

CLE 7 – FIRST TERM REVIEWER

LESSON 1: REVELATION AND FAITH

Revelation

Revelation: from Latin re-velare, meaning “to unveil or uncover.” It is God’s loving communication of who He is and His plan to save us, reaching out to us in friendship.

Avenues of Revelation

Natural Signs – God reveals Himself through creation and nature—what we see, hear, and touch.

Biblical Signs – God reveals Himself through His words and deeds recorded in Sacred Scripture and fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Ecclesial Signs – God reveals Himself through the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit in His people, the Church.

Liturgical Signs – God reveals Himself through prayer, sacramental worship, doctrine, and moral service of the Church.

Grace – God reveals Himself through His interior presence in conscience, daily events, and the signs of the times.

Faith

Faith: our response to God (CCC 26).

Doctrine: Believing – Cognitive (Mind) – Knowing and deeply understanding Jesus and His teachings, leading to wholehearted acceptance and transformation.

Moral: Doing – Psychomotor (Body) – Living out faith through action, obeying God’s will, and loving service to neighbors.

Worship: Entrusting – Affective (Heart) – Trusting God and His providence. Faith grows through prayer, worship, personal connection with God, liturgical celebrations, and the sacraments.

Memory Key: REVELATION = God reveals Himself → FAITH = our response: Mind, Body, Heart.

LESSON 2: GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE

Meaning and Origin

Bible / Ta Biblia – Greek term meaning “the books.” The Bible is more than one book; it is a library.

Testament – from Latin testamentum, meaning “covenant” or a close bond between God and His people.

Old Testament (OT) – recounts God’s covenant with Israel through Moses and God’s faithfulness despite Israel’s disobedience.

New Testament (NT) – recounts God’s covenant made available to all people in Christ through His life, passion, death, and resurrection.

Divine Inspiration and Authorship

Inspiration – from Latin inspirare, “to breathe upon or into”; the special influence of God on Scripture through human authors.

Active Inspiration – God is considered the one actually speaking in Scripture.

Passive Inspiration – the way the human author experiences God’s intervention.

Authors, Editors, Compilers – authors conveyed divine messages; editors shaped and refined texts; compilers organized writings into the unified canon.

Effects of Inspiration

Revelation – the inspired writings give God’s self-disclosure and bring us near to God Himself.

Unity – the Bible is many books but also one because God is its sole principal author; its central reality is the mystery of God.

Completeness – biblical revelation is definitive; no new revelation is needed to complete our picture of God and His ways.

Sacramentality – Scripture offers an opportunity to encounter God in Christ through intellect, imagination, and emotion.

Inerrancy – the Bible is truthful in the truths that lead to salvation; the handout also recognizes possible human limitations such as grammar or historical/geographical data.

Tradition and Scripture

Tradition – from Latin tradere, meaning “to pass on or hand over”; the living and lived faith of the Church.

Oral Tradition – faith passed on by word of mouth.

Written Tradition – tradition that was eventually put into writing.

Scriptural Tradition – traditions rooted in the Holy Bible.

Sacred Tradition – doctrinal and Apostolic teachings passed through the unbroken chain of succession.

Relationship: Scripture grew from Tradition and is interpreted by the living Tradition—the life, worship, and teaching of the Church.

LESSON 3: INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE

Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics – from Greek hermēneuein, meaning “to interpret” or “to explain”; the art and science of understanding a text, especially the Bible.

Biblical Interpretation – seeks what the text meant in its original context and how its message can be understood and applied today.

Hermeneutic Circle – understand the whole through the parts, and the parts through the whole.

Approaches

Diachronic – studies the Bible through the history of its formation and composition.

Synchronic – studies the text as it now stands.

Methods

Eisegesis – reading into the text using preconceived ideas or a biased lens.

Exegesis – using the words of Scripture and their original context to determine the intended meaning.

Senses of Scripture

Literal Sense – what the biblical text actually says and means in its context.

Spiritual Sense – recognizes meanings that point beyond the immediate text to Christ, Christian life, and eternal fulfillment.

Allegorical – How does this point to Christ and His saving work?

Moral – How should this change the way I live?

Analogical – How does this point toward our ultimate destiny with God?

Four Factors in Interpretation

Human Author – consider the author’s mindset and social, economic, and religious context.

Text Itself – consider literary form and read the text within the entire Bible, not in isolation.

Readers/Hearers – consider contemporary experience while remaining connected to the Church’s tradition of meaning.

Common Horizon – the unity linking all biblical books, tradition, and today’s context through the new and eternal covenant in Jesus Christ.

Aids for Bible Study

Bible Commentary – systematic explanations and interpretations of Scripture.

Bible Atlas – helps understand the places and geographical context of biblical events.

Bible Concordance – an alphabetically arranged reference to biblical words and their definitions.

Ordo – an annual calendar with directions for each day’s Mass and Divine Office.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Three Moments in Development

Human Experience – “Moment of lived experiences” – actual historical experiences of the people of who God is and how He works in their lives.

