

# Back to Basics with the *Law of God*

## Part 4: The Gospel in the Old Testament (2)



A Straightforward Teaching of Orthodox Christianity based upon  
the Slobodskoy *Law of God* Study Book

Priest Justin Patterson / Fall 2018

# What is the Law of God?

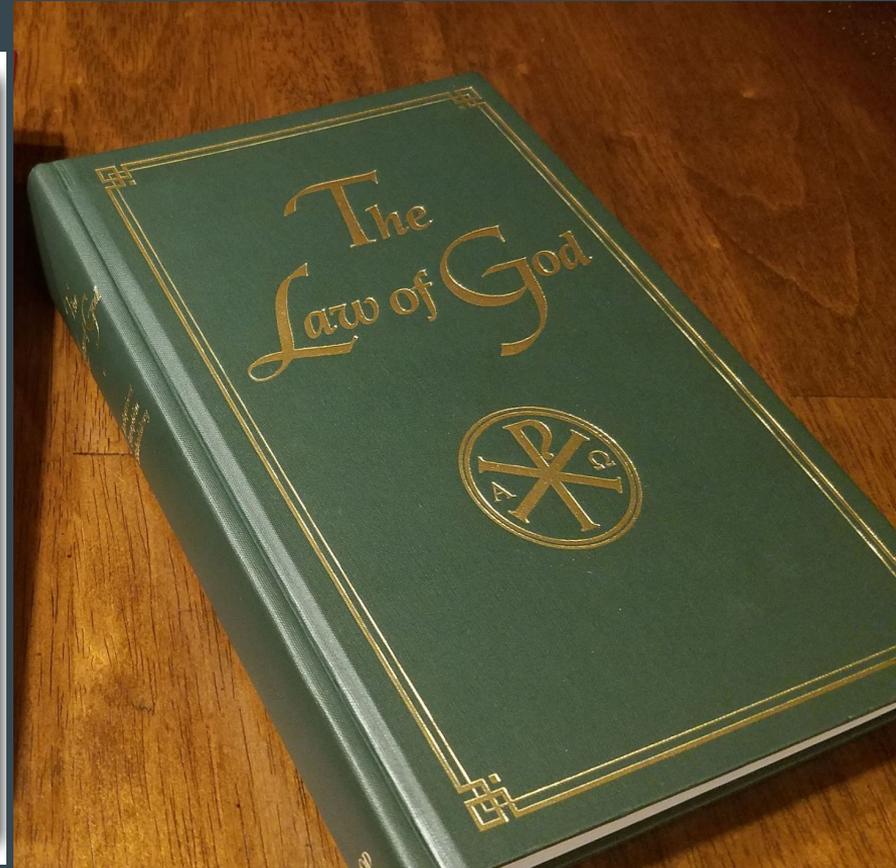
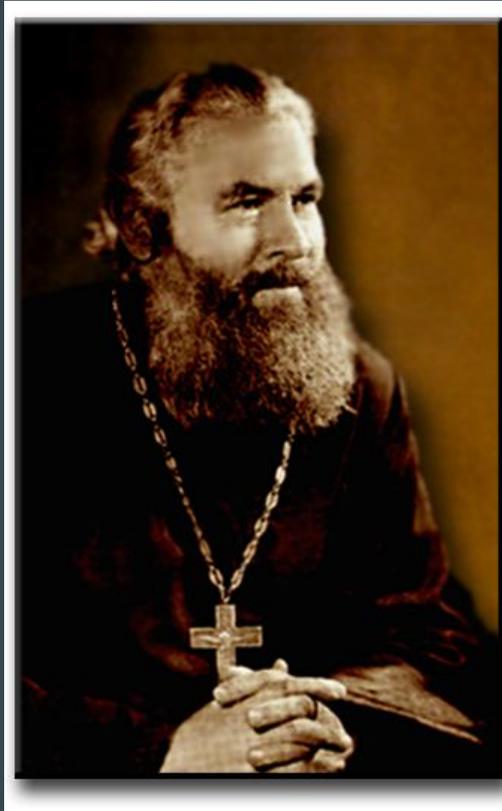
*The Law of God*

“For Study at Home  
and at School”

Compiled by  
Archpriest Seraphim  
Slobodskoy 1912-71

Holy Trinity Press in  
Jordanville

1966; English 1993



# Previous Weeks' Thoughts on Prayer Generally

+Importance of Sign of the Cross (carefulness!)

