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Sarah Dille

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# **The Significance of the Hebrew Bible as Christian Scripture: Community and Justice in the World**

**Sarah Dille**

*Assistant Professor of Old Testament  
Waterloo Lutheran Seminary*

The Hebrew Bible is one of Christianity's great resources — a gift to us for the life of faith and for our ongoing reflections on our life of faith. The Hebrew Bible was the scriptural foundation of the first Christians and has continued to speak to Christians throughout the ages.

For the Christian Church today there are particular themes in the Hebrew Bible which may be especially meaningful. I'll sum up my topic today as: "Community and Justice in the World."

This topic actually combines several interrelated themes. The first theme is this: The Hebrew Bible's concept of human identity is essentially based in community. This is often called "corporate identity." This concept is especially relevant as a corrective in response to our enlightenment heritage which sees human identity as essentially the autonomous individual.

The second theme is the Bible's concept of justice - expressed as *mishpat* and *zedakah* — along with the Bible's concept of the failure to achieve justice, which the Bible calls "evil." These justice concepts are essentially based in community and relationship.

The third theme is the affirmation of the world in the Hebrew Bible. The Old Testament concept of redemption or salvation is rooted in this world — the community of faith in this world. Redemption has to do with justice, life, and shalom — in this world. The Hebrew Bible's worldly perspective is especially relevant as theologians of recent decades have called for a shift away from the dominant influence of a Platonic dualism in Christianity — a dualism which has downplayed the significance of God's work in the world in favor of a focus on an eternal or heavenly salvation in a world to come.

I will address these three topics separately. However, it will become clear that these concepts — corporate identity, justice, and the world — are essentially interrelated.

### **Theme #1: Corporate Identity**

In our Western culture we have an understanding of the person as radically individual. Salvation is often understood as a strictly individual affair. Some Christians prefer to speak of Jesus Christ as a personal Lord and Savior. The emphasis is on the individual. I do not reject the notion of myself as an individual, but a counter-voice is clearly needed as well.

One of the great gifts of Hebrew Scripture is its understanding of human identity which is based in the “corporate identity.” Individuals are understood primarily in relationship to those with whom they are in community — whether it be household, clan, tribe, or nation.

Hebrew Bible scholar Joel Kaminsky addresses this in his book *Corporate Responsibility in the Hebrew Bible*.<sup>1</sup> He writes,

Corporate responsibility is an important concept because it is a fundamental theological principle in ancient Israel that God relates not just to autonomous Israelites, but to the nation as a whole. Inasmuch as God relates to the community as a whole, he holds each member of the nation to some level of responsibility for the errors of any other member of that community. Not only is one responsible for one's own proper behavior, but one must also actively prevent others from sinning.<sup>2</sup>

Kaminsky states further, “The oldest strata of Israelite religion appears to affirm the idea that Israelites are corporately responsible for each other” (p.52).

In the Hebrew Bible the corporate identity is identifiable in cases of corporate responsibility for sin. Often it is the actions of the leaders of the nation which are responsibility for the suffering of the whole people. For example, in the Elijah narratives the patronage of the god Baal by King Ahab and Queen Jezebel is responsible for a drought which severely affects the whole nation. Even the widow of Zarephath



who lives beyond the boundaries of Israel is without food for herself and her child because of the drought.

The effects of the sins of the leader can even cross generations. According to the Deuteronomistic historian's exilic editor, writing in 2 Kings, the sinful King Manasseh was responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile which occurred some 55 years after his death. 2 Kings 23 reports:

Still Adonai did not turn from the fierceness of his great wrath, by which his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked him. Adonai said, "I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel; and I will reject this city that I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there" (2 Kings 23:26-27).

The case of Manasseh shows that corporate identity and responsibility not only links leader and nation, but is trans-generational. The people are profoundly affected by their ancestors.

In our Western culture, a product as it is of the individualism of the Enlightenment, we are offended by the idea of holding anyone responsible for the actions and decisions of someone else, someone over whom they have had no control. It offends our sense of justice. My students are invariably offended at Exodus 20:5-6 and Deuteronomy 5:9-10:

You shall not bow down to idols or worship them; for I, Adonai your God, am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

Our discomfort with such a trans-generational corporate identity stems from our tendency to think of this statement in terms of our understanding of justice — we find it unjust that one person be punished for the sins of another.

