>> McKenzie Stribich: I will go ahead and welcome everybody. I'm glad everyone who is here is here. Thank you all for coming. This is the second week of our study on the Bible and disability. I wanted to introduce our interpreter, Ada, and Jessica is our captioner for the evening. We're really grateful for their services and we're really excited this is happening. It's a collaboration between St. Luke's and RespectAbility. And St. Luke's talks a lot about becoming a Beloved Community and it basically means welcoming everybody into our ranks and to come into our calling as a Beloved Community. We want everybody to belong and I think this Bible study is going to be a big piece of  helping that happen for the disability community   And it's an ever-going quest, right, to become Beloved Community it's-- we're always becoming. We will probably never become, we certainly haven't become yet but we are becoming, and I think that's a really beautiful thing. So thank you everyone for being here. Jane or Shelly, did you either of you have anything you want to add?

>> Reverend Jane Gould: I think you said it. I think we make a huge mistake if  any of us ever think we have become   Beloved Community because then we're surely wrong. There always is a broader expanse into which we're invited to go if we open ourselves  to where the Divine One would have us go. So -- I just am grateful for this time and space and a chance to stretch ourselves.

>> McKenzie: Yeah. Well with that said I think I'm going to hand it over to the man of the hour, Dave Stewart, to get us going here.

