

God's First Chosen People: Their Story and Ours

Introduction to the Old Testament

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Welcome

New importance for believers

Vatican II

Evangelisation today

Pope Francis: "The joy of the Gospel"

Detailed Programme

1. The Old Testament in our faith and worship
2. The use of the Old Testament in the readings
3. The Torah / Pentateuch
4. A literary history of the Bible / Israel
5. Praying the Psalms
6. Justice: the prophetic voice

Sequence

- The Mother Religion
- What is the Old Testament?
- Challenge and benefit of the OT
- The use of the OT on Sundays
- Praying the Old Testament

The Mother Religion

- Jews and Christians
- Christianity is born of Judaism
- Renewed respect / reconciliation

The Mother Religion

The Pope meets the Chief Rabbi of Rome

What is the Old Testament?

- The Bible of the Jews 24 (39)
- The Protestant Old Testament (39)
- The Catholic Old Testament (46)
- The Orthodox Old Testament (51)

The Jewish Bible

- Jewish Bible or **Tanakh**
- **T**orah (Pentateuch)
- **N**evi'im (Prophets)
- **K**hetuvim (Writings)

Bible of the Reformation

- Identical to the Jewish Bible
- Yes to books written in Hebrew
- No to extra books written in Greek

Catholic Bible

- Based on the Latin (Vulgate)
- Based on the Greek (Septuagint)
- 39 Books of the Hebrew Bible
- Plus 7 extra books and additions

The Catholic Bible

- Books: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Sirach, Baruch, 1 + 2 Maccabees
- Additions: Esther 10-16, Dan 3:24-90, 13 and 14.

- The Deuterocanonical books

The Challenge of the Old Testament

- It can feel very remote
- Parts are extremely violent
- Parts seem to us immoral
- You need to know a lot

The Challenge of the Old Testament

- "Because the Bible says so"
- Laura Schlessinger

The Challenge of the Old Testament

Lev 25:24 says I may indeed possess slaves, provided they are purchased from neighbouring nations.

A friend of mine claims that this applies to Mexicans but not to Canadians. Can you clarify? What can't I own Canadians?

Library?

Reading the Old Testament Today

- It is really a library
- It reflects a long history
- It contains many different kinds of writings
- It shows an evolution in faith

Different Kinds of Writings

- Creation myths
- Ancient sagas and legends
- "History"
- Prophecy
- Poetry
- Wisdom
- Novels and short stories
- One "comic" book

Reading the Old Testament Today

- Experience of life
- Prayer
- Wisdom
- Quest for justice
- Foundational images
- Its okay to skip bits

Use in the Liturgy

- Though difficult, it is also the Word of God
- It was the Bible of Jesus himself
- St Paul used it to explore the meaning of Jesus
- NT: impossible to read without it

Use in the Liturgy

- Vatican II
- Renewal of the liturgy
- Rediscovery of Scripture
- The Lectionary
- Before Vatican II
- The current Lectionary

Use in the Liturgy

	Verses	Verses used	Percentage used
NT Gospels	3997	848 (1962) 2181 (1970)	22.4% (1962) 57.8% (1970)
NT Epistles	4178	461 1061	11.00% 25.4%
OT Readings	25,044	255 932	1.02% 3.7%

Use in the Liturgy

- More: on weekdays 13.7%
- Less: Christmas, Easter, Pentecost
- Gospel: continuous reading
- St Paul: continuous reading
- OT: never continuous on Sundays

27 January 2019

Nehemiah 8:2-6, 8-10	Psalms 19 (18)
<p>Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, consisting of men, women, and children old enough to understand. This was the first day of the seventh month. On the square before the Water Gate, in the presence of the men and women, and children old enough to understand, he read from the book from early morning till noon; all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.</p> <p>Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden dais erected for the purpose. In full view of all the people – since he stood higher than all the people – Ezra opened the book; and when he opened it all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people raised their hands and answered, 'Amen! Amen!'; then they bowed down and, face to the ground, prostrated themselves before the Lord. And Ezra read from the Law of God, translating and giving the sense, so that the people understood what was read.</p> <p>Then Nehemiah – His Excellency – and Ezra, priest and scribe and the Levites who were instructing the people said to all the people, 'This day is sacred to the Lord your God. Do not be mournful, do not weep.' For the people were all in tears as they listened to the words of the Law.</p> <p>He then said, 'Go, eat the fat, drink the sweet wine, and send a portion to the man who has nothing prepared ready. For this day is sacred to our Lord. Do not be sad: the joy of the Lord is your stronghold.'</p>	<p>Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life.</p> <p>The law of the Lord is perfect, it revives the soul. The rule of the Lord is to be trusted, it gives wisdom to the simple.</p> <p>Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life.</p> <p>The precepts of the Lord are right, they gladden the heart. The command of the Lord is clear, it gives light to the eyes.</p> <p>Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life.</p> <p>The fear of the Lord is holy, abiding for ever. The decrees of the Lord are truth and all of them just.</p> <p>Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life.</p> <p>May the spoken words of my mouth, the thoughts of my heart, win favour in your sight, O Lord, my rescuer, my rock!</p> <p>Your words are spirit, Lord, and they are life.</p> <p>Psalm 19 (= Psalm 18)</p>