But the insights of the Hebrew Bible which we can affirm today is that we are indeed affected by the sins of our leaders and of our ancestors. Their actions and decisions profoundly affect us. Our connectedness to our ancestors is clear, in such obvious factors as whether our ancestors decided to immigrate from Europe to North America. But in subtle ways also, we suffer for the sins, or enjoy the benefits, of our ancestors. The study of family systems in recent years confirms the insight that we are not just individuals but products of our families of origin, members of a system. The 1985 book *Dance of Anger*<sup>3</sup> is an excellent study of how important this trans-generational identity is — despite our cultural predisposition to insist that we are free individuals. We repeat the patterns of past generations without even knowing when we are doing so.

In the Hebrew Bible the inheritance of sin is often expressed in terms of retribution. Kaminsky notes,

Trans-generational retribution is a form of corporate retribution in which the guilt of a sinful generation and its consequent punishment are stored for a generation or more and then released against a later generation. [Yet, Kaminsky adds,] It does not exclude the idea that the recipient may also be somewhat deserving of punishment (44).

The connection between past generations and the current generation is not always simply a matter of transferred punishment. Jeremiah 16 — speaking of the Babylonian exile — suggests that trans-generational guilt is more holistic.

When you announce all these words to this people they will say to you, “Why has Adonai spoken all of this great evil against us? What is the iniquity and the sin that we committed against the Lord our God?” You will reply to them, “Because your fathers abandoned me — declares Adonai — and followed after other gods and served them and worshiped them; they abandoned me and did not keep my instruction. And you have acted worse than your fathers, indeed each of

you is going after the stubbornness of his own evil heart and not listening to me. Therefore I will hurl you out of this land to a land that neither you nor your fathers have known and there you will serve other gods day and night; for I will not be merciful to you" (Jer. 16:10-13).

Thus, Jeremiah suggests that one is not simply guilty because of one's "fathers" — but like one's "fathers."

But the link with one's ancestors can also function in a positive way. The ancestors' relationship with God — the covenant — echoes down through the generations. In Exodus 32 Moses appeals to God's promise to the ancestors as he seeks God's forgiveness for the golden calf episode.

Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring evil on your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, "I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever." And Adonai changed his mind about the evil that he planned to bring on his people (Exodus 32:12b-14).

God's covenant, then, was not only with individuals, but was a trans-generational covenant.

The trans-generational identity extends to future generations. The story of the Passover in Egypt — the 10th plague in which the firstborn of Israel are spared from death by putting the blood of the lambs on the doorposts — incorporates future generations.

You shall observe this rite as a perpetual ordinance for you and your children. When you come to the land that Adonai will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this observance. And when your children ask you, "What do you mean by this observance?" you shall say, "It is the Passover sacrifice to Adonai, for he



passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, when he struck down the Egyptians but spared our houses” (Exodus 12:24-27a).

Perhaps this interest in future generations is the significance of the words in the Law concerning the iniquity of the parents being visited upon future generations. It is to remind the people that their actions do affect future generations. It admonishes them to be faithful — if not for themselves, then for their children, and their children’s children.

The idea of trans-generational responsibility which seems so foreign to our culture may give us the language by which to grapple with difficult issues today. In the U.S. there is much resistance to dealing with the community or national wrongs of the past, especially in relation to slavery and to the treatment of native Americans. There is some hostility towards affirmative action and towards the Native American’s separate status in relation to many laws, such as taxation, and hunting rights.

How then do we talk about our complicity by association with the sins of a nation, or of a community? Do I, as a white American, have any responsibility for slavery, when my ancestors were living in Sweden until the 1880’s? Many say “no,” and yet the ramifications of past sins are still oppressing people today. Some ask whether Germans today should feel guilty about the holocaust. But the question is not what we should feel. Rather, it is a question of whether, by virtue of being members of our community, we have some special obligation to address the sins of the past. But as we try to discuss such issues, our Western individualistic concepts of sin, guilt, and responsibility do not give us the conceptual framework we need to sort through these difficult issues.

A culture which regards people primarily as autonomous individuals has difficulty addressing past wrongs. Perhaps the insights of Jeremiah are most helpful — the sins of the ancestors are repeated. Racism did not end when slavery was outlawed. The heritage of guilt continues to be manifested in the national community.

