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WELCOME TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

I love the Old Testament with its rich pictures of people and their problems – as well as the solutions to those problems. David, Noah, Abraham, Samson, all stories many learn in Sunday School, heroes we remember from our childhood, whether we let it teach us or not. In each book of God's Word, we find His method for dealing with men and their dilemmas. And, more importantly, we find the symbols and pictures and markers which point to Christ. The Old Testament is the road map of life which demonstrates the need for a Savior. It is also the road sign along the highway of life which points to an event occurring some four hundred years after the close of the Old Testament.

There are many ways to study God's Word.

- ' One is the synthetic approach. This method provides an overview of the Bible as a whole to allow one to grasp the complete message of Scripture
- ' One is the analytical process of viewing the Bible verse by verse to get an in depth understanding of God's message.
- ' One is the topical or doctrinal approach which studies all of the traits and characteristics of the given topic.
- ' One is the typical study. Here the various "pictures" of the Old Testament are reviewed and considered. Here one looks for the "types" of Scripture which are explained later, in fuller fashion. An easy example is that both the Tabernacle and the Temple are "types" or pictures of the heavenly Temple of God. Another example is that Joseph is a "type" of Christ as various symbols of his life parallel or help to explain events of Christ's life.

A survey is more of a synthetic study, for it is a review and overview of the books of the Bible and their relationship to the "forest." This survey will, along the way, attempt to point out key doctrines and types, occasionally analyzing some verses in depth to explain the relationship of the Old Testament to the New. For, in the end, all of Scripture answers two questions for us. The first, the key, is **HOW TO FIND GOD**. The second, almost equally important, is **HOW TO LIVE ONCE YOU HAVE FOUND GOD**.

The entire of Scripture is an effort to answer these two questions. Many things the Old Testament is a thing of the past would be surprised to learn that there are over 350 direct quotes or clear

allusions from the Old Testament in just the book of Revelation! The New Testament concerns itself with the Person of God in the form of Jesus Christ. It is only through a study of the Old Testament, however, that we come to have our basic understanding of God's majesty, power, holiness, and sovereignty. His love, goodness, and wisdom are defined for us in the pages of the Hebrews Scriptures.

The Old Testament presents the background for the New Testament. It is the preparation and foundation of Christianity. In it we find

- < Law—the *Foundation* for Christ
- < History—*Preparation* for Christ
- < Poetry—*Aspiration* for Christ
- < Prophecy—*Expectation* of Christ

So, sit back and join me as we tour the Old Testament. Keep your eyes open for Jesus as we travel through the history of ancient Israel.

Jim Arthur
Calvary Road Baptist Church
Wednesday Night Alive
Winter 2000

Amos the prophet 765 B.C.	Hezekiah reigns in Judah 715 B.C.	Jehoiachin reigns in Judah 598 B.C.			
Isaiah the prophet 760 B.C.	85 Jo 1 1 E et Is 1 M 1 M 14 T 1 L M 1 W w et 1 C C b e 1 J Is 1 B D	Manasseh reigns in Judah 695 B.C.	Zedekiah reigns in Judah 597 B.C.	1 B.C.	
Hosea the prophet 755 B.C.		Amon reigns in Judah 642 B.C.	2 nd group of captives to Babylon 597 B.C.	gdom ided 1 B.C.	Time Line of the Bible
Zechariah reigns in Israel 753 B.C.		Josiah's reign in Judah 640 B.C.	Final captivity 587/6 B.C.	boam I gns in Israel, hoboam gns in lah 931	s in Judah 853 B.C.
Shallum reigns in Israel 752 B.C.		Nahum the prophet 630 B.C.	Daniel & Ezekiel act as prophets 586 B.C..		Joram (Jehoram) reigns in Israel B.C.
Menahem reigns in Israel 752 B.C.		Zephaniah the prophet 625 B.C.	Cyrus reigns in Persia 559 B.C.	ja u .	Esther 486-465 B.C.
Jotham reigns in Judah 750 B.C.		Jehoahaz reigns in Judah 609 B.C.	Cyrus conquers Babylon 539 B.C.	a r la .	Ezra - 458 B.C.
Pekahiah reigns in Israel 742 B.C.		Jehoiakim reigns in Judah 609 B.C.	First Jews return 538 B.C.	da sr .	Nehemiah 444 B.C.
Micah the prophet 740 B.C.		Habakkuk the prophet 609/6 B.C.	Temple construction begins 536 B.C.	as sr .	Malachi's ministry 400 B.C.
Pekah reigns in Israel 740 B.C.		Jeremiah the prophet 609 B.C.	Darius reigns 521 B.C.	h e .	"400 years of silence"
Ahaz reigns in Judah 735 B.C.		1 st group of captives to Babylon 605	Haggai & Zechariah 520 B.C.	h e .	Antiochus Epiphanes offers pigs on the altar of the Temple, the "abomination of desolation" Dan 8:13, 168 B.C.
		land 1398 B.C.	Temple finished 515 B.C.	ri e .	liah reigns in Judah 841
Darius reigns 521 B.C.		Joshua dies 1380 B.C.		as sr .	liah reigns in Judah 841 B.C.
Haggai & Zechariah 520 B.C.		Period of the Judges 1380-1050		h e .	liah the het 840
Temple finished 515 B.C.			David & Bathsheba 990 B.C.	ri e .	h reigns in Judah 835 B.C.
			David dies, Solomon king 970 B.C.	ab le .	the het B.C.
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				874 I Jeho reign Juda 872 I Elijah prop	ash reigns in Israel 798
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HISTORY IN THE MAKING

In the beginning God . . .

These are the first words of the Bible. These four simple words contain four important facts.

- ' First and foremost, notice the existence of God is assumed. There is no effort made to prove the existence of God. No effort is made to convince us that God really has being. **God is simply there!**
- ' Second, God not only exists, but He exists before all else. He is there “at the beginning.”
- ' Third, if one were to investigate the original Hebrew words (the Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew), one would find that the word for God, *Elohim*, is a plural word. This immediately hints at what Scripture will reveal, that God is Three Persons in One, a Holy Trinity.
- ' Fourth, God has revealed all of these facts to us. God wants us to understand **WHO HE IS** and **WHAT HE EXPECTS OF US**. God has provided this revelation to us in the form of the written Bible, the Holy Scripture, the Word of God. As we commence this survey study of the Old Testament, we must remember that the purpose of this revelation is to teach us about the Person of God. We will learn Who He is, what His expectations are, how He deals with us, and how He expects us to deal with Him.

This last point might be translated into two statements which govern one's entire perspective on Scripture. God wants us to learn:

- ' **HOW TO FIND HIM**

- ' **HOW TO LIVE ONCE WE HAVE FOUND HIM**

This is what the Bible is all about!

STRUCTURE OF THE BIBLE

It is important to have a basic understanding of the structure of the Bible before embarking upon a review of each individual book. By keeping this structure at the back of our minds, we are better able to fit a given piece of Scripture into the overall framework of the Bible. For, as one who may have some familiarity with Scripture will tell you, there is but one story in the Bible. It is the on-going story of man and God. It is a story which has many sub-plots, but only one true plot. That story is God's efforts to bring sinful man back to Him. This is the story in which we live our individual lives.

The Bible is really a single book composed of sixty-six individual books. Thirty-nine of these books are in the Old Testament, with the remainder in the New Testament. In turn, one may divide the Old Testament (and the New) into divisions. In general, four such divisions may be used – the law, the history, the wisdom and poetry, and the prophets. This division is the one of Christianity. The Hebrew Bible had a different structure at time of Jesus. A chart of the basic information of both the Old and New Testaments will look like this:

HEBREW CLASSIFICATION	ENGLISH CLASSIFICATION
THE LAW	THE LAW
Genesis	Genesis
Exodus	Exodus
Leviticus	Leviticus
Numbers	Numbers
Deuteronomy	Deuteronomy

THE FORMER PROPHETS	HISTORY
Joshua	Joshua
Judges	Judges
1 Samuel	Ruth
2 Samuel	1 Samuel
1 Kings	2 Samuel
2 Kings	1 Kings
THE LATTER PROPHETS	2 Kings
Isaiah	1 Chronicles
Jeremiah	2 Chronicles
Ezekiel	Ezra
Hosea	Nehemiah
Joel	Esther
Amos	WISDOM/POETRY
Obadiah	Job
Jonah	Psalms
Micah	Proverbs
Nahum	Ecclesiastes
Habakkuk	Song of Solomon
Zephaniah	MAJOR PROPHETS
Haggai	Isaiah
Zechariah	Jeremiah
Malachi	Lamentations
THE WRITINGS	Ezekiel
Psalms	Daniel
Job	MINOR PROPHETS
Proverbs	Hosea
Ruth	Joel
Song of Solomon	Amos
Ecclesiastes	Obadiah
Lamentations	Jonah

Esther	Micah
Daniel	Nahum
Ezra	Habakkuk
Nehemiah	Zephaniah
1 Chronicles	Haggai
2 Chronicles	Zechariah
	Malachi

A careful review will show the exact same books in both Hebrew and English, although the order was different. It appears the original order involved other differences. The Samuels, Kings, and Chronicles were single books. In fact when they were first split, the Samuel/Kings combination were referred to as the “Kingdoms.” Ruth appears to have been a part of Judges or Samuel. Ezra and Nehemiah were a single book. And, Lamentations was a part of Jeremiah.

REVELATION AND DISPENSATIONS

God has revealed His plans and desires for man in a progressive fashion. Rather than telling us everything in a single dose, He has delivered His instruction over 1600 hundred years, in “bite sized” pieces that we might understand. Along the way, our gracious God has provided examples to us that we might understand the point of the teaching. There is a clear pattern to this revelation. In theological circles this pattern is referred to as *dispensations*.

The term itself comes from the Greek word used in **Ephesians 1:10**.

*That in the **dispensation** of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:*

As with many other concepts, not everyone agrees with the idea of dispensations. God’s Word is not a textbook where each doctrine or concept is systematically described. Rather, God deals out His wisdom in small bits and we must

The Hebrew word for doctrine means “things received.” A doctrine then is nothing more than a statement of the revealed body of teaching from God used as a standard of orthodoxy. It may mean either the act or the content of the teaching. While the roots of most biblical doctrines arise in the

assemble these pieces of information and create an understandable and teachable doctrine. So, some do not agree with the idea of dispensations. Some base their theology on covenants alone. This difference explains, at least in part, why there are so many denominations within Christianity.

A dispensation is a period of time whereby man is tested in respect of his obedience to a

Each dispensation commences with God revealing to man certain “rules” of life. Man may live by these principles for a short time, but ultimately violates the rules. God delivers judgment upon man, ending the dispensation. God then reveals a new or modified set of principles beginning the next dispensation. Therefore, the

While many will disagree on the number of dispensations, in general, this pattern may be identified in the following cycles:

DISPENSATION	COMMENCEMENT OF DISPENSATION	JUDGMENT
Innocence	Genesis 1:28	Expelled from the Garden of Eden
Moral Responsibility	Genesis 3:7	The flood
Human Government	Genesis 8:15	Confusion of languages at the Tower of Babel
Promise	Genesis 12:1	As a test of stewardship, this dispensation was annulled at Mt Sinai with the giving of the law.
Law	Exodus 19:1	The rejection of Christ and the setting aside of the Nation of Israel
Church (“Age of Grace”)	Acts 2:1	The Great Tribulation
Kingdom (“Millennium”)	Rev 20:4	The release of Satan and the final battle and Great White Throne Judgment
Eternity	Rev 21:1	NONE – LIFE WITH GOD THE FATHER AND CHRIST!!!

COVENANT

A “covenant” is nothing more than a contract or agreement between two parties. The Hebrew word translated as covenant means “to cut” or “to cut out.” This gives the sense of forming an agreement. The Greek word is frequently rendered “testament” rather than covenant. While the covenant may be a pact between men (Gen 21:32) in theology it normally refers to an agreement between God and man.