3 February 2019

First reading: Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19	To go with Luke 4:21-20
<p>God put Abraham to the test. 'Abraham, Abraham' he called. 'Here I am' he replied. 'Take your son,' God said 'your only child Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a burnt offering, on a mountain I will point out to you.'</p> <p>When they arrived at the place God had pointed out to him, Abraham built an altar there, and arranged the wood. Then he bound his son Isaac and put him on the altar on top of the wood. Abraham stretched out his hand and seized the knife to kill his son.</p> <p>But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven. 'Abraham, Abraham' he said. 'I am here' he replied. 'Do not raise your hand against the boy' the angel said. 'Do not harm him, for now I know you fear God. You have not refused me your son, your only son.' Then looking up, Abraham saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush. Abraham took the ram and offered it as a burnt-offering in place of his son.</p> <p>The angel of the Lord called Abraham a second time from heaven. 'I swear by my own self - it is the Lord who speaks - because you have done this, because you have not refused me your son, your only son, I will shower blessings on you, I will make your descendants as many as the stars of heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants shall gain possession of the gates of their enemies. All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants, as a reward for your obedience.'</p>	<p>Jesus began to speak in the synagogue: 'This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen.' And he won the approval of all, and they were astonished by the gracious words that came from his lips. They said, 'This is Joseph's son, surely?'</p> <p>But he replied, 'No doubt you will quote me the saying, "Physician, heal yourself" and tell me, "We have heard all that happened in Capernaum, do the same here in your own countryside."' And he went on, 'I tell you solemnly, no prophet is ever accepted in his own country.</p> <p>'There were many widows in Israel, I can assure you, in Elijah's day, when heaven remained shut for three years and six months and a great famine raged throughout the land, but Elijah was not sent to any one of these: he was sent to a widow at Zarephath, a Sidonian town. And in the prophet Elisha's time there were many lepers in Israel, but none of these was cured, except the Syrian, Naaman.'</p> <p>When they heard this everyone in the synagogue was enraged. They sprang to their feet and hustled him out of the town; and they took him up to the brow of the hill their town was built on, intending to throw him down the cliff, but he slipped through the crowd and walked away.</p>

My lips will tell of your help.

In you, O Lord, I take refuge;
 let me never be put to shame.
 In your justice rescue me, free me:
 pay heed to me and save me.

My lips will tell of your help.

Be a rock where I can take refuge,
 a mighty stronghold to save me;
 for you are my rock, my stronghold.
 Free me from the hand of the wicked.

My lips will tell of your help.

It is you, O Lord, who are my hope,
 my trust, O Lord, since my youth.
 On you I have leaned from my birth,
 from my mother's womb you have been
 my help.

My lips will tell of your help.

My lips will tell of your justice
 and day by day of your help.
 O God, you have taught me from my
 youth

and I proclaim your wonders still.

Psalm 71 (= Psalm 70)

My lips will tell of your help.

Ordinary Time, Year C

Sunday	Old Testament	Gospel
2C	Isaiah 62:1-5 God's marriage bond with Israel	John 2:1-11 The wedding feast of Cana
3C	Nehemiah 8:2-6, 8-10 Reading the Book of the Law	Luke 1:1-4, 4:14-21 Jesus in Nazareth (I)
4C	Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19 Call of Jeremiah	Luke 4:21-30 Jesus in Nazareth (II)
5C	Isaiah 6:1-2, 3-8 Call of Isaiah	Luke 5:1-11 Call of the disciples

Task: Next two Sundays' readings

February 17 (6C)

Jer 17:5-8
Psalm 1
Luke 6:17-27

February 25 (7C)

1 Samuel 26:2, 7-9, 11-13, 22-23
Psalm 102
Luke 6:27-38

Open conversation

God's First Chosen People: their story and ours

2. The use of the Old Testament in the readings

Detailed Programme

- The Old Testament in our faith and worship
- **The use of the Old Testament in the readings**
- The Torah / Pentateuch
- A literary history of the Bible / Israel
- Praying the Psalms
- Justice: the prophetic voice

Sequence

- Old and New Lectionaries
- Sundays in Year C (2019)
- Next few Sundays
- How do we read the OT?
- How to reflect and pray
- Task for the next day
- Open Conversation

Old and New Lectionaries

	Verses total in the Bible	Verses used in the Lectionary	% used in the Lectionary
NT Gospels	3997	848	22.4%
Today		2181	57.8%
NT Epistles	4178	461	11%
Today		1061	25.4%
OT Readings	25,044	255	1.02 %
Today		932	3.7%

Sundays in Year C (2019)

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time	Jeremiah 17:5-8 Curses and blessings	Luke 6:17, 20-16 Jesus and the widow of Nain
7th Sunday in Ordinary Time	1 Samuel 26:2,7-9,11-13,22-23 No revenge	Luke 6:27-38 Love your enemies
8th Sunday in Ordinary Time	Ecclesiasticus 27:5-8 A tree judged by its fruit	Luke 6:39-45 A tree judged by its fruit

OT in Advent of Year C

- Advent = coming or arrival
- Advent: a time of watchfulness, joy and hope
- Start of Advent: the End Times
- Middle of Advent: John the Baptist
- End of Advent: the coming Birth of Jesus

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>New Testament</i>	<i>Gospel</i>
<i>1st Sunday of Advent</i>	Jer. 33:14-16 Future promise of a branch of David	1 Thess. 3:12-4:2 Be blameless when he comes	Lk. 21:25-28, 34-36 Stay away at all times
<i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i>	Bar. 5:1-9 Future joy in salvation	Phil. 1:4-6, 8-11 Keeping ourselves blameless	Lk. 3:1-6 The start of John the Baptist's ministry
<i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i>	Zeph. 3:14-18a Shout for joy	Phil. 4:4-7 Rejoice always	Lk. 3:10-18 John the Baptist points to the coming one
<i>4th Sunday of Advent</i>	Micah 5:1-4a Prophecy about Bethlehem	Heb. 10:5-10 I am coming to do your will	Lk. 1:39-45 The Visitation