The idea of corporate guilt is indeed an uncomfortable part of this corporate identity. So foreign is this idea to us that the English words “sin” and “guilt” seem to assume the individual by definition. When I’ve attempted to get at the idea of corporate sin with my students, it

becomes clear that for them “sin” must, by definition, involve individual volition and choice.

These words “sin” and “guilt” have come to be defined by our understanding of the person as an individual with choices. We have difficulty understanding what Leviticus says about making atonement for “unintentional sin.” How can it be sin if it is unintentional? Why must one make a “guilt” offering for accidentally touching something unclean? Clearly our English language is unable to translate these Hebrew concepts. We are unable to find a word for something which disrupts a healthy relationship between self and God and between self and community, which takes into account that such a disruption is not always the product of a conscious choice, or even of an individual.

Corporate identity functions within the contemporary community as a whole. For the prophet Amos, the foreseeable exile of Israel was not just as result of the sins of the king — it was related to the sins of ordinary — albeit somewhat wealthy — individuals who failed to practice economic justice. For their sin the whole nation would be exiled. Amos even holds wives responsible for the economic injustice — which was probably in control of the men. He called them “the cows of Bashan who are on Mount Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the need....” The women reaped the benefits of oppression and they would go into exile.

Our responsibility today towards our respective communities and for our respective communities is affirmed in the Hebrew Bible. Because we live in democratic nations we can understand that we have some responsibility for our nations’ governments. Nevertheless we need to be reminded of our communal responsibility and interconnectedness.

The New Testament counters our individualism in particular with Paul’s emphasis on the church as the Body of Christ, and the importance of discerning the body. Even more does the Hebrew Bible provide an understanding of the human being as a member of a community. Salvation is understood in terms of God’s salvation or deliverance for the nation Israel in this world. The Hebrew Bible has no concept of salvation as “going to heaven,” as individual “eternal life.” The fate of the individual is tied up with the fate of the community. It is the community which sustains the individual.

Our communal responsibility goes beyond the fellowship of the



church or being a voting citizen in a democracy. It is played out in the Hebrew concept of justice. This leads to my second point.

## **Theme #2: Justice and Righteousness – Mishpat and Zedakah**

“Let justice - *mishpat* - roll down like waters, and righteousness - *zedakah* - like an ever flowing stream” (Amos 5:24).

While examples of corporate guilt are a bit disturbing to us, we can get a better sense of what the Hebrew notion of the corporate identity has to offer if we focus on the idea of corporate responsibility as expressed in the Hebrew concepts which are translated “justice” and “righteousness” — the nearly synonymous Hebrew terms *mishpat* and *zedakah*. The Hebrew prophets express a concept of community responsibility, integrity, and compassion which is expressed in the words *mishpat* (justice) and *zedakah* (righteousness). These terms often appear together in the prophets. Both concepts are highly relational. Justice and righteousness are not understood essentially as conformity to law, but as faithfulness to community (in Hebrew, *hesed*). Hence, the English term “justice” does not clearly express the Hebrew concept. *The Encyclopaedia Judaica* notes,

Jewish justice is different from the classic philosophic (Greek-Western) view of this concept. In the latter, justice is generally considered under the headings of ‘distributive’ and ‘retributive.’ These are, of course, also comprised in *zedakah*, but while “distributive” and “retributive” justice are essentially procedural principles (i.e., how to do things), Jewish justice is essentially substantive (i.e., what human life should be like). . . . The substantive view of justice is concerned with the full enhancement of human and, above all, social life. Thus it suffuses all human relations and social institutions (476).

*Mishpat* and *zedakah* are related to other Hebrew concepts like *shalom* (wholeness), and *hesed* (community faithfulness). One practices *mishpat* and *zedakah* in relationship. In Genesis 38, Tamar practices it in relation to her dead husband, providing him with twin sons through extremely unconventional means. Her father-in-law

Judah, who did not fulfill his obligations, declares “She is more righteous than I am” (more *zedakah*) (Gen. 38:26). Thus Tamar practices *zedakah* within her family and even in relationship to a husband who is dead - faithfulness to a past generation, if you will.

