



**Coptic Orthodox Diocese
Of
The Southern United States**



AN INTRODUCTION ON THE HOLY PENTATEUCH

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HOLY PENTATEUCH

I. IDENTIFICATION:

A. The Holy Pentateuch consists of the first five Holy Books of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

B. The term "Pentateuch" comes from the Greek term pent-teuchos meaning "five-volumes (book) after the Jewish designation, "the five-fifths of the law".

C. The Jews called it "Torah" (instruction) which is often rendered in English by "Law" (Matt 5:17; Luke 16:17; Acts 7:53; 1 Corinth. 9:8).

D. Although each Holy Book is a unit, together they form a larger unit and unity.

II. UNITY:

A. These five Holy Books form a backbone for the rest of the Old Testament and New Testament theologically (Deut 26:5-10; Josh 24:2-13; Acts 3:17-41).

B. The Holy Books contain a chronological and theological progression of establishment of God's rule on earth through man over evil and over all creation.

1. The Holy Book of Genesis: The creation of the world and the man, the fall of man and the promised blessing of the seed in the land and of all peoples through the seed.

2. The Holy Book of Exodus: The redemptions of the seed of Abraham out of bondage and the formation of this people to be a nation with a constitution:

a. The redemption of the people

1) Their bondage 1-10

2) Their redemption 11-18

b. The formation of a people with a constitution:

1) Moral judgments 19- 20

2) Social judgments 21- 24

3) Cultic judgments 25- 40

3. The Holy Book of Leviticus: Israel's culture is established by providing a manual of ordinances to help with their needs when approaching God who is going to live among His people in holiness (Lev 26:11-12).

4. The Holy Book of Numbers: God orders Israel's walk (the military arrangement, census of the tribes, transport of the sacred tabernacle), but Israel disrupts the Lord order; Nevertheless, the promised blessing cannot be frustrated from within or from without

5. The Holy Book of Deuteronomy: The reconstitution of the nation under the Lord's leadership to enter the land through a covenant renewal.

III. AUTHORSHIP:

A. The Holy Books do give indications of Moses as its writer: He was ordered to write historical facts (Ex 17:14; Num 33:1-2), laws (Ex 24:4, 7; 34:27ff) and one poem (Deut 31:9, 22)

B. Moses is affirmed as author in the rest of the Old Testament: (Joshua 1:7-8; 8:32, 34; 22:5; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; 21:8; Ezra 6:18; Dan 9:11-13; Mal 4:4)

C. The New Testament refers to Moses as the author of the Holy Pentateuch (Matt 19:18; Mark 12:26; Luke 2:22; 16:29; 27; John 5:46-47; 7:19; Acts 13:39; Rom 10:5)

D. Moses is testified to be the author of the whole Holy Pentateuch in a unanimous way in the Talmud and the Church Fathers!