OT in Lent of Year C

- Lent = Lenz, an old English word for Spring
- 40 = People of Israel in the desert
- Conversion: foundational cry
- Story of salvation, culminating in the Easter *Triduum*, the great events bringing us new life in Christ.
- Each year is different and very rich

1st Sunday of Lent	Deut. 26:4-10 Ancient "creed": A wandering Aramean was my father...	Rom. 10:8-13 The word is on your lips and in your heart	Lk. 4:1-13 Temptation
2nd Sunday of Lent	Gen. 15:5-12, 17-18 Abraham: God's covenant and promise	Phil. 3:17-4:1 Our future transfiguration	Lk. 9:28b-36 The Transfiguration
3rd Sunday of Lent	Ex. 3:1-8a, 13-15 Moses: The Burning Bush	1 Cor. 10:1-6, 10-12 The Moses story as an allegory of Christ	Lk. 13:1-9 Repentance and the parable of the fig tree
4th Sunday of Lent	Josh. 5:9a, 10-12 Joshua: The first Passover in the Promised Land	2 Cor. 5:17-21 The ministry of reconciliation	Lk. 15:1-3, 11-32 The parable of the prodigal son
5th Sunday of Lent	Isa. 43:16-21 The Exile: God promises a new deed	Phil. 3:8-14 Paul strains ahead for what is still to come	Jn. 8:1-11 The woman caught committing adultery (on her own)

OT overall in Year C

- **Genesis:** *Lent 2, Easter Vigil (first reading), Easter Vigil (second reading), Pentecost, Corpus Christi, 16C, 17C.*

- **Exodus:** *Lent 3, Holy Thursday, Easter Vigil (third reading), Pentecost, 24C, 29C.*
- **Deuteronomy:** *Lent 1, 15C.*
- **Joshua:** *Lent 4.*
- **1 Samuel:** *Holy Family, 7C.*
- **2 Samuel:** *Christ the King, 11C.*
- **1 Kings:** **9C, 10C, 13C, 28C.**
- **Nehemiah:** **3C.**
- **2 Maccabees:** **32C.**
- **Proverbs:** *Trinity.*
- **Ecclesiastes:** **18C.**
- **Wisdom:** **19C, 23C, 31C.**
- **Sirach:** *Holy Family, Christmas 2, 8C, 22C, 30C.*

- **Isaiah:** *Christmas Vigil, Christmas Midnight, Christmas Dawn, Christmas Day, Epiphany, Baptism, Lent 5, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil (fourth reading, fifth reading), 2C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 14C, 21C.*
- **Jeremiah:** *Advent 1, 20C.*
- **Baruch:** *Advent 2, Easter Vigil (sixth reading).*
- **Ezekiel:** *Easter Vigil (seventh reading), Pentecost.*
- **Joel:** *Pentecost.*
- **Amos:** **25C, 26C.**
- **Micah:** *Advent 4.*
- **Habakkuk:** **27C.**
- **Zephaniah:** *Advent 3.*
- **Zechariah:** **12C.**
- **Malachi:** **33C.**

- **Pentateuch:** x 16
- **Historical Books:** x 10
- **Prophets:** x 32
- **Wisdom Books:** x 10

- Most used: **Isaiah** x 17
- Second most used: **Genesis** x 8
- Third most used: **Exodus** x 6

Next few Sundays

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time	Jeremiah 17:5-8 Curses and blessings	Luke 6:17, 20-16 Jesus and the widow of Nain
7th Sunday in Ordinary Time	1 Samuel 26:2,7-9,11-13,22-23 No revenge	Luke 6:27-38 Love your enemies
8th Sunday in Ordinary Time	Ecclesiasticus 27:5-8 A tree judged by its fruit	Luke 6:39-45 A tree judged by its fruit

How do we read the OT?

- There is an official document:
- ***The Jewish People and their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*** (2001)
- Implicit and explicit authority of the Hebrew Bible
- To be read in its own historical and literary setting
- To be read also in the light of Jesus' ministry, death and resurrection for us

How to reflect and pray

- In "ordinary time", there is always a link
- Usually, it is very helpful, once spotted

- The Psalm and especially the response are a good guide
- NB Lots of the OT is not to be taken literally

Tasks for later on

- Take a glance at the Pentateuch (Torah)
- Read Genesis 1-11
- Read Exodus 1-2
- Read Leviticus 19:1-4
- Read Numbers 22-24
- Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 34:1-12
- Questions / observations

Open conversation

God's First Chosen People: their story and ours

3. The Torah / Pentateuch

Detailed Programme

- The Old Testament in our faith and worship
- The use of the Old Testament in the readings
- **The Torah / Pentateuch**
- A literary history of the Bible / Israel
- Praying the Psalms
- Justice: the prophetic voice

Sequence

- Torah
- What's in the Torah
- Origins of the Torah
- Reading the Torah
- Praying the Torah
- Conversation

The Torah

- The Five Books of Moses
- For Jews, the heart of the Bible
- "Torah" means Instruction / Teaching / Law (Hebrew)
- Pentateuch means a "Five book work" (Greek)

What's in the Torah?

- Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
- Always treated with great respect
- Fundamentally, it tells 3 sets of stories:
- The Pre-history from Adam to Noah (Gen 1-11)
- Stories of Abraham, Jacob and Joseph (Gen 12-50)
- The Moses stories (Ex, Lev, Num Deut)

Adam to Noah

- Creation stories 1 and 2
- The Fall
- The children of Adam and Eve
- Noah and the Flood
- The Tower of Babel

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." (Gen 1:26-28)

Abraham to Joseph

- Abraham stories
- (Isaac)
- Jacob stories
- Joseph stories

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." But Abram said, "O LORD God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." But the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be

your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." And he believed the LORD; and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness. (Gen 15:1-6)

The Book of Exodus

1: 1-15: 21	Exodus from Egypt
15: 22-18: 27	Israel's journey through the desert to Mount Sinai
19: 1-24: 11	Yahweh makes a covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai
24: 12-31: 18	The Ten Commandments
32: 1-34: 35	The Golden Calf
35: 1-40: 38	The building of the Tabernacle

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." He said further, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you': This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations. (Exod 3:13-15)

The Book of the Leviticus

- Leviticus 1 - 10 Sacrifices etc.
- Lev 11 -16: Purity Laws
- 17-26 (+27), The Holiness Code

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. (Leviticus 19:1-2)

You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbour. (Leviticus 19:15)

You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the LORD. (Leviticus 19:18)

You shall keep my statutes. You shall not let your animals breed with a different kind; you shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed; nor shall you put on a garment made of two different materials. (Leviticus 19:19)

You shall not eat anything with its blood. (Leviticus 19:26)

You shall rise before the aged, and defer to the old; and you shall fear your God: I am the LORD. (Leviticus 19:32)

The Book of Numbers

- Numbers 1: 1 - 10: 28, Establishing a Holy Community
- Numbers 11: 1 - 20: 28, In the Wilderness
- Numbers 21: 1 - 36: 13, Conquest and Settlement of the Land

So Moses took the staff from before the LORD, as he had commanded him. Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, "Listen, you rebels, shall we bring water for you out of this rock?" Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff; water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their livestock drank. But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me, to show my holiness before the eyes of the Israelites, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them." These are the waters of Meribah, where the people of Israel quarrelled with the LORD, and by which he showed his holiness. (Numbers 20:9-13)

Gen - Ex - Lev - Num - Deut

- Adam to Noah (Genesis 1-11)
- Abraham to Joseph (Genesis 12-50)
- Moses (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)
- Adam to Joseph in Egypt: Genesis
- Exodus to Entry - forty years: Exodus
- Mt Sinai, the wandering in the desert, legislation, coming within sight of the land: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers
- The last will and Testament of Moses: Deuteronomy

Kind of Writing

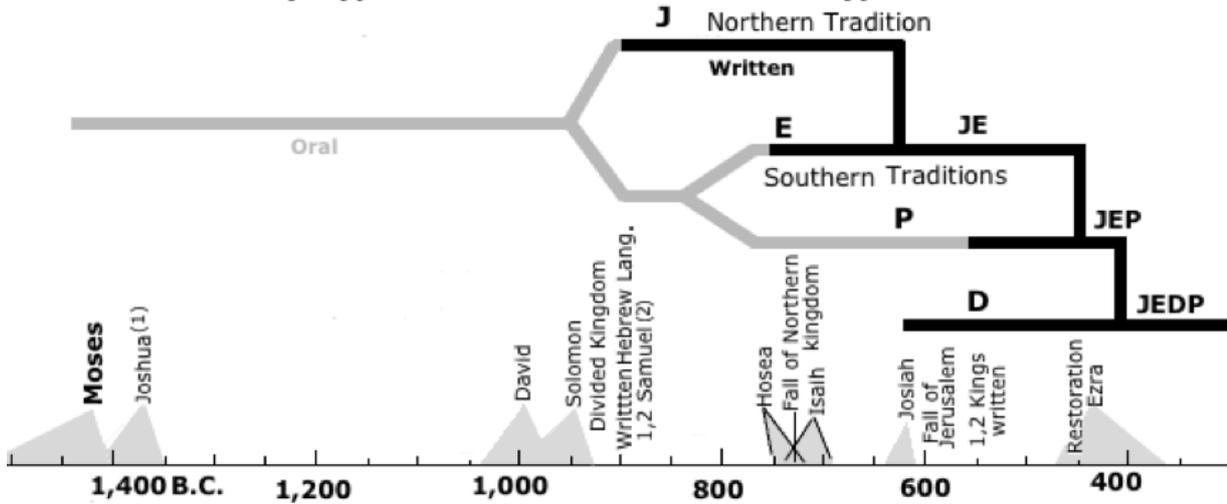
- Myth
- Family Saga
- Wisdom
- Poetry
- "Etiological stories"
- Laws
- Ten Commandments

Origins of the Torah

- The Torah was written over many centuries
- It began as oral tradition, later written down
- It reflects different contexts
- It was edited and brought "up to date"
- Parts are historical
- Parts are mythological
- There is a good deal of laws
- Language of Genesis 1: "Elohim" (E)
- Language of Genesis 2-3: "Yahweh" (J)
- Language of Leviticus: Priestly (P)
- Language of Deuteronomy: Deuteronomistic (D)

Date	Sources
?	<i>Oral traditions</i>
c. 922	J (South)
c. 850	E (North)
c. 722	JE
c. 600	D (Israel)
c. 539	P (Babylon)
c. 400	JEPD

Writing of the Pentateuch (Torah) Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy Documentary Hypothesis or Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis



Important Passages

GENESIS: 1-3 (creation and fall); 6,5 - 9,17 (flood); 12,1-3 (call of Abraham); 15 (covenant with Abraham); 18,1-15 (vision at Mamre); 22,1-19 (the sacrifice of Isaac); 28,10-22 (vision at Bethel); 32,23-33 (Jacob's struggle with the "angel"); 37 (Joseph sold by his brothers); 45,1-13 (Joseph makes himself known to his disciples); 50,15-31 (Joseph and his brothers are reconciled).

EXODUS: 2,1-10 (birth of Moses); 3,1-15 (3,1 - 4,17) (call of Moses); 7,1 - 10,11; 12,29-36 (the plagues in Egypt); 14,1-31 (crossing the Red Sea); 19,1-19 (appearance at Sinai); 20,1-17 (Then Commandments); 24,1-11 (covenant on Sinai); 32-34 (the Golden Calf; renewal of the covenant).