+Posture During Prayer (standing, bowing)

+3 broad categories of prayer:

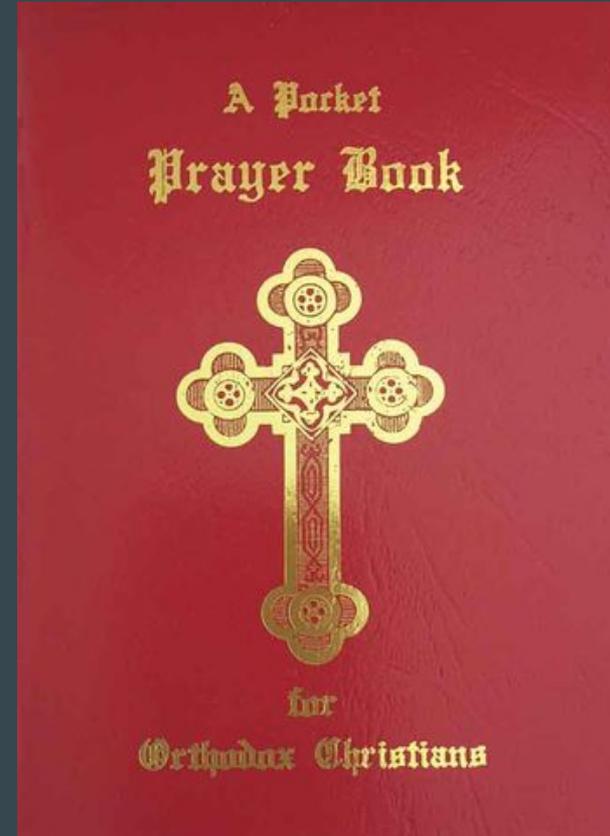
1. Prayers of Praise & Thanksgiving
2. Prayers of Petition
3. Penitential Prayers

+Disposition in Prayer (peace, focus, fasting, purity)



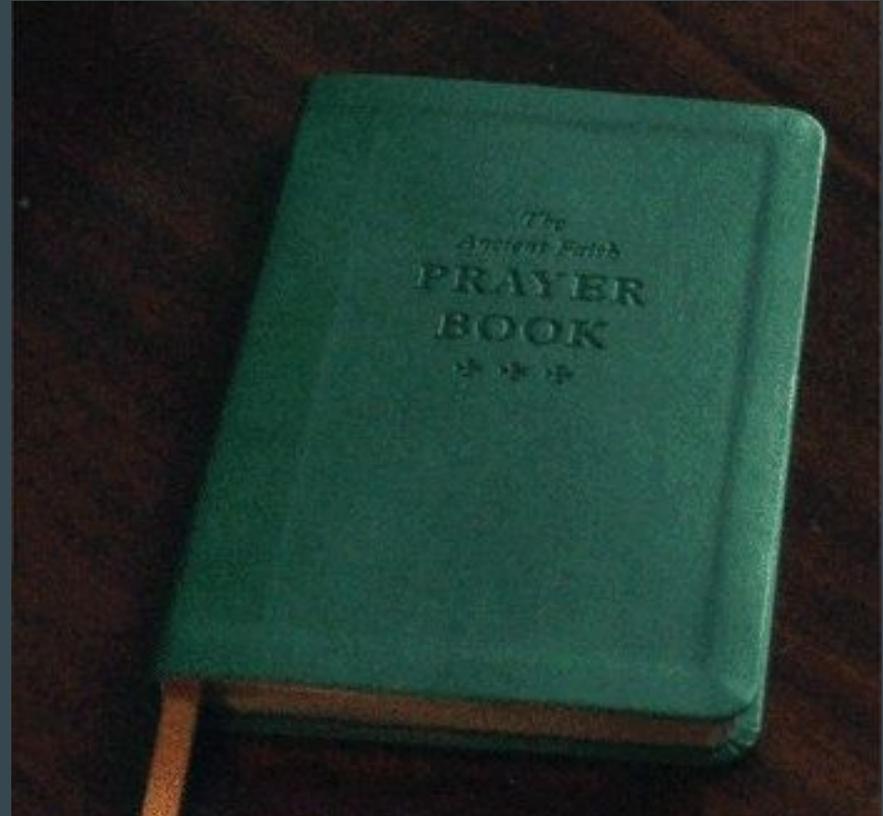
# Previous Weeks' on "The Prayers"

- Arrow prayers
- Trisagion Prayers (Opening Prayers)
  - The Lord's Prayer
- Prayers Related to the Theotokos
- Prayers Related to the Saints, Angels, and Cross
- Prayers for the Living
- Prayers for the Repose
- Morning Prayers
- Evening Prayers
- Prayers Before & After Eating



# Prayers of Need

- Many found for laypeople in the Ancient Faith Prayer book
- Many found in special services called Akathists (for all kinds of special requirements)
- Many found in the “Great Book of Needs,” four volumes full of services (led by priest) for almost any need imaginable



# Last Week (Week 3): The Gospel in the Old Testament

From the introduction to the Old Testament chapters [*excerpts from p. 76*]

The focus already on the big big picture:

- Humanity's high calling to live always in God's love
- Humanity breaking God's will
- God's desire to save and restore them
- The Old Covenant as preparation for the New Covenant



# Most of Last Week: Introduced Creation of Cosmos



Creation Series  
Icons by Michael Kapeluck  
Set of all 8 large icons, SKU 008341

# Last Week: Of particular interest... the firmament

And how the Genesis story differs from the stories of the ancient near east...

