





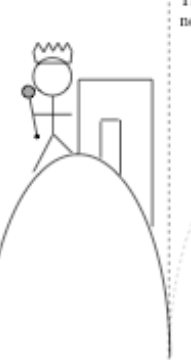

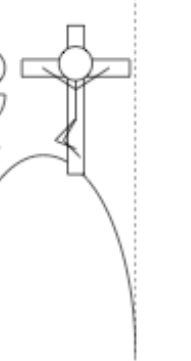
Old Testament

Volume 1 – Beginning with Moses

The following is a rough guideline to help you get the most out of your CD set. By reading the suggested readings prior to listening to the CD you will be able to draw more from the material that is presented.

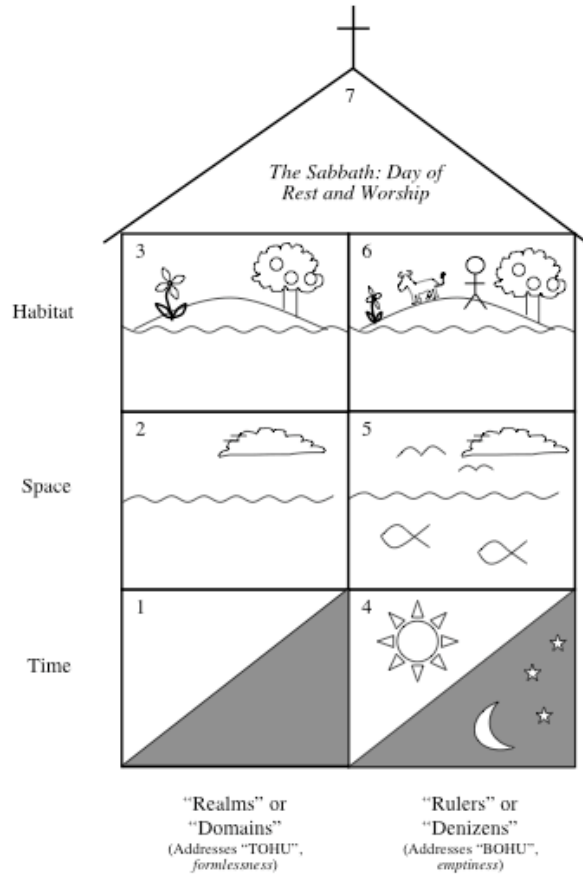
CD Tracks	Topic	Suggested Reading
Volume 1 CD 1	Overview of Salvation History	Genesis 1
Volume 1 CD 2	Creation and Fall Covenant with Adam Covenant with Noah	Genesis 2-3
Volume 1 CD 3	Covenant with Abraham	Genesis 4-16
Volume 1 CD 4	Foreshadowing of Israel's future problems	Genesis 17-50
Volume 1 CD 5	The Exodus	Exodus 1-19
Volume 1 CD 6	The Sinai Covenant	Exodus 20-34
Volume 1 CD 7	Failure in the Wilderness	Skim Exod 35-40; skim Lev 1-7, read 8-10, then skim 11-27; Read Num 1, 3, 6, 9-14, 16-17, 20-26, 31:1-12, skimming in between.
Volume 1 CD 8	The Deuteronomic Covenant (curses/planned obsolescence)	Read Deut 1-12, 17:14-20, 18:15-22; 20:1-18; 21:10-14; 24:1-4; chs. 27-34, skimming parts in between
Volume 1 CD 9	The Deut. Covenant Renewed	Read Josh 1-11, skim 12-22, read 23-24

Visual for CD 1

Name	"Adamic" or "Creation"	"Noahic"	"Abrahamic"	"Mosaic" or "Sinai"	"Davidic"	"New"	"Eucharistic"
							
