

John 1:17 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

Click chart to enlarge
Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
[Another Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

JESUS' RISE FROM OBSCURITY FOLLOWED BY OPPOSITION IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

Click to enlarge

THE LIFE OF JESUS AS COVERED BY GOSPEL OF JOHN (shaded area)

Click chart to enlarge

John 1:17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: hoti o nomos dia Mouseos edothe, (3SAPI) e charis kai e aletheia dia Iesou Christou egeneto. (3SAMI)

Amplified: For while the Law was given through Moses, grace (unearned, undeserved favor and spiritual blessing) and truth came through Jesus Christ. [Ex 20:1]

ESV: For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

KJV: For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

NLT: For the law was given through Moses; God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ.

Phillips: For while the Law was given by Moses, love and truth came through Jesus Christ. I

Wuest: Because the law through the intermediate agency of Moses was given, the aforementioned grace and the truth came through Jesus Christ.

Young's Literal: for the law through Moses was given, the grace and the truth through Jesus Christ did come;

- **The law:** Jn 5:45 9:29 Ex 20:1-17 Dt 4:44 5:1 33:4 Acts 7:38 28:23 Ro 3:19,20 5:20,21 2Co 3:7-10 Gal 3:10-13,17 Heb 3:5,6 8:8-12
- **Grace:** Jn 8:32 14:6 Ge 3:15 22:18 Ps 85:10 89:1,2 98:3 Mic 7:20 Lk 1:54,55,68-79 Acts 13:34-39 Ro 3:21-26 5:21 6:14 15:8-12 2Co 1:20 Heb 9:22 10:4-10 11:39,40 Rev 5:8-10 7:9-17

For (term of explanation) - Steven Cole sees this as John's elaboration (explanation) "on the fact (from John 1:14) that Jesus is also full of truth."

The Law was given - Strictly speaking the Law referred to the Torah (Genesis through Deuteronomy), but in this context probably is a reference to the entire OT (cf Jn 5:39 below), especially in view of the fact that the entire OT pointed to the Logos, the Messiah. And in the present passage John is in effect presenting a contrast between Old and New, Moses and Jesus, Law and grace and truth.

Even the **Law** was to have pointed Israel to Jesus for as Jesus Himself said "You search the Scriptures (in context this refers to the OT, including the Torah) because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me." (John 5:39)

Jesus declared "Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is **Moses**, in whom you have set your hope." (Jn 5:45)

Through [Moses](#)

Dt 4:44 Now this is the law which **Moses** set before the sons of Israel;

Dt 5:1 Then **Moses** summoned all Israel, and said to them, "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I am speaking today in your hearing, that you may learn them and observe them carefully.

D L Moody - The Law begins with commands and ends with blessings; but the blessings are fruit upon lofty branches, which fallen man can never reach: he cannot and will not climb the tree. The Gospel, on the contrary, begins with promises, and promises give birth to precepts. The Law demands justice; the Gospel delights in mercy through satisfied justice. Moses blesses the law-doer; Jesus pardons the guilty and saves the lost.

Grace (5485) (**charis** from **chairō** = to rejoice. English = charity. Beggars need "charity" even as sinners need grace, for we are all spiritual paupers outside of Christ, but "God gives where He finds empty hands"-Augustine [cp Mt 5:3-note]) is a word which defies a simple definition but at its core conveys the sense of favor while the specific nuances of **charis** depend on the **context** in which it is used. Someone has written that the word grace is probably the greatest word in the Scriptures, even greater even than "love," because grace is love in action, and therefore includes it. It is hardly too much to say that God has in no word uttered Himself and all that was in His heart more distinctly than in this word grace (**charis**)!

Truth (225) (**aletheia** from **a** = indicates following word has the opposite meaning ~ without + **lanthano** = to be hidden or concealed, to escape notice, cp our English "latent" from Latin = to lie hidden) has the literal sense of that which contains nothing hidden. **Aletheia** is that which is not concealed. **Aletheia** is that which that is seen or expressed as it really is. The basic understanding of **aletheia** is that it is the manifestation of a hidden reality (eg, **click** discussion of Jesus as "the Truth"). Truth then is the correspondence between a reality and a declaration which professes to set forth or describe the reality.

