

## Books of Moses – An Introduction

*“Faith is not clinging to a shrine, but an endless pilgrimage of the heart”*

Abraham Joshua Heschel

**Objective:** Our objective is to understand the Torah as the foundation of all that Jesus and the apostles taught or wrote in order for us to live a life “worthy of our calling”. Our God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow; unchanging; a Deity who was, and is, and always will be in the process of reconciling His children to Himself. It is our goal to see how God designed the commands and instructions of Torah as a means to understand and pursue the relationship He so graciously invites us to enter.

**Disclaimer:** This study will introduce the student to many traditional views as well as - from our normal church perspective - non-traditional thoughts, traditions and insights available but for us, seldom pursued. If you feel conflict by what might be shared and what you believe scripture to be saying, always go with the voice of “scripture”. We will explore traditional stories and thoughts from other cultural views with an objective of examining how these ideas might illuminate or explain what we already perceive we know. There will always be the perspective that God is reconciling men to Himself and the Bible is the story of that redemption and reconciliation. The apostle Paul praised the Bereans for studying scripture to discern whether what Paul taught was truth or not. You and I have that same objective and responsibility. It is ok to not agree with one another, but it is not ok to be disagreeable. We are all students together, seeking a deeper understanding, knowledge and wisdom from God’s written word.

**Introduction:** Books of Moses; Torah; Pentateuch; Law of Moses

- a. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy - Written by Moses
- b. Genesis covers 38% of biblically recorded time from the creation of Adam and Eve to the death of Jacob; while the entire Torah, Genesis-Deuteronomy covers 43% of all time as recorded by the Bible, through the death of Moses. Roughly 33% of time is covered from the birth of Jesus to today.

## The Four Lenses of Studying Torah

### 1. God's Plan for Redemption: Genesis - Revelation

- a. The Bible is many things and we use the Bible to meet many different needs in our lives today. Scripture supports a historical picture and yet it is not truly a book of history. It supports science but is not a science book. It teaches a good way of life. In scripture we learn about forgiveness, repentance, charity, values, how to raise children and how to be better spouses. It is a book of hope. It stills the heart that is fearful, damaged, and at the same time inspires great courage. It is the single source to teach us about the God of Heaven, the Great Creator, and about His Magnificent Son, Jesus the promised messiah.
- b. But more than anything, it is the written plan for the redemption of a world and people lost to sin. Before God spoke "Let there be light", He devised His magnificent plan of redemption, the very plan that meant He would come to earth as a man and die a hideous death, and on the third day be resurrected, the first to conquer death. From the creation story to the return of Heaven, the New Jerusalem, coming down at the end of Revelation, the Bible is the great story of redemption. As Abraham Joshua Heschel writes, "It is God in pursuit of man".
- c. We should be asking ourselves in each portion of scripture we study, what are the threads of the redemption plan displayed within this portion of scripture?

The Bible is the written story of God's plan to redeem sinful man:

- His plan was formed before He spoke, "Let there be light".
- It is the story of how God developed a people as the vehicle for His son to come into the world.
- The New Testament is a commentary on how Torah is to be lived out in a fallen world, by the Gentile and outside the Promised Land.

## 2. How are we seeing Messiah in Torah Pictures? A Challenge to our Traditional View of Trinity

- a. Genesis 1 - Jesus at Creation (Aleph-Tav: See attachment)
- b. John 1 - Jesus, the Living Torah (Word) at Creation
- c. Genesis 22 - Seeing Jesus in the sacrifice of Isaac
- d. Genesis 37 and following chapters - Joseph as a Jesus picture.
- e. Deuteronomy 3:26-28 - Roles of Moses and Joshua (Y'shua type)

## 3. What is God teaching His people about how to live in a fallen world?

- a. The Ten Commands
- b. 613 Commands
- c. Deuteronomy 10:12-22; "What does God require you?" (Micah 6:8)
- d. Sermon on the Mount - Matthew 5-7
- e. Writings and Letters of the Apostles (Commentary on how Christian Jews and Gentiles can live Torah in diaspora.)