>> David Tabb Stewart: Well hello, everybody. I'm Dave Stewart, a professor at Cal State Long Beach, and I began to become interested in disability   and ability when I learned that my daughter had a disability--a developmental disability. Now my daughter is happily married to another person with a disability, and something that I had never imagined would happen actually, back when she was four years old. And as a result of the impression that she made on me, I then became involved in various kinds of advocacy for people with disabilities and helped work on getting ADA passed through congress. Worked as a lobbyist for a while to see that that would happen. Eventually became a professor and then one of the things that I've focused on in my research has been disability in the biblical world and disability in the Bible. So, we're going to do just a quick little review of what we talked about last time so that if anybody missed that they'll kind of be oriented to where we're going to be at tonight, which is to talk about Aaron and priests who have disabilities, and animals— sacrificial animals that have disabilities. And we're also going to talk about a kind of work- around that the Bible develops to work around the problem of priests with disabilities. Also we'll find out tonight about what disabilities don't disable priests. So this is because of course, from a cultural perspective, not everything is disabling that we might think it is in every society, or at every time in the world's history. So some things are not counted disabling in other places that we in our culture and our century think are disabling. So I'm going to go and share and I'm going to bring up a PowerPoint with some slides. Here we go. This is it and you should be able to see it now. And I'm going to do the daring thing, which is to go to slideshow, the beginning. This makes everything big so that we can read it. So now what I want to do is minimize the pictures of people so that we don't have anything that's blocking us. So we're going to talk about Aaron as cyborg, disabled priests, and the Nazirite workaround. So cyborg, of course, is a person that has like, implants--digital or mechanical implants in their body or attached to their body as assisting devices. So having a pacemaker kind of makes you a cyborg. And so forth and so on. So I'm using the term a little bit loosely in talking about Aaron. And so we do have an artistic representation of Aaron here where my cursor is going, where Moses who has these strange little horns of light on his head, which represents the kind of understanding from the misunder—mistranslation of the Bible. So artists have for some reason always then painted him or drawn Moses with these little horns on top. But this is a depiction of his brother when Moses-- So as this picture illustrates simply Moses meeting Aaron, and we're going to talk about Aaron tonight. So in our last session together we talked about Moses as a disabled leader. And one of the things that we found out was that Moses had a disability that was described as heavy mouth and heavy tongue. But there was also some possible mobility impairments too, and difficulty stretching out his hand. I put a question mark because there's just a hint of that, it's not clearly stated. But this is clearly stated--it's heavy tongue. So one of the interesting things that we found was that this speech impediment is described as God-- as being on the same level with blindness, deafness, but also, weirdly, hearing, sight and facility in speaking. So apparently from the Divine perspective  what we think of as disabilities-- blindness and   deafness—although we should acknowledge that the Deaf community understands that as an ability-- but also hearing, sight, and speech are not from the Divine perspective much different rom it. And so we have God's promising Moses that he's going to help him, and there's an accommodation that's made where his brother, Aaron, is going to become his interpreter. Now one of the reasons that we know here that blindness, deafness, hearing, sight, and facility and speech is because in Biblical Hebrew there's a noun form, the name of the noun form is qittel. Which that's about all you have to know. But there's a noun form that signifies disability. And all of these words here, these three words are translated from the word "open." So open eyes, open ears, open mouth. So hearing, sight, speech -- it has the same noun form, which is extremely interesting because this kind of confirms  this notion that they're on the same level. So also last time, not only did we talk about Aaron as the interpreter, where the initial accommodation-- We found out that over time Moses's confidence and willingness to speak to various audiences developed, and it developed over the course of the book of Exodus and Leviticus. And Exodus during the plagues that are brought on Egypt, Moses is shown as developing -- more and more confidence. Unlike, say, in the movie The Ten Commandments which Charlton Heston seems to be confident all the time, Moses is a person that has to grow in that way. And in Leviticus he becomes more and more--has more and more facility in speaking. One other thing that we came up with in our last time was a notion that I just talked just a tiny bit about was that, it's actually somewhat common that in various literatures that giving a character a disability is oddly, surprisingly maybe an assistive device in telling the biblical story. And an assistant device