Jesus (2424) (**Iesous** is **transliteration** of the Greek **Iesous**, which in turn is the transliteration of the Hebrew name **Jehoshua** (**Yehoshua**) or **Jeshua** (**Yeshua**) which mean Jehovah is help or Jehovah is salvation. Stated another way the Greek **Iesous** corresponds to the OT **Jehoshua** (**Yehoshua**) which is contracted as **Jeshua** (**Yeshua**)

NET Note on Jesus - The Greek form of the name **Iēsous**, which was translated into Latin as **Jesus**, is the same as the Hebrew **Yeshua** (**Joshua**), which means "Yahweh saves" (Yahweh is typically rendered as "LORD" in the OT).

Christ (5547) (**Christos** from **chrīo** = to rub or anoint, consecrate to an office) means one who has been anointed, symbolizing appointment to a task. The majority of the NT uses refer to Jesus (exceptions = "false Christs" - Mt 24:24, Mk 13:22).

Jesus Christ - The first use of His Name by John. John's only other use of this full Name is John 17:3 (cp Jn 20:31 where **Jesus** and **Christ** are separately used). John used the Name **Jesus** almost as many times as all the other Gospel writers combined (there are a total of 979 uses of **Jesus** in the NT, and John has 242 of these uses in his Gospel. Recall John's purpose...

(John 20:31-note) but these have been written SO THAT (PURPOSE) you may believe that **Jesus** is the **Christ**, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

Jesus - Used by John 242x in 233v (Matthew used **Jesus** 150x, Mark 81x, Lk 89x) -

John 1:17, 29, 36ff, 42f, 45, 47f, 50; 2:1ff, 7, 11, 13, 19, 22, 24; 3:2f, 5, 10, 22; 4:1f, 6f, 10, 13, 17, 21, 26, 34, 40, 44, 47f, 50, 53f; 5:1, 6, 8, 13ff, 19; 6:1, 3, 5, 10f, 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26, 29, 32, 35, 42f, 53, 61, 64, 67, 70; 7:1, 6, 14, 16, 21, 28, 33, 37, 39; 8:1, 6, 10ff, 14, 19, 25, 28, 31, 34, 39, 42, 49, 54, 58f; 9:3, 11, 14, 35, 37, 39, 41; 10:6f, 23, 25, 32, 34; 11:4f, 9, 13f, 17, 20f, 23, 25, 30, 32f, 35, 38ff, 44, 46, 51, 54, 56; 12:1, 3, 7, 11f, 14, 16, 21ff, 30, 35f, 44; 13:1, 3, 7f, 10, 21, 23, 26f, 29, 31, 36, 38; 14:6, 9, 23; 16:19, 31; 17:1, 3; 18:1f, 4f, 7f, 11f, 15, 19f, 22f, 28, 32f, 36f; 19:1, 5, 9, 11, 13, 17ff, 23, 25f, 28, 30, 33, 38, 40, 42; 20:2, 12, 14ff, 19, 21, 24, 26, 29ff; 21:1, 4f, 7, 10, 12ff, 17, 20ff, 25;

Tenney - The contrast between law and grace as methods of God's dealing with men is expressed here as plainly as in the Pauline writings (see Ro 5:20–21; Eph 2:8). The law represented God's standard of righteousness; grace exhibited his attitude to human beings who found that they could not keep the law. This attitude was depicted in the person and life of Jesus. (The Expositor's Bible Commentary)

Grace and truth - While these attributes were present in the Torah, they are consummated and reached their pinnacle in the incarnate Son of God. These divine gifts/attributes are fully realized in the Son Who gives **grace** (2Cor 12:9, 2Ti 2:1), something neither Moses nor the Torah could provide. In addition, the Son declared Himself to be the personification of **truth** (Jn 14:6). While grace and truth that come to man through Jesus Christ is clearly the "better way," the Law has not been discarded but in the New Covenant is written on our hearts (Jer 31:33). In fact in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus repeatedly alludes to the internal aspect of the law when He says "You have heard that it was said....But I tell you" (Mt 5:21–22, 27–28, 22:33–34, 38–39, 43–44). As Jesus Himself declared "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill." (Mt 5:17) Paul amplifies Jesus' declaration explaining that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." (Ro 10:4) As

