Presentation of the *Dossier*

The Pentateuch is a cultural heritage of Humanity. The world narrated in it belongs to the second millennium B.C., and the narratives, poems, and sets of laws contained therein were composed during the first six centuries of the first millennium B.C. On the one hand, by bringing together *epic*, *lyrical*, and *legal poetry*, the one hundred and eighty-seven chapters constitute, in the form of five books, a masterpiece in the history of literature. On the other hand, it is literature that proposes to cultivate memory, either in relation to the narrated world, or in view of the period of its composer, sometimes narrating, sometimes legislating, sometimes singing. Moreover, as literature aimed at history, the texts of the Pentateuch promote enormous theological reflection. The main goal seems to be to think God. Thus the first five books of the Jewish Bible and the Christian Bible, with their narrated models of faith and behavior, turned into poems and defined by legal formulations, became the foundational reference for the religion of ancient Israel, of which Judaism was born and, from the latter, Christianity. Also Jesus of Nazareth, in the four New Testament Gospels, is presented in relation to Abraham and Moses, and stands out as a unique teacher with regard to the laws contained in the Pentateuch.

In view of this importance, it is clear that any more serious study of the *Jewish* and *Christian faith*, such as undergraduate university courses and/or postgraduate studies programs in Theology or Sciences of Religion, is intended to do so engage in research on what you hear or read in the Pentateuch.¹ In addition, the Pentateuch should also gain space to study literature, philosophy, history, sociology, etc. Or, in other words: who studies the Pentateuch, having acquired this new competence, needs to put himself at the service of various sciences, religious communities, as well as society as a whole. All people, therefore, as well as societies and all humanity, are in danger of being in need of wisdom, something of greater

¹ MANZATTO, Antonio; GRENZER, Matthias. *Teologia cristã latino-americana*. Anotações sobre a Área de Concentração do Programa de Estudos Pós-Graduados em Teologia da PUC-SP. *Revista de Cultura Teológica*, n. 89, p. 27-53, 2018.

importance in view of the dignified survival of all. The Pentateuch, in turn, is capable of conveying a unique wisdom.

Studies, in turn, require method.² In recent decades, the number of detailed studies devoted to the *synchronous research* of the final text of the Pentateuch has increased. The *poetic configuration* is rediscovered and, thus, the *literary quality* of the text found by the listeners-readers in the Bible, which is the canonized text. It is also aimed at theological reflection, which is favored by the beauty that belongs to biblical texts as literature. Certain textual elements, which in *diachronic studies* had been evaluated as signs of multiple essays – for example, repetitions – are explained as planned, intentional stylistic elements employed by the author himself in order to highlight, in an artistic and/or rhetorical way, what was most important to him. Certainly, it is not denied in the world of research that the Pentateuch is the result of complex processes of writing, writing, and compiling texts that took place at different times. Therefore, diachronic study will always be well justified. However, the question remains as to whether such processes can still be clarified in detail. In this sense, the lack of greater consensus among researchers about their own results is quite significant.

In this *Dossier* on the “Pentateuch Exegesis”, hosted by the journal *Caminhando*, synchronic and diachronic studies mingle. Such studies are mainly the result of research by members of the Research Group TIAT (Old Testament Translation and Interpretation). Above all, smaller excerpts or episodes, and even literary micro-units are investigated, knowing that understanding one detail can be significant in view of a closer approach to the entire Pentateuch work. In addition, there is also in this *Dossier* thematic research aimed at the study of semantic loads of certain words and/or intertextualities.

The first study, by *Matthias Grenzer* and *Luciano José Dias*, aims at the poetic and/or linguistic-literary analysis of the discourse of the Lord, God of Israel, in Ex 34: 6c–7d. That is, the investigation focuses exclusively on the form given to the seven verses in question here, in order to better understand the rhetorical force belonging to the divine discourse.

The second study by *Valmor da Silva* and *Joilson de Souza Toledo* – “I will come closer and see this strange thing” (Exodus 3:3): A biblical translation and its hermeneutical possibilities” – focuses mainly on the

² De forma atualizada, a história da *interpretação do Pentateuco* pode ser conferida em: Féliz GARCÍA LÓPEZ. *Pentateuco: introducción a la lectura de los cinco primeros libros de la Biblia*. 2. ed. revisada y actualizada. Estella, 2014, p. 45-76.

translation of a Hebrew word, and the various possibilities of translation mirror the possibilities of comprehension inherent in the biblical text.

The third study, by *Leonardo Agostini Fernandes*, hosts a larger set of verses. It aims at the scene of Ex 3:1–6 and the theological reflection promoted by this micronarrative.

The fourth study, by *Petterson Brey*, welcomes, through the theme of Human migration, a more current issue, aiming above all at the perspective favored by the exodal narrative about the legitimacy of power.

Also the fifth study, by *Telmo José Amaral de Figueiredo*, is dedicated to the exegesis of the book of Exodus. This time, however, the focus falls on the legal formulations in the Alliance Code in Ex 20: 22-3: 33, especially on how the poor gain attention in this set of laws.

Again, the sixth study, by *Ulysses Quintão de Carvalho* and *Valeriano dos Santos Costa*, conducts research in view of legal traditions. This time, the laws regarding the construction of the sanctuary in the desert are at stake and how, apparently, a cosmological model is included in the configuration of sacred space.

Also the seventh study, by *Gilvan Leite de Araújo*, is dedicated to the desert sanctuary. However, in view of an intertextuality, we study how reflection can go from the desert sanctuary to the sanctuary of the body of Jesus (Jn 2: 13-22).

Finally, we hope that the research presented in this *Dossier* will be a valid contribution to the Pentateuch exegesis in Brazil and Latin America. In the continent on which a theology was born, which was inspired above all by the exodal narrative, capable of attracting the attention of Christians and non-Christians worldwide, the studies of the Pentateuch need to advance, so that the biblical foundations are available to those who propose to reflect on God.

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