>> McKenzie: Welcome everybody. For those who have not been yet, this is a collaboration between my church home, St. Luke's, and my place of work, RespectAbility. Philip here today is here in a professional capacity, helping with the Zoom. So we're really glad he's here. Shelly should be here in a little bit. She was gonna be a little bit late. But yeah, welcome to everybody. I just wanted to say that RespectAbility is looking to start collaborating with other faith communities. So if you're part of a faith community who is interested in doing some sort of a program like this, please do contact us because we would love to expand our work in this field. With that said, I think I'm just gonna hand it over to Dave.

>> Dave: Oh, thank you! Good evening, everybody. It's my pleasure to be here with you, and to-- talk a little bit tonight. And please, take note of the fact that if you would like to have the Spanish translation you should go to the Spanish channel. And also if I end up speaking too fast for anyone, I would appreciate it if you give me a shout out, so I'll slow down, because sometimes I get excited and just plunge forward. Also, if there's any term that I use, any technical term, which sometimes I'm wont to use as an academic then, and I didn't explain it, you should virtually kick me in the shins. Okay? So this will help remind me that I should explain things that aren't immediately obvious. So I just wanna check that you set me up for share screen, because in a minute I'll put on the slides that we'll take a look at that will help guide our talk this evening. And at the end of the talk we'll have time for a question and answer and comments, and you can also put your questions or comments in the chat. That's another way for us, to you know, hear back from you, or to see what you had have to say, and respond to it. So I'm gonna go ahead, and share screen here, and we'll do a little bit of a review. And you can tell me if all of you are able to see this. Sometimes Zoom lies to me, but it looks like you can. So this is our third talk, or third evening, and I'm going to start this as a slide show. So let's see, the current slide —- so you can see that tonight our topic is the first disability law, which I would claim is in the book of Leviticus. It's not that other ancient cultures haven't thought about disability because they have. We have some texts, from ancient Sumer, and some texts from ancient Egypt. And also, we'll look at one of the Egyptian ones tonight. But this seems to be the first law that is deliberately written to add protections for people with disabilities. And this was significant for me, personally, to realize this at one time, because I had been active in lobbying for the passage of ADA or the Americans with Disabilities Act, back at the turn of the decade, from the 1980s. To the 1990s for several--2 or 3 years I'd been working on that. And then, some years later, in the late nineties, I realized Oh! OMG, here's the first disability law right here! My goodness! And I got kind of excited about that when I realized it, and began thinking more seriously at that point, what the Bible would say about disability. And that "ding dong" in the background, that was for emphasis. So we've been talking about Moses and Aaron in the last 2 sessions, and so I'm going to do a kind of quick review, so we can keep fresh in our minds some of the ideas that have come up. So the first time we talked about Moses as a disabled leader, and the Bible tells us in Exodus, this passage in Exodus here, 4:10-12 that he had a heavy mouth and a heavy tongue. And there was also some indications that he might have had a mobility impairment, and difficulty stretching out his hand. But this is a little bit speculative— this last one especially. But there is some evidence for it--direct evidence for a speech impediment. And what we find out in Exodus 4 which is a surprise, and might be the most important passage, in the entire bible, about disability -- is that Moses' speech impediment counted on the same level as blindness, deafness, hearing, seeing, and speech facility. And we get this impression from the use of a similar noun form devoted, mostly devoted to disability terms, for all of these, which is kind of the big surprise. Maybe we could say for the Divine perspective, hearing and deafness are kind of on the same level, where seeing and blindness is kind of on the same level, or being able to speak and having some difficulty in speaking are on the same level, from that Divine perspective. And despite all of this, Moses still led. And if we continue with our last night, we talked about Aaron as Cyborg. Of course the Cyborg part is a little bit of a joke, but it does refer to the fact that his body had to be modified in different ways-- really enabled by various assistive devices, the things that he put on, the blood and oil that was put on his body parts, the sandwich sacrifice that he held in his hands, and so forth, the sprinkling of blood on his clothing. All of those things needed to be done for him to function as a high priest. So just as a person with a body, it still was insufficient for him to be able to act as a high priest, in his like every day clothes or something. And we also found out last time that any priest could be kept from functioning as a priest by one of 12 visible bodily blemishes. To me, what's sort of interesting was I forgot to mention the visible part last time, but one of you, it was Jane, deduced that just from hearing the conversation. So I want to give her another shoutout here. So these visible bodily blemishes, which is how it's usually translated--but in Hebrew are mumim. So this word is kind of important for us, the Hebrew