetite of possession (Dt 4,21).

While criticising Moses' behaviour, should we take into account certain extenuating circumstances: the mentality and the habits of the time, the difficulty of the mission, the hardness of the people...?!

#### 4. Overloads

Moses has confessed that God has added nothing to the words of the ten Commands: "These were the words Yahweh spoke to you when you were all assembled on the mountain...**He added nothing**, but wrote them on two tables of stone which he gave to me" (Dt 5,22). Moses also prescribed: "You must add nothing to what I command you, and take nothing from it" (Dt 4,2). However, a lot of ritual and worship have been added in favour of the material well-being of the priests. Where do they come from? From "the lying pen" of the scribes (Jr 8,8). Today we are able to detect these impurities and to exorcise the Torah thanks to the words of Jesus.

#### 5. The "small remainder"

In Dt 4,25-31, Moses has prophesied the spiritual treason of the Jews: "Only a small number of you will remain" (Dt 4,27). After a long time, there is only a "small number", a "small remainder", who remains faithful to God and to His Messiah, who succeeds in the test of the faith. Indeed, only a small minority of the Jewish community has recognised Jesus as the announced Messiah, and only a small minority recognises the Antichrist today: "Somebody said to him: 'Sir, will there be only a few saved?' He said to them: 'Many will try to enter and will not succeed'" (Lk 13,23-24). Jesus also said on this subject: "Then you will be handed over to be tortured and put to death...And many will fall away; people will betray one another... love in most people will grow cold; but anyone who stands firm to the end will be saved" (Mt 24,9-13). Jesus still asked: "But when the Son of man comes, will he find any faith on earth?" (Lk 18,8). He will only find it in the hearts of a very small remainder who will inflame the world with the divine love.

#### 6. The "nation" of Israel

Dt 4,34 presents Israel like a **nation** chosen by God: "Has it ever been known before that any god took action himself to bring one **nation** out of another one... all of which things Yahweh your God has done **for you** before your eyes in Egypt". There are two errors in this declaration: it is false to claim that God chose a nation; the divine choice has been fixed on a man, Abraham. It is still false to say to the Jews: "...all things that **for you** Yahweh has done". We have seen that God had acted to achieve His Messianic plan in favour of **all men**, not exclusively for the glory of the Jewish community.

#### 7. Circumcision of the heart

We find in Deuteronomy an evolution of the comprehension of the circumcision according to the spirit, not according to the letter. For the first time, it is a matter of the circumcision **of the heart** in Dt 10,16: "Circumcise your heart then and be obstinate no longer". The prophet Jeremiah few centuries later stresses again on this spiritual circumcision by saying: "Circumcise yourselves for Yahweh, apply circumcision **to your hearts**" (Jr 4,4).

In spite of that, still nowadays, some people insist on the physical circumcision of the prepuce. This practise has been the cause of great dissensions among the first Apostles of Jesus: “Then some men came down from Judaea and taught the brothers, ‘Unless you have yourselves circumcised in the tradition of Moses you cannot be saved’ (Ac 15,1). The true circumcision is that of the heart, as Paul points out : “The real Jew is the one who is inwardly a Jew, and real circumcision is in the heart, a thing not of the letter but of the spirit” (Rm 2,29).

## 8. Choice between blessing and curse

To the Israelites blessings had been offered if they would have been faithful, and curses if they would have been unfaithful: “Today, look, I am offering you a blessing and a curse ...” (Dt 11,26-30). The blessing has been placed on the Garizim mount, in Samaria, and the curse has been placed opposite on the Ebal mount (Dt 11,29). The Garizim mount, being the place of the blessings, has been selected as sanctuary and place of worship by the Samaritans. It is in the same place still today. The Jews, instead, practised their worship in the Temple of Jerusalem (read the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan in Jn 4,20-24 : The worship God agrees is in “spirit and truth” said Jesus).

## 9. Moses announces the Messiah

The most important subject in this book is Moses’ announcement of the Prophet-Messiah: “From among yourselves, from among your own brothers, Yahweh your God will raise up a prophet like me; you will listen to him”. Moses added: “Then Yahweh said to me, ‘What they have said is well said. From their own brothers I shall raise up a **prophet** like yourself, I shall put my words into his mouth and he will tell them everything I command him. Anyone who refuses to listen to my words, spoken by him in my name, will have to render an account to me” (Dt 18,15-19).

It is necessary to remember this important Messianic prophecy to which Jesus refers: “... it was about me that he (Moses) was writing” (Jn 5,46). In the same way, the Apostles themselves referred to this verse: “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets wrote...” (Jn 1,45). When the Pharisees asked John the baptist if he were “the Prophet”, they were referring to this prophecy of Moses (Jn 1,45).

To note that the announced prophet is “similar” to Moses, as great as him. When Jesus came, He proved to be even greater than Moses as Paul reveals it: “He (Jesus) deserves a **greater** glory than Moses, just as the builder of a house is more honoured than the house itself” (He 3,3).

The Messiah announced by Moses comes for the salvation of all those who believe in Him, Jews or not-Jews, and for the judgement of all those who refuse Him (Dt 18,19). Jesus proclaimed: “No one who believes in me will be judged, but whoever does not believe is judged already, because that person does not believe in the Name of God’s only Son” (Jn 3,18).

