**BS-192???**

**This is MOSHES’ soirée. The ELDERS get to SEE stuff, but they cannot really be “in tune with G\*D” like MOSHE can. G\*D and MOSHE have got a BROMANCE going on here.**

**MOSHE goes to the people and reads to them from the “Book of the Covenant.” I did not even think they had books then! Was there papyrus? Scrolls? Stone tablets? I Pad? Maybe he was reading off his I-phone.**

**You know, just some LIGHT reading.**

**If we are talking reading a rendition of the LAWS, I did not even know they were published yet? Weren’t they in “oral form?” (just saying…)**

**Everyone is hunky-dory, so Moses sprays the people with ANIMAL BLOOD to make everything NICE and OFFICIAL. Talk about the “blood oath of blood oaths.”**

**Blood Oath**

**A “Blood Oath Law” and the “Legal Definition of a blood oath”: Blood oath is a “solemn promise” to keep “an agreement” using each party's “sense of honor or reputation” to “uphold the deal.”**

**In the past, a “blood oath” required that each party make a small cut in the right hand and mix blood as they shook hands. But NO, no MOSHE he gets a super-soaker and SPRAYS it over all the people non-stop, like a kid running in the backyard in the heat of the summer. The people are soaked, super soaked from the top of their heads to the tips of their toes…EWW – it is blood!**

**Here's WHERE things get confusing:**

**MOSHE and the ELDERS go up to see G\*D, and the text is EXPLICIT about THEM “doing it TOGETHER.”**

**Didn't G\*D say that this was “a MOSHE CLUB ONLY? NO ONE ELSE will be permitted in? You will be carded at the door. There will be a cover-charge. And unless you are MOSHE (himself) YOU WILL BE TURNED AWAY AT THE DOOR! EXCLUSIVE, not public! Stirred, NOT SHAKEN!**

**The actual text reads as follows…"Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and THEY SAW the G\*D of Israel.**

**Under his feet there was something like a pavement of SAPPHIRE stone, like the very heaven for clearness." Seems like “some hardcore chilling” to me...**

**THEN, there’s this change: MOSHE puts AARON (not HANK) in charge of the people, goes up to Mount Sinai, and ENTERS “the cloud of G\*D”: "Now the appearance of the GLORY of the Lord was like a DEVOURING FIRE on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. MOSHE entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. MOSHE was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights." This time, it sounds like it is A-MOSHE-ONLY-GATHERING!**

**So why is it written (where MOSHE goes in alone) paired with the other verse (where they all go together to check G\*D out)?**

**Could this be two different texts spliced into one product?**

**YOU CAN’T HAVE IT BOTH WAYS or maybe you CAN!**

**Talk about a letdown.**

**We just saw G\*D totally and completely engulf MOSHE in a CLOUD of DIVINE-STORM-FIRE, and now, what follows is we get this huge section on RITUAL.**

**Whoop-dee-doo-dah. Who wants to hear about ritual? Who cares about ritual anyways? Ritual-smitchual.**

**It is a total BUZZ KILL.**

**I’D BET ANYTHING, there is probably more STUFF on the “cutting room floor” and someone was patching things up “here and there.”**

**WHERE’S THE PROOFREADER? When you need one?**

**WHY would an author go from cool stuff like “FIRE AND BRIMSTONE” to “all-old-legal-jargon” almost immediately?**

**It BREAKS the tension, BORES the casual reader, and is not immensely helpful unless you are A PRIEST.**

**Let me again remind you that much of the “religious stuff here” was written by a P\_i\_s\_t \_. You can be quite sure of it. Especially the boring parts…heehaw**

**So, let us assume that these passages DID NOT COME from THE TIME the Israelites were IN THE DESERT.**

**The whole section's TONE, PURPOSE, and WRITING STYLE are completely different than what comes BEFORE IT—and AFTER IT, for that matter.**

**TONE AND PURPOSE AND WRITING STYLES matter!**

**But even if they weren't STUCK in the desert, how is the “average Israelite-joe” supposed to get all the stuff mentioned here, like GOLD, SILVER, OPALS IRON AND JEWELS?**

**This stuff does not exactly grow on CACTI in the middle of the desert somewhere or even to be found on your” LOCAL ORGANIC ISRAELITE FARMER’S LAND.”**

**The point is that THIS PIECE of text has a DISTINCT PURPOSE from the rest of the Exodus story. It is purposefully written…**

**It was not written BY or FOR an average-joe-or- average-Jayne-worshipper.**

**More likely, it was written by SOMEONE who had a VESTED (get it?) interest in the PRIESTHOOD. Vested, vestry… Think about it: would a doctor write a memo full of “industrial jargon?” Perhaps, but I kind-a-doubt it.**

**Of course NOT.**

**You write WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT, and this passage is NO exception.**

**And WHO wants to read lines and lines and lines of specific instructions for how to MELD gold? Only people who MELD GOLD every day.**

**VESTRY: a room in or a building attached to a church, in which the vestments, and sometimes liturgical objects, are kept; sacristy.**

**(in some churches) a room in or a building attached to a church, used as a chapel, for prayer meetings, for the Sunday school, etc.**

***Episcopal Church*. a committee elected by members of a congregation to serve with the churchwardens in managing the temporal affairs of the church.**

***Church of England*. a meeting attended by all the parishioners or by a committee of parishioners during which the official business of the church is discussed.**

**Tell me again, WHO would have care and concern about a VESTRY?**

**YEP!**

**This section of Exodus was written BY priests, FOR priests, so help me G\*D.**

**But LET’S take a little peakie-Poo it anyway, ok?**

**G\*D gives MOSHE a nice big list of things he will accept as OFFERINGS. AHEM, WHO CARES ABOUT OFFERINGS? Go ahead, and guess?**