and telling any story. So characters and models often have obstacles and the disability can be one of them. So it's useful to note that the most significant figure besides Abraham in the Hebrew Bible, the most significant of the prophets—the lawgiver to Israel, is a person, is a leader with a disability. [pause] And that's where we kind of ended up the last time. So here just turning to think about Aaron as a cyborg, we're going to be talking about Aaron as a person-- Okay so, and moving to speak about Aaron as a cyborg or a person who is enabled to do their work, I thought I would think about Hillel, who is a famous ancient Jewish rabbi, who said, "Be one of Aaron's students." So I think we can learn something from Aaron's life tonight. And of course it said one of the things we could learn from Aaron is loving people and bringing them to the Torah, the Torah being the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament. So one of the things that in thinking about the enabling of Aaron, is that he had to put on a tremendous amount of clothing to function as the high priest. So we have a partial snapshot of the high priest garments. So, notice that there's something here called the breastplate of judgment, which is right here--my cursor is circulating around it. And under need this apron, there is a tunic which is closer to the body. And down here, the apron is called the ephod. But it's a front apron and a back apron. And there is also a robe that goes over the tunic before we get to the apron. And the breastplate and the things that are on the high priest. So, when the high priest was ordained in ancient Israel, part of the ordination was to put on these clothes. There are actually more pieces of clothing than I just referred to here. And we'll talk about disabled priests in just a second. I'll go back to look at the priest for a minute and think about all of the things that had to happen to be enabled to act as a priest. So he had to put on his tunic.   And he had to put on a sash. So we can't quite see the sash. He had to put on the ephod or apron. he had to put on the breastplates. Now his head is cut off up here but on top of his head there was also a hat, and on his shoulders, there are these little pieces here on his shoulders that had to be put on. And underneath of all of his clothing there's also pants or britches. And finally, most importantly, on the hat there was a jewel or diadem that hung down, and on the diadem it said, "Holiness to the Lord." So there were words engraved on the jewel in Hebrew that said "Holiness to the Lord." And this wasn't all that had to happen hey, Moses also came and put the blood of a sacrifice on the thumb, the right thumb. And on the right big toe and on the right ridge, the ridge of the right ear. won't give you that technical term but the ridge of the right ear. So the right ear, the right thumb, and the right big toe. And then the priest came back Moses came back put oil on top of the blood on the right ear, and the right big thumb, and the right big toe. and then he came back again and she  sprinkled blood on all of the clothing   and he sprinkled oil on all of the clothing and poured oil on his head that traveled down his beard and then down to the hem of his garment as we're told in one of the Psalms. And all of these things were necessary in order to prepare him for doing his Priestly work. So we can think of these, in a kind of funny sort of way, as assistive devices that enable him to perform his work. He would not be able to do it without all of these assistive devices. And notice that it also just includes words, the words on the diadem, "Holiness to the Lord." But the vestments themselves, the clothing, is still insufficient in some ways, so he has to go through a further process of making various offerings before he can start his work. But his body itself also has to be prepared. So he has to be circumcised. So there's a part of his body that had to have been cut away. This was true for all males, Jewish males and males in ancient Israel. And his body had also to be washed. And still the body wasn't perfect. Aaron's body did not have to be perfect. It was not perfect already because not only was something cut away, but for instance Moses had a heavy mouth, or a heavy tongue, and Aaron could have had a heavy tongue and still have been high priest. He could have been infertile and not able to have children and he still could have been high priest. There could have been asymmetries in his body, one arm being slightly longe than another and he could still be high priest. So in his body there could still be things that were not perfect about it. Hence these coverings that he had that were enabling. And you might notice almost nothing of his body is exposed. and the hands actually, he would ultimately have to hold an offering in his two hands, a kind of a sandwich that was made up of the various components of an offering. And so even as the palms of his hands would be covered in some way. So Aaron did not have to be beautiful. And, but he could also not be naked. His body had to be covered up. And his body had to be also ritually pure, which means that he couldn't--could not have touched a corpse. He couldn't have touched an animal carcass. He couldn't have just had sex with his wife. He could not have had some other genital discharge on his body. And so forth. There were a few things that made not only a priest, but an Israelite, ritually impure—not morally, but ritually