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God, Justice, and Society: Aspects of Law and Legality in the Bible

Jonathan Burnside

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What is the real meaning of 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth'? Where did the idea for the 'Jubilee 2000' and 'Drop the Debt' campaigns come from? And what, really, are the 'Ten Commandments'? In *God, Justice, and Society*, Jonathan Burnside looks at aspects of law and legality in the Bible, from the patriarchal narratives in the Hebrew Bible through to the trials of Jesus in the New Testament. He explores the nature of biblical law, legal thinking, and legal institutions by setting the biblical texts in their literary, social, and theological context.

Burnside questions the biblical texts from the perspective of an academic lawyer and criminologist and asks what the biblical materials contribute to our understanding about the nature and character of law. He examines much of biblical law and narrative that has formed the basis of Western civilization, while at the same time exploring differences between biblical law and modern legal concepts and legal assumptions. The resulting book is a cross-disciplinary analysis which recognizes the integration of law and theology.

God, Justice and Society presents biblical law as an integration of instructional genres in the Bible which together express a vision of a society ultimately accountable to God. Burnside seeks to understand both the application of law and legal theory to the Bible and the extent to which biblical law contributes important insights into legal dilemmas in today's world.

A holistic teaching website to support this book, containing downloadable resources, is available at www.seekjustice.co.uk.

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