

# North Chesterfield MMA 2008-2009

WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 2009

## ***Holy Scripture: Psalms, Prophets, Wisdom, the rest***

### **History of Israel**

- Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Exram nehemiah, Esther
- Job: a beautiful book

### **Psalms**

- Several types including:
  - Wisdom (about 12 in total: e.g. 1, 119, 127)
  - Royal (e.g. 2, 45, 101, 110)
  - Complaint (over 40 in total: e.g. 3-7, 38-43, 54-61 138-143 etc)
  - Hymns of thanksgiving (e.g. 30, 118, 136, 146-149)
  - Hymns of trust (e.g. 23, 27)
  - Composite (e.g. 27 and many others)
  - Creation hymns (e.g. 103, 104)
  - Zion liturgy (e.g. 68)
  - History (e.g. 78, 106, 136)
- Different constructions: narrative, acrostic, antiphonal

### **Prophets, including:**

- Isaiah (? 3 of them)
- Jeremiah
- Ezekiel: 6thC BC, written for exiles in Babylon, warnings, Jerusalem destruction. Last 8 chapters a vision of restoration, OT equivalent of Revelation.
- Amos: 8thC BC. Anger about rich and poor inequalities.
- Micah: 8thC BC. do justly, love mercy, walk humbly.
- Daniel (inc Susanna and Bel and the Dragon). Different versions in different Bibles. Writing on the wall, Nebuchadnezzar, Lion's den. Benedicite.
- who are today's prophets? are there any?

### **Wisdom literature**

- Ancient (Mesopotamian etc) literature, characterized by sayings intended to teach about God and virtue, insights about the nature of life and reality, father to son sayings etc.
- Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, many psalms, Wisdom (of Solomon), Sirach (aka Ben Sira, aka Ecclesiasticus)
- Lady wisdom: sofia contrasted with harlot
- Rose? Mary (Theotokos)? Christ? Grail?
- Wisdom = love, light, knowledge (from Isaiah).
- Wisdom (*hokma*) for the Hebrews equivalent concept to Word (*logos*) for the Greeks? Proverbs 8:22 ff as the basis for John 1??
- The Russians, esp. Sergei Bulgakov: 'wisdom is the nature of God': love of love.
- Wisdom hidden (Job), partly revealed (Proverbs), fully revealed (Song). What are the implications of this last comment – very interesting.

### **Poetry and stories (my category)**

- Song, Job, Ruth, Jonah etc

Tanakh = Hebrew Bible.

Midrash = kind of investigations, halakha (legal, ritual) and haggadah (legendary, anecdotal).

Mishnah

*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.*