In Scripture, the word is used with regard to God’s revelation of Himself in the way of promise or of favor toward men. The first true use of the concept comes with God’s promise to Noah after the Flood (Gen. 9). The major covenant between God and Israel is the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:1-3; 17). As we will see, this covenant establishes the faith relationship between God and this chosen people. It is expanded upon by what is called the Palestinian covenant, the Davidic covenant, and the New covenant.

God also provides the covenant of the priesthood (Num. 25:12, 13; Deut. 33:9; Neh. 13:29), and of the covenant of Sinai, generally called the Mosaic covenant (Ex. 34:27, 28; Lev. 26:15). The covenants are frequently renewed at different times in the history of Israel (Deut. 29; Josh. 24; 2 Chr. 15; 23; 29; 34; Ezra 10; Neh. 9). The Sabbath, the rite of circumcision, and other similar events are also referred to as covenants. Some also see an implied covenant between God and Adam, God and Jesus, and God and nature.

The marriage compact is called “the covenant of

CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The modern church is being attacked on many sides, but the one noticeable difference is the actual attack on the Bible. The last two hundred or so years has seen a steady increase in “liberalism” which denies the accuracy of Scripture. While the nation of Israel frequently turned its back on God, disobeying His Word, no where in the Bible is it recorded that the Jewish nation denied that the Scriptures were the Word of God.

The Hebrews Scriptures were most likely collected in stages. As we will learn, not all of the authors are known and there is uncertainty as to the date of writing for many of the books. What is clear is that in around 250 B.C. the Hebrew

Scriptures were translated from Hebrew into Greek in Alexandria, Egypt. This translation is called the *Septuagint*.

By the time of Jesus, the Old Testament canon looked much like it is today. Jesus refers to the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (Luke 24:44). The section of the Hebrew Scriptures known as The Writings begins with the Psalms so Jesus could have been easily alluding to the entire section.

In A.D. 90, Jewish Rabbis met at Jamnia to “discuss” the make-up of the Old Testament. This event was most likely in response to the increase in popularity of Christianity. While some scholars view this as the approval meeting of the Hebrew Canon, it is clear that the Scriptures had been “locked” by use, tradition, and the Holy Spirit well before this council. In fact, this council actually questioned whether or not five of the books should remain in the Canon.

“Canon” properly means “reed” or “measuring stick.” It has come to mean a “rule of faith.” Over time, this “rule of faith” became the

- ’ Esther because the name of God is not mentioned in the book.
- ’ Song of Songs (Song of Solomon) because it seemed erotic in nature.
- ’ Proverbs 26:4 and 26:5 because they seemed contradictory.
- ’ Ezekiel chapters 40-48 because they appeared to conflict with the Law.
- ’ Ecclesiastes because it is pessimistic in its outlook.

The Jewish nation showed a great reverence and respect for their Scriptures. As a copy would wear out, rather than keeping it, the Jews would make a new copy and destroy the old, tattered copy. As such, very few ancient manuscripts remain. The oldest complete Old Testament manuscripts dated to about A.D. 1000. This is a copy of the Masorete manuscript. The Masoretes were a group of Rabbis formed around A.D. 400. Their task in life was to collect, collate, “correct,” and copy the Hebrew Scriptures in an effort to create a single accurate manuscript. Today, we would call their efforts a “critical manuscript.” These efforts toward accuracy included a complex system of marking and numbering which were recorded in the margins. By checking the copy against the marking system, one could determine if the copy were accurate. It took over 600 years for this group to “complete” its work.

Ezra is credited by Jewish tradition with having formed the “Great Synagogue,” a body of Jewish scholars in the 4th century B.C. This

In 1947, a Bedouin shepherd discovered a huge cache of manuscripts in the caves near Qumran at the Dead Sea. The scrolls have become known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. The manuscripts contained in these caves dated from around 250 B.C. to A.D. 68. There are fragments in these manuscripts of every book of the Old Testament except Esther. The prize is a complete manuscript of Isaiah which dates to near the time of Jesus. The importance of this discovery is that the Dead Sea Isaiah agrees in almost all detail with the Masoretes' manuscript of A.D. 1000.

As was mentioned, the earliest translation of the Hebrew Scriptures was the Septuagint around 250 B.C.. During the period between the Septuagint and Christ, many of the Jews spoke Aramaic. During this period through around A.D. 200 several Aramaic paraphrases of the Old Testament were made. These are known as the Targums.

“Septuagint” is Greek for “70.” The tradition is that 72 scholars translated the Scriptures in 72

Also, in about A.D. 404, Jerome translated the Bible into Latin. This version is called the Vulgate and until only recently was the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church.

Early English translations existed before the King James Version. John Wycliffe translated the Scriptures into English (1380-1384), but his translation came from the Vulgate. Later, William Tyndale (1525) translated the Scriptures into English from the original languages. Many of Tyndale's translations appear in the King James, which was translated in 1611.

Older Hebrew Texts

Text	Significance	Date	Oldest Copy
Masoretic	Most reliable	A.D. 100	A.D. 1000
Samaritan Pentateuch	Samaritan slant	200-100 B.C.	A.D. 1100
Dead Sea Scrolls	Includes parts of every book but Esther. Confirms reliability of other manuscripts	200-100 B.C.	200-100 B.C.
Septuagint (LXX)	Important witness to early text	300-200 B.C.	A.D. 300-500

Targums	Translation / paraphrase / commentary. Not as reliable	A.D. 500-1000, but parts to 2nd- 3rd century B.C.	A.D. 150
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THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE

The Bible contains all types of literature. There are narratives, poems, allegories, parables, speeches, letters, and symbolism. Each of these must be recognized, for the symbolism of a poem should be interpreted as symbolism, not as a literal statement. For many, this type of distinction is the most difficult to recognize and account for in attempting to understand the Bible.

- ' Notice, also, that there are different genres of purpose in the biblical literature. The design of Israel's literature was to teach about the way in which the covenant God, acted in history--especially in view of Israel's failures and unfaithfulness. These same lessons may be applied to our daily lives as we study God's Word.
- ' Legal literature declared God's will which was designed to mold the moral, spiritual, and ethical direction of God's people.
- ' Historical literature was a revelation of the sovereign work of God based upon the covenants.
- ' Prophetic literature was a declaration of the will of God set in history to judge the nation's historical dealings and in promise of God's future blessing.
- ' Wisdom and Poetic Literature is practical direction for life. It looks toward finding a wholeness in the brokenness of life.

INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE

As we participate in this study, certain rules will assist you in your understanding of the Bible and these materials.

- ' The Bible is God's written revelation to mankind. In its original manuscript it was inspired by God and without error. 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21
- ' The central theme of the Bible is Jesus Christ. We will look at this point later in this Introduction.
- ' The Old Testament was written in Hebrew (with just a few portions in Aramaic). The New Testament was written in Greek. Our English Bible is a translation from these languages.
- ' The word "Testament" means "Covenant" or agreement. The Bible contains several covenants given by God to man. We will look at these throughout the materials.
- ' The Bible is not inconsistent in any form. If you believe a one passage disagrees with another, then you are the one in error, not the Bible.
- ' The Bible is about God, man, sin, redemption, justification, sanctification. To sum this up in two words, the Bible is about Grace and Glory. To sum this up in one word, the Bible is about Jesus.
- ' The Bible is concerned with the whole man -- heart, mind, and soul!
- ' One other rule should be imposed – because of the unity of the Scriptures, final interpretations of the Old Testament must be made in light of the existence of the New Testament. This is because all Scripture is about Jesus Christ.

In reading and interpreting Scripture, use the following keys:

- ' Determine the kind of literature involved.
- ' Determine the context of the passage
- ' Determine the historical setting
- ' Determine the grammatical meaning of the words
- ' Determine what other passages on the same topic seem to say
- ' Determine your spiritual condition

In determining context, one must consider a variety of factors, including

- ' The context of the book involved
- ' The major theme of the book
- ' The historical events and setting
- ' The context of the chapter
- ' Is the subject being discussed related to the theme of the book?
- ' The meaning of the surrounding verses to the one(s) you are attempting to understand.

Remember, word meanings and “slang” have changed over the centuries. And, remember, it is the illumination of the Holy Spirit which allows you to understand Scripture. Ask God for His help in understanding.

1 Corinthians 2:14-16

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Bible Trivia

There are 1, 189 chapters

There are 31, 373 verses

There are 775,693 words in the King James version

The longest chapter is Psalm 119

The shortest chapter is Psalm 117

The longest book in the Old Testament is Psalms

The longest book in the New Testament is Luke

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the Gospels, Jesus quoted from twenty-two (22) of the books of the Old Testament. In part, this shows the unity and application of the Old Testament in our lives. In other instances, this quoting was a proof of the application of the Scriptures to Him, for as Jesus tells the disciples on the Road to Emmaus, all of Scripture points to the Christ.

Luke 24:22-27

*22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; 23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. 24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. 25 Then he said unto them, **O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? 27 And beginning at Moses***

and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

In reading each book of the Old Testament, learn to look for Jesus, for *“all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”* Our Lord will appear in a lot of different appearances during our study. For example, there are many descriptions and prophecies of the Messiah, the Christ. These help to explain Who the Messiah will be and what He will be like. There are appearances of the Angel of the Lord. We will learn that on many occasions this is the pre-incarnate Christ. We will also come to see that Yahweh (Jehovah), the God of the Covenant is the Second Person of the Trinity.

Lastly, and perhaps the clearest pictures of Jesus in the New Testament are through the use of what biblical scholars call “types.” The Greek word *typos* is rendered “print” (John 20:25), “figure” (Acts 7:43; Rom 5:14), “fashion” (Acts 7:44), “manner” (Acts 23:25), “form” (Rom 6:17), and “example”(1 Cor 10:6, 11; Phil 3:17; 1 Thess 1:7; 2 Thess 3:9; 1 Tim. 4:12). It properly means a “model,” “pattern,” or “mold” into which clay or wax was pressed, that it might take the figure or exact shape of the mold. The word “type” is generally used to denote a resemblance between something present and something future, which is called the “anti-type.” Jesus is the anti-type for many, many different Old Testament types.

Three Hebrew words are used for God in the Old Testament:

—*Elohim* is translated God and stands primarily for God the Father.

—*Yahweh [Jehovah in Latin]* is translated as LORD. This is the pre-incarnate Jesus.

—*Adonai* is translated as Lord. The context determines Which of the Trinity is being addressed.

A note of warning might be interjected here about types, however. Many people get carried away looking for pictures of Christ. They find Him in numbers, colors, and little details of true types. A good rule of thumb is to find types only where the New Testament Scriptures find a type. Clearly, this rule may be a little too restrictive, but if one is careful to find pictures of Jesus in this fashion, the types found will be true. An example of a good picture of

There is no doubt as to the application of Scriptures as an arrow pointing directly to Jesus. As we will see, God “created” the plan of salvation immediately after

the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. This plan is revealed in a progressive fashion which, initially culminates on Resurrection Morning, and will be finalized with the Second Coming of Jesus and the Millennial reign of Christ on earth.

We will use the terms Messiah and Christ interchangeably with worrying about the differences, because there are none! Messiah is the Hebrew term and Christ is the Greek equivalent. Both

So, come along and learn about God.

Welcome to the Old Testament, the story of true history in the making!

THE PENTATEUCH

The first five books of the Bible are attributed to Moses as their author and are commonly called the Pentateuch, a word which simply means "five books." These books form the foundation for the rest of both the Old and New Testaments. These are the "books of the Law."

The term "Pentateuch" comes from the Greek term *pent teuchos* meaning "five-volumed (book)". The Jews call this "the five-fifths of the law." These books are the "Torah" or "law" as the Hebrew word is often rendered in English. In Hebrew, the word more properly means instruction.