impure, so that they were not able to go before the altar in the tent, anciently the tent of meeting but later the temple. And so that ritual impurity had to have been cleaned up by washing, by laundering, and by waiting until sunset. And sometimes there were a few more things that needed to be done. So in any case, we have a body that had to have a lot of things done to it before he could actually perform his duties as a priest. Now the question comes up is, were there any things that would actually disable the priest that all of this enabling, all of this attempts to enable him to do his ministry-- Was there any disability that would prevent him from doing it? And there were a set of 12 disabilities that would prevent a high priest or any priest from doing their work. And, it did not prevent them from continuing being a part of a Priestly family and eating their share of food that came back to the priests from the altar. It wouldn't prevent them from doing that. It wouldn't prevent them from bringing their own voluntary offering to God that another priest would put on the altar. They could still do that, but they themselves would not be able to act in the role of the priest. One  of the things that we'll see is that the things   that disable a priest do not necessarily disable the everyday Israelite at least in the same way. So the priest had a special collection of disabilities that impaired them, whereas the average Israelite was not impaired in the same way. So we have to think about these different classes of people in ancient Israel. So if we, if you want now, we have a short list in the book of Leviticus chapter 21. We have a list of disabilities--you can see here that it's translated "blemish." My cursor is going over the word "blemish." This is the word "mum," m-u-m in Hebrew, and it is not something that is impure or something like that. It's just what it says, a blemish. And so this is the list here of things that would prevent the priest. So a priest that was blind, or injured or maimed basically in their arms or legs, or having a certain kind of discharge, or an itch or scabs on their skin, cannot put anything on the altar as offerings. Oh, I'm sorry, look at this, I'm looking at the animals. Go back! The funny thing is it's almost the same.   So Leviticus 21 verse 18 to 21. So a priest who was blind or lame or has a mutilated face, possibly missing a nose, or a limb that's too long, or one who has a broken foot or a broken hand, or a hunchback or a dwarf. We might say a person's smaller stature, or a man with some kind of blemish in his eyes, so discoloration or cataract, or an itching disease, or scabs, or crushed testicles. Okay so this is the list, which, list of the 12 things basically that prevents a priest. So Aaron, if he had had any of these blemishes, then he could not have served as a priest. But none of these blemishes, we're going to find out, are going to impair the ancient Israelite, as we look a little bit further on, in a spiritual way. So similar to this in the next chapter of Leviticus, Leviticus 22, are the disabilities of sacrificial animals. And these are disabilities that prevent the animal from being offered on the altar as a sacrifice. From the animal's perspective that might be a boon I don't know. But an animal who's blind, or otherwise injured or maimed, or having scabs, can't be offered on the altar. And, an ox or a lamb that has a limb that's too long or too short--now this is interesting-- you may present it for one kind of offering--this is a free will offering. But you can offer it for a vow. So if you were keeping a vow, you couldn't offer an ox or a lamb with a shortened limb. Any animal that has testicles that are damaged four different ways, one of four different ways—bruised, crushed torn, or cut, you shall not offer to the Lord. So one of the things that people have noticed for a long time is that this list of blemishes or disabilities in animals is roughly parallel with the list of disabilities of a priest.  And I'm going to do a daring thing here and stop sharing this for a minute. I'll see everybody's face again, and I'm going to share something else. I'm going to go to my document cam and let's see if this works out okay. Yeah you should be able to see on the screen now, this is an image from a book. And what it is doing here is it's -- I'll kind of adjust it slightly here. Okay it's a little better. You can see here at the top, it has the priest mumim and the sacrificable Animals mumim. And the interesting thing here is is that you can kind of see—and that's just the idea that I want you to get from looking at this that they're pretty well all parallel. Now, from the Israelite conception there are five parts of the body that can be disabled. Which is a   little bit different from our thinking. So one of the parts that can be disabled is the head, and so we have the disabilities of the head and blindness, also, in the animal prevents them from being a sacrifice. We have the disability of the limbs, and these are roughly equivalent. We have that disabilities of the trunk of the body, so this was the idea of the hunchback or dwarfism. But this is not an issue for animals. In this way reflecting the fact that not everything that's disabling to one category of being is disabling to another, right? So the fourth area here is skin or the height of an animal, and you can see that that's roughly parallel. And finally, the area of genitals. And notice that there are more possibilities