

Religious Legal Systems, Monday, January 9, 2012, 10:20 a.m. Room 345

1. **Biblical Law of Injury.** Topics One and Two (pp. 1-48). The first session's readings include a very brief introduction to the historical sweep of the Jewish legal tradition, before focusing on biblical law codes and the biblical law of personal injury. The centerpiece, to which I suggest you give primary attention, is the law code found in Chapters 19-24 of the book of Exodus. The translation in the text is from a contemporary Jewish version of the bible, but students from other traditions may find it interesting to compare this translation with others they know. Class discussion will emphasize chapters 21 and 22 of Exodus, but we urge you to read the whole code as a legal document and to be sensitive to its central themes.

Foci: (a) *Exodus on Injuries*. pp. 28-37 (especially pp. 31 and 32). This is a legal code. What does the text suggest about the structures and values of the society for which this was formulated.

(b) *Comparing Exodus to Leviticus and Deuteronomy on "An eye for An Eye."* pp. 43-44. three books of the Torah use the phrase "an eye for an eye." Are they talking about the same thing? If so, what is the meaning of the phrase?

(c) *Biblical law in Comparative context* pp. 44-47. The people of the Bible had very close neighbors who also have left us codes on injury. How is our understanding of Exodus affected by what we learn from Hammurabi and the Hittites?