***Torah* properly means "law." It is used to refer to the first five books of the Bible, the Books of Moses or the Books of the Law. These books**

***Talmud* refers to the entire Jewish Old Testament, together the rabbis' interpretations. There are actually two different versions of the Talmud in existence. One was**

The Talmud is another term often related to the Jewish Scriptures. The Talmud is properly all of the books of the Old Testament, together with the rabbis' interpretations. There are actually two different versions of the Talmud in existence. One was written in Palestine, the other in Babylon. They are of different lengths.

Theocracy means a kingdom ruled by God. It is government by God, not by man

Although the Pentateuch is really five different books, they form a composite unity creating the theological backbone for the entire Bible. Within their pages is a chronological and theological progression which shows the story of man's fall away from fellowship with God coupled to God's efforts to reestablish this relationship. The Theocracy of God is founded as God chooses Israel to become His special people for reestablishing this relationship. God will use these people as the vehicle by which He ultimately will conquer evil and regenerate creation.

Theology in the Pentateuch is presented both in the form of stories and in the giving of rules or principles of law. But, we must remember that while the Bible is accurate in its presentation of history, science, and so on, it is not a textbook on these subjects. The Bible is a book about theology, the study of God. As Paul reminds us, it is a spiritual book designed to be understood by a spiritual man (1 Cor 2:14-17).

While no author is named in the Pentateuch, Moses is ordered several times by God to write His Words (Exod 17:14; 24:4, 7; 34:27ff; Num 33:1-2; Deut 31:9, 22). More importantly, both the balance of the Old Testament and the New Testament witness to Moses' authorship of these books (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; Matt 19:18; Mark 12:26; Luke 2:22; 16:29; 24:27; John 5:46-47; 7:19; Acts 13:39; Rom 10:5).

Lower criticism is a study of the textual issues of Scripture, most of which have resulted from human errors in the transmission of the manuscripts. Remember, they did not have Xerox and fax machines or word processors. For around 2800 years the Bible was conveyed by copies made by hand!

Higher criticism, on the other hand, arises out of the growth of rationalism and is "intended" to "determine" the date, authorship, and "unity" of the literary works which comprise the Old Testament. In its simplest terms, it is an attack upon the accuracy of God's Word.

The philosophy of rationalism subjected all "truth" to the bar of reason, declaring reason as being the only true trait since only reason is universal in time and common to all humanity. This being the case, the liberals of higher criticism disregard the Bible's claim of special revelation, inspiration, and miracles. Thus, not all of the Bible may measure up to reason. The Bible declares, on the other hand, that faith is the cornerstone of a relationship with God.

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

This approach developed what is referred to as the “document hypothesis.” This is a study to determine what documents were involved in the creation of the Pentateuch. Reason demanded that Moses not be the author, so the writings had to come from somewhere! The liberal approach viewed the stories as containing a variety of elements and subject matters. Where duplications in materials occur and where the use of divine names change (*Yahweh, Elohim*), these “scholars found multiple authors as the explanation. After all, no “reasonable” author would tell the same story twice!

An obvious influence upon these critical studies was the development of the

The priestly rituals and methods of worship “must” have developed over time. Therefore, these were collected late in the life of Israel and could not have been presented in completed form by Moses. These scholars argue over similarity of vocabulary and style (or lack thereof), uniformity of theological outlook (or lack thereof), and worship rituals to develop this theory.

Most of this is based upon the earliest studies of a French doctor who suggested that the use of two different divine names in Genesis (*Yahweh* and *Elohim*) meant two different authors. In 1875 a German, Julius Wellhausen, used this theory to propose four sources behind Genesis which were called J, E, D, P.

- T** The *Yahwist's* narrative ("J" from the German Jahweh)
- T** The *Elohist's* narrative ("E")
- T** The Deuteronomist's document
- T** The priestly document (P) dealings with priestly issues (portions of narrative, genealogies, ritual, cult) in Genesis through Numbers (supposedly this comes from 586-516 BC).

This theory is, you will notice, an “evolutionary” approach to the Bible. The story of the beginnings and the law and the Nation and its rituals of worship “evolved” over time and were compiled in their “final” form in the Bible. A major difficulty with this approach is that it overlooks literary styles and techniques used in narration (e.g., the use of duplications to communicate sovereignty, the use of divine names to teach theology, etc). The theory has lost much of its appeal over the past 50-100 years following several new archaeological discoveries, but the basic thought behind this theory is one of the

major problems the church faces today. The Bible itself is attacked and God's Word is stripped of its accuracy.

Although the theory of Welhausen has lost its sparkle, the attacks which it commenced continue today.

Man's view of the Bible is the watershed for his belief in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Man's view of the Bible is the watershed for his belief in Jesus Christ.

GENESIS

Creation
8,000-6,000
B.C.

Noah and the
Flood
5,000-3,500
B.C.

Abraham's
birth
2,166 B.C.

Abraham
called to
Canaan
2,091 B.C.

Isaac born
2,066 B.C.

Jacob born
2,006 B.C.

Joseph born
1915 B.C.

Joseph sold
into slavery
1898 B.C.

Isaac dies
1886 B.C.

Jacob moves
family to
Egypt
1876 B.C.

KEY VERSES

1:1

3:15

12:1-3

15:1-21

17:1-9

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 1

Chapter 2

Chapter 3

Chapter 12

KEY CONCEPTS

Generations or Account

Beginnings

THOUGHTS FOR READING

When was your beginning in Christ?

How secure is your testimony?

Genesis 3:15

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Genesis is the books of beginnings. It is the foundation stories of the creation of the world and universe, of man, of evil, and, ultimately, of the Hebrew nation, the special people of God. The book is designed to show God definitely created all things. It is also a book which contains the foundation of the plan of salvation.

Title

The title comes from the Septuagint. The Greek title is a word which means “origin” or “beginnings.” The Hebrew title is based on the first word of the book, “In the beginning.”

It is difficult to date much of the book of Genesis. While chapter 5 contains a genealogical table of lives from Adam to Noah, it is unclear if the listing is complete. A comparison of many of the other genealogies in Scripture show that writers frequently skip generations. The concept of “father/son” may be applied to grandparents or great-grandparents, rather than one’s actual father. At a minimum there are around 1400 years from Adam to Noah. On the other hand, it is unclear how many years fall between Noah and Abraham. Accordingly, it is almost impossible to date the events before the time of Abraham with any degree of certainty.

Most dating starts with known times of later events and work backwards. Those who favor a short item between Noah and Abraham, then date Noah around 2500-2600 B.C.. With a time span of approximately 1400 years between Adam and Noah (based upon the given lives of Genesis 5), these scholars place creation at about 4,000 B.C. It is, in my opinion, more reasonable to allow for more time between Noah and Abraham. Noah more likely lived around 3500 B.C. and creation would then be no earlier than 6,000 B.C. And, of course, the modern world of scientists want to date creation several billion years ago!

THE STRUCTURE OF GENESIS

- Creation 1:1--2:3
- “The generations” of the heavens and the earth 2:4--4:26

- “The generations” of Adam 5:1--6:8
- “The generations” of Noah 6:9--9:29
- “The generations” of Shem, Ham and Japheth 10:1--11:9
- “The generations” of Shem 11:10-26
- “The generations” of Terah 11:27--25:11
- “The generations” of Ishmael 25:12-18
- “The generations” of Isaac 25:19--35:29
- “The generations” of Esau 36:1--37:1
- “The generations” of Jacob 37:2--50:6

PURPOSE

As we look at the various parts of Genesis, it will be good to have in mind an overall view of the purposes of the book. Genesis is designed to:

- present man's revolt against his Maker and its terrible consequences
- provide the historical basis for the covenant of promise with Abraham whereby God will graciously bring about the solution to man's revolt
- encourage faith in God by introducing His election and separation of Israel to Himself as a resolution to the terrible consequences to mankind's revolt

To understand the import of these purposes, one must understand the progression of Genesis. Genesis is more than the beginnings of creation and mankind. It is a series of “new” beginnings with mankind, the dispensations we spoke of in the Introduction section. Many of the Bible stories we learn as children come from the pages of this book. While not all represent a “beginning,” many of them do.

In brief, the beginnings look like this:

BEGINNING	CHAPTER
Creation	1:1-25
Mankind	1:26, Chapter 2
Sin	3:1-7
Redemption	3:8-24
The first evangelist action	3:15

Adam's family after the fall	4:1-15
Civilization, leading to Noah – the “end” of evil	4:16-9:29
Nations, leading to the tower of Babel – the end of God's dealing with mankind as a whole	Chapters 10, 11
Abraham – God deals with one man and promises a nation	12:1-3
Isaac and Jacob – God continues to deal with individuals	Gen 26-28
The twelve sons of Jacob – the beginning of the nation of Israel – God now deals with a Nation	Gen 29, 30
Joseph – the preservation of the family and the beginning of the growth of the Nation	Gen 39

CREATION

Remember how the book begins – “*In the beginning God . . .*” This concept focuses on the work of the Triune God. While the Trinity is more fully developed in the New Testament, the Trinity is present in these opening verses. First, the Hebrew word for God, *Elohim*, is a plural word. Second, God creates while the Spirit of God hovers. Third, there are two names for God in these opening chapters, *Elohim* and *Yahweh*. Fourth, “we” speak in the creation of mankind. Notice these distinctions as we move through not only Genesis but all of the Old Testament.

The Hebrew word for “create” is a word which means to make something out of nothing. God, through His Word, called the universe and all that it contains into existence (John 1:1-5).

To create

The attacks upon Scripture come from many avenues. Certainly in this day and age one such attack is upon creation itself. Could God have created in this fashion? Did He? The Hebrew word for “create” is used in Scripture solely for the actions of God. The Bible presents a picture of a God Who has created the universe for His purposes and continues to sustain the world for His purposes (Col 1:15-17).

It is important to understand the position of mankind in this book. As important as the creation of the world and universe may be, the emphasis is on mankind. Note that chapters 1 and 2 cover the creation, including the creation of man. At this point, with the coming of chapter 3, the emphasis is on man, not creation. Thirty-nine chapters are spent describing the lives of four men – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. The Bible is not a book of myths and legends. The Bible is a book about man and God.

**Genesis is quoted
over 60 times in
17 New Testament**

One of the issues encountered with non-believers is the question of whether or not Genesis 1 and 2 are two different creation stories – or merely the same story told from a couple of differing points of view. Hebrew literature, both biblical and secular have a pattern of telling a story, then returning and retelling the story (or parts of the story) with a different emphasis or more detail. That is what has occurred in these two chapters. Chapter 1 is the entire story of creation. Then, in chapter 2 Moses retells the story of the creation of man with more detail. This adds to the comments made above that the importance of the Scriptures is the focus on man, not on creation. Recall Paul’s descriptions of those who will fall away from God.

Romans 1:21-25

21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. 24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

SIN

A major part of the relationship between man and God is the introduction of sin in the lives of mankind. Satan, through the serpent, introduces the concept of temptation and potential sin into the world. Adam and Eve accept the promises of this false god and fall into sin, a loss of fellowship with God. The pattern of

attack used by Satan is the same as that used in the temptation of Christ (Matt 4:1-11) and as that used against us today. He uses the same pattern over and over again.

- b** the physical appetite (Gen. 3:1-3; Matt. 4:3)
- b** the desire for personal gain (Gen. 3:4-5; Matt. 4:6)
- b** an easy path to power or glory (Gen. 3:5-6; Matt. 4:8-9).
- b** And in each case Satan altered God's Word (Gen. 3:4; Matt. 4:6).

Look at the warning John issues to every believer

1 John 2:15-17

15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

This highlights the progression of the entire of Scripture. God creates man. Man falls from grace. God institutes the plan of salvation and the entire of Scripture is the story of the implementation of this plan in everyday life.