term, because it represents a category of disability in ancient Israel and a different time and place and climates, mumim were a category of disabilities that were visible. And so deafness and muteness-- and here we have also speech impediment— were not counted as mumim. They were counting--counted as something else, which we could call "not-mumim" I suppose. So we walked away with 2 ancient Biblical disability categories. Mumim, or blemishes, and those that aren't. So any Israelite woman, man, child or disabled priest, even, there was something—there was a kind of a workaround, which was both weird and interesting. And it was the Nazirite vow. We talked about this last time. So anyone, including a disabled priest or disabled person, able men, because women were not priests otherwise, although we do have evidence that Zipporah, Moses' first wife and also-- Ana, in the book of First Samuel, did some things that were priestly. But here we have this Nazirite vow, which allows people with disabilities to participate in sacred ritual, including putting their hair on the altar of sacrifice as a sacrifice. So they in that moment were acting as a priest for themselves and were able then to work around the obstacle that the Levites, the Levitical priest, had, if they had a mum. So that's where we left off last time, and where we are going to begin tonight. We're going to talk about the third leader within the Israelite trica of leaders at the time of Moses. Of course Moses was one of the leaders, and Aaron, who is the high priest, or became the high priest, was a second leader. But according to the prophet Micah, there is a third leader, and that is Miriam. And she's going to point us towards a third category of disability in ancient Israel. So this will be kind of interesting, but first we want to think about the first disability law, because the 2 categories that were mentioned, the mumim and the non-, or the ones that aren't, are at play in the particular law. So I'm going to go back to sharing screen. We'll take a look at that. Okay. [mutters to himself] Oh, I have to turn the slide show back on. Ha. Okay, slide show. Current slide. Okay, boom, okay. Okay, so-- So we had our 2 different categories. Okay, so the text that we want to think about tonight is found in Leviticus, chapter 19 verse 14. I think that I suggested last time that Leviticus 19 is a very important chapter in the Bible and in the Torah, which the first 5 books of the Bible--it's approximately in the middle of Leviticus. I think that most people who think of Leviticus as not a very fun book to read, they would think also that Leviticus 19 surely is some just random chapter. But it turns out that it's kind of a switchboard. If you think of the old-timey switchboards you used to see, in the movies from the 1930s or 40s, where there was a a telephone operator, and you'd call and you'd say, okay, Jefferson, 3, 1949, who are you calling? And they tell you the exchange, and the number, and then they would take this gigantic plug and plug it into the board, and you were connected to your phone call. So Leviticus functions in that way, like a sort of old-timey telephone connector board or switchboard in that, not only does it reference about 75 laws, it also alludes to many more. And so it's a chapter that is a kind of mini-Torah or a mini book of the law, a mini-Torah, and encapsulates many of the ideas there. And so this is the law: you shall not revile the Deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind. You shall fear your God. I am the Lord. So almost every word in this particular verse is important, and you'll notice that there's a kind of a pairing here of deafness and blindness. And we've already found out from our last study that deafness is not a mum, it's not a blemish, and does not prevent you from being a priest or acting as a priest. But blindness, which is visible to others, is a disability that prevents you from acting as a priest, is a mum, blemish. And there are 12 of them for priests. And so you could see where blindness could trip you up in the sanctuary. You might trip over something and hurt yourself. But since this was, the ancient temple was the Temple of Silence, the singing was done outside. What you have then is - you could be Deaf and still signal other priests what you were doing--you could have a kind of workplace sign language. So one way that we can think about this, then, is that "blind" is the head term for a whole category of disabilities, for those 12 disabilities that are mumim, which included having one arm or leg that was shorter than the other, having a hunchback or having some disability in your genitals and so forth, that blind stands for those disabilities that keep you from functioning as a priest. And deafness stands then, for other disabilities that might impair your function and other areas of your life, but not in every area, and if you were a priest, it did not disable you. So we have head terms for 2 categories, and so deafness pulls with it the idea of muteness, speech, impediments, and other kinds of disabilities that are not blemishes, invisible, like infertility, and blindness pulls with it all of those that are visible. But that doesn't end with what we can understand here about this instantiation of the 2, because one of the things that the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament loves to do is to use words pairs. And this is a word pair, deaf and blind and blind and deaf are used as word pairs and a number of other places in the Bible, and they'll inform our conversation in the future, this word pair. But a word pair also stands for an overarching category sometimes, and in this case I would submit that blind and deaf, or