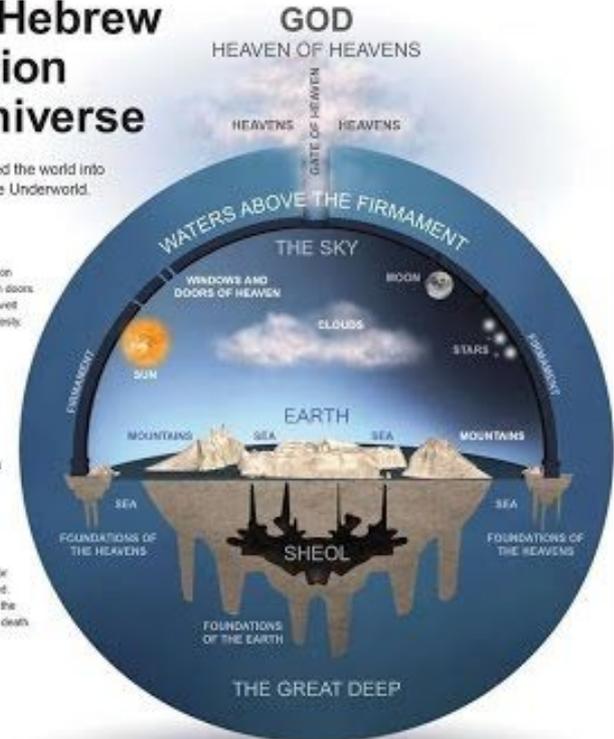
## Ancient Hebrew Conception of the Universe

The ancient Israelites divided the world into Heaven, Earth, Sea, and the Underworld.

They viewed the sky as a vault resting on foundations—perhaps mountains—with doors and windows that let in the sun. God dwelt above the sky, hidden in cloud and majesty.

The world was viewed as a disk floating on the waters, secured or moored by pillars. The earth was the only known domain—the realm beyond it was considered unknowable.

The Underworld (Sheol) was a misty or dusky prison from which no one returned. Regarded as a physical place beneath the earth, it could be reached only through death.



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# Last Week: key element that God make Man



... in His own image (inherent) and likeness (being restored by synergy.)

# And so we turn to the new material...

We will move MUCH  
FASTER through the Old  
Testament!



# Chapter 8: Cain and Abel

- Abel offers with pure heart (spirit of sacrifice)
- Cain makes his offering to God “out of habit, without love and fear of God.”
- Envy corrodes Cain, leading to murder
- In all this, Adam and Eve “repented of their sin, and firmly believed in the promised Savior,” coming through Seth, their new son, given by God.



# Chapter 9: The Flood

- Fr. Seraphim recounts the details of Genesis flood story
- He suggests that the purpose of the flood was “destroy man from the earth,” so it is possible that the flood was regional (not worldwide) (not about limits of “ecumenical”)
- The common flood stories highlights that it was real, though
- Fr. Seraphim explores ways this could be plausible, including geological finds



# Chapter 10: Life After Noah & His Children After Flood

- Story of Noah being drunk and then mocked by Ham (the disrespect for the elders is a main reason for focusing on this story)
- Blessing of Shem, especially, from whom would come the True Faith and Savior



# Chapter 11: Building of the Tower of Babel & Scattering

- A work of human pride
- The tower coincided with growth in evil among human beings
- The tower is connected to “Babylon,” a city associated with rebellion to God
- The tower was a sign of God’s goodness, in a way, because by scattering the people he reduced their capacity for coordinated evil



# Chapter 12: The Appearance of Idolatry

- While evils abounded before Babel, after Babel, the separated people began to fashion idols peculiar to them
- With the exception of the peoples of Shem in the near East, almost all peoples become idolators



# Chapter 13-15: Abraham, Three Angels, Sodom & Gomorrah

- Descendent of Shem (receiver of the Promise)
- Abraham chosen to protect the Seed of true faith (and to escape idolatry)
- Melchizedek as type of Great High Priest & King
- Visitation of the 3 angels
  - Abraham's Hospitality
  - Promise of a Son
- Destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah
  - Abraham's boldness & God's faithfulness to Lot
  - Angels "abused" seems to be main reason advanced for destruction
  - Lot's wife's perishes because she regretted leaving (incomplete repentance)