Oral Stage / Oral Tradition – “Moment of remembering” – religious experiences and reflections passed orally from ancestors to descendants.

Writing and Editing – “Moment of writing” – individuals wrote ancestral tales and redactors arranged varied texts into a comprehensive whole.

Important People and Events

Abraham – associated with Yahweh (YHWH) and the Yahwist tradition.

Moses – associated with Sinai, the commandments, and idolatry.

Exodus – departure of a large number of people.

Joshua – associated with the Promised Land, Canaan.

Judges – includes Deborah and the “Cycle of Baal”: Sin → Oppression → Cry Out → Salvation → Sin.

Samuel / Saul / David – important figures before and during the kingdom period.

Kingdom and Major Historical Events

United Kingdom (1020–922 BCE) – David and Solomon united one kingdom, with Jerusalem as its capital in the south.

Divided Kingdom (922 BCE) – after Solomon’s death, the kingdom split into Northern Israel and Southern Judah.

Elohist (E) – the northern tradition used Elohim for God and used names familiar to the northern region.

Fall of Samaria (722 BCE) – the Assyrian Empire captured Samaria, ending the Northern Kingdom; northerners fled south with the Elohist source, which was combined with J.

Josiah’s Reform (622 BCE) – King Josiah discovered that temple laws were not being observed and began reforms; efforts of priests, Levites, and prophets produced the Book of Deuteronomy (D Source).

Fall of Jerusalem (587 BCE) – Babylon conquered Judah, destroyed Jerusalem, and ended the Kingdom of Judah; the people were sent into exile.

Priestly Work (P) – during exile, priests gathered cultic and legal traditions, including major collections in Leviticus and Numbers, forming the fourth source.

End of Exile (539 BCE) – King Cyrus of Persia allowed the Israelites to return; the four sources were finally edited by the Priestly school into the Pentateuch.

Four-Source Theory / JEDP Theory

J – Yahwist – uses YHWH; associated in the handout with the United Kingdom and God presented in personal, human-like ways.

E – Elohist – uses Elohim; associated with Northern Israel, prophets, dreams, and northern traditions.

D – Deuteronomist – associated with covenant, law, obedience, worship of God, and much of Deuteronomy.

P – Priestly – associated with priests, rituals, sacrifices, genealogies, and detailed worship instructions; especially Leviticus and Numbers.

Julius Wellhausen: German biblical scholar who presented the Four-Source Theory / Documentary Hypothesis, proposing that the Pentateuch was composed from J, E, D, and P sources edited together over time.

Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

LESSON 5: CANONICITY OF THE BIBLE

Canonicity and Related Terms

Canon – from Greek kanon, meaning “measuring stick,” rule, or standard.

Canonicity – the condition of a book after passing standards for divine inspiration and being officially recognized by the Church as canonical.

Canonical Books – inspired books that serve as standards of faith and morality.

Criteria for OT Canonicity – Prophetic origin; coherence with the Torah; constant use in the liturgy; language.

Apocryphal – from Greek apocrypha, meaning “veiled or secret”; books that did not pass the criteria for canonicity and have doubtful authority.

Deuterocanonical – literally “second canon” or secondly canonized books; considered inspired by Catholics and equal in inspiration to protocanonical books.

Deuterocanonical Books: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Sirach/Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, 1 Maccabees, and 2 Maccabees.

Council of Trent

Council of Trent: affirmed the authority of the Vulgate, including the deuterocanonical books, and affirmed unwritten tradition as a source of truth along with the Bible.

Division and Structure of the Bible

Canon of Holy Scriptures – the set of books recognized by the Church as inspired or of divine origin.

Two Main Divisions – Old Testament and New Testament.

Chapters – major divisions of biblical books; the handout attributes the modern chapter division to Stephen Langton.

Verses – smaller divisions within chapters; Santos Pagnino made an early attempt, while Robert Stefano/Etienne is credited in the handout with the present-day system.

Catholic Bible – 73 books total: 46 Old Testament and 27 New Testament.

Catholic Publication Indicators

Nihil Obstat – “nothing hinders” – given by a Censor Librorum, attesting that a book contains nothing damaging to faith or morals.

Imprimatur – “let it be printed” – given by the author’s diocesan bishop or the bishop of the place where the book is published.

QUICK MEMORY CHECK

- Revelation = God reveals Himself; Faith = our response.
- Faith Dimensions = Doctrine (Mind), Moral (Body), Worship (Heart).
- Bible = “the books”; Testament = covenant.
- Interpretation = Hermeneutics; Eisegesis = read ideas into text; Exegesis = draw intended meaning from context.
- Three OT Development Moments = Human Experience → Oral Tradition → Writing/Editing.
- JEDP = Yahwist, Elohist, Deuteronomist, Priestly.
- Major dates: United Kingdom 1020–922 BCE; Division 922 BCE; Samaria 722 BCE; Josiah 622 BCE; Jerusalem 587 BCE; End of Exile 539 BCE.
- Canon = standard; Catholic Bible = 73 books (46 OT + 27 NT).