**What You Should Know from OT3-Pentateuch**

Lakeside Institute of Theology

1. Why should Christians study the Old Testament?
   * It is the “Scriptures” referred to by Jesus and the Apostles.
   * The Old Testament is part of God’s inspired revelation to us.
   * The Old Testament is foundational to our understanding.
   * The Old Testament is practical.
   * The Old Testament points to Jesus Christ.
2. What is the meaning of “Pentateuch?”
   * The “Five Books” or “The Five Part Book.”
3. What is the meaning of “Torah?”
   * “Law” or “Instruction.”
4. What are the five books of the Torah or Pentateuch?
   * Genesis
   * Exodus
   * Leviticus
   * Numbers
   * Deuteronomy
5. According to conservative tradition, who was author of the Pentateuch?
   * Moses
6. Why is it difficult to talk about the Old Testament as “history?”
   * While much of the Old Testament tells us about events that occurred in the distant past, and these records are very valuable, we must remember that the ancient Hebrews had a different way of looking at how history was written. Our modern idea of history – a sequential, systematic and usually objective record of events – was invented by Greek historian Herodotus in the 5th Century BC – which means almost all the Old Testament was written *before* the invention of what we think of as “history.”
7. What is the meaning of the name “Genesis?”
   * “Beginnings” or “origins.”
8. What are the two major sections of the Book of Genesis?
   * The Prehistoric Prologue (chapters 1-11)
   * The Story of the Patriarchs (chapters 12-50)
9. What are the four major events of the Prehistoric Prologue of Genesis?
   * The Creation
   * The Fall
   * The Flood
   * The Table of nations and Tower of Babel
10. Why are the Jewish people (and some others groups) called “Semitic?”
    * They are descended from Shem, one of the three sons of Noah.
11. Who were the Hebrew Patriarchs?
    * Abraham
    * Isaac (Abraham’s son)
    * Jacob (one of Isaac’s two sons)

(NOTE: Joseph, one of Jacob’s 12 sons, is technically not considered a “patriarch” by the Jews, but a major figure in their history and the focus of the last 14 chapters of Genesis.)

1. Abraham came from Mesopotamia; what does “Mesopotamia” mean?
   * “The land between the rivers” – meaning the fertile land watered by the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.
2. What is the “Fertile Crescent?”
   * The arc of land that starts in Mesopotamia – the fertile area watered by the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers – and curves around through the Levant (Palestine) and down to the Nile River Delta in Egypt. It was here the first human civilizations developed.

1. What was the physical sign of God’s covenant with Abraham?
   * All males were to be circumcised.
2. What new names did God give Abram (“Exalted Father”) to mark His covenant promise?
   * Abraham – “Father of Many” or “Father of a Multitude (of nations)”
3. The Jewish people came from the line of Abraham’s son Isaac; who was

Abraham’s other son, and what was his importance?

* + Ishmael was actually Abraham’s firstborn, from Hagar, the handmaiden to Abraham’s wife Sarah. Ishmael went on to father twelve sons who became the twelve tribes of the Arab peoples.