deaf and blind, stands for the idea of permanent disabilities, or at least, in the time of ancient Israel would have been permanent disabilities that there weren't ways of doing operations to correct them, or something like that. So here, then, we have a verse that intends, I believe, to encompass the idea of disability, but before we have a term like "disability." So the way that abstract category in Hebrew, so in the Old Testament, Hebrew Bible, sometimes does that, is why I'm using a pile-up of terms. And here the pile-up is with 2 terms. So, and then it says that you're not to revile the deaf, or put a stumbling block before the blind. And this is where it begins to get really sort of interesting, because, well, first you know, reviling the deaf, calling a a deaf person by names—by name-- not by their name, but calling them a name or something else, insulting them, because this would "revile" in Hebrew also means "insult," and it also means "to curse" and it has another layer of meeting which I'll get to in just a minute. So, cursing the deaf or insulting the deaf-- One of the things that might come to your mind, if you're a person that counts themself as able--and see my thing— [rhetorically] "Well, how is that harming them?! They can't hear it!" "How is that harming them?! They can't hear it!" But of course it could attack their reputation, and it might not harm them directly by the hearing. But if they've cursed or insulted them, other people might begin to think derogatory things of this person with a disability. And we were hearing a little bit of that I think from one of our participants this evening earlier, of how something had happened to them. So, but the other part of it is sort of interesting, too, because in ancient Israel there was an idea that a curse had almost had a life of its own, that a curse in one place in the prophets, and the prophet Zechariah, the curse is imagined as having a kind of wings and flying out and affecting people. So here there may also be this idea that the curse itself does something that damages the person directly, and not just causes an embarrassment, or people thinking derogatory things of them. So this brings us to the other level of meaning here, because this is just a little bit technical now, that the verb in Hebrew, this, underneath of this, that's been translated as "revile" is a special kind of a verb that simultaneously does 2 things. It simultaneously declares something that the person is accursed, and it makes it real, makes it happen. So the verb simultaneously declares and makes it happen. And this is the form of the verb, what it communicates. So if you think about a governor, for instance, who is opening up a new highway, it could have been-- He or she may go out, and there'll be a ribbon cutting ceremony, and they have a gigantic pair of scissors, and the governor stands there and he snips, or she snips the gigantic ribbon, and says, "I declare this new highway open!" And so, with the governor's words, 2 things happen at the same time--the governor declares that the highway is open and makes the highway open at that moment to traffic. So likewise here-- likewise, here the condemnation, the curse, the insult is not only declared, but it becomes an active force. And then with the stumbling block, there is a special word that's used for that, the stumbling block, for instance, in Isaiah, this also, also appears in Isaiah, chapter 8. at verse 14, or is sometimes translated "stumble stone." And so you could think of the stumbling block, or stumble stone, as a step that you might stumble on, stumble over as you're walking. You know, as people become more aged, they become more prone to stumbling and falling down, and it's very easy for them to trip over things. And falls become more and more scary as you age and you lose control of your balance, as you kind of age, into a disability, proving that all of us are only temporarily abled if we are abled. So here there's perhaps an echo of that notion of the aging person, fearing to fall down. But there's something else here, too, just like the last one—it can be taken more than just as a literal stumble stone. But it can be something else, because this, the very same verb here is used in another way For instance, it's understood in the book of Deuteronomy as misdirection. So Deuteronomy, in chapter 27, in its cursing liturgy— here's this cursing coming up again, by the way—so in Deuteronomy 27, there is a cursing liturgy where all of the Israelites say, "Cursed be people if they do this or that; they go through 12 of them. And among the things that are cursed are "Cursed be those that participate in idolatry," and so forth. But in the cursing liturgy, there's also "Cursed be those that put a stumbling block in front of the blind." So the same idea is showing up in Deuteronomy. But there it's been argued in particular by the world's Mr. Leviticus, who was talking about Deuteronomy, of course, Jacob Milgrom, M-I-L-G-R-O-M, is his last name--he argued, that it really meant misdirection there. And so we could see that here, too, we could read it back into Leviticus, and see that "You shall not misdirect the blind," and there you can see even a wider troubling behavior with respect to a person who is blind, that has blindness. So no stumbling, no misdirection, no cursing, no insulting of the deaf, and no stumbling or misdirecting the blind. Now, there's one more thing I could say about what happens to this reviling. The same term is used in Leviticus chapter 24 at verse 14 in the somewhat famous incident of the blasphemer. So in Leviticus 24 there's a story about someone who blasphemes God. And the term that's used for blaspheming is the same verb here, "reviling," this