

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE



Presented by
Dr. Jon Korkidakis MDiv, DMin.

The Pentateuch – Study #5

The Pentateuch consists of the first 5 books of the Bible.

- Though described as “Law” most of it is narrative.
- It sets the worldview, theology, and practice for the rest of the Old Testament.
- It also presents the national history of Israel as well as serve as a biography of Moses.
- The Book of Psalms appears to imitate the 5-fold structure of the Pentateuch.
- The titles for each book in our English versions come from the Greek Septuagint, the Hebrew titles are based on the opening words of each book.

Genesis (Hebrew “In the Beginning”)	Pentateuch (Comes from the Greek “Five Books”) Also known as the “Torah” Written by Moses (See John 5:46-47)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origins • Sin/Consequences • Promise (Abrahamic) • Patriarchs
Exodus (Hebrew “These are the Names”)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salvation/Redemption/Revelation-Yahweh • Passover • The “Law” • Sinai/Mosaic Covenant/Code • Ten Commandments
Leviticus (Hebrew “God called out”)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holiness • Sacred – space, status, time, etc. • Tabernacle, priesthood, sacrifices, seasons • Clean/unclean
Numbers (Hebrew “In the Wilderness”)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure, order, census • Failure-rebellion • Transition – 1st to 2nd generation • God’s presence and provision
Deuteronomy (Hebrew “These are the Words”)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal – Ten Commandments • Entering the Land • An authoritative commentary on the “Law” • Blessings/Cursing’s • Moses

The Hebrew word Torah is commonly referred to as the “Law”. This is somewhat misleading in that the term essentially means “instruction”. Also, “Torah” can be used to describe the Pentateuch, the entire Old Testament, a portion of it, or general aspects of the ‘Law’.

Three foundational pillars introduced in the Pentateuch are:

1. Torah – Sacred Instruction
2. Temple – Sacred Space
3. Times – Sacred Days and Seasons

Two foundational Covenants:

Covenants are different than contracts (conditional versus unconditional – equal party versus suzerain/vassal).

1. Abrahamic Covenant

The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you.² I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others.³ I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.” (Gen. 12:1-3)

Then the angel of the LORD called again to Abraham from heaven.¹⁶ “This is what the LORD says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that¹⁷ I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies.¹⁸ And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me.” (Gen. 22:15-18)

2. Sinai Covenant

When the LORD finished speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, written by the finger of God. (Ex. 31:18)

Two Foundational Genres:

We will expand on these in future studies.

1. Narrative
 - a. They are theological history
 - b. God is often the central character.
 - c. Not all human characters of a story are good models for us.

2. Law
 - a. Traditional Approach:
 - i. Moral
 - ii. Civil
 - iii. Ceremonial
 - b. Contemporary Approach:
 - i. Law within its context
 - ii. Interpret the Law within its covenant context

Understanding the Law for Today

Guidelines

- The Mosaic covenant is associated with Israel's occupation and conquest of the land.
- The OT laws are the Old Covenant stipulations for Israel's relationship with God, and its blessings/cursing's are conditional.
- The Mosaic covenant is no longer a functional covenant (versus the Abrahamic covenant).
- All the laws express something of the character of God or a value or virtue appropriate for a believer of any time.
- Jesus Christ has fulfilled the law and expresses in himself the totality of the spirit of the entire law.
- Therefore, as believers today, we interpret the Law through New Testament teaching.

Example: The Ten Commandments are essentially repeated in the New Testament.