## 4. What can we learn about the nature of the Living God?

Every page of Torah provides us an opportunity to learn more about the nature of the Living God. God describes Himself with these words, "*The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet He does not leave the guilty unpunished; He punishes the children and their children for sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation*". (Exodus 34:6-7)

God goes on to say, "*I am making a covenant with you. Before all your people I will do wonders never before done in any nation in all the world. The people you live among will see how awesome is the work that I, the LORD, will do for*

*you. Obey what I command you today. I will drive out before you the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites....”*

We will see many facets of the nature of the God we serve, but of great importance, we will see He is full of compassion, grace and mercy; He is also a God of justice.

**Why study Torah and the Tanach? (Tanach; acronym based on Torah (instructions); Nevi'im (prophets); Ketuvim (writings))**

- a. *“To turn Torah thoughts over in your mind is to engage in a two way relationship with God. On the one hand, you are drawing down divine wisdom from above. On the other hand, you are raising up your physical mind and surrounding environment to receive that wisdom. Thus, Torah study is a man-God partnership”.* Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson
- b. *“Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path”.* Psalms 119:105
- c. *John 1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. Everything that was created was created through Him and by Him”.*
- d. *Luke 24:27 “Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them all the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures”.*
- e. Acts 18:24-28: Apollos uses scripture to argue the proof that Jesus is the Messiah.
- f. Acts 17:11: Bereans (Greece) study the scripture to determine if Paul and company are teaching the truth regarding Jesus as Messiah.
- g. Matthew 5:17, 18: Jesus says He came to fulfill scripture, not destroy or replace it. Not one jot or tittle (smallest letter or stroke) will be changed till all things are complete regarding His mission of redemption.
- h. Acts 15:19-21: James instructs the new Gentile believers to begin specific life changes and go to the local synagogue to learn Torah.

- i. II Timothy 2:15; 3:16 Paul admonishes Timothy to remain faithful to study of scripture and use scripture for teaching, reproof and admonition.
- j. Psalms 1 - The righteous man meditates on Torah day and night.

## **Symbols, Numbers and Circular Teaching**

**Circular Teaching** - We will discover important concepts are taught and re-taught, often in the same chapter or book, and often repeated throughout other books of the text. Hebrew is a very pictorial language so many pictures may be seen, similar to facets on a precious stone.

### **Symbols and Colors**

Scarlet thread or cord - Atonement

Hyssop - Purification from sin and defilement

Acacia/Shittim Wood - Incorruptible Humanity of Jesus

Gold - Deity of God; purity; royalty

Silver - Atonement

Bronze/Copper/Brass - Judgment

Blue/Turquoise - royalty, heaven, God's presence

Purple - the Royal One

Scarlet/Red - Atoning blood; Suffering Servant (messianic)

Blood - life

Wind - Holy Spirit

Oil - Holy Spirit

God's Right Hand or Arm - Messianic implication, Jesus, Aleph-Tav

Water - cleanse or restore, healing

Circumcision - mark on the body signifying one belongs to the Living God

Egypt - Mizraim, the world as opposed to the Promised Land

### **Numbers and Their Meanings**

- One -Unity
- Two - Fellowship; Union with Messiah; Two are a witness
- Three - Godhead
- Four - Earth(Four corners of earth; Four winds of earth)
- Five - Grace

- Six - Man; Human weakness; short of perfection
- Seven - Perfection (seven or multiples of seven)
- Eight - New beginning (new week begins on 8<sup>th</sup> day; world re-started with 8 people in the ark)
- Nine - Fruit of the Spirit
- Ten - Responsibility on earth; Completeness
- Eleven - Human failure; confusion; Judgment
- Twelve - Number for earthly government (12 Tribes; 12 Apostles)
- Forty - Testing; Probation
- Fifty - Year of Jubilee
- Seventy - All the nations of the world

## 5. Outside Sources

- a. "Antiquities of the Jews", Flavius Josephus
- b. "Book of Jasher"
- c. "Book of Enoch"
- d. "Seeing Christ in the Tabernacle" by Ervin N. Hershberger.
- e. Chabad.org: Weekly Parsha Study, "In Depth"
- f. Yashanet.org: Torah Study
- g. First Fruits of Zion, Torah Study
- h. Stone Edition Chumash (Books of Moses) or Tanach (Old Testament) with commentary by Rashi. (11<sup>th</sup> century rabbinic sage and beloved commentator)
- i. Torah Pearls On Line ; Nehemiah Gordon and Keith Johnson
- j. Map Study - know the geography