Genesis 3:15

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Genesis 3:21

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

CIVILIZATION, NATIONS, AND A CHOSEN NATION

A key to understanding the revelation of Genesis, as well as all of the Old and New Testaments, lies in God's description of Noah and Abraham. These are men like us. They are not perfect. Noah celebrates deliverance from the flood by getting drunk. Abraham wanted to so protect himself that twice he allows his wife Sarah to be taken into the king's harem. But, Scripture and God look at the overall condition of their heart.

Genesis 6:8

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Genesis 15:6

And he [Abraham] believed in the LORD; and he [the LORD] counted it to him [Abraham] for righteousness.

This is what we all strive for. Like Noah and Abraham, we all want to find grace in the eyes of the Lord. We can do this by believing in God. The use of "grace" in Genesis 6:8 is the first use of this important word in Scripture. What a powerful testimony to the faith of Noah.

Noah and Abraham also introduce us to the concept of covenants. These two covenants remain extremely important for us today. They explain why things still work and how God deals with mankind.

In the case of Noah, God made a promise not to ever again destroy the world by a universal flood. It is important to note that God makes this promise on His own, unconditionally, without any requirements on the part of Noah. Further, farmers the world around can operate in the relative security of God's promise that the seasons will come and go on a regular basis.

Genesis 8:22

While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

Note as well, that through Noah, God instituted human government. The powers granted to man in Genesis 9:6 comprise the highest form of government, the right to take human life. The responsibility of government is a part of the dispensation of Noah which remains alive centuries after the death of this great man.

Genesis 9:6

Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

God's dealing with mankind as a whole ended in disaster as the people try to reach to God by building a tower (Chp 11). God confounds the languages and scatters the people to the four corners of the earth. God has effectively demonstrated that mankind as a unit has no desire to relate to his creator. To continue God's plan of salvation, our Creator moves to the other extreme. He goes to Abraham and enters into an unconditional covenant with him.

Genesis 12:1-3

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

God will repeat this promise to Abraham several times (13:14-18; 15:1-21; 17:6-8; 22:15-18). In addition, the covenant is repeated to both Isaac (26:1-5), the child of promise, and to Jacob (28:13-15). Through this family, God creates a Nation that is to be a picture of what it means to be a child of God. This is the story of the balance of the Old

Testament. At the same time, God promises the balance of the world, the Gentile nations, that they, too, will receive the blessings of God. It is safe to say that the entire dealings of God through the balance of the Old Testament are based upon this covenant. While we will see the covenant explained via other covenants, it remains the basis for all of the actions in the Old Testament and the basis for much of the dealings of God with the unbelieving nations in the book of Revelation.

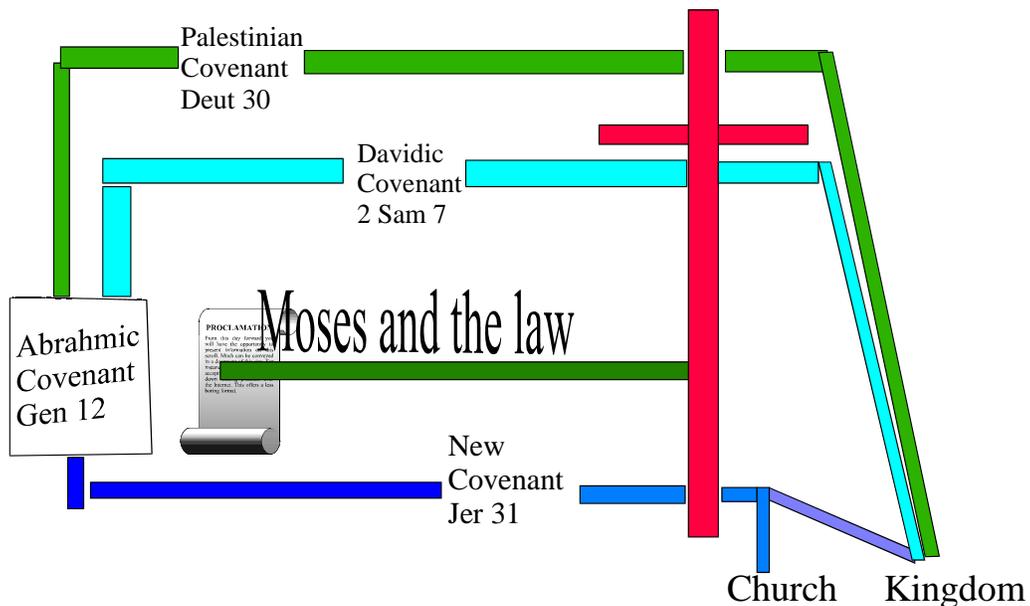
Using chapter 12's giving of the covenant, notice that God gives seven promises to Abraham:

A "Hebrew"

The name is derived, according to some, from Eber (Gen. 10:24), the ancestor of Abraham. The Hebrews are "sons of Eber" (10:21). Others believe the name comes from one of two Hebrew verbs, one meaning "to passover," as in passing over the river to enter Canaan. This may be the preferred origin, for the Canaanites would have given

- b** I will make thee a great nation
- b** I will bless thee
- b** I will make thy name great
- b** Thou shalt be a blessing
- b** I will bless them that bless thee
- b** I will curse them that curse thee
- b** In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed

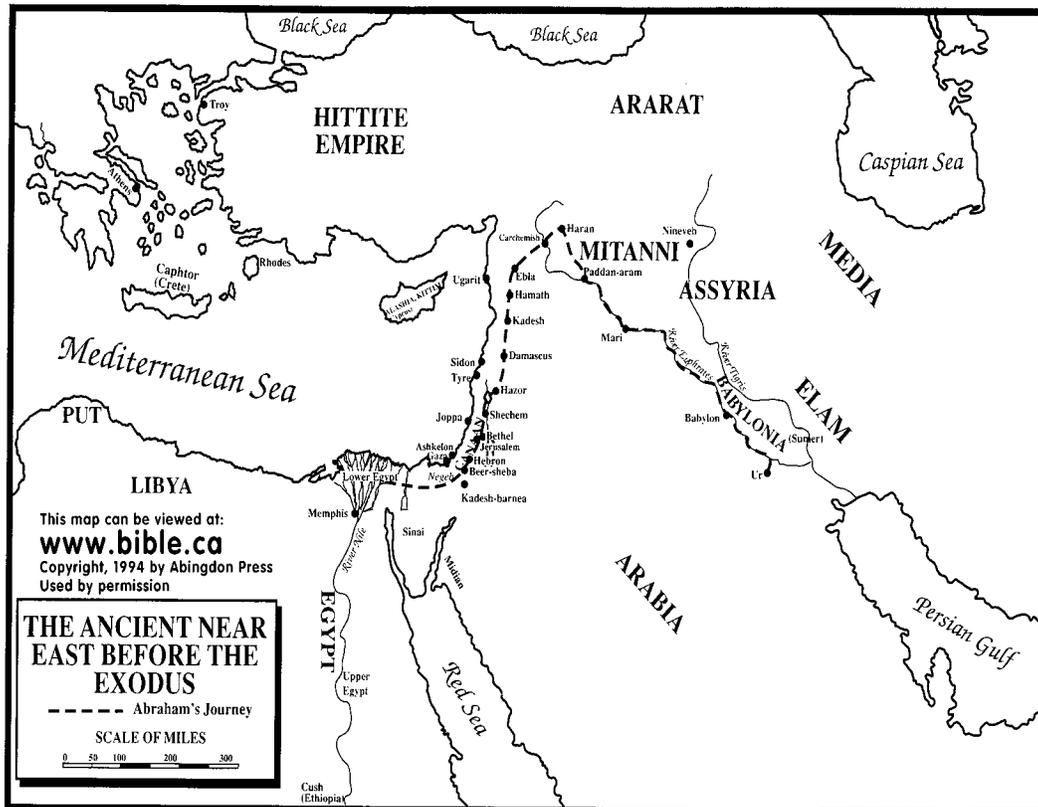
God will expand upon this covenant as time passes. This expansions comes in the form of the covenant about the land (Palestinian), about the throne (Davidic), and about the true relationship with God (“New”). The relationship of the covenants look like this:



Abraham was not perfect but God accepted him as righteous because of the faith the patriarch placed in the Lord. This is what sets the followers of God apart from those who fail to accept His sovereignty. As a result, God chose the descendants of Abraham to become a special people. God commands Abraham to circumcise his family as a sign of the covenant which has been given unto them (Gen 17:1, 10-14). This becomes the special symbol to the Jewish nation.

The development of this people consumes the balance of Genesis and much of Exodus. After they have been chosen by God, they demonstrate the same patterns as Adam and Eve. They are disobedient. God remains faithful, but He also demonstrates His on-going power and control over the entire situation.

The “birthright” is the right of the first son to have a special blessing from his



father. This blessing usually entails twice the size of inheritance as the other children's. Further, it shoulders the responsibility of being the head of the family, the family priest, and the spiritual leader. God's actions in choosing His leaders frequently goes against the birthright, demonstrating that God looks at the heart and is not a respecter of persons. The families of the world are continued through Adam's third son, Seth. God chooses Jacob over the first born Esau. The Christ comes through the fourth born Judah. The early nation is preserved through the works of the eleventh born Joseph. Later, we will see the model king is the seventh son of Jesse. God simply does not work the way we want him to.

Abrahams Journey

JESUS IN GENESIS

We have already mentioned the presence of the Trinity at creation. The New Testament Scriptures mentioned there should be reviewed to see how active the entire Godhead was at the creation.

The Angel of the Lord is a **theophany**, a physical manifestation of God. Several appearances of The Angel of the Lord are found in the Old Testament. For example, the Lord visits Abraham before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19). God wrestles with Jacob at Bethel (Gen 32). These and other appearances of The Angel of the Lord are appearances of Christ to men prior to the Incarnation. Jesus was actively at work in God's dealings with mankind long before His human birth.

It should be argued that all theophanies are Christophanies, appearances of Christ before the incarnation, since we are told in John 1:18 that no one has ever seen God, that is, God the Father.

**Please remember
that not all
appearances of
angels from God are
The Angel of the
Lord – Christ.**

Prophecies abound in Genesis on the coming of Christ and His work. Genesis 3:15 quoted above is viewed as the first promise of salvation. The coming of the Christ is seen set forth in the line of Seth (4:25), Shem (9:26), Abraham (12:3), Isaac (23:3), Jacob (46:3), and Judah (49:10).

Genesis 49:10

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Lastly, we will find Jesus in Genesis in the types of various characters. Adam is described as the first man, compared to Jesus the second man by Paul (Rom 5:14). Just as Abel's blood sacrifice was more acceptable to God, so will Christ's blood sacrifice be sufficient to appease God once and for all (Heb 10:14). Melchizedek (Gen 14) is seen as a type of Christ's priesthood by the author of Hebrews (Heb 7:3).

The most complete picture of Christ in the Old Testament may be found in the person of Joseph. Consider the following similarities:

Joseph	Jesus
The well-beloved son of his father	The well-beloved Son of His Father
Lived in Hebron, the place of fellowship, with his father before he was sent to his brethren	Lived in Heaven, the place of fellowship, before coming to earth
His father sent him, but he was perfectly willing to go	His Father sent Him, but He was perfectly willing to go
Testified against his brothers' sin, and they hated him	Testifies against men's sin, and men hated Him
Revealed to them the exalted position he would hold in the future, and they hated him the more	Revealed to man the exalted position He would hold in the future, and they hated Him the more
His brethren plot against him	His brethren, according to the flesh, the Jews, plot against Him
Judah sells him for 20 pieces of silver	Judas sells Him for 20 pieces of silver
Was tempted and did not yield	Was tempted but did not yield
Accused wrongfully	Accused wrongfully
Put in the Egyptian dungeon, the place of death, with two malefactors	Put on the Cross, the place of death, with two malefactors
One of the malefactors died and the other lived	One of the malefactors died and the other lived – spiritually
Was raised from the place of death by the king of the land	Was raised from the place of death by the King of the Universe
Was given all power in Egypt	Was given all power in heaven and earth
After his exaltation took Gentile bride to share his glory	After His exaltation takes a Gentile bride (the Church) to share His glory
Acknowledged to be the savior of the people and their ruler	Acknowledged to be Savior and Ruler of both Heaven and Earth
All must get their bread (physical life) through Joseph	All must get spiritual life through Jesus Christ, the bread of life
Gives all honor to the king and delivers all things into his hands	Gives all honor to God the Father (King) and delivers all things into His hands
Knew the past history of his brethren	Knew what was in man

MAN IS THE CAPSTONE

Genesis 1:26-27

26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Genesis 2:7

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Man was created by God in the image of God. Sin has tarnished that image. The purpose of salvation is the journey of cleaning off the tarnish. And, as we have seen and will see, it is God who leads the way.