translated "reviling." Take a [indistinguishable] what it is in Hebrew, and it has the same idea that it declares the insult to God and it makes it a reality at the same moment. And also here. So we could think of this reviling of the deaf as also blaspheming the deaf, and— deaf in some sense. And it equates use of this verb equates reviling the deaf with the blaspheming, of the divine being. So this is reinforced in the last 2 clauses of the verse. "You shall fear your God." So in other words, you should have respect to God. The kicker here is, that you should do these 2 things because you have respect for God. And then that itself is also reinforced with the phrase, "I am the Lord." Now those of you that come from Christian communities and not the Jewish community may not be aware that this is the first statement in the First Commandment. You might be aware of that. But in the Jewish tradition, this is the First Commandment. The declaration of the Divine Name. The declaration of the God, goodness of God! Of God being the only God. "I am the Lord," and many of the laws that are in Leviticus 19 have this as a refrain, and also here it's a refrain. It is emphasizing, this repetition of it is emphasizing that this, in a sense, connects it to the first commandment of the 10 Commandments. It gives it a connection to the 10 Commandments. And so we have all of these layers that stress it's important, and it's giving the most important heads or fence around persons with visible disabilities and invisible disabilities that would be possible within that biblical text. So, and this is, these are some of the things that we can learn from this particular verse. It's possible that Moses also knew of a proverb in the instruction of Amenemope. That's "amen" like A-M-E-N, "em," E-M again, O-P-E, "Amenemope," the instruction of Amenemope, which is an additional text from about the time of Ramesses, which is about the time that Moses was in Egypt, going to the Pharaoh, and telling him "Let my people go." And so in this text it says, "Do not laugh at a blind man, and do not tease a dwarf." Maybe we would say now, a person small in stature. But don't tease someone who's small in stature, and don't laugh at a blind man. So it, here in this text, the laughing might have come at the expense of the deaf person. And the deaf person is swapped out also for the dwarf in the instruction of Amenemope But there was a roughly similar idea floating around in ancient Egypt. So it's possible that Moses also, if you were the one that was one that wrote this down, knew about that. Okay, So this is our first disability law. And we talked about the problem of reviling. I think you could tell me what you think a little bit later, but I think I made a case that people would be hurt who are-- who are deaf, by being reviled. And I think that I made a case that there can be an association with the first command-- the first of the 10 Commandments with this command. But there is a another connection that could be made, because it's only a few verses away from the love your neighbor as yourself, and Leviticus 19:18, or the Golden Rule. And actually there's a second Golden Rule at the end of Leviticus 19, which says, "Love the resident alien as yourself." We probably need to hear more sermons on that one, and that particular verse. That's my editorial comment. But love your neighbor as yourself, so it's in the same context, in a way as that. And so you might be able to argue that this is a kind of special instantiation of love it your neighbor. It also says, for instance, just before loving your neighbor, that you should not hate your brother in your heart, but you should rebuke him if you have something against him. So you're not to hate your kinfolk, which is kind of negative version of love your neighbor as yourself. So again we might be able to see that this is also, just as the love your neighbor comes towards the end of the first part of Leviticus 19 before this little turning point in the next verse, verse 19. So this, Leviticus 19:14 comes a little bit before this, and kind of sets up the various passages that talk about not hating your kinfolk and so forth. So there could be another connection here. I'll leave that for preachers. Now I want to come to Miriam, and maybe I can do this a little bit differently. Oh, it doesn't want to for some reason. Let me show you everything. But so we have, this is another picture from Mark Chagall, which we saw a little bit earlier in the first talk, where we have the figure of Miriam, and I'm circling her figure with my cursor. Someone standing by that might be a guard, or possibly the daughter of Pharaoh-- over here I'm circling her with my cursor. And then the baby Moses down here, now on the side of the river. But I've brought here a picture just to remind us that Miriam is one of 3 leaders. It's very clear in Micah 6:4 that the 3 of them were the leaders of ancient Israel--at the time of Moses. Each of them had a different role, but the 3 of them were the ones that were their leaders. So one of the things that we find out about Miriam and her story, which is scattered through several different books of the Torah, she shows up in Exodus, and then she shows up again in the book of Numbers which is the book after Leviticus, and so I titled this "Miriam Meets Temporary Disability." And this is really a kind of controversial story. It's really an uncomfortable story, because it shows that she undergoes a kind of punishment. So this is how Numbers 12:10 and 11 reads: "When the cloud went away from over the tent..." Now the cloud that's being referred to is the cloud of the Divine Presence that was above the Tent of Meeting, which was the model of the