# Chapter 16-17: Abraham and Isaac

- God's call to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac
- Abraham's obedience to God
  - "The offering of Isaac in sacrifice was a prefiguration to men of the Savior, Who, being the Son of God, would be offered...on the Cross. Isaac, appearing... over a thousand years before the Birth of Christ, foreshadowed... Jesus Christ. He, like Jesus Christ, went without complaint to the place of sacrifice. As Jesus Christ bore the Cross himself, so Isaac himself carried the wood for the sacrifice.."
  - Mount Moriah later became the Temple Mount..
- Marriage of Isaac--full of meaning for Christians
  - Reminder of divine purpose of marriage--to find a good heart with spiritual beauty
  - "A good Christian family is a bulwark for good morals, the soil for the planting of good in mankind, the tool and means for the furthering of the holy Church of Christ, and confirming it upon the earth. " (p. 137)

# Chapter 18: Esau & Jacob

- Esau first-born with birthright
- Jacob obtains birthright (seniority) by zealous deal (commended by God!)
- Jacob also obtains blessing by deceit



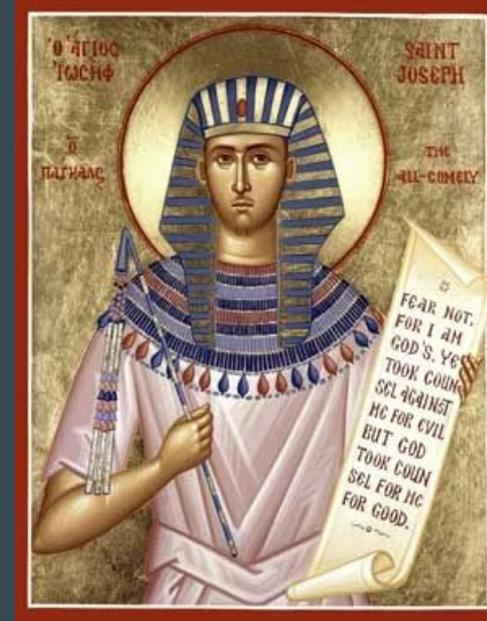
# Chapter 19: Jacob's Vision of the Mystical Ladder

- Vision of Jacob with repetition of Promise to bring forth Seed, which we see as a specific reference to the Lord Jesus Christ
- The Ladder a foreshadowing of the Mother of God



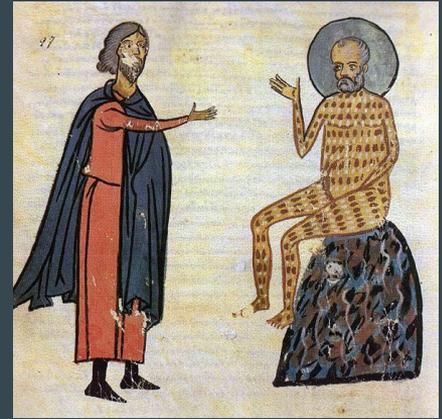
# Chapters 20-22: Story of Joseph

- Joseph's dreams and circumstances; sold into slavery as a prefigurement of Christ
- Joseph remains without blame in Egypt, persecuted and forgotten
- Joseph's miraculous interpretation of Pharaoh's dream and promotion
- Joseph's saving of his brothers, foreshadowing Christ
- Joseph's Crossing of his hands, foreshadowing the Cross and gentiles
- Like Christ, Joseph suffered at hands of own people, saved them by the wisdom of the Cross, and was glorified
- [interesting note: an aside about investigating tree rings from a Egypt! (p. 148-149)]



# Chapter 23: Story of Job the Long-Suffering

- Devil envious of Job's goodness and beloved status
- God permits Job to be tried (to prove the love between them)
- Devil put to shame by Job's persistent refusal to curse God
- Job prophesied Christ: "I know that my Redeemer lives and on the last day he shall raise from the dust my corrupted skin and in my flesh I shall see God..."
- The story teaches us that "God sends misfortunes even to the righteous... for confirmation of goodness, for the shaming of the Devil, and for the glorification of the righteousness of God."
  - Sympathy for misfortunate enjoined (as they may be innocent)
  - In his meek goodness, Job foreshadows Christ