Jacob was less than a firm believer as Abraham and Noah. Jacob took four women to raise a family of twelve sons. These sons become the tribes of Israel. God changes Jacob's name (Gen 32:28) creating a new identity for this family. God used Jacob's favorite son, Joseph, to protect the nation. Joseph ultimately recognized his service for God, but the journey must of have been very difficult. But as Joseph ultimately tells his brothers,

Genesis 45:8

So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

Who has chosen you?

¹J. Hampton Keathley III, *Concise Old Testament Survey*, Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C, www.bible.org, 1997, 6.

The Sons of Jacob
The Twelve Tribes of Israel

MOTHER	SON	MEANING OF NAME	REF. OF BIRTH	ORDER OF BLESSING	SYMBOL OF BLESSING	REF. OF BLESSING
Leah	Reuben	Behold a son	Gen 29:32	1	Reckless	Gen 49:3-4
Leah	Simeon	Hearing	Gen 29:33	2	Violence	Gen 49:5-7
Leah	Levi	Attachment	Gen 29:34	3	Violence	Gen 49:5-7
Leah	Judah	Praise	Gen 29:35	4	Lion	Gen 49:8-12
Bilhah	Dan	Judgement	Gen 30:6	7	Serpent	Gen 49:16-18
Bilhah	Naphtali	Wrestle	Gen 30:8	10	Doe	Gen 49:21
Zilpah	Gad	Good Fortune	Gen 30:11	8	Raider	Gen 49:19
Zilpah	Asher	Happy	Gen 30:13	9	Rich Food	Gen 49:20
Leah	Issachar	Reward	Gen 30:18	6	Donkey	Gen 49:14-15
Leah	Zebulun	Abode	Gen 30:20	5	Ships	Gen 49:13
Rachel	Joseph	May He Add	Gen 30:24	11	Fruitful	Gen 49:22-26
Rachel	Benjamin	Son of the Right Hand	Gen 35:18	12	Wolf	Gen 49:27

EXODUS

Egypt
enslaves
Israel
1730 B.C.

Moses born
1527 B.C.

Moses
flees to
Midian
1487 B.C.

The
Exodus
1446 B.C.

Law given
at Mt. Sinai
1445 B.C.

Wilderness
wandering
ends
1406 B.C.

KEY VERSES

6:6

19:5, 6

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapters 12-14

KEY CONCEPTS

Redeem

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Has God redeemed you?

If so, how have you repaid Him?

This is the book about the movement of the promised and chosen people from Egypt to the promised land. It is the first obvious step in God's plan of bestowing upon the descendants of Abraham the promises of the covenant. But, the promises come in an unlikely manner.

Title

The English title, Exodus, comes from the Septuagint. It is from the Greek word which means "movement" or "departure." In the Hebrew, the title comes from the first few words of the book, "these are the names."

DATE OF EXODUS

The Exodus from Egypt should be dated about 1446 B.C. This date emphasizes the literal interpretation of the biblical numbers in Exodus 12:40, Judges 11:26, and 1 Kings 6:1. This is referred to as the "early date." Not all modern scholars accept this date. Many prefer a "late date," placing the Exodus closer to 1250 B.C. This late date does not, however, allow for all of the events of history to occur in a "normal" fashion. Therefore, a plausible (and approximate) reconstruction would be as follows:

- b** 966 = 4th full year (actually into the fifth) of Solomon's reign (971-931 B.C.) when the Temple was begun
- b** +44 years = start of David's reign (1010 B.C.)
- b** +40 years = start of Saul's reign (1050 B.C.)
- b** +40 years = the time from Saul to Jephthah's statement (1050-1090 B.C.)
- b** +300 years = the time in the land (Jephthah's statement) (1390 B.C.)
- b** +16 years = Joshua's leadership (1406 B.C.)
- b** +40 years = wilderness wondering (1446 B.C.)

This matches 1 Kings 6:1 where $966 + 480 = 1446!$ If you add 430 years, the time that Israel lived in Egypt before the Exodus (Exod 12:40), Jacob moved to Egypt in 1876.

A conservative view of Israel's early history is:

- b** Abraham 2166-1991 B.C.
- b** Isaac 2066-1886 B.C.

- b** Jacob 2006-1859 B.C.
- b** Joseph 1915-1805 B.C.
- b** Migration to Egypt 1876 B.C. (Gen 45:6)
- b** Egyptian Sojourn 1876-1446 B.C. (Exod 12:40)
- b** The Exodus 1446 B.C.
- b** Wilderness Wanderings 1446-1406 B.C.
- b** Conquest and Judges 1406-1050 B.C.
- b** United Kingdom 1050-931 B.C.

Either Thutmose III or Amenhotep II would have been the pharaoh of the Exodus. It is possible that Hatshepsut (1490-1469 B.C.) may have been the princess who reared Moses.

The actual date for the writing of this book is unknown. It is possible Moses wrote while the people camped at Mt. Sinai, some three months into the Exodus. This would place the date in 1446 B.C. On the other hand, the book may have been written at some point during the wilderness journey, so it could have been written closer to the end of the journey in 1406 B.C.

PURPOSE

Exodus is a book of history, promise, and fulfillment. God prophesied to Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in a foreign land for 400 years (Gen 15:12-16). In Exodus, the fulfillment of their removal from the bondage of this foreign land sets the stage for God's deliverance of the people. Further, Exodus records the basic structure of the cultural and religious traits of the Nation which is to be God's chosen people. In this sense, it is a book of beginnings, for it is the national beginning of Israel as the recipients of the promise.

This new constitution under which Israel will relate to God is known as the Mosaic Covenant. It involves God's revelation of Himself as Yahweh or Jehovah. The emphasis of Exodus is on the importance of the people maintaining the covenant relationship with God.

A major portion of the book of Exodus deals with the background of the ritualistic or cultic religious services of the Nation. These are set against the background of the Ten Commandments and the other laws given by God to Moses. These laws were designed to teach the Nation what it means to be unique, a peculiar people

unto God (Exod 19:5). These laws would separate the people from their neighbors. These laws look forward to the spiritual aspects of how man should treat God and his fellow mankind. This is why Jesus could declare that the entire law stands on one of the Ten Commandments and the commandment given later in Leviticus 19:18.

Matthew 22:37-40

*37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. [Deut 6:5]
38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. [Lev 19:18]
40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

The cultic nature of the worship was to be centered around the Tabernacle. This portable Temple would serve as the center of Israelite worship for some 400+ years until Solomon builds the first Temple at Jerusalem. The Tabernacle itself is an amazing type of Christ. This will be discussed in more detail as you read on.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Notice in reviewing the Pentateuch and the balance of the Old Testament, that there are major differences in God's dealing with mankind in areas other than salvation. One of these is highlighted by the workmen of the Tabernacle. God's Spirit came upon these men to empower them to accurately construct the Tabernacle and all of its furnishings. This emphasizes one important Old Testament / New Testament difference, the actions of the Holy Spirit on man. We all know that when one accepts Jesus as Lord and Savior, an immediate action is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer. While God's Spirit will not create a robot, He is there to help us as we struggle to move closer to God. Such was not the case in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament there was no universal indwelling of God's Spirit. The Spirit comes and goes as God determines most appropriate for His plans. The workmen chosen to build the Tabernacle are an example of those specifically empowered by the Holy Spirit. This empowering was almost always for a set time and purpose. Consider the following instances of Old Testament empowerment and ponder them as we review the balance of the Old Testament.

PURPOSE	PERSON	REFERENCE
Skill	Bezalel	Exodus 31:3; 35:30-31
Leadership	Moses	Numbers 11:17
Leadership	Joshua	Deuteronomy 34:9
Leadership	Othniel	Judges 3:10
Leadership	Gideon	Judges 6:34
Leadership	Jephthah	Judges 11:29
Leadership	Samson	Judges 14:6; 15:14
Leadership	Saul	1 Samuel 10:10; 11:6; 19:23
Leadership	David	1 Samuel 16:13
Prophecy	Seventy Elders	Numbers 11:25
Prophecy	Balaam	Numbers 24:2
Prophecy	Messengers of Saul	1 Samuel 19:20
Prophecy	Amasa	1 Chronicles 12:18
Prophecy	Azariah	2 Chronicles 15:1
Prophecy	Zechariah	2 Chronicles 24:20
Prophecy	Isaiah	Isaiah 61:1
Prophecy	Ezekiel	Ezekiel 3:24; 11:5

Remember that as part of the transition from the Old to the New Testament, one of the traits given to John the Baptist is that he was filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15). This is the empowerment of the Old Testament given in a New Testament form, a fitting transitional picture for the last of the Old Testament prophets. Note also that both of his parents received fillings of the Holy Spirit in order to have prophetic insight into the events surrounding the births of John the Baptist and Jesus (Elizabeth at Luke 1:42 and Zacharias at Luke 1:67).

THE STRUCTURE OF EXODUS

Exodus breaks down into three simple groupings.

- b** Chapters 1 - 18 are about the call of Moses and the salvation of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. This is the Exodus.
- b** Chapters 19 - 24 are the giving of the Law.
- b** Chapters 25 - 40 are about the Tabernacle.

A key passage here is the call of Moses into service. God has supernaturally protected him from the hand of Pharaoh, causing the male child to be raised in Pharaoh's household rather than being killed. At the age of forty, Moses feels a strong affinity for the Israelites, killing one of the Egyptian taskmasters. When Moses learns that this event is public knowledge, he flees to the wilderness of Midian where he spends forty years being a shepherd. At this time, God determines that Moses has been trained enough and steps into the picture.

Exodus 3:2-4

2 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. 3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. 4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I..

God tells Moses to remove his sandals, for he is standing on holy ground. Moses complies with the demand.

To be holy or sanctified

Something which is holy is something set apart. In the case of people following God we are made holy because we are set apart for God and away from the world. This is being sanctified. In both Hebrew and Greek "holy" and "sanctify" are translations of the same word.

Moses, however, had doubts that he was ready for the task of leading Israel from under Pharaoh's hand. Moses presents several arguments against his assignment. God has a response for each one, including revealing the identification of a new name of the covenant God.

- b** “I am not worthy” - 3:11, 12
- b** “I don’t know enough about You, God” - 3:13-23
- b** “People won’t believe me” - 4:1-9
- b** “I can’t talk very well” - 4:10-12

Do any of these sound familiar to you?

God’s overall response is based upon Who He is!

Exodus 3:14

And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

This is important in our study of looking for Christ, for Jesus reveals to the Jewish leaders that He is this same God.

John 8:57-59

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? 58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. 59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

THE CONTEST, THE PLAGUES, AND THE PASSOVER

At the center of Jewish worship lies a single event, the deliverance of the nation by the blood and power of the Holy Spirit. The contest between Pharaoh and Moses is really a contest between God and the gods of Pharaoh. Moses goes to Pharaoh with a request to set the nation of Israel free. Moses came with the signs God had provided. We learned in Genesis 46:27 that seventy souls came with Jacob to Egypt while Joseph reigned. At the time of the Passover, the nation has grown to 600,000 men **plus women and children!** This potentially makes the population something between 2.5 and 3 million people. God has blessed the nation richly.

