



Episcopalians are “People of the Book”

...and the book
is the Bible.

The Biblical Library: 66 Books

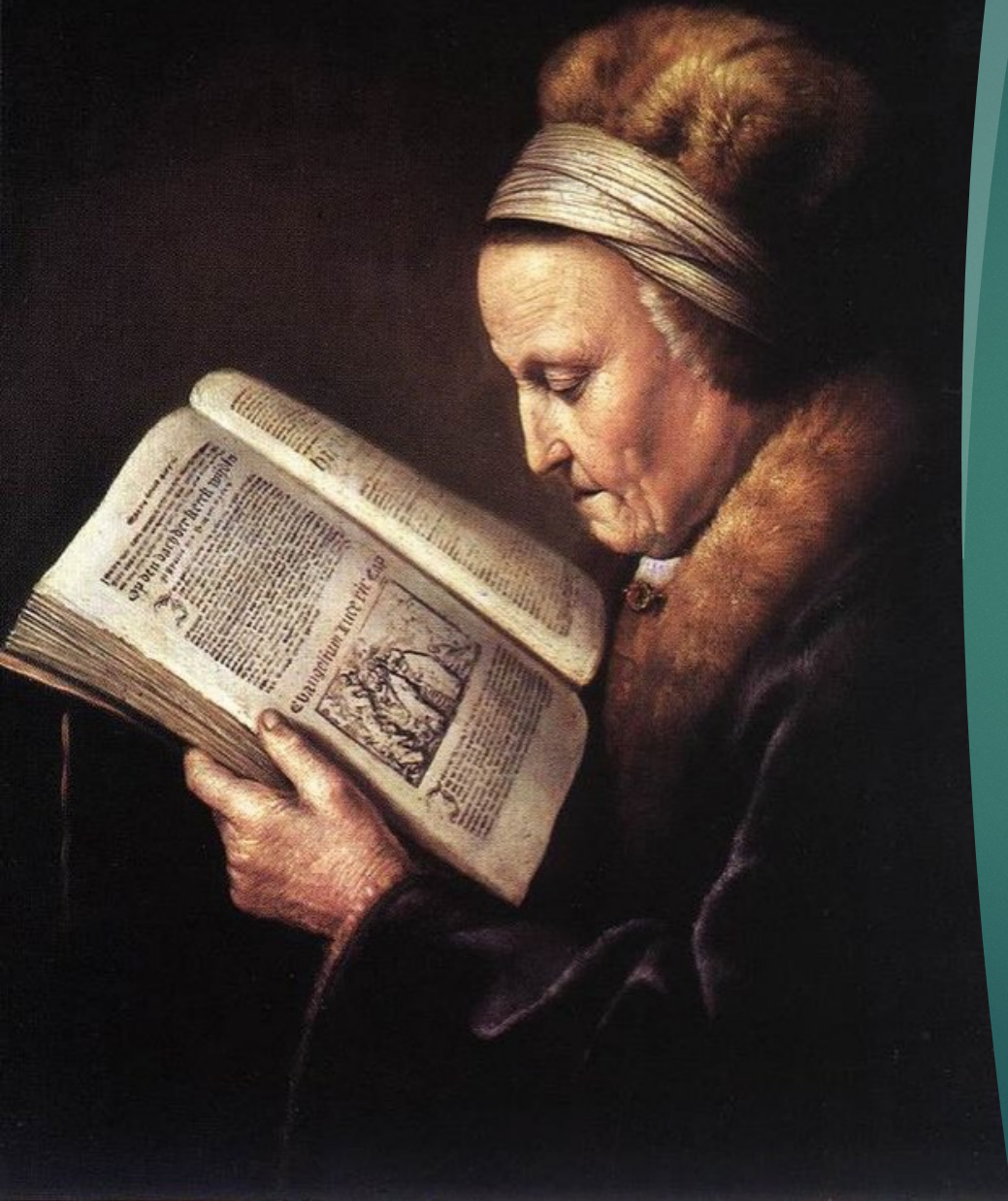
- ▶ **Collected over a century**
 - ▶ Torah 400 BCE
 - ▶ Prophets 200 BCE
 - ▶ Writings 100 CE
 - ▶ NT written by 100 CE
- ▶ **By A.D. 250: nearly universal agreement Hebrew Scripture**
 - ▶ Except the Apocrypha, debate continuing today
- ▶ **Recent discoveries of scripture**
 - ▶ Dead Sea Scrolls
 - ▶ Nag Hammadi codices
- ▶ **Evolution of translations**
 - ▶ Septuagint – 2nd/3rd C CE
 - ▶ Vulgate – 4th C CE
 - ▶ KJV – 1611
 - ▶ NRSV -- 1989



What is the Bible?