Mediator	Adam	Noah	Abraham	Moses	David	Son of David	Jesus
Mountain	Eden	Ararat	Moriah	Sinai	Zion	Zion	Calvary (Zion)
Organization	Married couple	Extended Family	Tribe	Nation	Kingdom (Empire)	Kingdom (Empire)	Church
Scripture	Genesis 1-2	Genesis 9	Gen 12:1-3; Gen 15; Gen 17; Gen 22	Exod 19-24 (fulfills Gen 15)	2 Sam 7 Pss. 89, 132 (fulfills Gen 17)	Jer 31:31-35 Ezek 37:24-28 Isa 55:1-5	Luke 22:14-32 esp. v. 20
	Roles of Adam: 1) Firstborn Son 2) King 3) Priest 4) Prophet 5) Universal Bridegroom		Promises to Abraham: 1) A Great Nation → Fulfilled 2) A Great Name (Royalty) → Fulfilled 3) Universal Blessing (to all nations) → Fulfilled				
	Covenants of Creation		Covenants of Redemption				

Seven Covenants of Salvation History

Visual for CD 1



Visual for CD 3

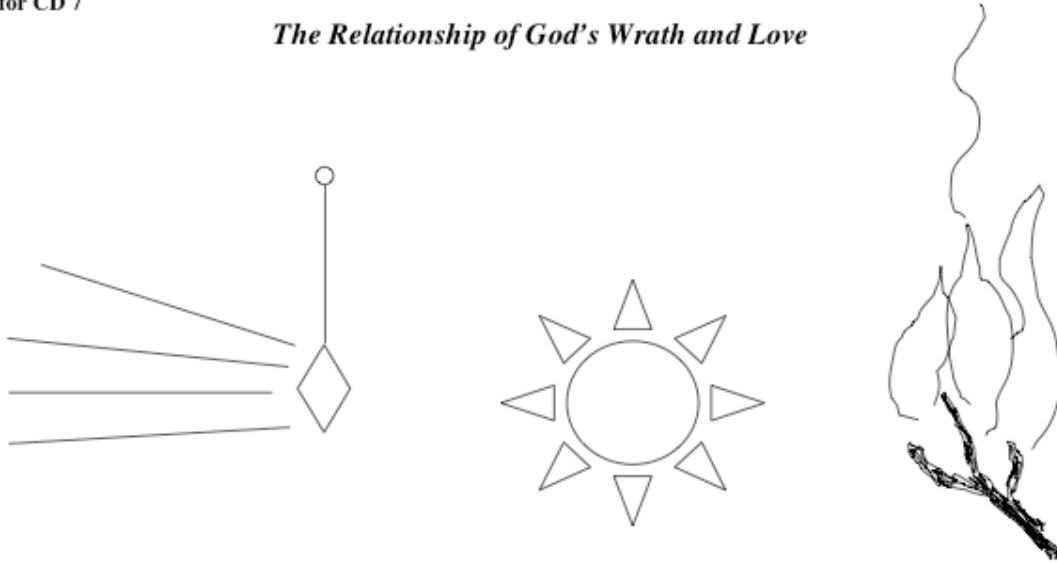
The Literary Pattern of Genesis 1–11

A	Creation out of watery chaos <i>Gen 1:1-25</i>	A'	Re-creation out of watery chaos <i>Gen 6:9–8:22</i>
B	Covenant with Adam. (Filial relationship established) <i>Gen 1:26–2:24</i>	B'	(Re)New(ed) covenant with Noah. (Filial relationship restored.) <i>Gen 9:1-17</i>
C	Fall into sin involving (1) fruit, (2) nakedness, (3) shame, (4) curse. <i>Genesis 3</i>	C'	Fall into sin involving (1) fruit, (2) nakedness, (3) shame, (4) curse. <i>Gen 9:18-29</i>
D	Spreading out of son's descendants. <i>Genesis 4</i>	D'	Spreading out of sons' descendants. <i>Genesis 10</i>
E	Genealogy of 10 generations, Adam to Noah. <i>Genesis 5</i>	F'	Massive sin of rebellion (Tower of Babel) <i>Gen 11:1-9</i>
F	Massive sin of rebellion (Sons of God with daughters of men) <i>Gen 6:1-5</i>	E'	Genealogy of 10 generations, Shem to Abram. <i>Gen 11:10-26</i>

A sequence of six major events repeats itself, although in the second sequence the last two elements are reversed.

Visual for CD 7

The Relationship of God's Wrath and Love



The warmth of God's love radiates out to every creature, but each creature experiences it differently, just as this prism and this dry, flammable stick experience the light and heat of the sun differently.