Paul says in Romans 6 believers "are not under law, but under grace." (Ro 6:14)

Boice - The contrast is between the **law** with all its regulations and the new era of salvation by **grace** through faith apart from the works of the law that has come with Jesus Christ. It is a great contrast. **Under the law**, God demands righteousness from people; under grace, He gives it to people. **Under law**, righteousness is based on Moses and good works; under grace, it is based on Christ and Christ's character. **Under law**, blessings accompany obedience; under grace, God bestows his blessings as a free gift. **The law** is powerless to secure righteousness and life for a sinful race. Grace came in its fullness with Christ's death and resurrection to make sinners righteous before God. (The Gospel of John : An expositional commentary)

Keep in mind that **grace and truth** were present in the OT, but just not as fully developed as they were in Jesus Christ. And so in the midst of great spiritual darkness and sin on earth we read that "Noah found **favor** (Heb = **chen/hen**; Lxx = **charis** = grace) in the eyes of the LORD." (Ge 6:6, cp Lxx uses of **charis** in Ge 18:3 of Abraham to God, God gift of grace to Joseph in Ge 39:21, cp Ps 86:11). In a similar way we see the mention of **truth (aletheia)** in Ge 24:27 (God "has not forsake His lovingkindness and His **truth (aletheia)**"). As alluded to earlier (comments on Jn 1:14), the OT "analogue" of grace and truth is lovingkindness and truth and is found 19 times in the OT, especially in the Psalms -

Gen 24:27 And he said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken **His lovingkindness and His truth** toward my master; as for me, the LORD has guided me in the way to the house of my master's brothers."

Ex 34:6 Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in **lovingkindness and truth**;

2Sa 2:6 "And now may the LORD show **lovingkindness and truth** to you; and I also will show this goodness to you, because you have done this thing.

Ps 25:10 All the paths of the LORD are **lovingkindness and truth** To those who keep His covenant and His testimonies.

Ps 26:3 For Thy **lovingkindness** is before my eyes, And I have walked in Thy **truth**.

Ps 40:10 I have not hidden Thy righteousness within my heart; I have spoken of Thy faithfulness and Thy salvation; I have not concealed **Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth** from the great congregation.

Ps 40:11 Thou, O LORD, wilt not withhold Thy compassion from me; **Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth** will continually preserve me.

Ps 57:3 He will send from heaven and save me; He reproaches him who tramples upon me. Selah. God will send forth His lovingkindness and His truth.

Ps 57:10 For **Thy lovingkindness** is great to the heavens, And **Thy truth** to the clouds.

Ps 61:7 He will abide before God forever; Appoint **lovingkindness and truth**, that they may preserve him.

Ps 69:13 But as for me, my prayer is to Thee, O LORD, at an acceptable time; O God, in the greatness of **Thy lovingkindness**, Answer me with **Thy saving truth**.

Ps 85:10 **Lovingkindness and truth** have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Ps 86:15 But Thou, O Lord, art a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in **lovingkindness and truth**.

Ps 89:14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Thy throne; **Lovingkindness and truth** go before Thee.

Ps 108:4 For **Thy lovingkindness** is great above the heavens; And **Thy truth** reaches to the skies.

Ps 115:1 Not to us, O LORD, not to us, But to Thy name give glory Because of **Thy lovingkindness**, because of **Thy truth**.

Ps 117:2 For His **lovingkindness** is great toward us, And the **truth** of the LORD is everlasting. Praise the LORD!

Ps 138:2 I will bow down toward Thy holy temple, And give thanks to Thy name for **Thy lovingkindness and Thy truth**; For Thou hast magnified Thy word according to all Thy name.

Pr 16:6 By **lovingkindness and truth** iniquity is atoned for, And by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil.