*Mishpat* and *zedakah* are related to law insofar as the law supports these principles. But they are not essentially about following laws. They are terms which by definition express relationship. All relationships in society are to be expressions of *mishpat* and *zedakah* — relationships between king and subject, judge and claimant, rich and poor, powerful and powerless.

Elizabeth Achtemeier notes, “Righteousness as it is understood in the OT is a thoroughly Hebraic concept, foreign to the Western mind . . . .”<sup>4</sup> She describes *zedakah* as restoring community. Achtemeier writes, “Righteousness is the fulfillment of the communal demands, and righteous judgments are those which restore community . . . . Thus the constant plea of the prophets is for righteousness in the gate, for a restoration of the foundations of the communal life. . . .”<sup>5</sup>

The failure to practice *mishpat* and *zedakah* in relationships is called *rasha*’ - “evil.” Evil is not only the failure to practice justice as an individual in relationship. Evil is a failure to establish *mishpat* in the community as a whole. The prophet Amos urged,

Seek good and not evil, that you may live  
and so Adonai, the God of hosts, will be with you.  
Hate evil and love good,  
and establish justice in the gates. . . (Amos 5:14-15).

The Hebrew Bible frequently highlights as the special characteristic of *mishpat* and *zedakah* — the concern for the poor, the oppressed, and the powerless. Failure to extend care to them — failure to act in responsible relationship with them — constitutes evil.

They do not judge with justice  
the cause of the orphan, to make it prosper,  
they do not defend the rights of the needy.  
Shall I not punish them for these things? says Adonai.  
and shall I not bring retribution on a nation such as  
this? (Jer 5:28b-29).

Ah, you who make iniquitous decrees,  
who write oppressive statutes,  
to turn aside the needy from justice  
and to rob the poor of my people of their right,  
that widows may be your spoil,  
and that you may make the orphans your prey! (Isa 10:1-2).

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;  
remove the evil of your doings from before my  
eyes;  
cease to do evil,  
learn to do good;  
seek justice,  
rescue the oppressed,  
defend the orphan,  
plead for the widow (Isa 1:16-17).

The widow and the orphan — actually the fatherless — are cited again and again as examples for the practice of justice. They represent all those in society who lack adequate means of support and lack protection from abuse and oppression.

Adonai himself is often described in this terms.

For Adonai your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the alien, providing them food and clothing (Deut. 10:17-18).

I know that Adonai maintains the cause of the needy,  
and executes justice for the poor (Psalm 140:12).

He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. . . (1 Sam. 2:8).



In Isaiah 30:18 God's *mishpat* is associated with grace and mercy.

Therefore Adonai waits to be gracious to you;  
therefore he will rise up to show mercy to you.  
For Adonai is a God of *mishpat*;  
blessed are all those who wait for him.

(Parenthetically, this verse would caution us against making Hebrew concepts of *mishpat* and grace or mercy a dichotomy along the lines of a Lutheran Law/Gospel dichotomy.)

The Hebrew concepts of *mishpat* and *zedakah* are a great challenge to us. Not only am I to refrain from oppressing someone myself — I am responsible when *mishpat* is not established in my community.

When we look at the ills of our society today — of our world — we can see the necessity of understanding justice as *mishpat* — as a communal responsibility to establish what is right, to provide for those who do not have what they need, to protect the helpless. Unless justice is understood as a communal responsibility, how can there be justice at all? An individualistic concept cannot address the world's needs. Have I personally caused anyone to go hungry — perhaps by stealing their food or eliminating their job, or paying them 10 cents an hour to work for me? No - I haven't done that. Have I oppressed a person of another race by telling racist jokes, being unkind, practicing discrimination? No, not that I'm aware of. Have I ever contributed to the violence in my society by committing any act of violence myself? No, I haven't. But if we define righteousness only in terms of personal sin — conscience choice and individual agency — how will *mishpat*, justice, ever be established in our world? I must see myself as responsible for *mishpat* or the lack of *mishpat*. I belong to a community. I belong to the world.

The establishment of *mishpat* requires that our corporate identities go beyond our important identity as members of the body of Christ — that they go beyond neighborhood, town, province, or nation. We are also members of the global village. Our corporate identity is that we live together on this globe.

This globe — brings me to my third theme today.