throne room of heaven. But it was on earth, of course, the Tent of Meeting. And the Christian tradition in some translations this is often called the Tabernacle. And it was also a model of the Temple yet to be built. So the presence, the Divine Presence is seen here as hanging over the tent, and Miriam had become lepered so we have to make a correction in the translation here. We know from mummies and skeletons, and surviving skeletons preserved by salt water off the Mediterranean coast, and so forth, that leprosy had not yet reached the Middle East at this time, even as early as possibly this was maybe 1300 Before the Common Era. The story seems to be set at that time, in any case, so first of all, it can't be leprosy because of that. But second of all, this, the symptoms that are described in Leviticus chapter 13 do not, are not-- the symptoms of leprosy. And we've known this for at least 70 years. It takes a long time for the stuff to make it into Bible translations I have to tell you. This Bible translation I'm using does have a footnote, and says that it could be a skin disease. But it's really rather been proven, like I said, for 70 years, that it's a scaly skin disease or a set of different kinds of scaly skin diseases like psoriasis. Maybe you remember those ads, the heartbreak of psoriasis. Okay, anyway, various kinds of skin diseases that discolor the skin, make it scaly and so forth, dry it out. And in her case, the scaly skin disease made her white as snow, and Aaron turned towards Miriam and saw that she had the scale disease. And then Aaron said to Moses, "O my lord, do not punish us for a sin that we have so foolishly committed." So Aaron is taking up for himself but, also for Miriam here. And the problem here was that Moses had remarried, he had taken an African woman as his wife, and there seems to have been some criticism [indistinguishable] With, you know, twenty-first century eyes we might see this as racist, but it could have just been outsider—criticism of an outsider But in any case, she was different looking, and different. And so Miriam had criticized her, and the passage seems to suggest that this temporary disability was, had a Divine source. Now, one of the things that this particular disability does, this scaly skin disease, is it makes you ritually impure. And I want to be very careful with this term "impurity." So this is a temporary disability, and I'm using the term disability somewhat loosely now from impurity. But impurity, Biblically speaking, is ritual impurity. Has nothing to do with moral impurity at all, and it doesn't have anything to do really with cleanliness, either, or uncleanness. Ritual impurity comes from natural causes, so some of the impairing conditions that temporarily impede your work, or for a priest, their service in the Temple would be from genital discharges, what are called lochial flows after child birth, so the after birth and the blood and tissue that flows, continues to flow, from a woman who gave birth sometimes for as long as 40 days, for touching corpses or carcasses of animals, and from scale disease, from this, too. So it's a ritual impurity, and these have the capacity to pass; most all of these pass quickly. In Leviticus Chapter 14, there's a ritual that's given in case somebody recovers from scale disease. They're to go and present themselves to the priest. And the priest takes a good look, and he says, okay, you have been healed, and then the person is supposed to go, and and make a sacrifice and show themselves there with their sacrifice, which is a a bird, one bird that is set free to fly away and to symbolically carry away any remaining impurity, or any remaining sense of disapproval of the person and the other bird is sacrificed on the altar. So this is what's done for the person with this ritual impurity from scale disease. And so what this does is it gives us a third chat category now. So the story of Miriam, although it's an uncomfortable story, gives us a third category of disability, temporary disability. Disability that's not a mum, and in a sense it's not a non-mum, either. [laughs] It's just a third thing. There's no way that ritual impurity intersects with the blem—the visible mumim, the visible disabilities, or intersects with the invisible disabilities. It is a different, a different species of disability. Or maybe we should think of it as even a different kind of phylum or genus, or something— a category that's above a specie. Right, if you're thinking biologically, it's another level up. And so we have 3, and we want to think about this just a little bit more, and to think about this sort of difficult idea about disability in this particular case seems to be a Divine punishment for Mariam for the things that she said about Moses' wife, the fact that she was different. And then that's why my "ouch" is there. Because it's just uncomfortable to hear something like this. And so I think some of you may also be-- find it uncomfortable to think about this idea of judgment being in the form of a disability, but I would just like to ask the question, well how do modern people get ideas like this, that disability is a punishment for people sinning or doing bad things. Where did they get that idea from? And I have to say that one thing, one place, the people get that idea or can get that idea is from passages like this in the Bible. Now, it doesn't mean that this is totally the way things go, but readers sometimes are prone to generalize, they don't necessarily look deeper into things to find out what other possibilities there might be, and can, often walk away with mis- impressions, and I see a raised hand from Jane Gould -- go ahead Jane. This is a good place to intervene, I think.