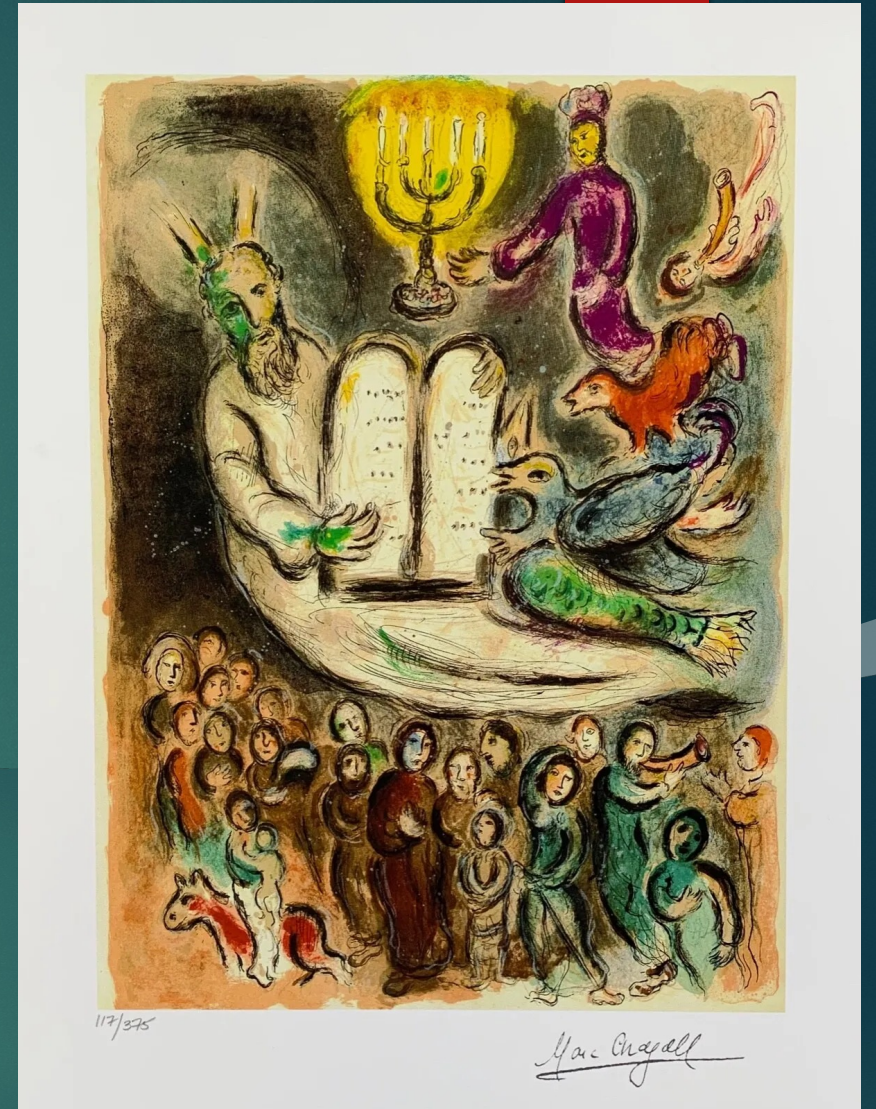
- ▶ Human lived response to God
- ▶ Stories of how God has acted in history
- ▶ Many different genres
- ▶ Multiple layers of meaning
- ▶ Sacred (set apart) and continually inspiring

Gerard Dou, *Woman Reading a Bible*



Translation Matters

“When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, he held the two tablets of the testimony, and he knew not that his face was _____ from the conversation with the Lord.”



Left: Michelangelo; Right: Chagall

DIFFERENT LENSES TO READ AND STUDY SCRIPTURE

- ▶ **Close reading** – what do the words say (and not say)?
- ▶ **Literary** – what type of writing is this?
- ▶ **Historical** – who is the author and to whom is he/she writing?
- ▶ **Context** – what is happening in their community and region?
- ▶ **Translation** – what words are different in various translations?
- ▶ **Symbolic** – what are the images and archetypes?
- ▶ **Metaphorical** – what metaphors are employed and what do they mean?
- ▶ **Social location** – how would people in a particular context today hear this story?



Sources of Authority in the Episcopal Tradition

- ▶ Scripture
- ▶ Tradition
- ▶ Reason



My Hermeneutic

(That just means my approach to or pattern of interpretation . . .)

**Jesus' life, ministry,
teachings are
foundational**

**Roman Catholic
upbringing** –
embrace of
mystery

Spirituality – Celtic
grounding in divine
revelation in nature,
original blessing,
paradox

Personality –
Enneagram 1

Context matters

**Hebrew scriptures
read through
Jewish lens**

Other . . .

What is yours?



Lectio Divina

1. What word or phrase do you notice in the passage?
2. What questions do you have for the text?
3. What questions or inklings of meaning do you have for yourself?