for the animal, just crushed here, but even bruises over here, are disabling to animals. So this one is a little bit more specific and  elaborated than it is for the human. Okay. So the point there was to notice that there's interesting parallels between the two. If you hadn't ever thought about animal disability, then you can think about it now for a second. So let me go back we'll go back and  look into the slides a little bit more. [pause] And I'm sharing the slides again. And we'll go on and -- [long pause] [long pause] Okay here we go! So the second main point of the evening is, was that, even though Aaron--the first point was even though Aaron was a person who had a body that seemed to be whole, and not having any of these disabilities that priests could not have, that he was still--it was not sufficient for him to be able to be high priest, just with a body that was apparently whole. And consequently he had to be enabled by all of the stuff that we looked at. So a person who is ostensibly  abled was still disabled   before the altar and the Tent of Meeting or the Temple, had to be enabled. So the priest could also be disabled and never be able to go and stand before the altar. And we went through those  particular Priestly disabilities.   Now the interesting thing comes up with the idea of the Nazirite. And the Nazirite is a group of people-- some of you, you might be thinking, well that sounds like "Nazarene," but this is a kind of different word than that. And the Nazirite that's here might relate to the idea of a root or something like that. But there is a particular vow that any person in ancient Israel could make. And it's talked about in the book of Numbers, which is the fourth book in the Torah, in chapter six. And interestingly, right after it in verse 22...6:22 and following is the priestly blessing. So it's in the same chapter where it talks about the blessing that the priest is to give at the end of a service of sacrifice. And this gives us a kind of an excuse now to bring up and think about it. One of the interesting things is that the Nazirite vow allows you access to the altar. So what could you do if you were just a regular Israelite and didn't have a particular access to the altar? Well, one of the things that you could do is you could take this Nazirite vow. Or what if you were a priest that  was disqualified from service   because you had one of those disabilities, one of those mumim? What could you do? Could you come before the altar in some fashion? And the Nazirite vow gave you a kind of special possible access to the altar now. Any Israelite can bring to the priest at the altar a sacrifice for completing a vow, or a sacrifice after a successful pregnancy and birth, or could bring a sacrifice or offering just because you wanted to be thankful. Any Israelite coulddo that but you'd give it to the priest. But this goes--the particular offering Nazirite at the end of their vow, is some special access to the altar. Now a Nazirite had to do four things—pledged to do four things in order to be set apart. And just as the priests in ancient Israel were set apart by their ordination. So the four things that the Nazirite pledged to do, were first of all to not drink any wine, and along with that they couldn't eat any grapes or raisins--nothing related to the could they eat. No grape seeds either. Nothing related to the grapes. So two things now--grapes and wine they abstain from. The third thing is that they could not touch a carcass of an animal or a corpse. So that, like a priest, a priest if they touched a corpse would become desanctified, and they would have to go through a ritual process again to be able to serve at the altar. So if a Nazirite touched a corpse, they would be de-sanctified, or they would lose their special status and they would have to go through a ritual process again to come back into the Nazirite vow. The fourth thing that they had to pledge not to do was to not cut their hair. So ostensibly there was no other requirements. If you were blind, if you were deaf, if you had a mobility impairment, if you had if you were small of stature, if you were a hunchback, if you had different sized limbs--none of those prevented you from becoming a Nazirite. And like any other person, you might have some ritual impurities would have to be resolved. But other than touching a corpse, none of those disqualified you from being a Nazirite. And so Samson is a good example of this in the book of Judges. Samson, his mother put a Nazirite vow on him. I don't think he appreciated that, and he managed to break every single one of those four things, the very last, killing himself in suicide after his hair was cut. But he broke all of the conditions of the Nazirite vow. So at the end of the period of the Nazirite vow, what happens is then the Nazirite cuts their hair, and they bring their hair to the priest, and the hair is put on the altar, and is burnt with the fire of the altar--it's burnt up. So it's sort of like a symbolic human sacrifice. Just like, in some way, the sacrificial animals--the fact that they were disqualified just with the same disabilities as the priest was disqualified, were symbolic of the priests and of the sacrifice of priests. And here, the hair becomes symbolic of the sacrifice of the person. I suppose that there could have been maybe one thing that could have disqualified them from this--being able to take this vow. And it wouldn't be alopecia, which is having kind of patches—losing patches of hair. They would have to have alopecia on every part of their body where there was not a hair left. And I bet you somebody could have found a hair. But there needed to be at least like one hair or two on their head that could be shaved off to be put on the fire. So there was potentially one obstacle. But in general any person, including  a disqualified priest could come as a   Nazirite to the altar with their hair and have  that put on the altar as a symbol of themselves.  