Visual for CD 8

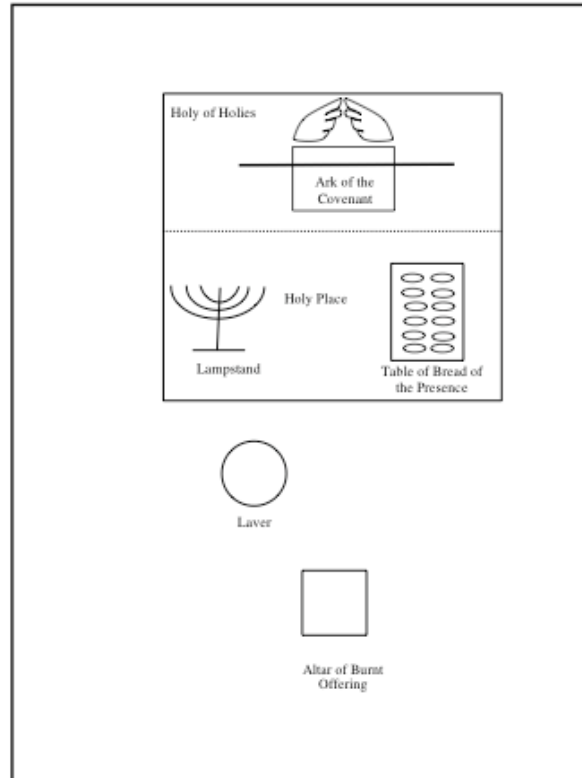


Diagram of the Tabernacle
(not to scale)

There are various theological, Christological, and Trinitarian types and images to be found in the layout of the Tabernacle

Visual for CD 9

The Three Basic Forms of Ancient Covenants

		Parties to the Covenant	
		Superior Party	Inferior Party
Type of Covenant	“Kinship-type” (Mutual)	Oath	Oath
	“Vassal-type” (Imposed)	(No oath)	Oath
	“Grant-type” (Bestowed)	Oath	(No oath)

There are three basic types of covenants in the Bible and the ancient Near East. They can be distinguished by observing who swears the oath. Biblical examples of:

Kinship: Exod 24 (1st Sinai/Mosaic); Gen 21 (Abraham and Abimelech)

Vassal: Gen 17 (2nd Abrahamic); Deuteronomy (Final Mosaic)

Grant: Gen 15 (1st Abrahamic); Gen 22 (Final Abrahamic)

Reading Guide #1: Genesis 1-11

Introduction: Both Christian and Jewish tradition ascribe the authorship of the Book of Genesis to Moses, although only a few modern biblical scholars would defend that position. Modern scholars tend to divide the book up into various “sources” from which they believe it was compiled, and the final compilation of the book is assigned to 500’s B.C., when the Jews were in Babylon or returning to Judah from Babylon. That is 700-1000 years after Moses who lived somewhere between 1500 and 1200 B.C.

We’re not going to worry too much about authorship for right now. Our primary task is to grasp the message of the book.

Genesis is a book of beginnings. The book can be divided roughly into three parts: the primeval history (Gen 1-11), the narratives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Gen 12-36), and the Joseph narrative (Gen 36-50). For this CD set, we are going to read the “Primeval History.” Primeval means “of or related to the earliest ages; ANCIENT, PRIMITIVE.”

Genesis 1:

This chapter has a poetic or hymnic structure based on seven “days.” How literally to take the “days” has always been an open question in the Church and remains so to this day. As you read this chapter, see if you can observe a pattern of relationships between the first three days and the second three days of creation.

Genesis 2: Starting with verse 4, this chapter is sometimes called “the second creation story” or “another creation story.” In point of fact, however, it does not attempt to repeat everything that was described in chapter one. All the events of chapter two would have taken place on day six and seven of chapter one—that is how the Jewish rabbis read it. What we have here is a close-up, a zoom-in on the sixth day and the creation of humanity. As you read, notice, what is the last living being created? Is that significant somehow?

Genesis 3: A tremendously important chapter, the account of the first sin and its curse. Again, how literally to take the story has been an open question, within certain parameters. In v. 15, we get the “protoevangelium”, the first subtle prophecy of the coming of Jesus. How does the serpent attack Eve, that is, where or about what does he try to sow doubt?