And it is easy to understand why Pharaoh would not want to lose this much slave labor. So, the contests begin. While on the surface it is a contest between Moses and Pharaoh, it is actually a demonstration by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that He is vastly superior to the wooden, stone, and metal idols of the Egyptian Gods.

Notice, too, that the plagues touch first the comfort of the people (#1-4), the property of the people (#5), their persons (#6, 7), then render them helpless (#8, 9), and, finally, bring death and doom (#10).

Plague	Egyptian God Defeated
Water into blood (7:19-25)	Osiris, Nile god
Frogs (8:1-15)	Heka, frog goddess
Lice (8:16-19)	Geb, earth god
Flies (8:20-24)	Khepara, beetle god
Death of cattle (9:1-7)	Apis, cattle god
Boils (9:8-12)	Typhon, physical god
Hail (9:22-35)	Isis, air goddess
Locusts (10:12-20)	Serapis, insect god
Darkness (10:21-23)	Ra, sun god
Death of first born (11:4-7)	Against all the gods

There are a multitude of other Egyptian gods. Several

Notice that it is always God at work, not man. God make this plain to Moses and, ultimately, makes it plain to Pharaoh

Exodus 3:11-12

11 But Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

12 And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.”

The Passover is still celebrated by the Jewish nation. It is the national ceremony which looks back on this great deliverance by God. Not only does God lead the people out of Egypt, He protects them along the way. He fights their battles for them. His power is displayed at the Red Sea (Chp 15). His graciousness is demonstrated as He provides water from a rock (Chp 17). He fights the

Amalekites (Chp 17). He provides bread (“manna”) from heaven (Chp16). God is at work for Israel.

**Passover comes from a Hebrew word meaning to “pass or leap over.” It commemorates God’s deliverance of the nation from Egypt. The Angel of Death “pass-over” the Israelites. You will see that the great Old Testament revivals are all accompanied by a renewal of the Passover ceremony (2 Chron 30:14).
Jesus celebrates Passover with His**

The people are led to Mt. Sinai, just as God promised Moses. There the Law is given to the Moses for the nation. The point of the law is to create a unique people for God.

Our God is a God who works in history. Notice as we read through the Old Testament, the rulers of the foreign nations are real, historical people, not myths. In the case of the nation of Israel in Egypt:

▮Jacob and his family settle in Egypt during the XII Dynasty.

▮The “king who knew not Joseph” is during the Hyksos period.

▮Moses was born under Thutmose I (1539-1514 B.C.)

▮Thutmose III (1482-1447 B.C.) Is Pharaoh when Moses flees.

THE LAW

Exodus 19:1-6

In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. 2 For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. 3 And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; 4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. 5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

This is the Mosaic Covenant – the Covenant of the Law. Unlike the covenant God gave to Abraham, the Mosaic Covenant is conditional.

- b** It is based upon God's acts in history.
- b** But, it requires obedience on the part of Israel.
- b** Israel is promised they will be a treasure, will have possession of the land, and will be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Notice this is all based upon the original promises given to Abraham.

Christians

Peter says the church has the same spiritual promises as were given to Israel in this covenant.

1 Peter 2:9

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

The Ten Commandments are properly given in Exodus 20:1-17. There are many ways to view the law, but the major view should be that the Commandments govern everything which follows. However, many feel that these interpretive laws should be divided into specific areas of coverage. These include:

- b** Moral life – Chps 19/20
- b** Social life – Chps 21-23
- b** Religious life – Chp 24

Many call the section following the Ten Commandments (Exod 20:22-23:37) the Book of the Covenant. This title is based upon the language of Exodus 24:7. The entire section discusses “if / when” situations and is designed to demonstrate to the people how to apply the broader, more general principles of the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 24:7

*And he took the **book of the covenant**, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.*

The law was given to provide a standard of righteousness (Deut 4:2, 8). When viewed in this fashion one can understand Paul’s statement that the law is good.

1 Timothy 1:8

But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully

The law should be viewed as an insertion into the Abrahamic Covenant. Paul speaks of the law as a school master or tutor designed to watch over the child (Israel) until the coming of maturity (the Cross and the Resurrection) (Gal 3:19-24). As such, the view must be held that the end and fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant lies in Jesus. Scripture teaches that the law also exposes and identifies sin (Rom 3:20; 5:20; 7:7) as well as revealing the holy character and power of God (Deut 4:32-36).

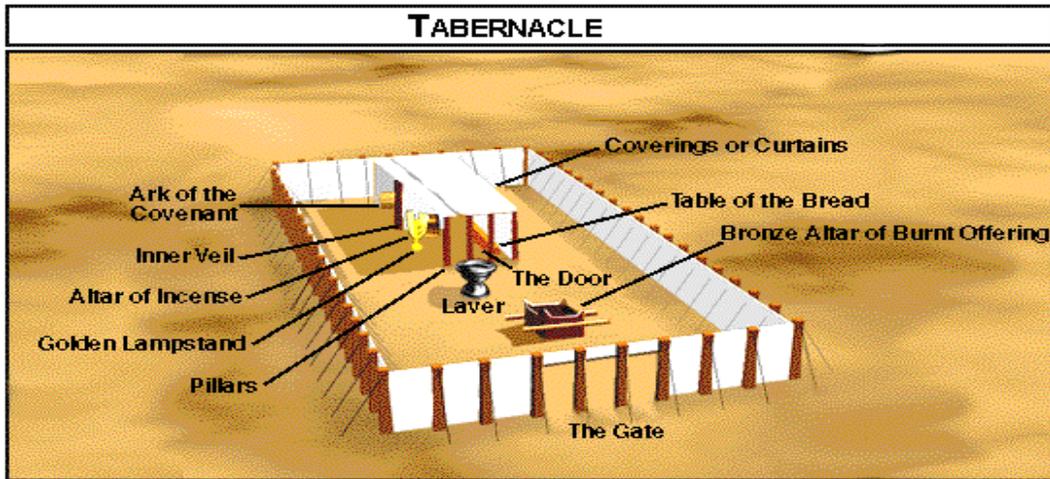
THE TABERNACLE

God's desire is to dwell with mankind in the same manner He walked with Adam in the Garden of Eden. Today Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, so God walks with us, but not in the close fashion found in the Garden. In the millennium Christ will rule on earth, and, then, in eternity, we are all with God in a closeness which will surpass that of Adam and Eve. The beginning of this dwelling was seen at Passover as the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire led the Israelites out of Egypt (Exod 19:9, 18; 24:17). While this pillar was not as prominent after the disobedience of the people, it was still the desire of God to dwell amongst His people.

The plan for the Tabernacle is given to Moses in great detail (Chps 25-31). While the episode with the golden calf interrupts the building of the Tabernacle, Exodus records the construction of the Tabernacle which becomes the home of God's presence among His people (Chps 35-40). His glory fills the Holy of Holies as

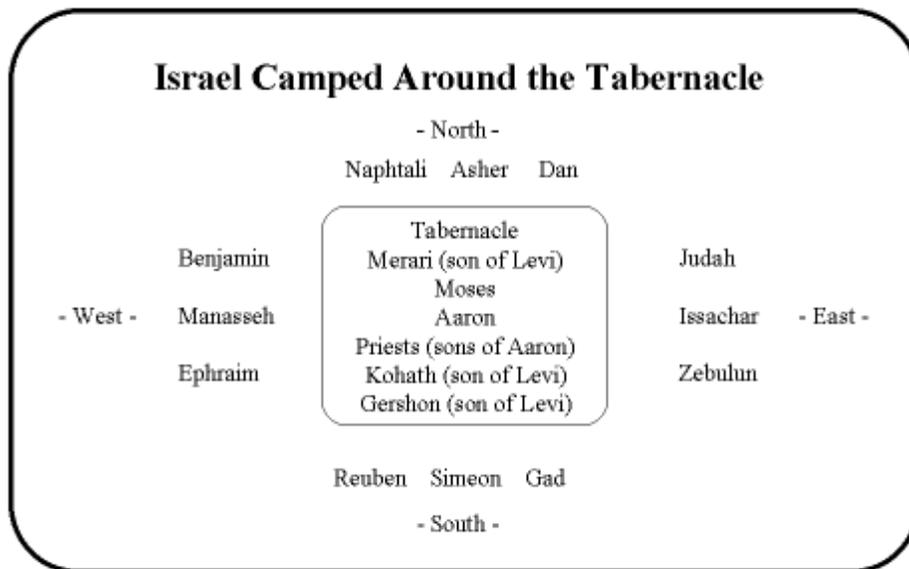
He sits on the mercy seat to commune with the people through Moses.

The Tabernacle is described as a pattern of the heavenly throne (Heb 9:23). More room is given to the description of the Tabernacle than to any other single subject. Scripture clearly teaches the Tabernacle is a portrayal of Christ (Heb



2

God's direction to the people covered more than just the mere formalities of the law or the rich structure of the rituals for the Tabernacle. God showed that Israel was His people and He was their King in every facet of daily life, including, leading them with the pillar of cloud and fire, as well as giving them precise directions on how to march and the order for establishing a camp.



Marching Oder of the Tribes

Direction of March -> The Ark of the Covenant goes in front

Dan Asher Naphtali	Ephraim Manasse h Benjamin	Tabernacle Furniture (Kohath)	Reuben Simeon Gad	Tabernacle Material (Gershon, Merari)	Judah Issachar Zebulun	ARK
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Keep in mind that the Tabernacle is not just a picture of the coming Messiah. The Tabernacle was extremely important to the Israelites of the Exodus. It was the dwelling place of God and while it and its furnishings point toward Christ, they have significance of their own right during the Exodus and beyond.

- b** The Ark of the Covenant symbolizes God’s actual presence with the Jewish nation
- b** The Shewbread reminds the Israelites that God provides their daily necessities
- b** The Lampstand is a picture of God lighting the way
- b** The Altar of Incense represents prayer and God’s eternal presence with the people
- b** The Bronze Laver or Basin shows the need for purity before meeting God
- b** The Burnt Offering Altar addressed the need for forgiveness

JESUS IN EXODUS

The Tabernacle is the biggest picture of Jesus in this book. A fuller explanation of this type of Christ is found in the next, short chapter. But, there are other pictures of Jesus in Exodus.

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³Charles C. Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible, Expanded Edition*, Chicago: Moody, New American Standard 1995 Update, 1986, 1995, 577.

- b** Moses is the prophet who anticipates Christ(Deut 18:15). He is the kinsman-redeemer who saves the nation of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. Moses is also the leader of the nation, although he is not called a king.

- b** The Passover lamb causes us to look forward to Jesus, the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36; 1 Cor 5:7).