Kostenberger refers to this **grace** as "True grace, i.e., final eschatological grace, came through Jesus Christ. Rather than offend the Gospel's Jewish audience, this verse is designed to draw it in: "If you want an even more gracious demonstration of God's covenant love and faithfulness," the evangelist tells his readers, "it is found in Jesus Christ." Jesus' ministry is superior to Moses, just as He is

superior to Jacob (Jn 4:12) and Abraham (Jn 8:53).

Bible Knowledge Commentary - The greatness of the old dispensation was the giving of the Law by God through His servant Moses. No other nation has had such a privilege. But the glory of the church is the revelation of God's grace and truth . . . through Jesus Christ (cf. Jn 1:14).

A T Robertson - It is grace in contrast with law as Paul sets forth in Galatians and Romans. Paul had made grace "a Christian commonplace" (Bernard) before John wrote. It is truth as opposed to Gnostic and all other heresy as Paul shows in Colossians and Ephesians. The two words aptly describe two aspects of the Logos and John drops the use of Logos and charis, but clings to alētheia (see Jn 8:32 for the freedom brought by truth), though the ideas in these three words run all through his Gospel.

Hughes - Much could be said about **truth**. Suffice it to say, however, that when grace comes, so does God's revelation of spiritual truth, and we begin to see things as they are. A little girl had a terrific fight with her brother. When her mother came in, the mother asked, "Why did you let the devil put it in your heart to pull your brother's hair and kick him in the shins?" The little girl thought for a moment and said, "Well, maybe the devil put it into my head to pull my brother's hair, but kicking his shins was my own idea." She had better theology than her mother. We begin to see things as they are when we through grace begin to understand ourselves, life, God, and salvation. The overflowing fountain of grace is a marvelous gift. (Preaching the Word).

Through Moses...through Jesus Christ - "Through" indicates they were the intermediate agents of God, the former the agent of law, the latter the agent of grace and truth.

Steven Cole - Why does John introduce the law and Moses here? For one thing, in Exodus 34, when God called Moses back to Mount Sinai to reveal His glory, He instructed him to cut out two stone tablets like the former ones that he had broken in anger when he went down the mountain and found the people worshiping the golden calf (Ex 34:1). God reissued the law on that occasion of showing Moses His glory. The law, as summarized in the Ten Commandments, manifested God's grace ("lovingkindness") and truth (Ex 34:6). If that passage is the backdrop for these verses in John, then he is showing that as great as the law and Moses were, someone who embodies grace and truth had now "tabernacled" among us.

Andreas Kostenberger (ibid., p. 47) points out, "Rather than offend the Gospel's Jewish audience, this verse is designed to draw it in: 'If you want an even more gracious demonstration of God's covenant love and faithfulness,' the evangelist tells his readers, 'it is found in Jesus Christ.'" So John is saying, "If you thought that God's gift of the law through Moses was a great thing (and it was), He has given us a greater gift now through Jesus Christ."

But it seems to me that John is at the same time drawing a contrast between the inferiority of the law and the superiority of Jesus Christ. Leon Morris (The Gospel According to John[Eerdmans], p. 112) points out, "The contrast of the Christian way with the Jewish and the function of Moses as subordinate to and pointing forward to the Christ is a recurring theme in the Gospel (see 5:39, 46; 6:32; 8:32ff.; 9:28ff.)." J. C. Ryle (Ibid., 3:40) puts it this way:

By Moses was given the law-the moral law, full of high and holy demands, and of stern threatenings against disobedience;-the ceremonial law, full of burdensome sacrifices, ordinances, and ceremonies, which never healed the worshipper's conscience, and at best were only shadows of good things to come.

By Christ, on the other hand, came grace and truth-grace by the full manifestation of God's plan of salvation, and the offer of complete pardon to every soul that believes on Jesus,-and truth, by the unveiled exhibition of Christ Himself, as the true sacrifice, the true Priest, and the true atonement for sin.

Augustine, on this verse, says: "The law threatened, not helped; commanded, not healed; showed, not took away, our feebleness. But it made ready for the Physician who was to come with grace and truth."

