


Catholic Discipleship

Unit 6: Mount Sinai




Opening Prayer

O Holy Spirit of God, take me as your disciple. Guide me, illuminate me, sanctify me. Bind my hands that they may do no evil. Cover my eyes that they may see it no more. Sanctify my heart, that evil may not dwell within me. Be my guard. Be my guide.

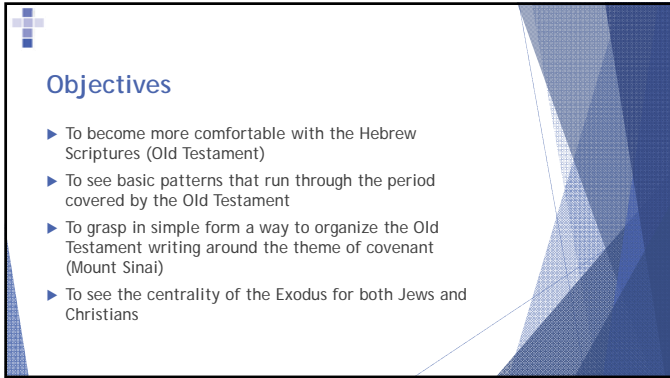
Wherever you lead me, I will go. Whatever you forbid me, I will renounce. Whatever you command me, in your strength I will do. Lead me, then, to the fullness of your truth. Amen.

- Henry Edward Cardinal Manning, 1809-1892



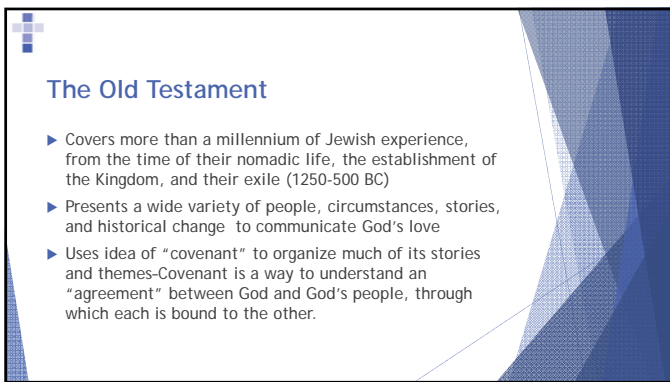
Orientation

- ▶ The twelve units of *Catholic Discipleship* are helping us explore dimensions of what it means to be a missionary disciple in the Church today.
- ▶ Each unit has an essay section, a spiritual exercise section, and a Scripture passage with reflection questions.
- ▶ Please read the essay section before each meeting.
- ▶ We will do the spiritual exercises together.
- ▶ We will use the Scripture as part of our prayer.




Objectives

- ▶ To become more comfortable with the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)
- ▶ To see basic patterns that run through the period covered by the Old Testament
- ▶ To grasp in simple form a way to organize the Old Testament writing around the theme of covenant (Mount Sinai)
- ▶ To see the centrality of the Exodus for both Jews and Christians



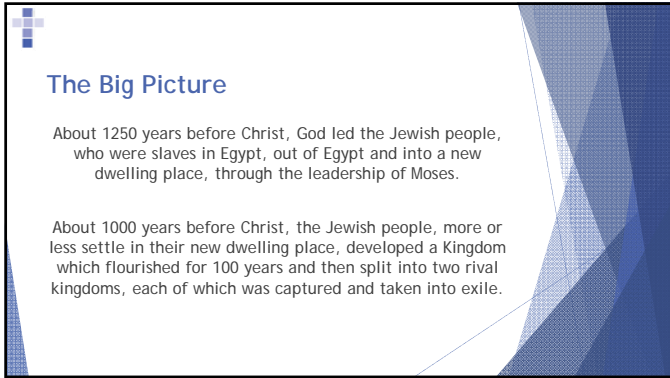
The Old Testament

- ▶ Covers more than a millennium of Jewish experience, from the time of their nomadic life, the establishment of the Kingdom, and their exile (1250-500 BC)
- ▶ Presents a wide variety of people, circumstances, stories, and historical change to communicate God's love
- ▶ Uses idea of "covenant" to organize much of its stories and themes-Covenant is a way to understand an "agreement" between God and God's people, through which each is bound to the other.