>> Jane: So my question is, it's Aaron, who says this is because of sin. So Isn't that rather our tradition? Let's blame Miriam for this sin, that if it was a sin, the one you described was Moses's, not hers at all. And we're suggesting that she somehow now is given scaly skin disease, because Moses's sinned? Right, like, so for me, there's also the --

>> David: Not that Moses sinned, or maybe she was suggesting, but the suggestion is that, and I think it [crosstalk] is Miriam, who -- whose accusation or criticism of Moses was the issue.

>> Jane: Was the sin?

>> David: Well, that's for the -- that's for the preacher to decide, perhaps, or to expatiated on.

>> Jane: Well, there's the preacher's question! [crosstalk] because right? You know, it feels like she is the one that, "Let's just put on this blame on her." There's a good long tradition of this in Biblical interpretation, right?

>> Dave: Yeah, that's why I'm bringing it up. [David and Jane laugh] Because there is a good long tradition of it, even though Aaron includes himself in it when he -- even though he says it's also —

>> Jane: It's a "we"!

>> Dave: Yeah, "we." So "we" there But it is a place where the woman appears to be blamed in the tradition about the text. And so, I'm wondering out loud [Jane laughs] why this is so also. Maybe it's because people don't weigh things out or are too quick to jump to conclusions and overlook the "we," for instance, at least that part. But it's -- but there you go. It's one of those problems just not completely solvable in terms of interpretation. But I think we both could probably see people jumping on this and saying, "Aha! Aha! Now we know not just women are bad, but" you know, "disabilities prove that somebody has sinned" right. And of course we'll find later that Jesus was asked that question -- in the Christian Testament. Well, I gotta -- I gotta go one worse on this, Jane. Okay, So brace yourself now. Here we go to the next one. Okay, So we'll go back to sharing the screen. So there is another story about this, and I have to tell you, it's about another woman, and it's also in Numbers. So maybe this tells us something about the book of Numbers. This is about the sotah, which is Hebrew word, but doesn't appear in the Bible, but is a Hebrew word for the suspected adulteress in Numbers 5. This is really, I have to tell you, is really a weird passage, because it involves this very strange ritual, where a husband feels jealous that maybe his wife has committed adultery It says the spirit of jealousy comes upon him and he drags his wife to the priest, and the priest takes dirt from the floor of the sanctuary and mixes it up with words or letters written on a piece of papyrus, it's crumbled up with a curse, and the sotah is asked to drink this water of the curse and then, if nothing happens, then it's okay, that she hasn't done anything, and the husband theoretically has to give give it up. But if something happens, and there's 2 possibilities of what might happen next; it says that her belly extends, and some other descriptive words, and I'll quote here one biblical scholar, Tikva Frymer-Kensky; that's F- R-Y-M-E-R, hyphen, K-E-N-S-K-Y. Tikva Frymer-Kensky. She argues that the woman's internal, reproductive organs, some or all of them prolapse. That what the Biblical writer has in mind is the prolapse of a woman's reproductive organs. And the second possibility which a scholar friend of mine, Rachel Magdalene, has argued in an article in the Anchor Bible Dictionary which is readily available in academic libraries, she argues that it is a miscarriage, it produces a miscarriage. And so what is, I guess this would be the controversial point about that, that what is an induced miscarriage? We would call that an abortion in modern times wouldn't we? So she argues that this is an abortion ritual. So we could say that, okay, this is a ritual that seems to be coming down on the side of patriarchy to save the husband in some way. But one of 2 things happens. There's this awful thing that happens to her body, or nothing happens. Now I used to think that this was like a clever, Divine way of saving the woman, that she would be going you know, through this ritual, and nothing would happen, and so then the husband would have to give up his jealousy and be assuaged by the result and she would go home and be okay. But there's something that I think was too naive about that on my part. So the second possibility is that the ritual is so psychologically intimidating that it might induce some kind of body response. Or you might believe that that there is going to be a response in the body because of the Divine word, just like there was in this other thing with Miriam, right. And so this is the most severe disability, then, if this is an actual prolapse of reproductive organs. This is the most serious disability of any kind it seems to me that happens to a woman in the Bible. The most serious disability for a man we haven't gotten to yet, but this, yes, it happened. And thus, we have a kind of fourth category of disability, which I'll just show you in a moment. But this would also then be a disability that was precipitated by punishment and trauma. Ouch! Induced by a ritual curse. So I'm going to stop sharing this. I see there's something in the chat. Let me just check and see what that is real quick. Our captioner is here. Okay, this has been good for a while. It looks like so, if anybody needs captioning, please go to that and see that. I'm going to go now and share the screen again. But this time I'm going to use my document camera. And so here it comes. Oh, it shows my