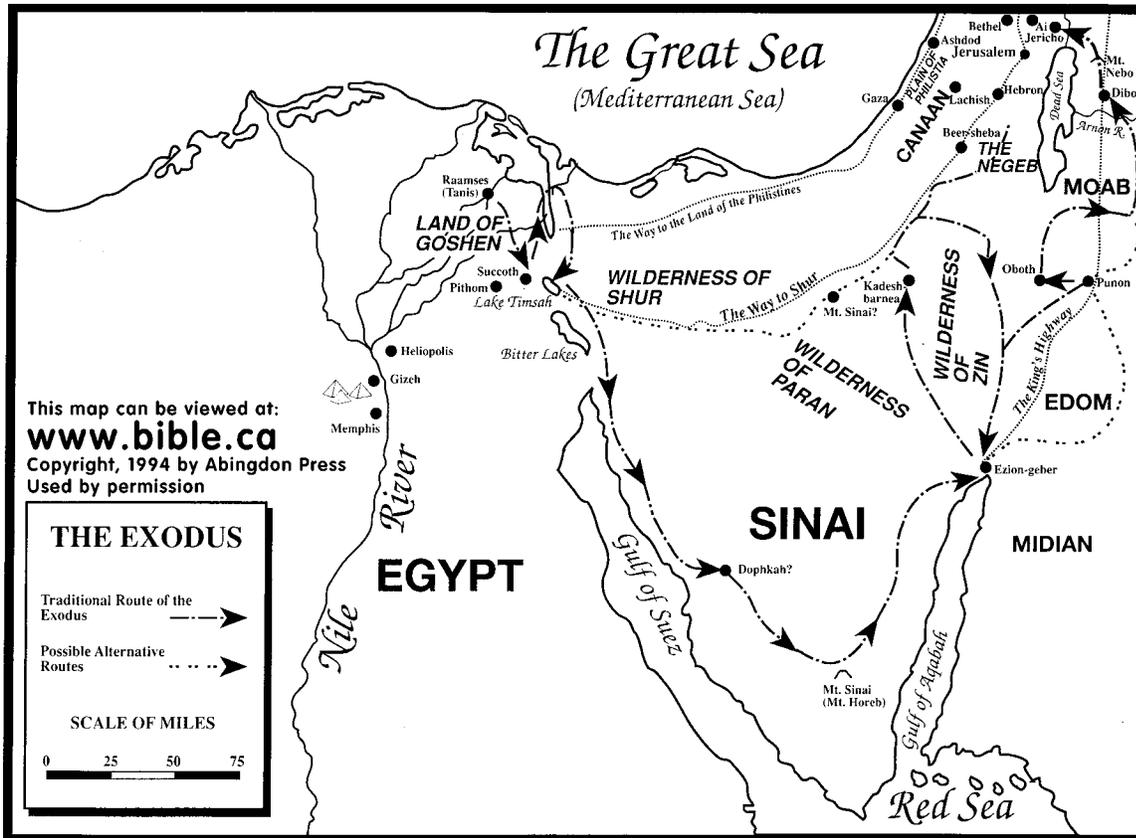
- b** The seven feasts outlined in this book all point to the work of Christ. We will look at these in more detail in the chapter on Leviticus.

- b** Manna from heaven and the water from the rock also point to Jesus, the bread of life (John 6:31-35, 48-63; 1 Cor 10:3, 4).

- b** The work of the priests all look forward to Jesus our High Priest (Heb 4:14-16; 9:11, 2, 24-28).

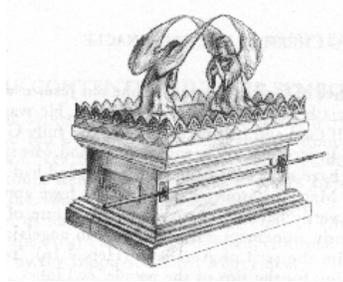
- b** And finally, the Exodus itself is a picture of our identification with Jesus as a baptism (Rom 6:2, 3; 1 Cor 10:1, 2).

What is your "golden calf?"



Map of the Exodus

The Ark and the Tabernacle



The Ark of the Covenant is the throne of God on earth. It is a symbol of God's power. Indeed, ultimately, during Samuel's time, the people treated the Ark as a superstitious token of God's power. While we do not have time to travel down a side road for an in-depth look at the Tabernacle and its furnishings, a brief consideration seems in order.

Hebrews 9:2-5

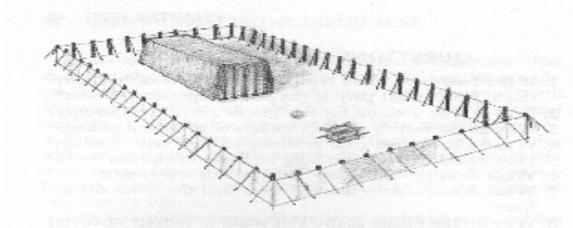
2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. 3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; 4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; 5 And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

Hebrews 8:5

*Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the **pattern** shewed to thee in the mount.*

In Hebrews 8:5, the word translated pattern comes from the Greek word *tupos*, meaning an example to be imitated. It is from this Greek word which theologians have developed the concept of a “type.” A type is a person or thing prefiguring a future (Messianic) person or thing. Thus, the Tabernacle and its furnishings are “types” or prefigurements or examples of things to come.

Let us look briefly and its furnishings types.



then at the Tabernacle to find the Messianic

At the time the Tabernacle was constructed, the Nation of Israel had every reason to believe they would shortly be in the Promised Land and would shortly be worshiping God there. Solomon would later build a Temple for God in Jerusalem and the furnishings of the Tabernacle would be moved to the Temple. It was the veil of the Temple which separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place or Sanctuary which was rent in two at the Crucifixion of Christ.

The Tabernacle’s center tent held the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. There was a courtyard in front of the Tent which held the Brazen Laver and the Brazen Altar. This is the altar for burnt offerings. The entire structure and courtyard was surrounded by a fence through which there was only one entrance. When the Temple was constructed, and then rebuilt by Herod, this single courtyard had expanded into a series of courtyards, including the Courtyard of the Gentiles and the Courtyard of Women. Each served as a barrier to prevent certain groups from proceeding inward toward the Temple proper. The shops and moneychangers which Jesus attacked both at the commencement (John 2) and end of His ministry were located in the Courtyard of the Gentiles. While not part of the original pattern, Christ still considered these courtyards to be part of God’s House since they were part of the physical structure.

As with parables, it is somewhat difficult to decide how to, and when to, interpret types. Clearly, all of Scripture points to Christ and in this sense virtually all of the Bible is a type. But at a more specific level, there is some danger in viewing items in too great of detail. For this reason, many evangelical scholars prefer not to consider anything a type

unless it is specifically addressed as such in Scripture. For example, Peter treats the flood as a type of baptism (1 Peter 3:20-21). On the other hand, this may be too restrictive.

As far as the Tabernacle is concerned, studies exist which treat all of the construction materials and colors as types. While this may be correct, it is beyond the scope of this short study to consider such detail. Further, some of the conclusions which are arrived at in such an approach, for example as to colors, may be contradicted or changed in other parts of Scripture. If you are interested in this area, several studies are listed in the bibliography and you are urged to undertake your own study. This study will restrict itself to the Tabernacle proper and its main furnishings.

Moses was directed to build a series of furnishings for the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle or Tent of the Meeting became the location of many of God's conversations with Moses. The Levites were taken by God as His tithe of the people and given the task of caring for the Tabernacle. Part of the items constructed, for example, was a carrying case for the Tent. Specific instructions were given as to how items could be handled – and by whom. The Ark, for instance, could not be touched. It was carried by Levites using special poles.

As one enters the outer gate, one comes upon the Brazen Altar. This is the altar of the burnt offerings (Exod 27:1-8; 38:1-7). All sacrifices were offered here, but only by the priests. This, then, becomes the Cross, the point of the only true sacrifice. To the extent that the details may represent parts of the type, the only important point to remember is that God established the rules and determined the timing. He chose Jesus as the only true, perfect sacrifice for us. It is upon the altar that sacrifices were offered by the people for or as a substitute for the sins of the people. Jesus became our substitute:



For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Mark 10:45

This control of God is reflected in the teachings of Christ. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus reflects that wide is the road that leads to destruction, but narrow is the road that leads to salvation. There is but one entrance gate into the courtyard. There is only one way to reach the altar where sins may be forgiven.:

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. . . I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

John 10:9; 14:6



Next, across the courtyard from the Brazen Altar, sitting just in front of the entrance to the Holy Place, is the Brazen Laver (Exod 30:17-21; 38:8). Here the priest cleansed themselves before entering into the Holy Place. It is the Word of God and the blood of Christ which cleanses men from their sins. Jesus told His disciples at the Last Supper,

Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

John 13:8

One then enters into the Holy Place. On the right, as one enters the Holy Place, sits the Table for the Shewbread (Exod 25:23-29; 37:10-16). Made of wood, this table represents the flesh of Christ, while the gold overlay represents His Deity. This combination of wood and gold is present in many of the furnishings and represents this perfect union of Christ. Upon the Table sat twelve loaves of shewbread, or the bread of the presence. Made without leaven(yeast), these breads are baked from only fine flour. Leaven represents sin in the Scriptures, so these loaves are representative of sinless perfection, a sinlessness which provides nourishment and sustains us. Jesus says



I am that bread of life.

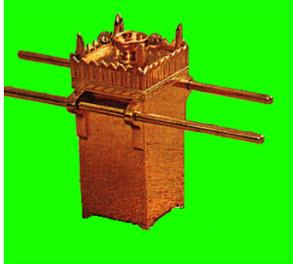
John 6:48

Opposite the Table of the Shewbread is the Golden Lamp Stand (Exod 25:31-39; 37:17-24). These lamps burned continually shedding light upon God's House (Exod 27:20). It is interesting to note that oil may be viewed as a picture of the Holy Spirit, the power behind our light in Christ. But it is Jesus Christ Himself who is the light:



Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 8:12



Sitting in front of the veil which separates the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies is the Golden Altar of Incense (Exod 30:1-10; 37:25-28). If the veil did not exist, the Altar of Incense would sit directly in front of the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat. The Incense being offered continually by the priests represents the intercession necessary before God. The aroma of the burning incense represents the prayers of the people. Christ as our prime mediator and intercessor offers His prayers for us.

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

John 17:9

The Veil separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, the Holy of Holies (Exod 26:31-33; 36:35-36). Scripture teaches that sin has clearly separated man from God. The veil represents this separation. God resides behind the veil in the Most Holy Place. The priest could not enter, except for the High Priest. And he could enter only on the Day of Atonement, a once a year event! The writer of Hebrews tells us Jesus' flesh is this veil. With the Cross, the flesh was given and the veil was torn opening a new path to God.



By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.

Hebrews 10:20

Jesus is our intercessor because as God He has access to God continually, sitting at the right hand of the Father.

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; 20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Hebrews 6:19,20



Entering through the veil into the Holy of Holies one comes upon the Ark of the Covenant (Exod 25:10-16; 37:1-5). As has been emphasized in our study of First Samuel, the Ark represents the seat of God's presence with the Israelites. Covering the Ark was the Mercy Seat. This gold covering was adorned by two Cherubim (Exod 25:17-22; 37:6-9). It was at the Mercy Seat where God met with Moses (Exod 25:22).

The Mercy Seat typifies Christ, the location where *"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other"* (Psalm 85:10). The Mercy Seat represents the Purpose of Christ, the forgiveness and reconciliation of the God and man. The Ark, on the other hand, represents the Person of Christ, the combination of human (wood) and divine (gold). The Ark is the vessel of all that Christ represents.

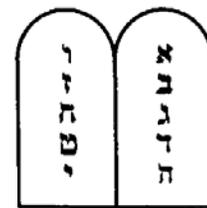


And the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant.

Hebrews 9:4

First there is the manna, the bread from heaven, the bread of life is Jesus, the true life which came down out of heaven (John 6:32-35, 48-58). *"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent"* (John 17:3).

Then there are the Tables of the Covenant, the Ten Commandments, the Law which Christ came to fulfill. The Law is kept in the Ark, just as God's law is to be kept in our hearts. *"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart"* (Psalm 40:8). Finally, Aaron's rod that budded is in the Ark, for it is only in Christ that one may find life. And this life is life out of death!





“19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. . . 25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”

John 14:19; 11:25,26.

Once a year, the High Priest entered into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled blood on the Mercy Seat (Lev 16:1-34; 23:26-32; Hebrews 9:7). In this Christ is the final sacrifice, the final offering for our sins, the final blood offering.

And he is the propitiation [atonement, expiation, ultimate sacrifice] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 John 2:2

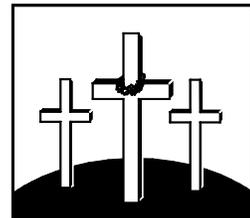
Christ is also our High Priest.