Also, note that this is the first time that John has used the human name, Jesus, or His designation as Christ, or Messiah. He uses "Jesus" 237 times, more than any other gospel and more than a quarter of all New Testament uses (Morris, p. 112). He also uses "Christ" more often than any other gospel, although he only uses "Jesus Christ" together one other time (17:3; but see 20:31). In 1:17, John is making it clear that the Word who was in the beginning with God, the Word who was God, and the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us, is none other than Jesus the Messiah of Israel.

As I pointed out in our last study, God's grace and truth reach their apex at the cross. His truth demanded that the penalty for sin be fully paid. His grace provided Jesus, the eternal Son of God, as that payment for sin for all who believe in Him. So make sure that you have received God's gift of eternal life by trusting in Jesus Christ as your sin-bearer.

Thus John says that you should believe in Jesus because He is greater than all the prophets, including John the Baptist; you should believe in Him because He provides abundant grace for all who believe; you should believe in Him because He is greater than Moses and the law.

1. That “the law was given by Moses” is the universal tradition of the Jewish Church. To what extent does modern scholarship confirm the truth of the tradition?

(1) It may fairly be questioned, says Ottley, whether the Decalogue in its present form can be ascribed to Moses. In the first place, what appears to be an older and widely different version of the “ten words” is found in the Book of Exodus (34:14–26); secondly, the Decalogue in its present form seems to be influenced by the teaching of the eighth-century prophets. It is also urged that an exclusively moral code is not consistent with the predominantly ritualistic character of early religions. Other arguments have been adduced which it is needless to consider in detail. The facts as they stand are perplexing, and justify a suspension of judgment. It is reasonable to suppose that the Decalogue in its present form bears traces of expansion in prophetic times; at the same time it lays down principles of morality which are so elementary as to be strictly consistent with what we know of the condition of Israel in Mosaic times. It is difficult to see what other precepts could have been better adapted to lift the Hebrews above the degraded nature-religion of their heathen neighbours, to teach them the true character of their Divine Deliverer, and to educate them in the rudiments of social justice and humanity. In short, the “ten words” as we have them in the Pentateuch may be a later prophetic summary of the great moral ideas contained in the religion of Moses; but there is every reason to suppose that in a brief and easily remembered form the primary moral precepts of the Decalogue constituted from the first the foundation of Israel’s national development. It is indeed impossible otherwise to account for the vitality and vigour which gave to the Hebrews their physical and moral superiority over the inhabitants of Canaan. The Decalogue has in fact intrinsic credibility as a Mosaic utterance, and we may reasonably accept it as an authentic monument—at least in its main substance—of the period to which Hebrew tradition assigns it.

¶ While many of the enactments of the Book of the Covenant served but a temporary purpose, and passed away with the religion of Judaism, the Decalogue has been retained unchanged in the Christian Church. The Divinity of its origin and the excellency of its contents still give it a foremost place in the theology of every Christian community. There is nothing in it that is not valid for mankind. It is a universal code of morals. No compend of morality among ethnic religions can be compared with it. The ethical systems of Confucius, of Zoroaster, of Buddha, of the Greek moralists, are far behind it as a summary of human duty. All will admit that the Decalogue is cast in an archaic mould; and the negative form in which its commandments are addressed is in keeping with its primitive character. In the infantile life of a nation, as in child life, the early part of its moral training must always consist of concrete precepts, expressed in a prohibitory form. In the first portion of a child’s life it has to be kept from harm by continual prohibitions; and the formation at that early stage of the habit of obedience to these simple prohibitory commands is essential to moral well-being. Thus it is thoroughly consistent with the youthful stage of the Beni-Israel, a horde of slaves newly enfranchised and little better than children, that this fundamental code of moral and religious duty should be one not of principles but of plain precepts. Children do not understand principles: they must at first receive simple, concrete directions as to what they shall do and not do. Truth must be accommodated to the measure of their mind; and while they cannot comprehend the principles that lie at the basis of property, they understand the command “Do not steal.” The first stage of moral education will be full of restrictions. And the form of the Decalogue is in keeping with the stage of Israel’s progress in morality.