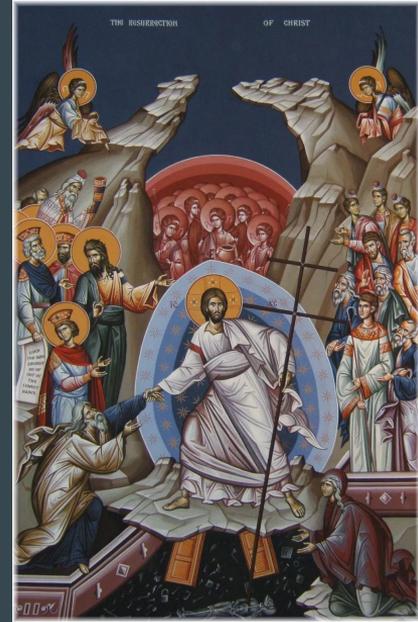
# Chapter 24: Moses

- Egyptian bondage and story of Moses
- Main theme drawn out from early life--the Burning Bush, prefiguring the Mother of God in the Incarnation



# Chapter 25: Pascha (Passover) & Exodus

- Plagues in Egypt leading up to 10th
- 10th Plague: lamb required
- “On this day, the Lord established the main feast of the Old Testament, which he called Pascha. The word Pascha means “passing by,” “passover...” The Paschal lamb, by whose blood the firstborn of the Hebrews were delivered from death, foreshadowed the Savior himself... The OT Pascha prefigured our NT Christian Pascha... Christ died on the Cross on the day that the Passover lambs were slain; and he arose immediately after the Hebrew Pascha. This is why the Church always celebrates the Resurrection of Christ after the Jewish Passover...”



# Chapter 26: Hebrews Pass Through the Red Sea+

- Red Sea crossing symbolizes baptism (delivery from sin!)
- The tree being thrown into the bitter water symbolizes the wood of the Cross healing the bitterness of sin
- The manna symbolizes the bread of life
- Moses' hands in the form of the Cross defeating Amalek



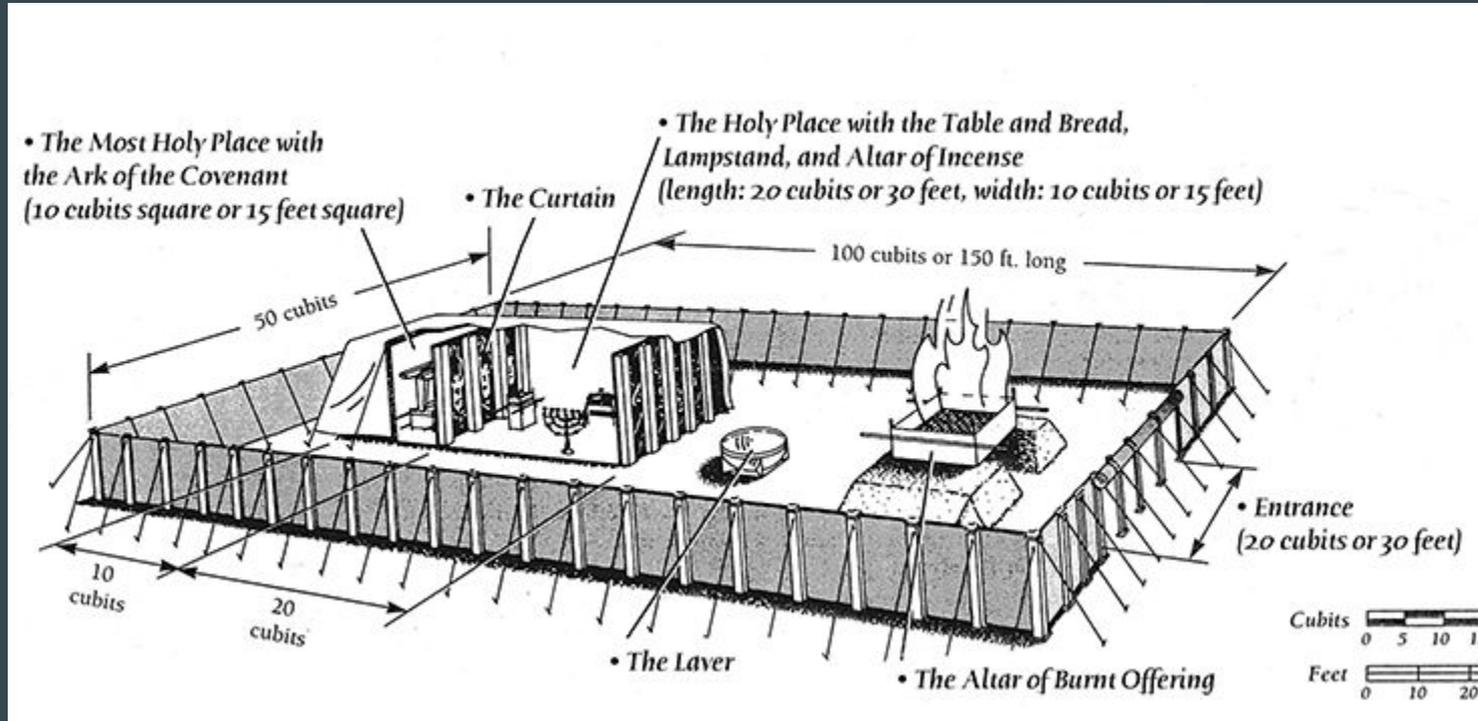
# ● Chapter 27: God Gives Law on Mt. Sinai (Horeb)