Genesis 4: Human society quickly degenerates. Here we have the first murder. In this chapter note who is the first bigamist, and what kind of man he is.

Genesis 5: The genealogy of Adam to Noah. How many generations are there between Adam and Noah?

Genesis 6: The beginning of the account of the flood. What are the sins that precipitate (pun intended) the flood? Note v. 2. Concerning the ark: a cubit is 18 inches. The ark was a very LARGE boat—it is only in modern times that ships have been built exceeding the dimensions of the ark.

Genesis 7: Flood narrative continued. Clean animals were acceptable for sacrifice. That's why more of them are brought along.

Genesis 8: End of the flood. Note God's command in v. 17—where have we heard language like that before? What's the first thing Noah does when he gets off the ark?

Genesis 9: The covenant with Noah. A very important event in salvation history. Observe that vv. 1-7 sound a lot like Gen 1, but there are some important differences as well. Vv. 18-28 discuss the origins of Canaan, the traditional enemy of Israel. What Ham actually did is unclear, but it was probably worse than it appears to be in our English translations.

Genesis 10: This chapter is called The Table of Nations. Though seemingly boring, it is theologically very important. All the known nations of the world are shown to be descendants of Noah's three sons. Seventy nations or peoples are named here—a traditional number of completeness, symbolizing all humanity.

Genesis 11: The tower of Babel—another great sinful rebellion of mankind, comparable to Gen 6:1-3. Only this time it does not result in flood, just dispersion. Vv. 10-26 give the genealogy of Abraham from Shem. How many generations from Shem to Terah?

Suggestions for your Theological Reflection:

1. What do you think the original sin essentially was? Was it pride (I want to be like God), doubt (what did God really say?), physical desire (I just want to taste it ...). Or was it a combination?
2. Did Adam and Eve really “die” when they ate the apple, and if not was God the liar and the serpent truthful?
3. What can we learn about God's intent for male-female relationships in these chapters?

Reading Guide #2 Genesis 12-22

Genesis 12-22 is main body of *the Abrahamic narrative*. Even though Abraham lives on until Gen 25:8, shortly after Gen 22, the focus moves off of Abraham to Isaac.

The early chapters of Genesis (1-11) are hard to correlate with ancient history, but with the life of Abraham we can begin to place biblical events in known times and places. Abraham was an ancient chieftain of a migrant tribe that moved from what is now southeast Iraq (Ur of the Chaldees) to present-day Israel. This would have taken place somewhere around 1900-1700 BC.

Genesis 12: The first few verses are a blessing to Abraham that will unfold into three covenants in the course of Abraham's life. Note Abraham's faith to go wherever God wants. But not all his actions are commendable, even if God finds ways to bless him!

Genesis 13: Lot is Abraham's nephew and like an adopted son to him. However, note his selfishness, which will later backfire in a big way.

Genesis 14: Abraham defeats nine kings in this chapter. After he defeats them, who is in control of the land of Canaan, the promised land? Yet Abraham tithes to this mysterious priest-king Melchizedek (where have we seen a priest-king before?). Salem, his city, would later be called [Jeru]salem.

Genesis 15: The first covenant made with Abraham. This animal-cutting ceremony is a way of making a covenant. Look at what is and what is *not* promised in this covenant (vv. 18-21).

Genesis 16: Abraham messes up here. Hagar was not the one God intended to produce the heir, as we will soon find out.

Genesis 17: God has to renew the covenant with Abraham. There is an implied rebuke in God's command in v. 1. Note that the promises of this covenant are more than those in Gen 15. Also, conditions are now attached.

Genesis 18: The LORD appears to Abraham as three men. Remind you of anything? What does Abraham's long discussion with God show about God's mercy and justice?

Genesis 19: Forced homosexuality is shown here as the lowest degradation of human culture. Lot is not that bad, but as it turns out, he's no saint—his “interactions” with his daughters produce two nations that will be perpetual enemies of the Israelites.

Genesis 20: And Abraham said, “If it worked once, why not try it again?”

Genesis 21: Don't worry too much about Hagar and Ishmael, they will do alright for themselves. In vv. 22-34, we have the first human covenant recorded in scripture. How many lambs are exchanged? What are the two meanings of “Beersheba”?

