



# Legal Revision and Religious Renewal in Ancient Israel

*Bernard M. Levinson*

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## **Legal Revision and Religious Renewal in Ancient Israel** Bernard M. Levinson

This book examines the doctrine of transgenerational punishment found in the Decalogue – the idea that God punishes sinners vicariously, extending the punishment due them to three or four generations of their progeny. Although a 'God-given' law, the unfairness of punishing innocent people in this way was clearly recognized in ancient Israel. A series of inner-biblical and post-biblical responses to the rule demonstrates that later writers were able to criticize, reject, and replace this doctrine with the notion of individual retribution. Supporting further study, it includes a valuable bibliographical essay on the distinctive approach of inner-biblical exegesis, showing the contributions of European, Israeli, and North American scholars. This Cambridge release represents a major revision and expansion of the French edition, *L'Herméneutique de l'innovation: Canon et exégèse dans l'Israël biblique*, nearly doubling its length with extensive content and offering alternative perspectives on debates about canonicity, textual authority, and authorship.

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