- “If you will hear my voice... you will be my people!”
- Various commandments/  
instructions given
- [read through 10  
Commandments on p. 160-162]



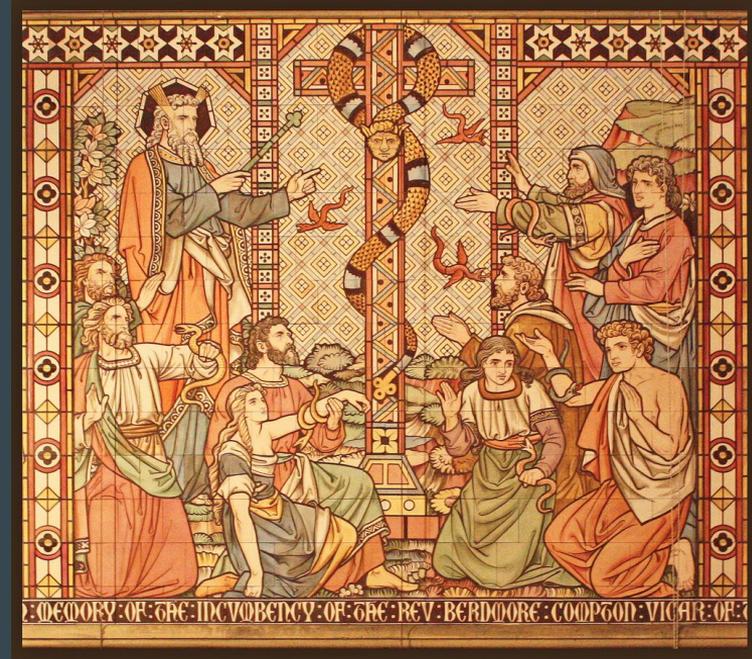
# Chapter 28: The Tabernacle

“The tabernacle represents the Church of Christ and the Mother of God, who, having contained God... was herself the house of God.”



# Chapter 29: The 40-Year Wandering & Bronze Serpent

- Lack of faith was reason for not entering Promised Land
- Aaron's staff blossoming (sign of Cross)
- Bronze serpent on pole (also sign of Cross)



# Chapter 30: Entry of Israelites into Promised Land

- Joshua a type of Christ in leading people into the Promised Land
- [fascinating excursus on Joshua's lengthening of the day, p. 171-173]



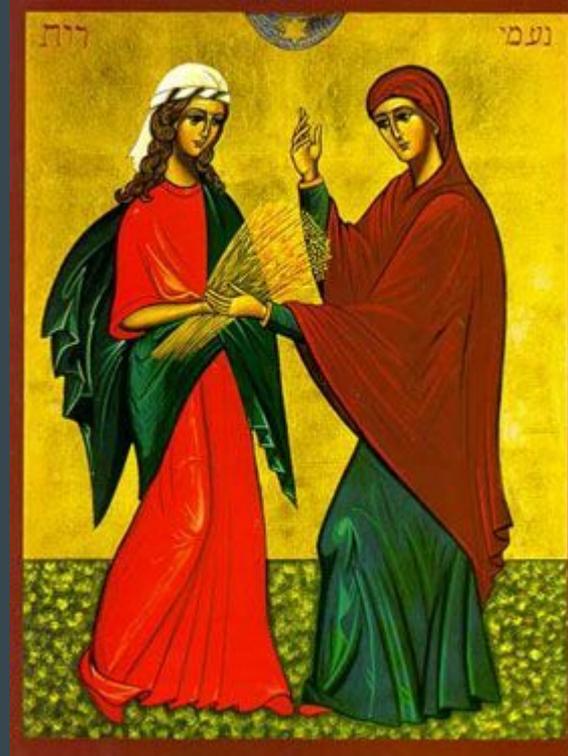
# Chapter 31: Judges

- God's faithfulness to his erring people revealed in the stories of the judges
- Gideon's story: "I will not rule over you... neither shall my son; but the Lord."
- Samson: [no lesson offered, just the story told!]
- Samuel: main thrust of his life was to show that "holy things do not help those who do not respect the holy commandments of God."
- Samuel's ministry also revealed God's desire to rule over his people directly (only giving in to people with Saul and finally with David)