This is what I mean by special access to the altar. So Nazirites might have been a kind of lay person priestly group, if you wanted to think of it that way. If those of you that are in the Christian community, you might know about Third-Order Franciscans--you have priests, Catholic priests, and then you have Catholic monks, and then you have Third-Order Franciscans who take on some of the vows that monks take on and engage in a spiritual life. So that could be analogous to this in some way, to the Nazirite, that they take on certain obligations of a spiritual life in ancient Israel. And as a result of that, then had a special kind of in-between status that was not impaired by anything except possibly universal alopecia. So I've taken pains to talk about this because I think it's rather interesting and even exciting to think that there is this kind of workaround where the body was concerned. We might not think today about the body as really being some kind of spiritual impediment, impediment to spirituality. But to the degree that it was in ancient Israel, we also have this workaround in the Torah. I think I should ask you now that you've been kind of exposed now to a run through on the problem of disability as it's associated with priests and how this can be worked around for people that also wanted to be--have some access to the altar of the Temple in a special way, who could be— could take this Nazirite vow and complete it. But I wonder if any of you noticed what kinds of disabilities that are perhaps quite common— relatively common--that were -- did not impair the priest. So I'm asking you to think now of what was absent from the list of things that impaired a priest. I mentioned one of course--infertility did not impair the priest. [long pause] That's because infertility is not a mum. And if you can think of any of these, then we'll be able to discover now that we don't just have one category of disability in ancient Israel, but that we have two categories disability. And I'll tell you a secret, we'll end up with four before we're done. But tonight we're going to be introduced to the second category--a disability that's not a disability for a priest. This is important for what we do next week too--to know about the second category—what was not there? The ancient Israelite priest cannot--is not disabled by deafness or muteness. This is because, it has been said and argued by a scholar named Knohl— [pause] I put in the name of the scholar in the chat. His name is--of course I misspelled Israel. That's silly--it is right now. Israel Knohl has written a wonderful book called The Temple of Silence. So he argues that the Israelite--the ancient Israelite Temple, and also that would mean the Tabernacle--was a temple of silence. Now later we find out there were choruses of singers, but they were outside. Inside--so the priests did not have to be able to--be able to speak--and didn't have to be able to hear. And they would have had to have developed a sign language. And indeed we do have some indications of a sign language. For instance, the wave offering is an offering where they went up and down like [gestures] this, or maybe with the open hands going up and down like this. And the priestly blessing was done with two hands held up kind of by the head with the fingers open like Dr. Spock did, like Dr. Spock. I can't quite do it but you can see I sort of do it here. Yeah there there you go, see Shelly can do it but I can't do. Oh even Jane can do it! Well you can clearly see I'm not in the--I'm not a Levite because I can't do it. Wow so--so that was so the priest could have come out of the temple area where the sacrifices were, and--or could have been still inside of the temple and gone to the entrance and just held up his hands, and that would have been the--indicated the blessing. Stepping out of the temple he could say the words of the blessing and verse 22 and number 6, but he could have just held up his hands perhaps. Okay, so we have by this indication of the possibility of the beginnings at least of the sign language. And we know that in ancient-- the ancient Hittites, which were a little bit earlier than ancient Israel and Canaan land-- they did develop--had developed an ancient sign language. So the idea of a sign language already existed in the ancient Near East at the time that the Israelites were in— Canaan land in ancient srael. So there you go. So we have--it is of course disabling in other ways and would have been for the average Israelite in other ways in the community—but--at that time--but we can--we're left to wonder how developed a sign language might have become, or if it was just a workplace sign language like sometimes workers and factories develop to signal each other, or soldiers on the battlefield develop to signal each other. Was it a workplace sign language or did it become more developed; that's a question that we'll just have to leave to other people or to the imagination. Now Jane did you—or Hengy, did either of you—