1. What were the names of Isaac’s two sons?
   * Jacob
   * Esau
2. How did Jacob gain preeminence over his older twin brother, Esau?
   * First, by talking him out of his birthright in exchange for a bowl of stew.
   * Second, with encouragement from his mother Rachel, by pretending to be Esau and convincing his old and blind father Isaac to give Jacob his primary blessing.
3. What name did God give Jacob after wrestling with him all night?
   * Israel, which means “He has striven (or ‘wrestled’) with God.”
4. How many sons did Jacob/Israel have, and what was their importance?
   * Twelve sons, who became the founders of the “Twelve Tribes of Israel.”
5. Which of Jacob’s sons became most important, and why?
   * Joseph, the 11th son, because after his brothers sold him into slavery in Egypt he rose to prominence there and later was able to save his father, brothers and their families from famine by bringing them to live in Egypt.
6. Who is considered the first true Old Testament prophet, and the prototype for all prophets who followed?
   * Moses.
7. Moses is called a “prophet of God.” What is the proper definition of a “prophet?”
   * One who speaks for God and interprets His will to the people. So “to prophesy” means to communicate God’s will and His words to people, whether that relates to events happening in the past, the present, or the future.
8. How and why did the Israelites end up as slaves in Egypt?
   * The Israelites had gone to Egypt because of famine in Canaan, at a time when Joseph was second only to pharaoh in authority. But many years later, after the memory of Joseph’s importance had been forgotten, the reigning pharaoh turned the Israelites into slaves.
9. How did Moses come to be the leader of the Israelites?
   * Moses was saved as a baby from Egyptian efforts to kill all male Hebrew babies, adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter and raised in the royal household. As an adult, after killing an Egyptian for beating a Hebrew, he flees to Midian and becomes a shepherd. Forty years later God appears in the burning bush and tells Moses he is to return to lead the Israelites out of slavery.
10. What is the meaning of the name “Exodus?”
    * “Exit” or “departure.”
11. What are the two primary events recorded in the Book of Exodus?
    * The Exodus itself – the miraculous delivery of the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt.
    * The giving of the Law through Moses at Mount Sinai.
12. What happened at the “Burning Bush” on Mt. Horeb?
    * God spoke to Moses.
    * God told Moses His name.
    * God called and commissioned Moses to return to Egypt to bring the Israelites out of slavery there.
13. What did God tell Moses His name was, and what does it mean?
    * YHWH (or Yahweh), which means “I Am” or “I Am Who I Am.”
14. What is the “Tetragrammaton?”
    * The written form of the proper name of God, YHWH, which is made up of four Hebrew letters. (“tetragrammaton” is Greek for “four letters”)
15. What was the last and most devastating of the plagues God sent against Egypt, and why did it not affect the Israelites?
    * The last plague was for Death to pass through the land of Egypt, taking the lives of the firstborn of every family – including the livestock. The Israelites were not affected because they had been warned to sacrifice a lamb and to put the blood of the lamb on their doorposts and lintels, as a sign for Death to “pass over” those Jewish households – which is where we get the “Passover” as a Jewish celebration.
16. How did God preserve the people of Israel after they left Egypt?
    * Miraculous crossing of the Red Sea and destruction of the pursuing armies of Pharaoh.
    * Quail and manna in the wilderness
    * Provision of water from the rock
    * Protection from Amalakites and other enemies
17. God provided quail and manna to feed the Israelites in the wilderness. What is the accepted meaning of “manna?”
    * “What is it?”
18. What happened at Mt. Sinai?
    * God swore his covenant commitment to the Israelites, that they would be his special people if they agreed to obey and follow him.
    * The Israelites completely agreed to the covenant… then proceeded to break their promise for the first of many times.
19. What was the reaction of the Israelites when Moses remained for forty days on the mountain of God?
    * They convinced Aaron to make an idol for them to worship in the form of a golden calf, probably reminiscent of gods they had known in Egypt.
20. What was the reaction by God and Moses when the Israelites worshipped the golden calf?
    * God threatened first to destroy the people, then to not remain present with them in their journey to the holy land, but agreed not to do either after being implored by Moses.
    * Moses broke the two tablets of the Law that had just been given by God as a sign that the Israelites had broken their covenant with god, then – assisted by the Levites – led a massacre of many of the people as a judgment against them.
21. What is the major theme of the book of Leviticus?
    * Holiness
22. Why is the third book of the Pentateuch called “Leviticus?”
    * The name is derived from Greek Septuagint and its Latin translation, meaning “pertaining to the Levites” – the priestly tribe of Israel.
23. What are the two sections of Leviticus about?
    * How the people can become holy (by sacrifice).
    * How the people can remain holy (how they should live).
24. What is the point of the sacrificial system in Leviticus?
    * To provide a means by which the Israelites can receive atonement for their sins and become holy before a righteous God.
25. Why is the fourth book of the Pentateuch called “Numbers?”
    * Because of the two census events that occur in the book (chapters 1-4 and 26) in which the Israelites are counted.
26. What is the setting and situation in the Book of Numbers?
    * The forty years of wandering in the desert by the people of Israel before they could enter the Promised Land.
27. What is the primary theme of the Book of Numbers?
    * Preparation – first to leave Mount Sinai, and then to enter the Promised Land.
28. Why were the Israelites forced to wander in the desert for forty years before entering the Promised Land?
    * Moses sent spies into Canaan (the Promised Land), and when they returned all of them except Caleb and Joshua said it was not possible for the Israelites to overcome the people living in Canaan, and they should not even try. This lack of faith in God’s promise meant they had to wander 40 years until every adult male of that generation – except Caleb and Joshua – had died before they could enter the Promised Land.
29. Why did the majority of the Israelites spies not trust God and believe they could conquer Canaan?
    * Because the people were large and powerful, and the cities were heavily fortified.
30. Who, beside Moses, were the only Israelites who believed they could conquer the land of Canaan?
    * Joshua and Caleb.
31. What is the meaning of the name “Deuteronomy?”
    * The “second Law” or “second telling of the Law.”
32. What is the theme and purpose of Deuteronomy?
    * The Law is restated and the Mosaic Covenant is renewed to the new generation of Israelites before they entered the Promised land.
33. What is the literary form of Deuteronomy?
    * Three sermons or addresses from Moses to the Israelites in preparation for entering the Promised Land.
34. Why was Moses not allowed to enter the Promised Land?
    * Because he had acted in anger at Meribah (Numbers 20) and disobeyed God’s instructions.