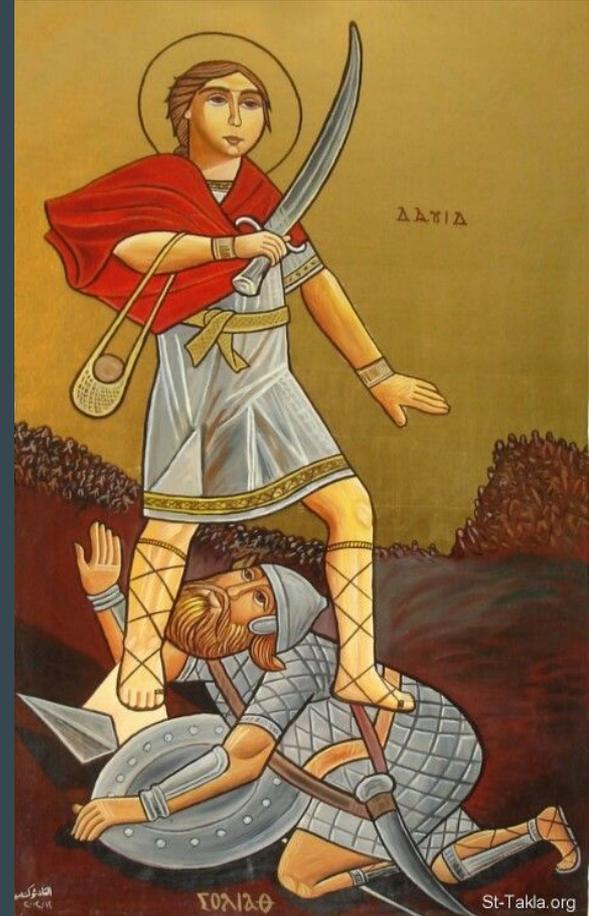
# Chapter 32: Ruth

- The lesson of Ruth's tale is to show how even the pagans could accept the one true God and become part of the family of the true God!
- “Blessed be the Lord, who has left you without a kinsmen, that his name may be famous in Israel.”



# Chapter 33: Saul, First King of Israel

- Anointed by Samuel (and thus by God) but disobeyed God and became presumptuous.
- In his reign, David first comes to the forefront of the biblical narrative
  - Story of David defeating Goliath



# Chapter 34: King David

- “Meek, pious, fastly believing in the true God, trying to do his will. Not willing to lay hand against the Lord’s anointed.”
- Despite heart like God’s, he fell into sin, yet showed himself model of repentance.
- “Have mercy on me, O God...” and Psalms (foretelling Christ)
- Receiver of the promise: “Thy kingdom will stand forever...” to be fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 



# Chapter 35-36: King Solomon & Division of Kingdom

- The gift of the “wisdom” of Solomon
- The builder of the Temple
- Solomon’s fall into sin (many wives) and failure to repent from his heart, as had his father David
- Israel Divided into two kingdoms (Judah retaining Jerusalem and remaining in Davidic line)



# Chapter 37: The Prophets

- The prophets main role was to foretell the coming Savior for the world.
  - The prophets ALSO exposed idolatry and sin as part of preparing people for the Savior
- Elijah: lived during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel
  - Widow of Zareptha
  - Defeat of the prophets of Baal
  - God not in wind or earthquake, but in still small voice
  - God's promise of a remnant who would not bow...
- Elisha: successor of Elijah
  - Crossed the Jordan (symbol of baptism) and healed the waters
  - Shunamite woman
  - Washing of Namaan in the Jordan
  - Relics of Elisha resurrect man
- Jonah: dual sign of love for gentiles & 3-day Passover