**Notice how every one of these things has some association of LUXURY.**

**He also says he is about to give MOSHE directions for building A PLACE TO HOUSE ALL OF THIS STUFF. G\*D needs a “pad,” (no, NOT AN I-PAD) YOU KNOW A CRIB, A PLACE TO LAY HIS WEARY HEAD! AND he is going to tell them HOW TO build it.**

**The Ark of the Covenant**

[**INDY (not 500) just GRAB IT!**](http://www.traileraddict.com/trailer/indiana-jones-and-raiders-of-lost-ark/trailer) **Okay, so HARRISON FORD was not in the Bible, but all those Ark legends come from THIS ONE SPOT, cool right? Yep, right here where God gives the Israelites instructions on HOW “the thing.”**

**Lampshades…No, Lampstands!**

**Ever heard of a** [**menorah**](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/menorah.html)**? Or a candelabra? Or a free-standing chandelier? Yup. That is THIS thing. Check out the image in EXODUS 25:33, where the writer says that the candle-holder's cup should look like "almond blossoms."**

**Not only is that a beautiful image, but it is super naturalistic. The fire on the gold looks just like blossoms on a tree. Aww…**

**Never let anybody tell you differently: these writers had style and lots of it.**

**The Tabernacle's Structure**

**The “Tabernacle” is a little more low-profile in our pop culture than the Ark, and we have no archaeological dirt on the thing. It is a tent, after all. We have a tabernacle behind the altar, have you seen it? If not, you might want to check it out sometime!**

**In a nutshell, the idea of the “Tabernacle” is to make a place for G\*D on earth—it is his home in the desert. It holds the Ark of the Covenant, the Altar of Burnt Offering, and the Altar of Incense.**

**Fancy! Schmancy!**

**G\*D ordains that an altar should be put in the Tabernacle for burnt offerings. And it has horns! Say what?**

**The horns of the altar were first mentioned in Exodus as part of the furnishings of the tabernacle. In**[**Exodus 29**](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Exod%2029)**they were used in the consecration of the priests.** [**Exodus 29:37**](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Exod%2029.37)**describes the altar as "most holy." After giving instructions as to what must be offered on the altar, God said, "There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be sanctified by my glory. I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests. I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God."**

**Basically, the court is just an open area surrounding “the HOLY OBJECTS” inside the Tabernacle. Like the other objects, they have their own special design, makeup, and instructions.**

**The image the writer creates here is beautiful: you enter this nice-smelling tent, and the wind blows the sides of the tent, so the air ripples surround you and the Ark. Pretty nice break from the desert heat and sun!**

**This short section just specifies that only the most "pure oil of beaten olives" should be used for the big candleholder. It is also meant to stay burning day and night (humans like the idea of foreverness).**

**If the ancients knew one thing, it was** [**olive oil**](http://www.globalgourmet.com/food/egg/egg0397/oohistory.html#axzz1zD5P5VUs)**. And Brutus and Popeye!**

**But I wonder, WHO BEAT THEM? What do you do for a living? I am an olive-beater! I beat olives!**

**Makeover Time…for Priests?**

**This section deals with the way an “Aaronite priest” (related to Aaron) should dress and be ordained.**

**It is called the “RITE of ORDINATION,” it is one of the things that sets a priest apart.**

**WE HAD TO HAVE: A sponsoring minister, (mine was CHARLIE BROWN) a red stole, a red Bible, supporting clergy and a Bishop, and of course, the “laying on of hands.” There was a 500-voice choir and rather than being held in a SANCTUARY, it was held at the PERFORMING ARTS CENTER.**

**This was an important process for the priesthood (who do you think is writing this section?) but also for Israelite culture in general. These are their spiritual and political leaders, after all.**

**Think of it in terms of a presidential inauguration, getting a degree, or being promoted. We have manuals, traditions, and books about that stuff and the RITUALS surrounding it, so why shouldn't the Israelites have had the same thing?**

**Here G\*D indicates what he wants for dinner each night. Well, maybe not dinner, but G\*D needs burnt offering every day. It is just PART of the DEAL.**

**G\*D even provides us with a little recipe: "and with the first lamb one-tenth of a measure of CHOICE flour mixed with one-fourth of a HIN of beaten oil, and one-fourth of a HIN of wine for a drink offering." This is all about using materials at your disposal to honor G\*D and the priests. WHEN is the last time you had a HIN of anything? HIN – a Hebrew unit of liquid capacity equal to approximately 5.5 quarts.**

**Even though these are seemingly MINOR regulations about HOW and WHEN to kill an animal, the writer follows up with a dramatic reminder of WHY they do this. G\*D says, "I will dwell among the Israelites, and I will be their G\*D. And they shall know that I am the Lord their G\*D, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them; I am the Lord their G\*D." Cannot get much clearer than that. (Why=G\*D)**

**In this chapter, we get more instructions on HOW TO build the Altar of Incense, a special basin for the PRIESTS to wash in, and recipes on how to prepare special OILS and INCENSES for the Tabernacle.**

**G\*D also demands that a CENSUS be taken of all Israelites. JUST LIKE we are presently going through… MAKE SURE YOU SEND IT IN!**

**Oh, and you have to pay a little "ransom" or tax WHEN you REGISTER: "When you take a CENSUS of the Israelites to register them, AT REGISTRATION all of them shall give a RANSOM for their lives TO THE LORD, so that NO PLAGUE may come upon them for being registered."**

**Somebody did not give their ransom, OBVIOUSLY and as a result COVID-19…and that is a WRAP!**