

## Introduction to the Bible

### **Dei Verbum – November 18, 1965**

God uses the Word to teach us

God has always revealed Himself to us

Sacred tradition

Word of God interpreted through man

Old Testament is preparing for coming of Christ

“NT hidden in the Old and the Old made manifest in the New”

### **Verbum Domini – September 30, 2010**

Apostolic exhortation

Incarnation shows God seeks dialogue with humankind

Must help people of our time encounter the living God

### **What is the Bible?**

Old Testament and New Testament

How many books? – 73 or 66?

Deuterocanonical

Canon of Scripture

Septuagint (LXX)

Council of Florence 1441

Divine Revelation

## **Biblical History**

Early Semitic Cultures 3000-2000 BC  
Patriarchal Period 1900-1300 BC  
Exodus 1300-1250 BC  
Judges 1250-1020 BC  
Jewish United Kingdom (David and Solomon) 1020-930 BC  
Kingdom Splits (Israel and Judah) 930-722 BC  
Judah Alone 722-586 BC  
Babylonian Exile 585-539 BC  
Postexilic Period 539-332 BC  
Greek Rule 332-175 BC  
Maccabees 175-1 BC  
Jesus 1-30/33 AD  
Paul's Missionary Journeys 45-58 AD  
Peter and Paul Executed 67 AD  
End of Apostolic Age (John's Death) 98 AD

## **Sections of the Bible**

### **Old Testament**

Pentateuch/Torah

History Books

Wisdom Literature

Prophets

6 major and 12 minor

### **New Testament**

Synoptic Gospels/Acts

Writings of John

Catholic Epistles

Letters of Paul

## **Approaches to Scripture**

Historical-critical method

Source criticism

Form criticism

Redaction criticism

## Sources

Bergsma, John: *Bible Basics for Catholics/New Testament Basics for Catholics*

Bergsma and Pitre: *A Catholic Introduction to the Bible: Old Testament*

Boadt, Clifford, Harrington: *Reading the Old Testament*

Numerous Authors: *Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture*

## Pentateuch Outline

### 4 source theory

Repetitions

Patriarch lies about wife being sister (Genesis 12, 20, 26)

Two creation stories (Genesis 1 and 2-3)

Abraham sends Hagar and Ishmael into desert (Genesis 16 and 21)

Two calls of Moses (Exodus 3 and 6)

Different words for same thing

Mt. Horeb vs. Mt. Sinai

Canaanites vs. Amorites

18<sup>th</sup> century – 2 words for God: Elohim and Yahweh

“Yahwist” source = J (Jahve, German)

“Elohist” source = E

“Priestly” source = P

Deuteronomy source = D

Sometimes sources blended together in one story

Noah and flood

Joseph (Gen 37)

### **Other ancient sources**

Pentateuch stories have close parallels in works of other ancient civilizations (Akkadian)

Creation myths (Enuma Elish)

Flood story in Epic of Gilgamesh (written around 2000 BC)

Code of Hammurabi (1800 BC)

May have been lost for a while (at least Deuteronomy)

2 Kings 22: 3, 8, 10-13 – finding of law in Temple post exile

### **Themes in Pentateuch**

Covenant

Adamic covenant

Noahic covenant

Abrahamic covenant

Mosaic covenant

Importance of having a “land”

Importance of names (Abraham; Jacob)

Disobedience and punishment cycle (more so in later books)

“Types” – person or thing that foreshadows or prefigures person or thing in NT

Adam and Eve; Abraham; Melchizedek; Isaac; Moses; liturgy; serpent cross...

## **General outline: focus on Sinai**

“Chiasm”

Derived from Greek “chi” = “X”

Genesis: Prologue – Israel’s past (and future)

Exodus 1-19: Israel from Egypt to Sinai

Exodus 20-40: Israel at Sinai, preparing for the liturgy

Leviticus: Israel’s liturgy established at Sinai

Numbers 1-10: Israel at Sinai, preparing to leave

Numbers 11-36: Israel from Sinai to Jordan River

Deuteronomy: Epilogue – Israel’s future (and past)

## **Genesis**

Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph

Finishes with Israelites in Egypt following famine

1-11: creation to birth of Abraham

12-36: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob

37-50: Jacob’s family, Joseph, and settling in Egypt

## **Exodus**

Moses leading deliverance of Israel to Holy Land

Ends with building of tent of meeting and Ark of Covenant

1-15: Israel in Egypt

16-18: Israel in the Wilderness

19-40: Israel at Sinai (Covenant 19-24, Tabernacle Constructed 25-40)

## **Leviticus**

Laws and commandments from God

Largely ignored by Christians but first book used to teach Hebrew to Jewish boys

## **Numbers**

More laws and commandments plus census

Continues story of wandering in desert

Seemingly chaotic (narrative interrupted by laws) but overall structure based on census