Genesis 22: This chapter is called the Binding of Isaac, or the “Aqedah,” from the Hebrew word meaning “Binding.” How is Isaac like Jesus? Pay careful attention to the oath in vv. 16-18. What is the last, climactic promise? Where did we hear that promise before?

Suggestions for Theological Reflection:

1. Sometimes people reading the Bible for the first time are shocked that heroes of the faith (like Abraham) sometimes commit what we would consider “bad behavior.” What would you say to a friend of yours who is bothered about that?
2. Abraham isn't perfect, but he has some qualities that God likes. What are some admirable virtues that God seems to value in Abraham, and where do we see them in the story?
3. In Gen 22, how can God command Abraham to do something which otherwise would be considered gravely wrong (kill his own son)? Is God evil?

Reading Guide #3

Genesis 23-50

Genesis 23: The death and burial of Sarah. Skim this chapter.

Genesis 24: The narrative now turns attention from Abraham to Isaac. Isaac is the most passive of the patriarchs. But his wife is a real go-getter! (Note: Camels can drink like 40 gallons of water at once). The two of them are very much in love: note Gen 24:67 and 25:21.

Genesis 25: Ishmael and all Abraham's descendants by Keturah become Arabian tribes that will plague the nation Israel in the future. The rivalry between Jacob and Esau will also pass on to the nations that descend from them.

Genesis 26: Isaac tries the ol' wife-as-sister trick. Where do you think he learned this?

Genesis 27: Note the power of words and parental blessings in the ancient world—they took seriously what they said and could not take it back, even if “mistakes were made.” But was it right for Esau to try to accept the blessing when he had sold his birthright to Jacob?

Genesis 28: When God speaks to Jacob, listen carefully to the promises—where and to whom have these promises been given before?

Genesis 29-30: The “baby wars” narrative. Poor Leah! But watch how God vindicates her in the long run.

Genesis 31: Oh, my! What a dysfunctional family we have here! Note the covenant-making episode at the end. Take note of the kinds of things one does to form a covenant.

Genesis 32-33: Esau is thinking “payback time!” but Jacob once again finds a clever way out of a pickle. Note the struggle with the angel and the name change.

Genesis 34: Sons #2 and #3 (Levi and Simeon) bring down a curse on themselves in this chapter. That will become important in the long run.

Genesis 35: Note where Rachel is buried, and keep it mind to compare with where Leah eventually will be buried. What does Reuben do in this chapter?

Genesis 36: Skim this chapter.

Genesis 37: Now we start the Joseph narrative, which will continue to the end of the book. Some things to watch for: (1) How is Joseph a type of Christ in many ways? (2) Observe the interaction between Judah and Reuben as they vie for leadership of the family. Who is more successful? (3) Watch Judah's moral development in the course of the story. Is he the same person in ch. 44 as he was in ch. 37?

Genesis 38: A strange side story, but important, because through Tamar's son David and eventually Jesus will come (see Matt 1:3)

Genesis 39-47: Keep watching for the things I mentioned above in Genesis 37

Genesis 48-49: The blessing of Jacob is very important because Jacob is the heir and mediator of the divine covenant. What he says will determine the fate of each son. Which sons get royal blessings? Note: the end of 49:26 should read “on the brow of him who is prince among his brothers.”

Genesis 50: The book ends on a note of reconciliation. Watch for mention of Joseph’s bones as we move into the rest of the Bible. Eventually we are going to find out what happens to them.

Suggestions for Theological Reflection:

1. Looking back on the story of Joseph, discuss and point out the ways that either (1) Joseph and/or (2) Judah is a type of Christ. That is, how (by their words, deeds, and character) do these men resemble and foreshadow Jesus Christ?
2. In many ways Jacob was a schemer and a conniver. Does the Bible endorse his behavior? What would you say to a young Christian disturbed by the behavior of this “Father of God’s people”? What is it about Jacob, if not his trickery, that God likes, in your opinion?
3. What moral insights about living a Godly life can you derive from observing the life of Joseph? In what situations in his troubled career does he really model what we would think of as a “Christian” response to the circumstances he faced?