### **Theme #3: The Affirmation of the World in the Hebrew Bible**

There is a worldliness to the Hebrew Scriptures which is an important part of Christian heritage. Much of Christianity - indeed some of the New Testament - has been strongly influenced by a Platonic dualism which regards this world as being of less than ultimate concern. There is a spirit/matter split. The spiritual realm has been the focus for much of Christianity. I see this influence in my undergraduate students when we read the Gospel of Mark and they can only assume that when Jesus speaks of “the kingdom of God” he is talking about heaven — and heaven as the ultimate destiny of the individual immortal soul. Such thinking is not only foreign to the Old Testament, it is quite arguably foreign to Jesus. While the synoptic Gospels do their part to ground Christian faith in this world, we can look to the Hebrew Bible as a strong witness to God’s concern for this world.

First, I’d like to take a brief overview of several facets of the worldliness of the Hebrew Bible. Then I’ll focus in more particularly on how this ties in with the first two themes.

The Hebrew Bible also offers us a worldliness — or perhaps we should say an earthiness — in its stories of the patriarchs and the foremothers in Genesis. The “heroes” of Genesis are fallible and human heroes indeed. Abraham tries to pass his wife off as his sister. Jacob cheats his brother. The fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel are portrayed as selfish and cowardly in the Joseph story. And the list of fallible heroes goes on and on — Moses, Aaron, Miriam, David, Solomon, and so on. The prophets — those who speak for God — are portrayed as very human. Elijah lies down in the desert and asks God to let him die. Hosea marries a “woman of whoredom” — whatever that may mean. Jeremiah cries out in his torment his lament over the burden of being a prophet. The characters of the Hebrew Bible are earthy and human.

And the worldliness of the Hebrew Bible extends beyond its cast of human characters. God is quite a character too. While Adonai is often portrayed as utterly awesome, Adonai is also portrayed in the earthiest metaphors. The prophet we call Second Isaiah says “To whom will you liken God, or what likeness compare him?” (Isa 41:18). Yet this same prophet says that God cries out like a woman in labor, that God is a shepherd who will gather the little lambs in his arms, that God is a soldier crying out the battle cry as he goes forth into battle, God is the



next-of-kin who purchases his kinsman out of slavery, God is the father of sons and daughters, God is an artisan — a potter or a sculptor — molding the clay, God is a husband who abandoned his wife. And these are just some of the metaphors of one prophet. In Proverbs 1-9 God's creative purpose is portrayed as Woman Wisdom - a feminine dimension of God which is the principle by which all of the earth was created and ordered. Not only is she God's creative purpose. She is portrayed as an enticing and even seductive woman. In the Hebrew Bible, even God is an earthy character.

It is the Hebrew Bible which gives us our theology of creation. Historically creation theology has taken a back seat to redemption theology, but in recent years there has been an increasing interest in the theology of creation. "And God saw that it was good." The Bible begins with Genesis 1 when God states again and again that the creation (the material creation) is "good." The goodness of God's created world has been affirmed throughout Christianity, with few exceptions. Humanity itself is created "good," in the image of God. The goodness of the heavens and the earth, the vegetation and the animals were not defined by their ability to provide for human beings. God simply said that it is "good."

In the past century we have witnessed a shifting paradigm for creation. We understand the earth as "spaceship" earth - we understand that the earth is not an infinite resource available for human exploitation. We recognize that our human abilities have grown to the point of being able to injure the creation beyond its ability to heal itself.

Theologians have come to question the interpretation of the dominance over the earth which God gave humans in Genesis 1. It is best understood as stewardship, not as an invitation to exploitation. Sally McFague has spoken of the creation as the "Body of God" and suggests that the time has come for us to think of the earth as a living thing.<sup>6</sup> The Hebrew Bible's acknowledgement of all things as God's good creation is a significant word for our time. The Deuteronomistic writer's understanding of all land as God's land, that we are but stewards, speaks to us today.

Perhaps the most relevant aspect of the worldliness of the Hebrew Bible for our focus today is that God is ultimately concerned with this world. In the Hebrew Bible, there is no concept of "going to heaven" — there is nothing at all like the dominant Christian concept of



salvation and eternal life.<sup>7</sup> What this means is that the very concept of “salvation” is something which is rooted in this world. In the Hebrew Bible the concept of “salvation” or “redemption” or “deliverance” is always the saving of the people from their worldly enemies for the sake of life - for the sake of their continued existence in this world. In the Hebrew Bible life survives death - only in the survival in the world of a remnant after the destruction of the community — and for the sake of the restoration of the community. Redemption is redemption for life. As Amos says, “Seek God and live.”