LEVITICUS: 19,1-19 ("Be holy as I am holy").

NUMBERS: 13-14 (Exploration of the Promised Land); 22-24 (Balaam).

DEUTERONOMY: 4 (the meaning of Sinai); 6,1-9 ("Shema Yisrael"); 8 (the temptations of the holy land); 30,11-14 (the word is near); 30,15-20 (the two ways).

NB: New forms of reading

- The whole text as it stands
- Narrative analysis
- Good example: pairs of brothers in Genesis

Praying the Torah

CREATION

- Genesis 1:1-2:4a
- Psalm 104
- Ephesians 1:3-14

Basic story
Story in the form of prayer
Christ and creation

REDEMPTION

- Exodus 12:1-27
- Psalm 114
- Mark 14:12-25

The Passover
The Passover hymn
The Last Supper

THE WORD IS NEAR

- Deuteronomy 30:11-14
- Psalm 147
- Romans 10:5-13

How near is God?
God's Word is near
Nearness of God's Word

Open Conversation

God's First Chosen People: their story and ours

4. A literary history of the Bible / Israel

Detailed Programme

- The Old Testament in our faith and worship
- The use of the Old Testament in the readings
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- **A literary history of the Bible / Israel**
- Praying the Psalms
- Justice: the prophetic voice

Sequence

- "Recent" History (last 2000 years!!)
- Ancient History (King David to the Romans)
- Books of the Bible in their time and place
- When was it all written down?

"Recent" History

- State of Israel 1948-today
- British Mandate (1920-1948)
- Ottoman Empire (1516-1920)
- Mameluke Period (1291-1516)
- Crusader Period (1099-1291)
- Early Arabian (640-1099)
- Byzantine (374-640)
- Roman (63 bc - 342 ad)

Ancient History

- Paleolithic 1,600,000-18,000
- Epipaleolithic (Mesolithic) 18,000-8,000
- Neolithic 8,000-4,500
- Chalcolithic 4,500-3,200
- Bronze Age 3050-1200 BC
- Iron Age 1200-539 (several "empires")
- Babylonian and Persian Period: 587-332
- Hellenistic and Maccabean Period 332-63

Roman Empire

- For the biblical world, the Roman period began when the Romans took control of the region in 63 BC. During this period, Roman technology was put to use in extensive building projects including highways, amphitheaters, and aqueducts.
- Trade networks grew as imports arrived via ship from Italy and were transported along the new road system.
- The Jews revolted against Rome in AD 66-73, resulting in the destruction of the Second Temple, and again in AD 132-35, but were unable to drive the Romans out.
- The end of the Roman period is often dated to AD 330, when Constantine moved the capital from Rome to Byzantium/Constantinople.
- Augustus
- Tiberius
- Pontius Pilate
- Jewish War
- The Dead Sea Scrolls
- The New Testament

Hasmoneans

- Persecution under the Seleucids (yet to be discussed)
- The Jewish people rebelled in 166 BC. Led by the heroic Judah the Maccabee, of the Hasmonean family, the Jews were successful in militarily repelling Greek rule.

- They entered the Temple and purified it, and found the miraculous jug of oil, which, legend tells, though it had only enough oil to light the Menorah (candelabra) for one night, lasted for eight nights. Hanukkah.
- The Hasmoneans ruled in the Holy Land for close to a century. They also expanded the physical boundaries of the land, returning to almost Solomonic-era borders. Jewish life flourished under the Hasmonean leaders.
- Eventually, though, the Hasmonean era came to an end, brought to submission under the Romans by Pompey and eventually by Herod the Great in 37 BC.
- The legacy of the powerful Hasmonean dynasty was so great, however, that Herod married a Hasmonean princess in order to strengthen his legitimacy as a ruler and shore up support for his reign.

People, events writings

- Campaigns of Pompey the Great brought about the end of the Hasmonean Kingdom.
- Background:
- After the death of Alexandra Salome, there was a dynastic struggle between Hyrcanus and Aristobolus.
- The Romans were invited to adjudicate.
- The Feast of Hanukkah
- 1 and 2 Maccabees.
- Many other writings not in any one's bible.
- E.g. The Psalms of Solomon and the Testament of the Twelve Patriarch.
- Also: the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Seleucids

- Alexander the Great in 323 BC
- The "Successors" fought for 40 years.
- Seleucus: Babylonia; from northern Syria to the borders of Egypt, including Asia Minor.
- 250 years of control
- Beginning of serious "Hellenisation"

People, events, writings

- Seleucus
- Antiochus IV Epiphanes
- Book of Daniel
- 1 and 2 Maccabees
- The Book of Wisdom
- Many non-biblical Jewish writings

Persian Period

- In the mid- 6 cent. BC, Media and Persia were united under the rule of CYRUS the Great,
- Cyrus defeated Babylon in 539 BC
- Persia's inheritance of areas controlled by Babylon made it the largest empire to date.
- The period lasts for roughly 200 years until Alexander the Great's defeat of the Persians under Darius III in 334-330 BC.