Reading Guide #4 Exodus 1-19

“Exodus,” from the Greek words meaning “a road out, exit,” recounts the events surrounding Israel’s escape from Egyptian slavery and their reception of God’s law at Mt. Sinai. Moses is introduced in chapter 1. He will remain the main character and protagonist for the rest of the Pentateuch—all the way to the end of Deuteronomy, when he dies.

Exod 1: Concerning the “new king” that did not know Pharaoh—there was apparently a coup in the Egyptian court and a new dynasty came into power, one that belonged to a different ethnic group than the dynasty that patronized Joseph.

Note what Pharaoh tries to do to the Israelites here. Poetic justice will be served by the end of the story.

Exod 2: Was it smart and/or just for Moses to kill the Egyptian? How might the story have turned out differently if he hadn’t?

Exod 3-4: Very important passage—the Divine Name is revealed. We will discuss in class. Observe how Moses argues with God—gutsy, don’t you think?

Exod 5-11: The first nine plagues. Observe a couple of things: How receptive are the people of Israel to Moses? Do they get off to a good start together? Also—who hardens Pharaoh’s heart? Not so simple as you might think—look carefully how it’s phrased each time the Bible mentions Pharaoh’s heart being hardened.

Exod 12-13: The Passover and the last plague. Look for similarities between the Passover and the Eucharist (but don’t spend too much time). What is the relationship between the Passover and the firstborn?

Exod 14-15: The parting of the Red Sea and aftermath—How much love is Moses getting from the Israelites?

Exod 16-17: What does Moses provide (by God’s power) for the people in the wilderness? Getting any love yet?

Exod 18-19: Moses father-in-law has another name, really a title, “Reuel”—“friend of God.” He seems to have been a prophet.

In chapter 19, pay special attention to the promise in **verse 6**. Also, when God comes down on the mountain, where have we seen these kind of phenomena before? Fire, smoke, darkness, etc.?

Questions for Theological Reflection:

(1) What do you think it means that God hardened Pharaoh's heart? What was the relationship between God's will and Pharaoh's will? Was Pharaoh a puppet without free will in this matter?

(2) Ponder the divine name, "I AM WHO I AM." What does it mean? Why is it significant? What does it tell us about God? Why would God reveal himself by this name rather than another?

(3) The Catechism (§129-130) talk about the typological reading of the Old Testament. Obviously we see in the Passover a type of the Eucharist. What other types of Christ, the Church, or other elements of the New Covenant can you see in the events portrayed by Exod 1-19?

Reading Guide #5
Exod 20-Lev 27

This assignment includes a lot of the Old Testament laws. Since in the New Covenant, many of these laws are fulfilled and no longer practiced, we will skim a good bit of these legal texts.

Exod 20-24: Exod 20 contains the ten commandments, which are perpetually valid. Exod 21-24 contains a body of instruction called the “Covenant Code,” to distinguish it from other codes of law in the OT: the “Priestly Code” (Lev. 1-16), the “Holiness Code” (Lev 17-27), and the “Deuteronomic Code” (Deuteronomy 1-33).

Exod 25-31: Skim this section, which describes the construction of the tabernacle.

Exod 32-34: Here is the account of the great covenant-breaking at the golden calf. Note a couple of things: what arguments does Moses use to try to persuade God not to wipe out the Israelites? Although God will eventually renew the covenant, certain things about the covenant relationship get changed as a result of this incident: how many can you observe?

Exod 35-40: The tabernacle is built—skim these chapters.

Leviticus: Leviticus contains instructions about animal sacrifices, ritual “cleanliness”, and other laws for being holy in God’s presence. All of this legislation is given by God *after* the Golden Calf incident.

Lev 1-7: Regulations for sacrifice. Skim.

Lev. 8-10: Aaron and Sons ordained. How good a start do they get off to in their priestly ministry?

Lev. 11-27: Laws of holiness and purity. Skim these chapters, but slow down and read **chs. 20, 25 and 26** more closely—well enough to get a good feel for what is contained in them.

Suggestions for theological reflection:

1. Consider Moses' behavior during and after the Golden Calf incident (Exod 32-34). How is Moses in some ways a type of Christ? On the other hand, how is he *not* like Christ?
2. Why does God offer to wipe out the Israelites and start over with Moses and his descendants, and then later change his mind? Is God not omniscient? Does he need Moses to remind him to do what's right?