notes instead. [talking to himself] Okay, and move this out of the way. Looks like I knocked my document camera. So this is a table of the different kinds of categories of disability that I mentioned to you. It's important to remember that there's different categories; we have in our own culture different categories for disability also. But it's important to remember that -- Wow, my document camera is getting excited. That's why it keeps flashing on squares. But if we go back to our body map, the Bible organizes disabilities around eyes and nose, or face ears and mouth, or hearing and speaking, limbs and trunk, genitals, interestingly, and skin and hair. So these are our 5 areas of the body that the Bible focuses on for bodily disability. So we have the mumim in the second column, or the visible disabilities to others: blindness, split nose, broken tooth, for mouth, lameness, hunchback, damaged testes for genitals, scars, and other kinds of things marking the body. That we also have the non-mumim which are not visible. And I'm going to say that it's also not another category, this next category. So these are disabilities that are not like the ones we just talked about, and are not like mumim, not likely visible. They're not like what happened to Miriam. And so this includes deafness and heavy tongue, and infertility with the genitals. And baldness this which is visible. But it is not something that would disable you as a priest from exercising your priesthood, because we know that even a that person with a Nazirite vow who's bald, unless they're a 100%, almost every single hair, in their body, they can still take the Nazirite vow, and have a spiritual service. So this category here, I'm using the word, the Hebrew word for impurity, and I'm sorry that this wasn't in the chat or some other place for you. But I'll just pronounce it for you, "tum'a," which would be spelled in English letters or Latin letters T-U-MA. "Tum'a." So we have the mumim, which are the visible. We have the non-mumim, which are mostly invisible, and we have tum'a, which are things that make one ritually impure and disable you temporarily, and discharge, certain kinds of discharges from genitals, make you temporarily disabled; and as you can't do your regular duties. And this scaly skin disease also does it. And the term for this is "tsarat," which would be spelled T-S-A-R-A-T if you're using Latin letters. And the other thing that causes this, interestingly, for the Nazirite, which is this category that has been flashing sometimes, is the hair of the Nazirite as hey break their vow before they're vow is over. This is also something that causes ritual uncleanness and prevents them from continuing in their Nazirite duties. And finally we have our new category, our fourth category, which is permanent exclusions from the community. And it might be that what happens to -- It's hard to say now where we would actually put this thing that happens to the sotah -- or the suspected -- this prolapse. It is going to be with the castrate, the permanent castrate is, because they have one extra thing that happens to them. Castrated male is permanently eliminated from the community. It prevents it from being in the community, although we'll see, later, in Isaiah the prophet, there's a workaround on that. But maybe we also have here this woman, because it says that she's condemned, that she is reproved by the thing that happens to her in Numbers chapter 5. And again notice, and strangely, we have, all across the spectrum of categories of disability, It's all on this line about what happens to genitals—fertility and [inaudible]. Okay. Well, I'm tired of the flashing blue light. So we'll read this, and we come now to a moment-- We're kind of at the conclusion for this evening of what I'm saying, and I want to hear your questions and comments. I'm certainly waiting for another comment about the sotah, that we have a somewhat complicated system of disability in ancient Israel showing that there was a very rich cultural formulations surrounding the ideas of disability. Not just one idea, but the ideas, about disability. We should remember then, in our culture and in other cultures there can be equally complex systems. And they don't automatically correspond to each other. So the cautionary note for us to take the ancient Israelite examples of disability and automatically use them to speak about how we think about disability in this age doesn't always work. And we can see that that would be a source then for some, possibly some misunderstandings about disabilities. I have to say that when I worked for a season as a lobbyist for the Arc, which of the time was known as the Association for [R word] Citizens, but now it's just called the Arc, that I often had parents come and talk to me about this and say that they weren't sure whether God was punishing them because their children had a disability, or that God was blessing them because they had children with a disability. And they would say things to me like Well, they got angry when people said, "Well, this is a blessing; you have been blessed by God," because they knew that it was tougher. But they were also mad when people said, "Oh, God has cursed you because you have children with the disability," because they knew that wasn't true, either. So I think that we know then that because the Bible is a culturally important book, that sometimes ideas are taken from it and misunderstood. Okay, I'm gonna shut up now, and I want to hear questions and comments in the time that we have left. [long pause] [long pause] Oh, my goodness! [laughs] Have I silenced everybody?