People, events, writings

- Cyrus the Great
- Second Isaiah
- Many of the Wisdom Books
- Ezra and Nehemiah
- Possible Jonah
- The Pentateuch came into its final form

Babylonian Empire

- Assyrian Empire was too large. In 626 the Kaldu sheikh Nabopolassar led an uprising and declared himself "king of Babylon." Both Nabopolassar and the Assyrian king Assur-etil-ilani (likely the predecessor of the Sin-sûarra-isûkun known to the Babylonians) claimed authority over Babylonia.
- Nabopolassar's forces defeated the Assyrians in a last stand at Carchemish in 605. With the defeat of Assyrian king Assur-uballit II, the Assyrian Empire passed into history.
- Nebuchadnezzar made Babylon the headquarters of an imperial administrative bureaucracy. During his 43-year reign (605-562). The ziggurat Etemenanki (the infamous Tower of Babel) was restored.
- Nebuchadnezzar campaigned in Syria and Palestine and in 597 laid siege to Jerusalem.
- Judah was reduced to the status of tributary and, according to Jeremiah, 2 Kings, and 2 Chronicles, was reduced to rubble in 586, when the Babylonian monarch destroyed the temple of Solomon and deported the Hebrews into captivity.

People, events, writings

- Exile 587-539
- Nebuchadnezzar
- Highly centralised
- Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Second Isaiah
- Many Psalms
- Reinvention of Israel

Assyrian Empire

- The Neo-Assyrian Empire was an empire in Mesopotamian history which began in 934 bc and ended in 609 BC.
- During this period, Assyria assumed a position as the most powerful nation on earth.
- Under the reforms of Tiglath-Pileser III in the 8th century BC it became a vast empire.

People, events, writings

- Many marvellous names!!
- Tiglath-Pileser III, 744-727 BC
- 722 BC: Fall of the Northern Kingdom
- Sargon II, 721-705 BC
- Sennacherib, 705-681 BC
- Ashurbanipal, 669-627 BC
- Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah
- Possibly: JEPD

The Israelite Kingdoms

- David's Kingdom
- Solomon's Kingdom
- The Divided Kingdom

Conversation

- Lots of "stuff"
- You need only a general idea
- NB 722 and 587-539
- Various books came to be
- Often quite late

God's First Chosen People: their story and ours

5. Praying the Psalms

Detailed Programme

- The Old Testament in our faith and worship
- The use of the Old Testament in the readings
- The Torah / Pentateuch
- A literary history of the Bible / Israel
- **Praying the Psalms**
- Justice: the prophetic voice

Sequence

- Your experience of the Psalms
- Where would you find them?
- The Psalms in the Mass
- How to read a Psalm
- How to enjoy a Psalm
- How to pray a Psalm

Experience

- Any particular Psalm?
- As a response to the first reading
- In modern versions
- Set to music (e.g. Psalm 139)

Finding the Psalms

- In the Bible, between *Job* and *Proverbs*
- There are 150 Psalms, in five "collections"
- Each collection has a conventional closure / ending
- Psalm 1 - a great opening
- Psalm 150 - a resounding conclusion

Numbering the Psalms

<i>Hebrew Numbering</i>	<i>Greek and Latin Numbering</i>	<i>Hebrew Numbering</i>	<i>Greek and Latin Numbering</i>
1-8	1-8	116	114-115
9-10	9	117-146	116-145
11-113	10-112	147	146-147
114-115	113	148-150	148-150
<i>Most Bibles</i>	<i>Catholic Mass</i>	<i>Most Bibles</i>	<i>Catholic Mass</i>

The Psalms in the Mass

- **Sunday 5C:** Isaiah 6:1-2, 3-8 ("Holy, holy, holy etc."), followed by Psalm 138 (137) *Before the angels, I will bless you, O Lord.*
- **Lent 1C:** Deuteronomy 26:4-10 ("My father was a wandering Aramaean etc."), followed by Psalm 91 (90) *Be with me, O Lord, in my distress*
- **Lent 2C:** Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18 (covenant with Abram), followed by Psalm 27 (26) *The Lord is my light and my help.*

How to read a Psalm

Planning permission is sought from Sligo County Council to build a small temporary dwelling using stone age techniques on an uninhabited island.

It is proposed to have between 8 and 10 drills of beans and one hive for the production of honey.

Electrical and telephone connections are not required.

Privacy is essential.

- 1 O God, you are my God, I seek you,
my soul thirsts for you;
my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
- 2 So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.
- 3 Because your steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise you.
- 4 So I will bless you as long as I live;
I will lift up my hands and call on your name.
- 5 My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast,
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips
- 6 when I think of you on my bed,
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;
- 7 for you have been my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.
- 8 My soul clings to you;
your right hand upholds me.

Parallelism

Is. 2:4 He shall judge between the nations,
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;

they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;

nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

a	b	c	Amos 5:2
But let justice	roll down	like waters,	
a		c	
and righteousness		like an ever-flowing stream.	

a	b	Psa. 29:4
The voice of the LORD	is powerful;	
a	b	
the voice of the LORD	is full of majesty.	

a	b	Psa. 112:1
Happy are those	who fear the LORD,	
a	b	
who greatly delight	in his commandments.	

a	b	c	Psa. 1:6
for the LORD	watches over	the way of the righteous,	
	c	b	
	but the way of the wicked	will perish	

a	b	c	Prov. 10:1
A wise child	makes	a glad father,	
a	b	c	
but a foolish child	is	a mother's grief.	

From the Exodus to the Temple in Jerusalem
 The Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom
 The pain of alienation

Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites." (Exodus 19:5-6)

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt."

But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. (Exodus 14:21-25, 29)

When the people set out from their tents to cross over the Jordan, the priests bearing the ark of the covenant were in front of the people. Now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest. So when those who bore the ark had come to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the edge of the water, the waters flowing from above stood still, rising up in a single heap far off at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, while those flowing toward the sea of the Arabah, the Dead Sea, were wholly cut off. Then the people crossed over opposite Jericho. While all Israel were crossing over on dry ground, the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, until the entire nation finished crossing over the Jordan. (Joshua 3:14-17)

Now there was no water for the congregation; so they gathered together against Moses and against Aaron. The people quarrelled with Moses and said, "Would that we had died when our kindred died before the LORD! Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness for us and our livestock to die here? Why have you brought us up out of Egypt, to bring us to this wretched place? It is no place for grain, or figs, or vines, or pomegranates; and there is no water to drink." Then Moses and Aaron went away from the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting; they fell on their faces, and the glory of the LORD appeared to them. The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and your brother Aaron, and command the rock before their eyes to yield its water. Thus you shall bring water out of the rock for them; thus you shall provide drink for the congregation and their livestock.