Reading Guide #6 Numbers

“Numbers” derives its name from the fact that two censuses are taken in the book, the first in ch. 1 and the second in ch. 26. The first census is taken of all the people who left Egypt with Moses. By the time the second census takes place (ch. 26), all the adults who left Egypt have died off, and their children have risen to adulthood.

Although Numbers reads rather quickly, keep in mind that approximately forty years elapses between chs. 1 and 26. In chs. 1-3, the people are leaving Sinai. By chapters 25-26, they have reached the “Plains of Moab,” where they will remain for the rest of Numbers and Deuteronomy, until Joshua leads them into the land. So what we are really getting is some selected anecdotes and incidents from a rather long period of wandering in the wilderness.

Notice in Numbers that the book alternates between stories of Israel’s rebellions in the wilderness, and giving of more laws. For interest’s sake, count how many rebellions take place in the assigned passages of Numbers.

Suggestions for Theological Reflection:

1. Throughout Numbers, the people seem continually to complain to God and Moses, and to rebel. Yet they remain God’s people. He doesn’t destroy them. Do you think the Catholic Church is better in its faithfulness to God than Israel was, or similar? Or a little of both? What are possible similarities and differences between the Israelites in Numbers and Christians in the Church of yesterday and today.
2. In at least two instances in Numbers, there are rebellions against the human leadership God has provided for his people (namely Moses and Aaron). Is there ever dissent against the human leadership of God’s people today? What are the similarities or differences?
3. Compare Num 21 and the bronze serpent with John 3:14. How can Jesus compare himself with this object? How is it a “type” of Christ?

Reading Guide #7: Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy is a long address by Moses to the people of Israel while they are waiting outside of the promised land. The book divides roughly into three parts: Part 1 (chs. 1-11) is a long introduction in which Moses recounts much of what has happened so far in Exodus-Numbers, and exhorts the people to love the LORD by being faithful to him. Part 2 (chs. 12-26) is a new set of laws, which are mostly similar but sometimes different from laws previously given in Exodus-Numbers. Part 3 (chs. 27-34) consists of various blessings and curses given for keeping or breaking the covenant respectively, interspersed with some narrative about Moses' final days.

The laws section can be somewhat tedious, so I am having you read all of the introduction (1-11), just a few of the laws to get the "flavor" (chs. 12; 17:14-20; 18:15-22; 20; 21:10-14; 24:1-4), and then most of Part 3, the blessings and curses.

Moses' First Sermon

Deut 1-4: Moses is recapping what has taken place since leaving Sinai. Notice that in Deuteronomy, "Sinai" is called "Horeb." These are alternative names for the same location. Notice, too, that sometimes what Moses recounts is slightly different from what the narrator has told us in Exod-Numbers. Moses puts his own "spin" on events in certain places.

Deut 4: Note where the people now are located (3:29), which Moses mentions (4:3). This chapter is an exhortation for the people to stay faithful to the LORD generally. Then we have a transition (vv. 44-49) to a sermon on the ten commandments.

Moses' Second Sermon

Deut 5-11: This long address is loosely a sermon on the ten commandments

Deut 5: The commandments are repeated, in slightly different wording from Exod 20, and in slightly different order.

Deut 6: Moses begins by expounding on the first commandment, to have only one God, the LORD.

Deut 7-8: Moses is motivating the people here, by promising blessing for being faithful to the first commandment, but curses if they are unfaithful.

Deut 9-10:11: A historical reminiscence, as Moses recalls the people's unfaithfulness on the journey up to this point.

Deut 10:12-ch. 11: Again Moses urges faithfulness, promising blessings and curses.

The Laws

Deut 12: Scholars call this chapter “the law of the central sanctuary.” It is perhaps the most important and characteristic law of Deuteronomy—one place of worship once they get into the land.

Deut 17:14-20: A king allowed for the first time. Note the three things a king must not do.

Deut 18:15-22: What is promised here? A very important chapter for later biblical history.

Deut 20: Note the two different standards for warfare, depending on whether the city is near or far from the people of Israel.

Deut 21:10-14: No comment now, but listen to the CD.