>> Jane: Well, what I was going to say is that a whole host of the disabilities that we talk about today relate to— learning disabilities, cognitive, spatial, you know, none of which are in this list-- most of which are physical and visible.

>> Dave: Correct, they're—

>> Jane: So what struck me was the visibility of all the disabilities. And deafness, on one level, like, is it different because it's not visible?

>> Dave: Correct. So you should give yourself an A+ [Jane laughs] for having noticed that the significant characteristic of the mumim was that they were visible. And infertility for instance would not be visible--it would be another one that's not visible. So there you go, that was— And Hengy, what were you going to say?

>> Hengy: I was just going to ask how--'cause sometimes this question comes out like in religious class and everything like that-- it's how one may perceive physical disabilities as symbolism to a character in the Bible being imperfect, rather than a human -- a human experience I guess you can say.

>> Dave: Well in, not next week but in two weeks, we're going to talk about disabilities referred to in the prophets both the former and the later prophets. And so [clears throat], I think that it's possible that Mephiboseth, who was a descendant from King Saul who had potential rights to the kingship, he was disabled with a mobility impairment. And it seemed to affect, have some effect on his ability to be able to become king. And also it may have also reflected on this character because he turned out to be not much of a--he turned out to not be a hero later on in the story of David in Second Samuel. So that would be maybe one example and in the prophets themselves, sometimes blindness and deafness are used-- especially to refer to personal characteristics of blindness: or unable to understand —deafness: inability to obey. And I can say that in the Christian Testament the Apostle Paul uses them in exactly those ways, which is a little bit of a problem if you're a reader of the Christian Testament. What do you-- we'll have to think about what--how one should think about that, right? But yes, so it is true that at least for readers that they will use some of the characterizations of significant disabilities like blindness and deafness to also represent character in someone. [pause] Which is one of the malfunctions of, you know, when people read the Bible, [sarcastically] everyone understands everything—ha! And so there's--it's easy for sometimes things to become misused, Cecelia, please go ahead!

>> Cecelia: Yeah this makes me wonder, I guess -- after all I  don't really know what are the functions, what were the functions of the priest--of the high priest? If--if deafness--in other words it's not necessarily giving a sermon, right? If muteness is-- it's mostly handling the sacrifice. Is that correct?

>> Dave: That's correct, and doing some cleanup work also, although that might have been delegated to other temple workers among the Levites. In Second Kings we find out that Levites were teachers, and at one point they were sent into what used to have been--had been before the Northern Kingdom from the Southern Kingdom of Judah, they were sent out there to try and convert people back to Judaism by teaching. So the Levites also, so in the Tribe of Levi one particular family, the family of Aaron, and the descendants of Aaron, were the priests, and all the rest of the families of the Levites had the other tasks: moving the Tent of Meeting, breaking it down, setting it up, moving it around, cleaning up after the mess. Also, then, singing, and so forth, we see in Second Chronicles--they're singing, they have choirs organized. And so they had other--and then teaching also, in Second Kings. So we have seen that they have other duties. So the priests themselves potentially could have taught--certainly Moses taught. And in a sense we have Aaron teaching the other priests, and of course, at the beginning we started with the quote from Hillel—Hillel, who said that let Aaron--we should let Aaron teach us. So that would also be kind of a hint that they could, but it wasn't--what was necessary for them to do was to do the stuff that was in the Temple. And later, when the Temple was no more, then Aaronides would need to find something else to do and could become leaders in synagogues and so forth.

>> Cecelia: Mm, thank you.

>> Dave: There you go. I think, Antonio go ahead, please.

>> Antonio: Yes, David I -- you know, I — I'm trying to articulate my question but I think it's more of a reaction. I wonder, it seems that these people were able to still fulfill their  jobs despite having some certain disabilities, but   I wonder what was their sense of perfection? Was there, was perfection coming as a requirement from God, or was still it something imposed by society?

>> Dave: Well there is--there is the idea bodily perfection in the Bible. There's actually a word for it in Hebrew, which is "tamim," which I will now put in the chat so that you can have that. Here's the chat here so one second— "Tamim" equals-- bodily perfection. Or, maybe better is able-bodied, maybe not bodily perfection but able-bodied. [Dave mutters to himself] So tamim is -- I'm going to be slightly technical now -- it's a class of words that's called an abstract plural. So it's plural and that sometimesnmakes the word abstract. And so this is the word for able-bodied. And you see pictures of the abled-bodied or the bodies that are tamim in the Song of Songs, AKA "Canticles," AKA Song of Solomon. But Song of Songs. And those bodies are celebrated as—and actually called tamim. The high priest's body is not tamim. [pause] So there--there is a idea of at least when you're thinking about love making of bodies being perfected and beautiful and so forth. But in any case even if the priest's body was a beautiful body, even if the priest was tamim, it still had to be covered up. And all these attachments given to him. [long pause] Okay so--and I actually, I thank you for asking that question because that was in my talk but I forgot to talk about it so. Go ahead Shelly, please.