So Moses took the staff from before the LORD, as he had commanded him. Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, "Listen, you rebels, shall we bring water for you out of this rock?" Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff; water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their livestock drank. But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me, to show my holiness before the eyes of the Israelites, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them." These are the waters of Meribah, where the people of Israel quarrelled with the LORD, and by which he showed his holiness. (Numbers 20:2-13)

When Israel went out from Egypt,
 the house of Jacob from a people of strange language,

The sea looked and fled;
 Why is it, O sea, that you flee?

The mountains skipped like rams,
 O mountains, that you skip like rams?

Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the LORD,
 at the presence of the God of Jacob,
 who turns the rock into a pool of water,
 the flint into a spring of water.

Jordan turned back.
 O Jordan, that you turn back?
 the hills like lambs.
 O hills, like lambs?

Judah became God's sanctuary
 Israel his dominion.

A: Event: exodus/entry
 B: Repercussions: *recounted*
 B': Repercussions: *interpreted*
 A': Event: God's leadership

Passover

Mishnah *Pesah*. 10:5

E. **In every generation a person is duty-bound to regard himself as if he personally has gone forth from Egypt**, since it is said, And you shall tell your son in that day saying, it is because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth out of Egypt (Ex. 13:8). Therefore we are duty-bound to thank, praise, glorify, honour, exalt, extol, and

How to pray a Psalm

What links would you make?

bless him who did for our forefathers and for us all these miracles. He brought us forth from slavery to freedom, anguish to joy, mourning to festival, darkness to great light, subjugation to redemption, so we should say before him, Hallelujah.

While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." (Mark 14:22-25)

Our "exodus" is the cross and resurrection
 Our "Passover" is Jesus
 Our "liberation" is from death

Your boasting is not a good thing. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch, as you really are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Cor 5:6-8)

Tasks for the next while

Check the psalms for the next two or three Sundays and see how the "fit" with the OT reading.

Lent 3C

Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15

Lent 4C **Psalm 103 (102): 1-4, 6-8, 11**
 Joshua 5:9-12

Lent 5C **Psalm 34 (33): 2-6**
 Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalm 126 (125): 1-6

Easiest way to check: www.universalis.com/mass.htm

Check the psalms for the next two or three Sundays and see how the "fit" with the OT reading.

Open conversation

God's First Chosen People: their story and ours

6. Justice: the prophetic voice

Detailed Programme

- The Old Testament in our faith and worship
- The use of the Old Testament in the readings
- The Torah / Pentateuch
- A literary history of the Bible / Israel
- Praying the Psalms
- **Justice: the prophetic voice**

Sequence

Experience: prophets today/ names / passages / questions /

Prophet: word / call / ministry / books

Prophets from the Hebrew Bible

Justice: Amos

Exile: Jeremiah

Return: Second Isaiah

Reading the Prophets

Jesus as a prophet in Luke's Gospel

Where in the Bible

Experience

Prophets in our day

Names?

Passages?

Questions

The church established by Jesus "was to be a community of brothers and sisters, free of all domination", he said. Jesus warned against "replicating the relationships of power that existed in the wider society".

"Whatever little theology I have, I learnt from homeless people," he said. Listening to them had "changed my understanding of who God is and what God wants".

He said the wealth, power and status of the church, and its "fear of losing them", may have filtered "understanding of the message of Jesus". Such fear was seen recently in the church authorities' response to child sexual abuse.

He recalled that "for the religious authorities at the time of Jesus, God was a God of the law" and that "the church, too, has often proclaimed a God of the law".

It meant "anyone, like Jesus, dissident priests, organisations like the ACP who challenge this understanding of God, is seen therefore as a threat . . . to be got rid of".

"Jesus . . . was just 'the carpenter's son,' one of the laity no less" who "was moved by the suffering of his people. And Jesus proclaimed a different God, a God of compassion".

A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. (Ezekiel 36:26)

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14-15)

I hate, I scorn your festivals, I take no pleasure in your solemn assemblies. your oblations, I do not accept them and I do not look at your communion sacrifices of fat cattle. Spare me the din of your chanting, let me hear none of your strumming on lyres, let justice flow like water, and uprightness like a never-failing stream! (Amos 5:21-25)

Blow the horn in Gibeah, the trumpet in Ramah. Sound the alarm at Beth-aven; look behind you, Benjamin! Ephraim shall become a desolation in the day of punishment; among the tribes of Israel I declare what is sure. The princes of Judah have become like

those who remove the landmark; on them I will pour out my wrath like water. (Hosea 5:8-10)

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)

Prophetic Gestures

Hosea marries a prostitute	- Hosea 1-3
Isaiah gives symbolic names to his children	- Is 7:3; 8:14
Jeremiah: the almond tree and the pot	- Jer :1:11-14
Jeremiah: the waistcloth hidden by the Euphrates	- Jer 13:1-11
Jeremiah: the potter	- Jer 18:1-12
Jeremiah: the jug	- Jer 19
Jeremiah: the figs	- Jer 24
Jeremiah: the yoke	- Jer 27-28
Jeremiah: buying the field	- Jer 32
Ezekiel makes a model of Jerusalem	- Ezek 4:1-3
Ezekiel: the rationed food	- Ezek 4:9-19
Ezekiel: the hair	- Ezek 5
Ezekiel with the exile's baggage	- Ezek 12:1-16
Ezekiel's "non-bereavement"	- Ezek 24:15-27

Where in the Bible? (Chart)

Where in History? (Chart)

What is a prophet?