1-25: First Generation in Wilderness

26-36: Second Generation in Wilderness

## **Deuteronomy**

Written later as speech by Moses to show meaning of wandering in desert and law

“farewell speech” by Moses and death

Hugely important – in NT third to Psalms and Isaiah in references

1:1-4:43: Moses’ First Sermon (recap of Exodus and Wanderings)

4:44-26:19: Moses’ Second Sermon (laws Israel must obey)

27:1-31:30: Moses’ Third Sermon (prophecies for Israel’s future)

32-34: Concluding Material

## **Passages of note**

### **Genesis**

Two creation accounts

Six days of creation (panorama)/Creation of Adam and Eve (specific)

Protoevangelium (first Gospel) Genesis 3:15

Noah and the flood

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – nomadic peoples

Sacrifice of Isaac is “pre-enactment” of Jesus on Cross (Genesis 22)

Israel’s 12 sons – tribes

## **Exodus**

Moses saved from slaughter of innocents

Moses called by God – feeling of unworthiness

God’s name (Exodus 3:14)

I am who I am

Active nature of God existing of himself

Other gods “are not”

“Lord” (capital) = YHWH; “Lord” (not capital) = Adonai

Ten Commandments

Jewish and most Protestant – Exodus 20

Catholic and Lutheran – Deuteronomy 5

## **Leviticus**

God speaks to Moses from tabernacle making it “portable Mt. Sinai”

Holy vs. common (profane); clean vs. unclean

Sacrifices/offerings meant to be self-offering to God

Ordination of Levitical priests (Lev. 8)

Scapegoat – Lev. 16 – day of atonement

## **Numbers**

Spies’ report and revolt (13-14)

God threatens to kill all and restart but Moses intervenes (happened before)

Num 14: 20-23

## Deuteronomy

6:4 – most important – recited twice a day by Jewish people from ancient times

Chapters 12-26: Deuteronomic Code

30:15-20 – Choose life!

31:1-8: Joshua is successor to Moses

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### THE PENTATEUCH

The Documentary Hypothesis				
	Yahwist	Elohism	Deuteronomist	Priestly Source
Date	9th cent. (Wellhausen) 10th (von Rad, others) 5th (Schmid, Van Seters)	8th cent. (Wellhausen) No "E" (Volz/ Rudolph, many others)	7th–6th cent. (Wellhausen, many others) 10th cent. (Gordon, Rendsburg, Tigay [for parts]) 13th cent. (Kitchen)	5th cent. (Wellhausen) 8th cent. (Kaufmann) 12th cent. for parts (Milgrom)
Divine Name	"Yahweh" (יהוה), even in Genesis	"Elohim" (אלהים) and other titles until Exodus 3	"Yahweh our God" (יהוה) "אלהינו", "Yahweh your God" (יהוה) (אלהיכם)	"Elohim" (אלהים) or "El-Shaddai" (אל שדי) until Exodus 6
Provenance	Judah	Northern Israel	Israel (Levitical and/or prophetic reformers who fled to Judah after 722 B.C.)	Judah (postexilic priestly community)
Extent	Continuous narrative Genesis–Numbers	Episodic and supplemental; begins with Abraham	Deuteronomy; some edits or insertions in earlier books.	Most of Exodus 35–Numbers 36, including all of Leviticus
Source Profile	a. Epic and vibrant style; master storyteller b. Depiction of God as anthropomorphic (also represented by "the angel of the LORD") c. Interest in the promise to the patriarchs and its fulfillment in the Davidic kingdom d. Includes revised Covenant Code (Ex 34:1–28) e. Uses "Sinai", not "Horeb"; "Canaanites", not "Amorites"	a. Less vibrant than J b. Stress on "the fear of God" b. God is distant—mediated through dreams, visions, and angels c. Interest in northern locations (Shechem, Bethel) d. Includes Aqedah (Gen 22); Decalogue/Covenant Code (Ex 20–23); Golden Calf (Ex 32) e. Speaks of "Horeb", not "Sinai"; "Amorites", not "Canaanites"	a. Moralistic and homiletic b. Most distinct of the five books c. Strong influence on historical books (Joshua–Kings) d. Interest in "all Israel" (all 12 tribes) e. "Horeb", not Sinai f. Is the "Book of the Law" used for Josiah's reform in 622 B.C. (2 Kings 22:8)	a. Unadorned, formulaic, repetitious b. God is exalted and transcendent c. Interest in genealogies, census lists, sacred calendar, covenants, purity, ritual d. Mostly non-narrative material, but a few stories (e.g., creation, Flood, Noah covenant) e. Preserves ancient elements, but mainly reflects worship of postexilic Jerusalem

## Schedule

April 24

Introduction/Pentateuch

March 3

History

March 10

Wisdom/Prophets

March 17

Synoptic Gospels/Acts

March 24

Writings of John/Epistles

March 31

Letters of Paul