

Cynthia Wilson-Borbor

#### Lesson 4: The Pentateuch

- I read the Bible for 1.5 Hours
- I listened for 30 minutes
- I read 100% of the assigned reading carefully, highlighted areas of focus and took notes from it.
- I watched all 5 videos (Lesson 4-8) for each book and took notes. I watched the Bible Project videos for Genesis through Deuteronomy

1. Provide a succinct overview of the Pentateuch. What is it? The Pentateuch, also known as the Torah, Five Books, Law of Moses orients us to who we are as human beings. It is a book of instruction and legal material and guidelines given by a human mediator. Moses was the author and law giver. These guidelines provided instruction on how the Hebrew people will live. These instructions are foundational to the entire Bible. Creation, the fall, and human rebellion are the first steps toward redemption. God established relationship with one people to reach all people.

2. What is the purpose and message for each of the books that it contains?

Genesis: the overarching theme is covenant with a chosen people of promise and fulfillment. Yahweh is faithful despite Israel's shortcomings. God creates order so he can dwell with man, but sin disrupts God's order. God wants to dwell with us and reestablish the relationship and order.

Exodus: the redemptive work of God and how He redeems a covenant people. The purpose and message, Judgement against Egypt; historical; deliverance of Israel; establishment of covenant with Israel as God's special possession.

Also, the purpose is revealing who God is. Leviticus is a manual for holy living and holy worship. Numbers is a record of Israel's early day and gives account

of the destination of the people towards Canaan. Deuteronomy formalizes the covenant to prepare God's people to live in the land that God promised to Abraham.

3. Identify at least one major event or feature that was new or challenging to your understanding of this portion of scripture. The story of Balaam and the Balaam oracles somewhat challenged my understanding. Why would God speak through a sorcerer like Balaam? To turn the tables, just as He done previously with Joseph. God spoke through someone who was available just as he used Pharaoh by hardening his heart toward the Israelites before the Exodus from Egypt. Balaam was manipulative and blinded (literally) by greed. Balaam offered seven burnt offerings to God on seven separate altars. I've learned through this lesson and other literature that Pagans as well as Israelites regarded seven as a complete number based on the seven days of creation. There are several similarities in culture and literature I was not aware of that opened my understanding of God's plan for His people. Because of the similarities in sacrifice (albeit not of people but animals) and other customs of the Ancient Near East, the Israelites identified all too readily with Paganism and idolatry.
4. Identify 2-3 specific questions or issues that you would like to research further.
  1. Creation and Before the Fall, what was it like when Adam and Eve walked right with God in the Garden of Eden?
  2. I would also like to research the Balaam Oracles and the messianic glimpses God provided as he blessed Israel, even as they murmured and complained.