The Old Testament (continued)

- ▶ Adam demanding to have everything in the Garden
- ▶ Abraham taking a risk
- ▶ Moses struggling for freedom
- ▶ A wandering Jew not sure whether or not to trust God
- ▶ An exultant people entering a new land
- ▶ A king who serves his people
- ▶ A king who uses his people for himself
- ▶ A prophet crying out on behalf of God
- ▶ A rebel trying to silence a prophet's message
- ▶ A people in exile
- ▶ A people awaiting redemption



The Big Picture

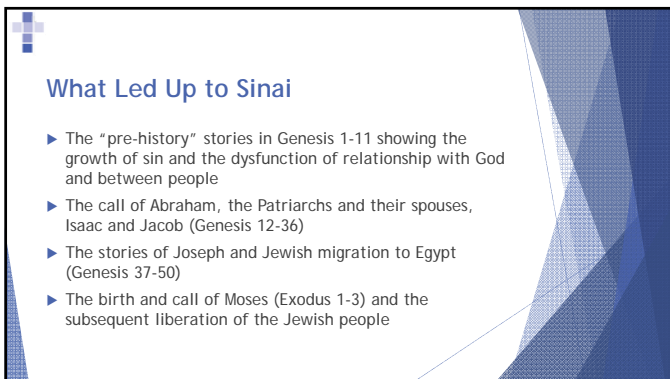
About 1250 years before Christ, God led the Jewish people, who were slaves in Egypt, out of Egypt and into a new dwelling place, through the leadership of Moses.

About 1000 years before Christ, the Jewish people, more or less settle in their new dwelling place, developed a Kingdom which flourished for 100 years and then split into two rival kingdoms, each of which was captured and taken into exile.



Mount Sinai—The Covenant

1. What led up to Sinai
2. What was involved in Sinai
3. What flowed from Sinai



What Led Up to Sinai

- ▶ The “pre-history” stories in Genesis 1-11 showing the growth of sin and the dysfunction of relationship with God and between people
- ▶ The call of Abraham, the Patriarchs and their spouses, Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 12-36)
- ▶ The stories of Joseph and Jewish migration to Egypt (Genesis 37-50)
- ▶ The birth and call of Moses (Exodus 1-3) and the subsequent liberation of the Jewish people

What Was Involved With Sinai

- ▶ Liberation of the Jewish people from Egypt
 - ▶ This is told in the first half of the Book of Exodus, containing the outline of the plagues, the Passover, the leaving of Egypt and the pursuit of Egyptians (Exodus 1-18).
 - ▶ The Passover was a traditional feast that became associated with the Exodus.
- ▶ The Covenant on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19)
 - ▶ I will be your God, and you will be my people.
 - ▶ All the people say "Yes" to following the covenant.
- ▶ The Commandments (Exodus 20)
 - ▶ These are the ways the Jewish people will embody their faithfulness to God.

What Flowed From Sinai

- ▶ The Jewish people make their way into the Holy Land (Joshua) and set up tribal systems (Judges) as they adjust to their sometimes hostile environment.
- ▶ The Jewish people, under Samuel, establish a Kingdom with three initial kings (Saul, David, Solomon), after which the Kingdom splits into North (Israel) and South (Judah)—1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings.
- ▶ As the Jewish people respond to outside threats and internal divisions, prophets arise to remind the people of God's fidelity (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel), especially when driven into Exile.
- ▶ After the Exile, wisdom writings are collected to help guide daily life.

Spiritual Exercise (p. 42)

List the stories from the Old Testament that are important to you... the ones you remember the most, the ones that help you spiritually.

As you write them down, say briefly what they mean to you spiritually.

Scripture—Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength. Take to heart these words which I command you today. Keep repeating them to your children. Recite them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them on your arm as a sign and let them be as a pendant on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates.

Conclusion

- ▶ Thank you for coming and participating.
- ▶ Please think of bringing a friend along next week.
- ▶ Remember to bring your Bible next week. If you need help getting a Bible, see me after our session.
- ▶ We invite you to spend some time in hospitality after our session.
- ▶ Please stand and recite together the Catholic Discipleship prayer and the Lord's Prayer.

Catholic Discipleship Prayer

Lord, God, through our baptisms you have made us disciples, followers of Jesus who attend to his Word, pray and worship in his Spirit, experience love in his community of the Church, and are sent to serve by helping others as he did. Lead us, Father, more fully into your Kingdom, which Jesus came to begin and fulfill. Help us, through his Spirit, to adhere to him and bring his Good News to all we encounter. We pray this in his name. Amen.

Our Father...