(2) Again, some forms of worship were doubtless observed in the wilderness, though it is impossible to point to any details of cultus prescribed by Moses himself. Some traditional usages seem to have been retained or regulated by the lawgiver. There certainly existed a primitive sanctuary, or “tent of meeting,” designed to serve as the seat of the sacred oracle and as a shelter for the ark. In form this structure would resemble the ordinary shepherd’s tent, having its outer and inner compartment, and standing in an enclosed court. The tent of meeting seems in Mosaic times to have been pitched outside the camp (Exod. 33:7; Num. 11:26, 12:4), and not, as was assumed in post-exilic times, at its centre. Sacrifices of some kind must have been offered during the wanderings, but we can only conjecture what their exact significance may have been. According to the primitive Semitic idea, sacrifice was the means of renewing or maintaining the bond which united the people to their god; and a ceremony like that described in connexion with the ratification of the covenant (Exod. 24) would probably be repeated on special occasions, e.g., before the tribes engaged in battle with their enemies. If Moses instituted a regular priesthood, possibly recruited from members of his own tribe (Levi), it is unlikely that its main function was that of sacrifice. The “holy” persons of Semitic antiquity were attached to the sanctuary and were its recognized guardians, but they were employed chiefly in consulting the oracle touching matters of difficulty. To the priesthood would naturally fall the task of continuing the work of Moses, i.e., imparting torah to those who asked for guidance, and giving judicial sentences (toroth) in matters of dispute. Thus a traditional and authoritative torah would gradually be formed, and there would be a tendency for the priesthood to become hereditary in certain families. The means by which Jehovah’s will was ascertained was usually the casting of the sacred lot, and it is easy to understand how rapidly the priesthood would acquire a powerful influence over the mass of the people. The original torah given by Moses, and after his time by the priesthood, was oral; and the name “En-mishpat” (“well of judgment”) at Kadesh, which was for a long period the religious centre of the tribes, indicates that the sanctuary was invariably the seat of justice, as well as the place of worship.

¶ Even on Wellhausen's own admissions, it may be urged that the Levitical Law, as we have it now, is but the codified form of the Torahs given by Moses. For that critic makes the Jews go from Egypt to Kadesh, as "the original object of their wanderings," and there spend "the forty years of their wanderings in the wilderness." "The legislation at the seat of judgment at Kadesh," he proceeds to say, "goes on for forty years, and consists in the dispensation of justice at the sanctuary, which he begins, and the priests and judges carry on after him according to the pattern he set. And in this way the Torah has its place in the historical narrative, not in virtue of its matter as the contents of a code, but from its form as constituting the professional activity of Moses. It is in history not as a result, as the sum of the laws and usages binding on Israel, but as a process." From this point of view Moses was the author of the Customary Law of Israel, which assumes a codified form in the Pentateuch, and the Law thus codified may not improperly be called the Law of Moses, as tradition has taught us to call it.

2. If we seek to know to what extent the Mosaic legislation is original, we need go no further than the Code of Hammurabi. Dr. C. H. W. Johns, in a very full examination of the Code of Hammurabi and its relation to the Mosaic legislation, in Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, v. 611, sums up in these words: "We may say that the Israelite legislation shows strong traces of Babylonian influence, and yet not destroy the independence of its origin. We cannot suppose that the author of any code set to work to draw up a comprehensive scheme of law. Each built upon the already prevailing custom. His attention would be directed chiefly to what was not matter of uniform treatment. The most characteristically Babylonian things in the current custom of the day in Israel may be just those which are not legislated for. The new legislation did not require to touch what was so firmly established. Other things of Babylonian origin may have been abrogated by the new laws—it would not be necessary to say what they had been, but merely by stating the new law to say they should be no longer. That any Israelite code shows marked differences from the Code of Hammurabi is enough to show an independent origin. The absence of any difference would show complete dependence. The co-existing likenesses and differences argue for an independent recension of ancient custom deeply influenced by Babylonian law. The actual Code of Hammurabi is a witness to what influence might accomplish. It cannot be held to be a creative source. The Code may only be itself a proof of the same influences. These may be called Semitic in preference to Babylonian. But that view calls for overwhelming proof that there was any source of civilization powerful enough to have this influence on both Israel and Babylonia. The presumption that Babylonia had a prominent influence on Palestine long before Israelite codes were drawn up is one that grows stronger as time goes on."