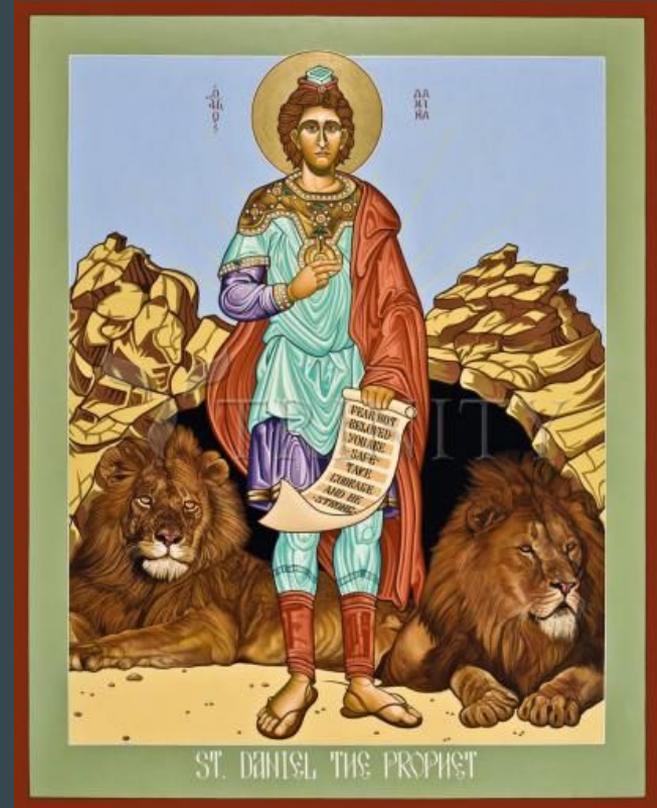


# Chapter 38: Downfall of Israelite Kingdom

- Northern Kingdom around Samaria fell first (due to wickedness/lack of fidelity)
- Judean Kingdom endured another 100 years
- Isaiah: descendant of David, prophet foretelling Christ
  - “Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a child...”
  - “He was wounded for our transgressions...”
  - Called an “Old Testament Evangelist”
  - Martyred for truth (sawn in two) for preaching against Manasseh
- Jeremiah and Fall of Judea: lamented over the people and city
- Babylonian Captivity & Ezekiel (Prophet of Exile)
  - Vision of Dry Bones & Resurrection of the Dead
- Daniel & Three Holy Youths
  - Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream of the Statue and the empires that followed
  - Furnace Story (Martyria)

# Chapter 39-40: Fall of the Babylonia & Persian Ascent

- Daniel's prophecy of Beshazzar's destruction (God's judgment and sovereignty)
- Darius and Daniel as prime minister
  - Daniel's faithfulness and favor leading to envy
  - Daniel and the Lion's Den
  - Daniel's prophecy concerning Christ (ch. 9)
  - Daniel's prediction of the cessation of the OT sacrifice (note that Daniel is the LAST OT book in the Russian canon)



# Chapter 41: Return of Jews from Captivity / 2nd Temple

- “Babylonian Captivity” for 70 years
- Cyrus released 42,000 Jews with gifts for temple
- Sacrifices resumed in Jerusalem
- Haggai comforted them and predicted the glory of the new temple would be greater than the old (Christ!)
- Zechariah spoke of the Triumphant Entry of the King (Palm Sunday)
- Malachi prophesied the coming of the Messiah and a Forerunner like Elijah. (Last of prophets in chronology, until St. John the Baptist.)



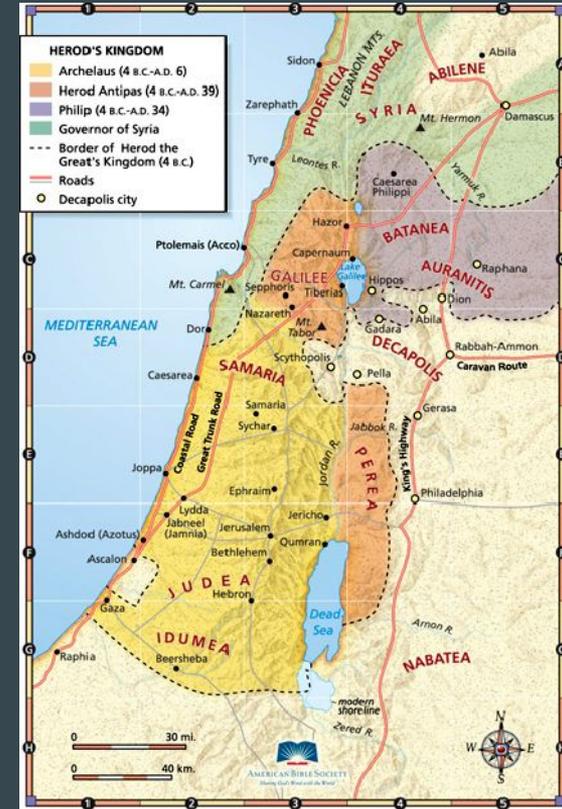
# Chapter 42: Greek Empire: LXX

- 200 years under Median-Persian Empire
- Then conquest by Alexander the Great
- Division into Greek Kingdoms
  - LXX undertaken under Ptolemy II Philadelphus (pro-Jewish)
  - Antiochus Epiphanes promotes idolatry in Israel (Maccabees)
  - Story of the Maccabean martyrs, defending faith and nation (p. 216)



# Chapter 43: Roman Empire & Expectation of Messiah

- After overthrow of Antiochus Epiphanes, the Jews only enjoyed brief freedom before arrival of Romans.
- Romans eventually appointed Idumean (son of Esau) as ruler over Jews: Herod
- Judaism semi-accepted as a religion and culture within the Roman Empire
- Jews spread throughout the Greek-speaking world providentially in expectation of the preaching of the Gospel
- Fr. Seraphim concludes the OT portion of the Law of God with a chapter on the geography of Palestine



# Next Week: The Gospel in the New Testament

