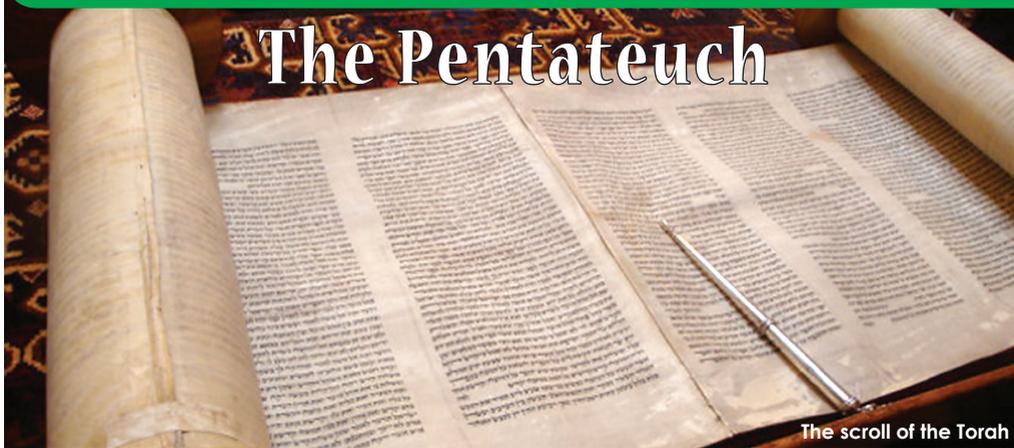


The Pentateuch



The scroll of the Torah

The word "Pentateuch" is ancient Greek for "five books" and it refers to the first five books of the library we call the Bible. The Jews refer to these books as "The Law/Torah". These books are: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

These five books are not just the first in order. For the Jews they are the most sacred writings in existence. It is difficult for us to grasp just how sacred the Torah is for all Jews. Loosely attributed to Moses, these five books reveal the God who created all things; they recount in various ways the origin of creation and the sacred history of early humankind.

When we open the Bible, we have to set aside our usual understanding of history and science. These writings, especially the Pentateuch, are not imparting secular history and they are not textbooks of ancient science. They are religious texts couched in a great variety of literary forms and have a religious purpose. Whether a Bible truth is expressed in a poem, a hymn, a law, a fable, a myth, or a love story, the religious purpose is uppermost. It is a message from God.

The Pentateuch reveals that God is the ultimate creator of all that exists; that creation is good, that human beings are all made in the image and likeness of God; that despite the human tendency to sin, God delivers humanity from evil. At the heart of the Pentateuch is the great Covenant of love between God and humankind made on Mount Sinai.

A close study of the Pentateuch has shown that it was put together over hundreds of years, roughly from the time of King Solomon (10th or 9th century BC) to the time of the Babylonian Exile (587-538 BC).

Genesis

The Book of Genesis can be divided into two distinct parts. Chapter 1-11 deals with creation, the first humans and their fate. Chapters 12-50 deal with the Patriarchs and Matriarchs: Abraham, Sarah (12-25), Jacob (27-36) and Joseph (37-50).

Exodus

As its title suggests, Exodus deals with the liberation of the Chosen People from slavery in Egypt. The first half of the book deals with the marvels worked to liberate the people and the wanderings in the desert. The second half focusses on the revelation on Mount Sinai, the Covenant, the Law and divine worship.

Leviticus

This book spells out in detail the implications of the Sinai Covenant for divine worship (1-16) and in chapters 17-27 it articulates the ethical implications for daily social life and worship. The book is a clear call to holiness.

Numbers

The theme of the Book of Numbers is the journey through the desert toward the Promised Land. The long journey is used to recount the temptations faced by the Chosen People, their weaknesses, the role of Moses, and many small regulations, until the death of Moses.

Deuteronomy

This last book of the Pentateuch presents the Law of Sinai in a new (deutero=second) way. It stresses the holiness of the Covenant and reinforces the dominance of love in the mystery of life, both human and divine.

In the words of a hymn, "God has spoken to His people, alleluia!" Not just then, between 900-500 BC but even now in 2020 AD.

SUNDAY MASS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

As for me, in justice I shall behold your face; I shall be filled with the vision of your glory.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 55:10-11.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 65.

RESPONSE:

The seed that fell into good soil yielded a hundredfold.

- You visit the earth, give it water; you fill it with riches.
God's ever-flowing river brims over to prepare the grain. **R**
- And thus you provide for the earth; you drench its furrows; you level it, soften it with showers; you bless its growth. **R**
- You crown the year with your bounty. Abundance flows in your pathways; in pastures of the desert it flows. **R**
- The hills are girded with joy. The meadows clothed with flocks. The valleys are decked with wheat. They shout for joy; yes, they sing! **R**

SECOND READING: Romans 8:18-23.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia! The seed is the word of God, and the sower is Christ; all who find him will abide for ever. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 13:1-23.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

The sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for her young; at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are they who dwell in your house, forever singing your praise.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Live the Word

Mon 13 Jul (St Henry)

Isaiah 1:10-17; Psalm 50; Matthew 10:34-11:1

Each harsh, negative approach we extend to another person contributes to the cruelty pervading society. Likewise, each positive, loving action we choose to do lessens the violence that life contains.

Tue 14 Jul (St Camillus de Lellis, Pr)

Isaiah 7:1-9; Psalm 48; Matthew 11:20-24

Jesus warned the three towns against a smug sense of superiority. Yet how often do we look at how flawed other individuals, societies or groups are while failing to acknowledge, and weed out, our own defects?

Wed 15 Jul St Bonaventure, BD

Isaiah 10:5-7,13-16; Psalm 94; Matthew 11:25-27

Gandhi said, 'become the change you wish to see in the world'. If we wish to see more caring and more justice, we must therefore learn to care, and to act. We are God's hands and voice in our world.

Thu 16 Jul (Our Lady of Mount Carmel)

Isaiah 26:7-9,12,16-19; Psalm 102; Matthew 11:28-30

Prayer involves listening with the 'ears of the heart.' It is a quiet listening that invites humility in order to become attuned to voices other than one's own – and to learn from them.

Fri 17 Jul Liturgy of the Day

Isaiah 38:1-6,21-22,7-8; Isaiah 38:10-12,16; Matt. 12:1-8

God's laws are not constrictive, but freeing. When we love without measure and forgive without blame, God's love is magnified through our merciful service to others. We are not to be slaves to petty thinking.

Sat 18 Jul Liturgy of the Day

Micah 2:1-5; Psalm 10; Matthew 12:14-21

God always leaves us with the freedom to choose our path. Sometimes, if we make poor choices, we bear the consequences, but with Christ it is when we are most bruised and smoldering that he is closest to us.

Sun 19 Jul 16TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Wisdom 12:13,16-19; Psalm 86; Matthew 13:24-43

Today's psalm describes God as 'slow to anger'. Resolve to live today being slow to anger – for if we are slow to anger in small matters, we will learn to stay more calm and rational in larger ones.

(KEY: **SOLEMNITY**; **FEAST**; **Memorial**; (Optional Memorial) Pr=Priest; B=Bishop; D=Doctor

MISSIONS 2020



When last did your parish experience the revival that a



PARISH MISSION

offers?

To book your mission contact Fr Bafana at bafanah@hotmail.com or Fr William at wtkre@yahoo.com