“Look, today I am offering you life and prosperity, death and disaster” God said in Dt 30,15. Life is found near the Messiah, Jesus. Death is on the side of the Zionist State opposed to the Spirit of God and His Messiah. “No one can be the slave of two master” (Mt 6,24).

## 10. Abraham the Syrian.

The scribes introduced Abraham as a Hebrew: “A survivor came to tell Abraham **the Hebrew...**” (Gn 14,13). Their intention was to make believe that the Hebraic “race” pre-existed the election of Abraham who belonged to it. Thus, by choosing Abraham, all Hebrews are elected in him. Such is their logic, not that of God, nor ours.

That is why Moses asked his community: “In the presence of Yahweh your God, you will then pronounce these words: ‘My father was a wandering **Aramaean**, who went down to Egypt...’” (Dt 26,5). Moses thus recalled to the Jews that their father, Abraham is not of a Hebraic origin but of an Aramaic (i.e Syrian) origin. At the time of Abraham there were no Hebrews. This specification of Moses confuses and denounces the Zionist racism.

## 11. Conditioned divine promise

The faithfulness of the Jews to God was the main and essential condition to possess the Promised Land: “...but only if you follow his ways... but only if you keep all his commandments...” (Dt 26,17-18). However, this condition was not observed: “This people is about to play the harlot by following the gods... They will desert me and break my covenant, which I have made with them”, Yahweh declared to Moses (Dt 31,16).

Moses warned the Jews against unfaithfulness: “For not having obeyed the voice of Yahweh your God... you will be torn from the country which you are about to enter and make your own” (Dt 28,62-68). Jeremiah denounced on his turn the unfaithfulness of the Jews and the breaking of the Covenant with God: “a covenant which **they broke**” said the Lord (Jr 31,32).

Only a “small group” will remain faithful (Dt 28,62) to continue the plan of God by welcoming the Messiah, the initiator of the **New Covenant** announced by the prophets: “I shall make a **New Covenant** with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, but not like the covenant I made with their ancestors...a covenant **which they broke**” (Jr 31,31-32). By his martyrdom Jesus has instituted this New eternal Covenant (Mt 26,28).

The breaking of the first Covenant has taken away from the Israelites of the XXth century any pretext to the possession of Palestine in the name of God. Their unfaithfulness towards the Creator, by their refusal of Jesus, will once again tear them off the country. If they are there today, it is not because of a divine intervention. The Book of Revelation reveals that they are attracted there from “ the four quarters of the earth (by Satan)” (Rv 20,7-9). They are attracted there with the illusion of being the elected people, coming from the four quarters of the world to the Promised Land. Israel has thus become, as Paul revealed, this “power that deludes people so that they believe what is false”, but “ the Lord will destroy him with the breath of his mouth and will annihilate him with his glorious appearance at his Coming” (2 Th 2,8-12).

## 12. Death of Moses

The death of Moses and Aaron outside Palestine is the punishment announced by God (Nb 20,12). The death of the great legislator outside “the Promised Land” means that the practise of the mosaic Law is unable to introduce into the Kingdom of God, since his founder himself could not penetrate in the Promised Land, symbol of Heaven.

## Reflection

The Bible is a gold mine. Like all the gold mines, it contains some impurities mixed with the Treasure it contains. It is necessary to be able to detect these impurities and to separate them from the essential message of the Bible.

The impurities are the precepts and the abominable worships ascribed to God. Those who have prescribed them have profaned “the Holy Name”. These reluctant actions are mentioned abundantly and uniquely in the Old Testament. They have been denounced by the prophets, by Jesus and his Apostles.

In the Old Testament, the gold is the Revelation of the unique God, the fall of man (Adam) and its cause, the divine determination to save humanity, the call of Abraham, the formation of the first monotheistic community, the announcement of the Messiah’s advent by the prophets etc...

In the New Testament, everything is gold. The time has come to purify the biblical gold in the crucible of the apocalyptic message where Jesus Christ says: “I warn you, buy from me gold that has been tested in the fire to make you truly rich...” (Rv 3,18). To purify gold, we must recognise it and separate it from the impurities. One needs to ask for the divine grace and the biblical experience.

## Questionnaire

1. Draw a chart of the area including Egypt, the Sinai, the Dead Sea, the Jordan, the Tiberias Lake then trace the route of the Israelites in the desert of the Sinai. Locate Madian, Kadesh, Edom, Hor, Shittim, Moab, Nebo, Jericho, the Garizim mount.
2. In Dt 33, 8-11 Moses blesses the tribe of Levi. How do you understand this blessing by comparing it with the curse that Jacob proclaimed on Levi (Gn 49, 5-7)?
3. Why was Balaam killed by the Jews (Nb 31, 1-12) and what is he the symbol of?
4. What happened at Kadesh (Nb 13)?
5. What happened at Shittim (Nb 25,1)?
6. Moses and Aaron did not deserve to enter Palestine? What was their guilt?
7. What are Urim and Tummim?
8. Do you think that God has literally inspired all the points of the mosaic law? How do you interpret the verses of Jr 7,22 and 8, 8?
9. Was Abraham Hebrew?
10. Did God want to form a nation with Abraham or to give an universal message?
11. Circumcision of the prepuce or of the heart? Baptism of the body by water or of the heart by biblical knowledge and faith? Are circumcision and Baptism sanctifying or are they only symbols to be overcome?
12. What is the Promised Land? Whom was it promised to?
13. Is the Covenant between God and the Jewish community still valid? Why?