

Week Ten

YEAR ONE

Read

Leviticus and Numbers
Collins, Chapter 7, “Priestly Theology: Exodus 25–40, Leviticus & Numbers,” pages 74–83

Focus

Identify: the Tabernacle; sacrificial system; Day of Atonement; stories of Nadab and Abihu and of Korah; impurity laws; Holiness Code; relationship of ethics and holiness; Cultic Calendar; Book of Numbers

YEARTWO

Read

Powell, Chapter 7, “Luke,” pages 147–167

Focus

Note the following names, terms, ideas: Theophilus; “the beloved physician”; Luke’s Gospel in relationship to the Acts of the Apostles; the major themes in the Gospel of Luke; passages from Luke widely used in Christian liturgies

What interests or concerns you in Powell’s presentation of Luke’s Gospel?

Which of the major themes Powell identified do you find interesting or even compelling?

What makes the Gospel according to Luke sacred literature?

YEAR THREE

Read

MacCulloch, Chapter 7, “Defying Chalcedon: Asia and Africa,” pages 231–254

Focus

Learn the meaning of the following: *The Life of Balaam and Joasaph*¹⁷; Miaphysites; Dyophysite “Nestorianism”; Tome of Leo; *Henotikon*; Jacob Baradeus; Syriac Orthodox Church; Sergius; Peter the Iberian; Armenian Church; *Trisagion*; Theopaschism; Ethiopia; *abunI*; Ezana; *tawabedo*; *Kebra Nagast*; King Kalleb; Dyophysite Christians; failure of the Marib Dam; School of the Persians in Edessa; Sebokht; “Mar Thoma” Church; Cosmas Indicopleustes; Thomas Christians; Evagrius Ponticus; Alopen; library pagoda of Ta Qin

Identify the central opposition for one individual or a group that defied Chalcedon.

YEAR FOUR**Read**

Allen, Chapter 7, “Innocent Suffering and Life Beyond Death,” pages 68–73

Focus

Concepts that provoke thoughtful reflection: transformation of suffering; sufferings as punishment for sin; prosperity as mark of righteousness; wrong doing results in suffering; injustices of innocent suffering prompt affirmation of life beyond death; omnipotence—as can do anything; almighty—as having authority over all things; problem of natural evil

Which of the concepts listed above interested you the most?

**Respond**

Select a theme or concept from your reading, for example liberation, prayer, Christ, or suffering. Consider these questions:

What do you believe about the selected theme or concept?

How has your personal experience shaped that belief?

What personal values can you identify as you talk about that belief?

What personal values does the selected theme or concept challenge?

Practice

Carefully read the passage below and identify two or three places that interest you. Connect your personal experience with that focus.

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel

17. Note: An eBook English translation of *The Life of Balaam and Joasaph* can be found at <http://omacl.org/Barlaam/>.

of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. Then the Lord said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them."—Exodus 3:1–9

Theological reflection is about ministry: what we do and say that provide opportunities to hear and know God more and to act in the world in ways that reflect God. See where the following reflection outline takes you. Review the opening description of reflection movement as a reminder of the terms below.

Identify—the passage above from Christian tradition is the identified starting point. Focus by considering where the key energy/heart of the scripture passage is: what the passage seems to be about. Develop an image in words or a drawing that makes the point of the passage evident.

Explore the image using a question from the theological themes of Creation, Sin, Judgment, Repentance, or Redemption; that is,

What kind of community does the image-world suggest? (Creation)

What might get in the way of relationships in that image-world? (Sin)

What could make those in that world realize there's something wrong?
(Judgment)

What would represent a change of direction? (Repentance)

What might a new, life-giving creation look like? (Redemption)

Connect

PERSONAL

Experience—When has something happened in your life that is like the world of the image/metaphor? Compare your experience with the exploration above.

Contemporary Culture/Society—Who or what has taught you something that is helpful when life is like the image? In our world, how is there opposition to that image? How is there support for it?

What key issues do the metaphor and personal experience and contemporary culture raise?

State your Beliefs and Positions relative to those issues.

Apply meaning and purpose to the reflection by identifying learning and clarifying questions.

How do the beliefs and insights of the exploration support you in ministry?

Notice where you might want to make some changes in action or viewpoint about the matter covered in the reflection.

What prayer would you offer in this matter?