>> Shelly: A couple, a couple of things. In Judaism the--there we go--the descendants of the kohanim, the priests, exist today. And you know, if you meet somebody whose last name is Cohen or some derivative of Cohen, they're descended from the kohanim or the high priest. And in my family, my great-grandfather was a kohen, and all his sons were kohanim, but the daughters and so forth were not. And that is, you know, more the Orthodox and Conservative traditions. But I'm of a more liberal tradition of Judaism, and I like to think that, you know that, that all the children are descendants, without regard to gender, of the kohanim, which would make me a kohenet [chuckles]. I'm just saying, you know, maybe that's why I love Torah so much and I love learning so much. The other thing, and I mentioned this to Dave earlier, is that in our synagogues, there are still vestiges of how Aaron was garbed, how the high priest was garbed. Our Torah scrolls are one good example where there—Torahs have a cover over them. And kind of like that robe that we saw a picture of. And there's all kinds of different artistic interpretations of what goes on a Torah scroll. But one of our Scrolls has a breastplate with the 12 Tribes of Israel, or the descendants of-- the descendants of Jacob and that is, that is mentioned in the Torah, in the Old Testament, in terms of the very long discussion in Exodus about what the priests wore, how the whole layout of the Tabernacle and all of these things. And so those all carry out--some of the Torahs have crowns with bells on them. Just--pretty fascinating. And I love--I loved showing our students at our synagogue where I used to teach--I loved showing them that, especially as we would study what Aaron you know, what Aaron was garbed in for the high priest and take them to the sanctuary and take out the Torah scroll. And they're just fascinated to see that really strong connection between what they see, what they hear, what they read in Torah, and then see it actually in their -- lives in real time. So.

>> Dave: Yeah that's very cool, yes.

>> Jane: One of the things that, you know, on some level we're sitting here looking at Aaron and looking at all the garments and reading in Exodus, and I remember doing a Bible study on Exodus,  and the people in the group sort of saying, what— this is all absurd, like what are all this stuff going on? And I said, "Have you watched the clergy get dressed on a Sunday?" Right? Like— it--we have not—that is the--the sense of preparing to engage in ritual continues, you know. And I think that we sometimes sort of forget that though there have been sort of slight alterations of what we see as essential--like Shelly as you were describing  how the pieces have been integrated into the Torah, right? And the reading and the scrolls from which you read--it's all been interpreted also into Christian worship and tradition in both the layout of our physical worship spaces, the clothes we wear--and so I--it just, it has been interesting to me to, like, you know, when you get into all the dimensions of the Temple-- to sort of push Christians on, "No no no," like, "Don't think this sounds weird." Right? Understand how this is the root of traditions that persist, both in ways that are maybe inspiring, but also in ways that may be limiting to us as we move forward, like, the male cousins of the Cohen family, right? Like how do we reinterpret these traditions?

>> Shelly: Exactly. Exactly. That's what makes it so beautiful.

>> McKenzie: And I'll tell you that tradition dies hard because a few weeks ago when it was 100 degrees in Long Beach, I was begging Jane not to make me wear my, my alb and all of the things I have to put on to be a lay eucharistic minister and she wouldn't, she wouldn't take it, she wouldn't buy it.

>> Jane: We turned on the air conditioning.

>> McKenzie: We did.

>> Dave: Well there--it creates a kind of liminality, where you move from one world into another world. It sets up the liminality—would be a nice technical academic word to describe it. Well I was told by Jane that I absolutely must at 8:10 wind down and tell you what's going to happen next week. And that's what the topic is for next week. Well next week we're going to talk about the first disability law that we know in any literature, which just happens to be in Leviticus of all places—Leviticus 19:14. And so we're going to talk about that and other laws in the Bible that relate to disability. And we'll discover that we will have more categories, but we have two categories of disability now: mumim and not mumim. But we'll find that we have some other categories as we explore. And darn it if you can't come next week the wonderful fact here is all of this has been recorded and should be made available so you can catch up if you want to catch up. I turn it back to the host.

>> McKenzie: Well, thank you everybody so much for being here. Yeah, shout out to Ada. It was really great that she was here. Shout out to Jessica, our captioner, and to Dave of course for putting this on. RespectAbility, St. Luke's. It's been such a great collaboration.