

Take-Home 2: The Hope of Israel

What We Found

Israel was not waiting vaguely. Moses promised a prophet like himself whom the people must heed (Deuteronomy 18:15-18); Isaiah promised a new exodus, a new way in the wilderness (Isaiah 43:16-21); Jeremiah promised the new covenant, written on hearts and founded on the forgiveness of sins (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

And we saw how the first covenant was made: blood thrown on the people, the words of the covenant read aloud, and the elders eating and drinking in the presence of God (Exodus 24:3-11). Covenant, blood, and meal are one act. At the Last Supper, Jesus said: this is my blood of the covenant, the new covenant in my blood, fusing Sinai and Jeremiah in a single cup (Matthew 26:27-28; Luke 22:20).

Voices of the Church

St. Irenaeus of Lyons (d. c. 202)

In summary: taught by Polycarp, who was taught by the apostle John, Irenaeus insisted the two Testaments have one Author, and that Christ gathers up Israel's whole story and brings it to its goal in himself. The exodus was not background to the Gospel; it was, as we might put it, its first draft.

St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

The New Testament is hidden in the Old, and the Old is unveiled in the New (*Quaestiones in Heptateuchum* 2.73; cited at CCC 129). Our study applies his rule: the Last Supper is hidden on Sinai, and Sinai is unveiled in the upper room.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386)

In summary of his catechesis: preparing new Christians for the sacraments, Cyril taught them to read the events of Israel, above all the exodus, as figures written for us, so that what God did once in shadow he now does in truth for the baptized at his table.

Live It This Week

- Read Exodus 24:3-11 once more this week, then read Luke 22:14-20 immediately after, and write down every echo you hear.
- At Mass, when the chalice is elevated, silently pray: the new covenant in your blood; count me among your covenant family.
- If you have never read the deuterocanonical books, read 2 Maccabees 2 this week as a start.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Jeremiah 31:31

Before Next Session

Read Exodus 11 before the next session.

Catechism references for this session: CCC 128-130, 610-611, 1965.