Deut 24:1-4: Read this permission for divorce very carefully. What situation is actually being addressed?

Deut 27: Note that blessings and curses are promised in v. 11-14. But what actually gets pronounced in vv. 15-26?

Deut 28: Another section of blessings and curses. Count how many verses describe blessings, and then how many describe curses.

Deut 29: More exhortation from Moses.

Deut 30: Very important chapter. The first six verses describe the rest of biblical history. Read them carefully.

Deut 31: Note where “this book of the law” (i.e. Deuteronomy) is stored. Also, how optimistic are Moses and God about the faithfulness of the people?

Deut 32: How optimistic is this poem?

Deut 33-34: Moses final blessing and death. Which tribes get the best blessings?

Suggestions for theological reflection:

- 1) Sometimes Jesus' teachings about love for God are contrasted with the teachings of the Old Testament. However, Moses teaches a great deal about love for God as well. What is the difference between the Mosaic Covenant and New Covenant in Christ, if both taught about love for God?
- 2) What is Moses' attitude toward the Israelites in Deuteronomy? Is his attitude justified or not, based on his experience with them over his lifetime? Does his attitude show a moral defect on his part?

Reading Guide #8: The Book of Joshua

Joshua picks up where Deuteronomy ends: Moses has died, the people of Israel are now under the command of Joshua. Under Joshua, whose name means salvation and was translated in Greek as “Jesus,” the Israelites will experience a brief period of spiritual faithfulness and military success.

The book of Joshua is divided into three parts: Part 1, chs. 1-11, describe the conquest of the land under Joshua. Part 2, chs. 12-22, describe the division of the land. Part 3, chs. 22-24, recount some events near the end of Joshua’s career. I am having you read parts 1 and 3, skipping the geographical description of the division of the land. For the division of the land, it is easier simply to look at a map. Your Bible may have a map in the back or front. Knowing the basic geography is of some importance for understanding subsequent events.

Josh. 1: Self-explanatory.

Josh 2: Rahab was a “madame” who ran a “public house.” She is saved by tying a scarlet cord in the window. When was the last time we had a red mark of salvation on one of the entrances of a house?

Josh 3-4: Of what earlier event in salvation history does the river-crossing recorded here remind you? Note Josh 4:9—the pile of stones was still visible when the writer of Joshua was composing the book.

Josh 5: It is remarkable that circumcision of the people did not take place in the desert. Who should have seen to that during the wilderness wanderings? Did that individual forget about circumcision on other occasions as well?

Josh 6: The fall of Jericho is a historical problem. Some scholars doubt it happened. However, there is archeological evidence that the walls of Jericho fell down on at least two occasions in history. The problem lies simply in matching the dates with the time of the conquest.

Josh 7: The people have learned a painful lesson about the consequences of covenant infidelity in the desert. Therefore, justice on Achan is swift and decisive.

Josh 8: After the defeat of Ai, Joshua performs the covenant-making ceremony prescribed by Deuteronomy 27 (look back and compare). He also reads Deuteronomy (the book of the law). The Deuteronomic covenant takes effect at this time.

Josh 9: Like Rahab, the Gibeonites find a way into the people of Israel, although they technically should have been excluded. Is there anything admirable about the Gibeonites?

Josh 10: no comment

Josh 11: The summary at the end of this chapter concludes Part 1 of Joshua.

Skim 12-22. Look on a map for the tribal divisions.

Josh 23-24: Here Joshua renews the covenant with the people. Does he sound like Moses? Is he optimistic about the faithfulness of the people? Whose bones are finally laid to rest in the land of Canaan?

over

Suggestions for theological reflection:

1. Joshua (Y'shua in Hebrew) shares the same name as Jesus (Y'shua in Greek). How is Joshua a type of Jesus? Are there similarities in what Joshua and Jesus do for God's people?
2. Why do you think God permits Canaanites like Rahab and the Gibeonites to enter into his covenant people, despite the Mosaic law?
3. Joshua seems to give the people the option to leave the covenant of the LORD in Josh 24:15. In fact, he almost encourages them to do so (Josh 24:19-20). Would it have been better or worse for the Israelites to have "opted out" of the covenant at this point? What do you think?