>> McKenzie: Shelly has her hand up.

>> Shelly: I'll bite. [laughs]

>> Dave: Go ahead, Shelly.

>> Shelly: I just am really enjoying all of this, and I wanna go back to the Miriam story in Numbers.

>> Dave: Okay.

>> Shelly: And even, I think one of the lessons that comes from that particular story is in is in numbers 12, verse 15. And this is after God told Moses, "Let her be shut out of camp for 7 days, then let her be readmitted." So 15 says, "So Miriam was shut out of camp 7 days, and the people did not march on until Miriam was readmitted." In other words, everybody, everybody counts, everybody belongs and everybody is part. We don't move on without all of us. Which kind of takes us back to Exodus When Moses was speaking to Pharaoh, and I can't remember which plague it was, but Pharaoh said, "Okay, okay, you can go. You can go and leave, leave the— your flocks, and so on, and so forth," and Moses said, "Nope, we will all go. Nobody goes unless we all go."

>> Dave: Oh, that's such a beautiful thought! And because we can say, you know, our whole society shouldn't go unless we all go.

>> Shelly: Mhm. Yeah. [pause]

>> Dave: Thank you for bringing that up. That was excellent. And Jane, I was also almost expecting that you would say something. [pause] But Virginia has something. Virginia, I remember that you had a good thought the last time. Go ahead.

>> Virginia: Oh, thank you so much. And this is more going back to the Moses story. When you were reviewing him, and you were describing all of his disabilities, and you talked about that he had the speech impediment, and that he had lameness, and that he had the inability to extend his hand, and that's what catches my attention, the inability to extend his hand. And I've asked other people, and nobody's told me what they thought. I want to know, what thought you're aware of, or what thought you have about the possibility that Moses actually had a severe stroke-- because of the particular symptoms. So I'd like to hear what you have to say about that.

>> Dave: I could go to the end of Deuteronomy, where it says that Moses' eyesight was not dimmed, and that he was vigorous. So, if he had a stroke, then that would be evidence that he'd fully recovered. it also could work the other way. It could be evidence that he hadn't had a stroke.

>> Virginia: That's interesting, thank you.