"Prophet" - speak on behalf of

Nabi - someone who tells forth not foretells!

Samuel, Elijah, Elisha - eventually Moses, Abraham

Miriam (Exod 15:20), Deborah (Judg 4:4), Isaiah's anonymous wife (Isa 8:3), Huldah (2 Kgs 22:14), and Noadiah (Neh 6:14).

Also: "our" writing prophets

What is a prophet?

Prophets emerge at critical moments

Royal system v. the prophetic system

Royal system: reassurance (power, taxes, soldiers)

Prophetic system: unconventional wisdom (freedom of thought, integrity, truth-telling)

Prophets are called to ministry

Prophets use speech and gesture

Amos

First writing prophet

From Tekoa (near Bethlehem)

Had a secular career

7: 14 "not a prophet; not (even) a son of a prophet."

The reigns of Jeroboam II (786-746 BCE) in Israel and Uzziah (783-742) in Judah.

Great economic growth *plus* exploitation / injustice

- a. The growth of urban centers.
- b. Militarization.
- c. Extraction of surplus.
- d. Life-style of the upper class
- e. Trade and commerce.
- f. Market condition.
- g. Indebtedness of the peasants.
- h. Role of the creditors.
- i. Role of judicial courts.

Examples: Amos 1:1-5; 4:1-5; 5:21-24

Jeremiah

Longest prophetic book.

Full of haunting imagery and palpable emotion

A re-enactment of the break down of the Temple, covenant arrangements, ancestral land claims, election traditions, power structures.

A spirituality / theology of suffering, purification, hope and renewal

Wrote before and after the Great Exile

Experience the Exile himself

Eventually he died in Egypt

Two parts of the book:

Jer 1-25: the destruction of Israel - despair

Jer 26-52: the restoration of Israel - hope

Examples: Jer 1:1-10; 3:1-5; 29:4-9; 33:14-16; 46:27-28

Isaiah

Isaiah has 66 chapters

These seem to reflect different times

Isaiah "of Jerusalem" - 8th century bc prophet

Second Isaiah - written just *before* the Exile ended

Third Isaiah - written *after* the return

Each Isaiah was a religious genius and a great poet

Nevertheless, the book does "hang together"

Examples: Is 6:1-5; 25:6-10

Second Isaiah

Isaiah 40-55

Cyrus of Persia is mentioned in Isa 44:28-45:1; 45:13

A message of consolation and hope

It also contains the mysterious "Suffering Servant Songs"

First servant passage (Isa 42: 1- 4)

Second servant passage (Isa 49: 1- 6)

Third servant passage (Isa 50: 4- 9)

Fourth servant passage (Isa 52: 13 - 53: 12)

Examples: Is 40:6-11; 41:25-29; 52:7-10; 54:4-8; 55:10-12

Isaiah in the New Testament (many examples)

Prophets in Advent

Advent Sunday

Advent 1A

Advent 2A

Advent 3A

Advent 4A

Advent 1B

Advent 2B

Advent 3B

Advent 4B

Advent 1C

Advent 2C

Advent 3C

Advent 4C

First Reading

Isaiah 2:1-5

Isaiah 11:1-10

Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10

Isaiah 7:10-14

Isaiah 63:16b-17, 64:1, 3-8

Isa 40:1-5, 9-11

Isa 61:1-2a, 10-11

2 Sam 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

Jer 33:14-16

Bar 5:1-9

Zeph 3:14-18a

Mic 5:2-5a

Reading the Prophets

NB slow reading

Remember: nearly all *poetry* (parallelism, images)

Suggested start: Amos and Micah (short)

Move on to Second Isaiah (Is 40-55 - for Advent)

Then perhaps Third Isaiah (55-66)

Do use the Introductions to each book, in your bible and keep an eye on the Notes.

Jesus as prophet in Luke

The birth of Jesus

Synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4)

A great prophet has arisen (Luke 7)

Jesus' destiny in the prophets (Luke 18 and 24)

NB Jesus' death as a prophet-martyr (Stephen)

Jesus: Prophetic Gestures

The Baptism by John

The Call of the Twelve

Open Table Fellowship

The Healings and Exorcisms

Taking of a Little Child

The Entry into Jerusalem

The cursing of the fig tree

The Temple Action

The Last Supper

Jesus as prophet in Luke

Open Table Fellowship

Scripture, Meal, Participants

5:27-32, Banquet at Levi's house, Tax collectors and sinners

7:36-50, Dinner at Simon's house, Pharisees, guests and sinful woman

9:10-17, Feeding the 5,000, Disciples and crowds

10:38-42*, Mary and Martha receive Jesus, Mary and Martha

11:37-52*, Dinner at a Pharisee's house, Pharisees and lawyers

14:1-24*, Sabbath meal at a Pharisee's house, Pharisees, lawyers and guests

19:1-10*, Hospitality at the home of Zacchaeus, Zacchaeus

22:14-28, The Last Supper, The Apostles

24:28-32*, Breaking bread at Emmaus, Two disciples

24:36-43*, The risen Jesus eats food, The Eleven

Summary

Experience: prophets today/ names / passages / questions /

Prophet: word / call / ministry / books

Prophets from the Hebrew Bible

Justice: Amos

Exile: Jeremiah

Return: Second Isaiah

Reading the Prophets

Jesus as a prophet in Luke's Gospel

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