

North Chesterfield MMA 2008-2009

WEDNESDAY 10 JUNE 2009

Holy Scripture: The Law, Pentateuch, Torah

- Dating very difficult. Much uncertainty and disagreement.

Noddy's guide:

- Creation
- In the garden, expulsion
- Populating the earth
- YHWH rather cross, so flood
- Repopulation (things are no better really, but no more catastrophic floods anyway)
- Rules for healthy living and godly living
- The chosen people ('Israel') and their trials
- Getting things wrong again and again and again and again
- YHWH's faithfulness to his people, and forgiveness
- YHWH's inscrutability (and, IMHO, irascibility)
- The expectation of the Messiah

Pentateuch = Torah = The Law (by tradition, from Moses)

- Genesis (origins).
 - primeval history (1:1-11:26): Adam, Eve, wilfulness, flood, Babel
 - patriarchal stories (11:27-50:26): Abra(ha)m, captivity in Egypt, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph.
- Exodus. Israel in Egypt, Moses, plagues, trek, Sinai, 10 Cs, ordering of worship.
- Leviticus. Named after Levi (son of Jacob) whose family was chosen by God as priests in the Tabernacle. Corporate and personal laws regarding worship and religious activities: cleanliness, morality, ethics, hygiene.
- Numbers. Names, censuses. aka 'In the Wilderness': Israelites' rebellion wandering in Sinai and Moab (now Jordan, east of the Dead Sea). Covers a brief period.
- Deuteronomy. 'Second law', repetition of much in Ex, Levit, Numb. Given to Israel on plains of Moab (now Jordan) just before their entrance into the Promised Land of Canaan under the command of Joshua. Moses' last address before his death (Mount Nebo [I've been there!]) from where he could see promised land). Only two men that escaped from Egypt remained, so repetition of law was necessary.
- Dating very controversial. Archaeology important. Maybe about 500 BC, but reflect oral traditions much older.

Ten Commandments

- 1-4 concern what?
- 5-10 concern what?
- What are they all about?
- In whose interest?

- *Big picture stuff, and how did it come to be as it is? Why so many versions?*
- *The Law. In whose interest was this written? Is it reasonable? it relevant to us?*
- *History, Prophets, Wisdom, Psalms, Poetry. Images of God. Headmaster, lover, parent, problem-solver, disturber, creator, inscrutable, silent partner,*
- *Gospels. Why four? Why only four? Which came first? Why were they written? how were they compiled? Why contradictions? Why omissions?*

- *Paul and the rest. To whom were the epistles written, and why? What is gnosticism? Should Christianity be called Paulinity?*
- *Authority: how should we use Holy Scripture? Guide or rulebook? If we ignore Paul's rules about women in church, why not ignore others as well? Sexuality, morality, the role of reason, tradition ... and more.*