Permit me a disclaimer. I am not suggesting that the ideas of the resurrection of the dead and eternal life are unimportant to the Christian. But the affirmation of God’s ultimate concern with this world is a valuable corrective to the dominant trends of Christian theology through the centuries. In the latter half of the twentieth century theologians have become increasingly critical of the strong other-world focus of past theology. They have called for a renewed focus on this world. This theological shift appears in a wide variety of theological concerns. Liberation theologians call for social justice, insisting that justice for the poor and the oppressed must be sought — be established in the world — in this world. The call for a reverence for God’s earth in the face of ecological challenges is expressed by such theologians as McFague.

Douglas John Hall is just one of many theologians of the late 20th century who critiques Christianity’s focus on the heavenly world and calls for a more worldly theology. He speaks of “God’s abiding commitment to the world.”<sup>8</sup> While he identifies this with a theology of the cross he finds its roots in the Hebrew Bible, in particular in the pathos of God as expressed by the prophets. He writes:

It is this world-orientation of the *theologia crucis* which requires of us that we locate its deepest roots in the prophets of Israel (26).

[He adds further,] when the cross of Christ is separated from the pathos of Yahweh it is grossly distorted, becoming on the one hand the soteriological basis for the heaven-bent world rejection of much avowed Christian orthodoxy,

and on the other the model for that peculiar form of personalistic sentimentalism which characterized bourgeois neo-Protestantism. The abiding commitment to creation that marks classical Hebraic thought as well as much contemporary Jewish theology and faith is the matrix for our contemplation of the meaning of the cross. We can recover the full significance of Jesus' suffering and death only if we regard it against the backdrop of that ancient tradition, and in company with our brothers and sisters of Israel who still live and think that prophetic faith-tradition (27).<sup>9</sup>

The affirmation that this world is the realm of God's activity is not new. It is newly appreciated in recent decades. But this affirmation is one of our gifts from the Hebrew Bible.

## Conclusion

The three themes I've addressed today are clearly inter-related: corporate identity, justice, and affirmation of the world. These are just three of the many gifts which we receive from our heritage of the Hebrew Bible as part of our Christian Scripture. There are many other gifts of the Old Testament which I could have addressed today. To name a few — there is the beautiful poetry of the psalms, and especially the heartfelt passion of the psalms of lament. I would love to say more about the many rich metaphors for God. There is the great human honesty of Job and Ecclesiastes. And there are some really great stories.

My theme today has been "The Community of Faith and Justice in the World." This focus evolved in part as I have struggled with these issues with my students. I have seen that in our culture we lack the language to speak adequately of corporate identity, corporate guilt, and *mishpat*. I see that even in this supposedly post-modern era, my students read the Bible through a Platonic lens, which sees individual salvation in heaven as what the Bible is really all about.

But we are part of a living community of faith, we are members of a global community, we are called to establish justice in the world.

What a great heritage and resource the Hebrew Bible as our

Christian Scripture. It can help us as we ask, What does it mean to be God's people in the 21st century?

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Joel S. Kaminsky, *Corporate Responsibility in the Hebrew Bible* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).
- <sup>2</sup> Kaminsky, 1.
- <sup>3</sup> Harriet Goldhor Lerner, *The Dance of Anger: A Woman's Guide to Changing Patterns of Intimate Relationships* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1989).
- <sup>4</sup> Elizabeth Achtemeier, "Righteousness in the OT," in *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, IV (Abingdon Press, 1962) 80.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.
- <sup>6</sup> Sally McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Fortress Press, 1987) 69-78, esp. 69-70 and 77. See also *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* by Sally McFague (Fortress Press, 1993).
- <sup>7</sup> A few idiosyncratic passages might suggest going to heaven - but not along the lines of the Christian concept - Elijah, Psalm 139, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah 53, maybe even Ezekiel - dry bones.
- <sup>8</sup> Douglas John Hall, *Thinking the Faith: Christian Theology in a North American Context* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1989) 25.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*