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building.

Hebrews 9:11

The Tabernacle in total then is a pattern of Christ and of the things to come. It represents the proper method of worship before God. The teachings of the Old Testament demonstrated there was only one way to approach God. These were the rules God had set forth. Since Christ is the fulfillment of the picture of the Tabernacle, it is clear that He is now the only way to approach God. This is the clear teaching of both Jesus and the New Testament.

Even as the furnishings of the Tabernacle passed away, so did the Tabernacle constructed by Moses in the wilderness. The Ark had



many homes between the wilderness and the Temple. In deed, God says:

4 Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in: 5 For I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.

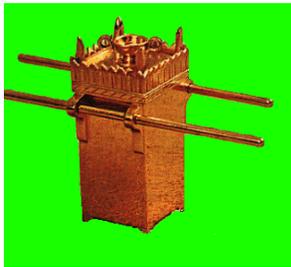
1 Chronicles 17:4-5

Christ is permanent, forever, the First and the Last, the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. He cannot pass away. He will always be there for us.

Two other pictures or observations may be made about the Tabernacle and its furnishings. First, when one reads Exodus, the order of construction given to Moses starts with the Ark and works its way out. God reaches out to man first! Man, on the other hand, when he walks into the Tabernacle must work his way back to God. God reached out to mankind through Jesus so that mankind would have a means of getting back to God!

Lastly, turn the page and notice once again the arrangement of the furnishings. Try playing connect the dots. First draw a line from the Ark to the Brazen Altar. Now, draw a line from the Golden Candlestick to the Table of the Shewbread. Does it look at all familiar?

The photographs of the Brazen Altar, the Table of the Presence or Shewbread, the Altar of Incense, and the Veil come from *Geneva Tabernacle Model*, www.domini.org/tabern/geneva.htm, and are used with permission of the copyright holder.



LEVITICUS

KEY VERSES

17:11

19:18

20:7, 8

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 16

KEY CONCEPTS

Holiness

Atonement

Sacrifice

THOUGHTS FOR READING

How does one become holy in this day and age?

This is the book about the cultic or ritual worship of the Nation. Here God sets forth the structure under which the Israelites will offer worship to Him. This ritual includes a structure of priests as well as a series of sacrifices and festivals.

Title

Our English title actually comes from the Latin Vulgate. It means "of or pertaining to the Levites." The title is similar to that of the Septuagint which comes from an adjective meaning essentially the same thing. Again, the Hebrew title comes from the first few words of verse 1:1, "and he called."

The Vulgate is a translation of the Scriptures into Latin undertaken by Jerome about A.D. 400. While not the first Latin translation, it is one which was generally based upon both the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, rather than using all Greek as the earlier Latin translations had done. The Vulgate remained the only Bible used by the Roman Catholic Church until well into this century.

The book is really about cultic service which the descendants of Levi would participate in. The principle people in the book are Aaron and the priests to whom was committed the Aaronic priesthood. Later a distinction was made between the Levites and the Priests. Only the descendants of Aaron would be priests while the other Levities would assist in the Temple.

The book is designed to answer the question, "How can a sinful people come before a holy God?" The book is a contrast between the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. Yet, the statements of Leviticus cause us to understand that God wants us to be holy as well.

Leviticus 19:2

Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.

Not only does Leviticus frequently call upon Israel to be holy, but it also frequently reminds the people of who God is. *I am the LORD your God.*(19:3).

THE DATE OF LEVITICUS

The Passover occurred on the first day of the first month of the year (Ex 12:2). The tabernacle was erected at Mount Sinai exactly one year after the Exodus (Ex

40:2, 17). One month later the nation prepared to leave Sinai for the Promised Land (Num 1:1). It seems that the book of Leviticus was given to Moses during the one month period between the erection of the Tabernacle and the departure of the people for the Promised Land from Mount Sinai.

With the erection of the Tabernacle, God now lived and dwelt amongst His people. It was only proper that the people be instructed in the correct method of approaching a Holy God. The events at Mt. Sinai, such as the golden calf, had clearly demonstrated the difference between the holy God and the unclean people. God now set forth the conditions by which the latter could approach the former.

There is a recurring theme that commences at Mt. Sinai and continues throughout the balance of the Bible, but has particular emphasis in the final three books of the Pentateuch. This is the basis for the cultural differences between Israel and all of the nations around her. God demanded a “holy” people. In order for the people to be holy, they must separate themselves to God and away from the ways of their neighbors. The laws, ordinances, statues, and teachings of these books are the foundation for accomplishing this task. That Israel failed to live up to these standards time and again does not invalidate the purpose behind them.

JESUS IN LEVITICUS

The real point of this book is the manner in which it looks forward to the redemptive work of Christ. While major parts of the book deal with the details of the cultic worship and with the civil law of the theocracy, the real emphasis of Leviticus is on atonement and redemption. It is the Atonement which points to the Cross where the complete atonement for sins is given. The Day of Atonement (Lev 16:3-34) was the one day of the year when the High Priest, and only the High Priest, could enter into the Holy of Holies – into the presence of God – to offer the atoning sacrifice for the people. The book of Hebrews makes it clear that the entire sacrificial system is a picture of the atoning work of Christ. The author of Hebrews stresses the failure of the blood of bulls and goats to remove sin (Heb 10:4). At the same time, Jesus was successful in His blood offering.

Hebrews 9:22

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

Hebrews 10:12

But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God

This work is foreshadowed by Leviticus.

Leviticus 17:11

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Jesus is also seen in the precepts of the law. The righteous judgment of God is foreshadowed in the penalties set forth in Leviticus 26:1-46.

Leviticus 18:5

Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD.

Jesus is the life (John 6:35, 11:25; 14:6). Only through Christ may the sinner find life. The entire law is fulfilled in Jesus because the law pointed to life and Christ is that life.

John 10:10

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

As mentioned earlier, the Jewish sacrifices, the Jewish holidays and festivals, are all pointers to Christ. In closing this chapter, here is a brief review of these events.

The Holidays or feasts

Event	Reference	Commemorates	Christ is
Passover	Exod 12; Lev 23:4-8	Deliverance from Egypt	Death of Christ - 1 Cor 5:7
Unleaven bread	Lev 23:6	Memorial feast for deliverance	Holy Walk of believers - 1 Cor 5:8
First Fruits	Lev 23:10	Offering of first harvest	Resurrection - 1 Cor 15:23

Pentecost (Weeks)	Deut 16:9-12	Spring Harvest	Descension of the Holy Spirit - Acts 2:4
Trumpets	Lev 23:23	Sabbath Memorial	Regathering of Israel - Matt 24:31
Day of Atonement	Lev 16; 23:26-32	Sacrifice for sins of the nation	National cleansing - Rom 11:23
Tabernacles	Lev 23:33-36	Wilderness wanderings	Messianic Kingdom Rest - Zech 14:16; Matt 17:4

Notice there are other feasts celebrated by the Jewish people. One of these is from the Old Testament and is still celebrated today.

This is Purim, or the feast of lots. It is based upon Esther 9 and celebrates the failure of the plot against the Jews by Haman. A second comes from the “400 years of silence,” the period between the end of the Old Testament and the coming of John the Baptist. This is the Feast of Lights, better known as Hanukkah. It is probably the feast of John 10:22 and is the celebration of the dedication of the Temple at its restoration and cleansing in 164 B.C. A third feast celebrated has no biblical support. This is the 9th of Ab, which is the date of the destruction of the Temple. The feast may refer to either the original destruction in 586 B.C. or to the final destruction of the Temple by Titus in A.D. 70.

The Sacrifices

Event	Reference	Commemorates	Christ is
Burnt Offering	Leviticus 1	Sweet Savior, Voluntary	An offering without spot Heb 9:14 – The Cross
Meal Offering	Leviticus 2	Sweet Savior, Voluntary	Manhood of Christ Heb 2:17, 18
Peace Offering Thank Offering	Leviticus 3 Leviticus 7:11, 12	Sweet Savior, Voluntary	Restored Communion with God Eph 2:14
Sin Offering	Leviticus 4	Non-sweet Savior, Compulsory	Christ our sin bearer 2 Cor 5:21
Trespass Offering	Leviticus 5	Non-sweet Savior, Compulsory	Atonement for the damage of sin – restitution – 2 Cor 5:19; Eph 2:1

Jesus is also seen in Leviticus in the work of the High Priest. We have made reference of this before (Heb 9:11-15).

A SPECIAL PEOPLE

The idea of the people of God being special and set apart cannot be emphasized enough. This is a major fault of the modern church which has fallen too far into the ways of the world. Leviticus devotes several chapters to this need to be different, to be a special people, a people separated (2 Cor 6:14-17).

God's people must be clean –

- b** Clean foods – Chp 11
- b** Clean bodies – Chp 12
- b** Clean clothes – Chp 13
- b** Clean houses – Chp 14
- b** Clean contacts – Chp 15
- b** Clean nation – Chp 16

All of which leads to –

- b** Holy People – Chps 18-20
- b** Holy Priests – Chps 21, 22
- b** Holy Feasts – Chp 23
- b** Holy Law – Chp 25-27

<h3>Holiness and Sanctification</h3>
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We spoke earlier of the fact that the same Hebrew and Greek word is translated both ways – holy and sanctify. Leviticus is a book about these two English concepts. The first seventeen chapters are on the sacrifices as a means of becoming holy -- **HOW TO FIND GOD**. Then the balance of the books is on the process of sanctification – **HOW TO LIVE ONCE**

WE HAVE FOUND GOD.

That these concepts apply to Christians is made very clear by Scripture. Christians are the priests of God.

1 Peter 2:5

5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. . . . 9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Christ is our High Priest, the One we want to obey and please.

Hebrews 2:17

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Hebrews 10:12

But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God

Do you follow a ritual or a Person?

NUMBERS

KEY VERSES

9:15-23

14:22-23

20:12

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapters 13-14

KEY CONCEPTS

Disobedience v. Guidance

Wanderings v. Deliverance

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Are we punished for our sins?

If you answered this yes, does the punishment fit the crime?

Numbers is really the story of the march to the promised land. Only, a short time into the journey, the people revolted and God, as punishment, extended the short (eleven day?) walk into almost thirty-nine years! The entire central message of the book is found in **Numbers 9:15-23**:

15 And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning. 16 So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. 17 And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents. 18 At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents. 19 And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not. 20 And so it was, when the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle; according to the commandment of the LORD they abode in their tents, and according to the commandment of the LORD they journeyed. 21 And so it was, when the cloud abode from even unto the morning, and that the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed: whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed. 22 Or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up, they journeyed. 23 At the commandment of the LORD they rested in the tents, and at the commandment of the LORD they journeyed: they kept the charge of the LORD, at the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

Title

The English and Latin titles both mean “numbers” and refer to the censuses which open and close the book. The Hebrew title comes from the overall setting of the book, “in the wilderness.”

THE TIME FRAME OF NUMBERS

- b** The Passover occurred on the fourteenth day of the first month of the year and the nation departed from Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month (Num 33:3; Exod 12:2, 6)
- b** The tabernacle was erected at Mount Sinai exactly one year after the Exodus (on the first day of the first month of the second year; Exod 40:2, 17)
- b** One month later the nation prepared to leave Sinai for the Promised Land (on the first day of the second month of the second year; Num 1:1)
- b** On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year "the cloud was lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony and the sons of Israel went out on their journeys from the wilderness of Sinai" (Num 10:11-12)
- b** Deuteronomy opens with a reference to the first day of the eleventh month of the 40th year. This is 38 years, eight months and ten days after the nation departed from Sinai (Deut 1:3; cf. Num 10:11-12)

Therefore, Numbers covers a period of time known as the wilderness wanderings which lasted 38 years, nine months and ten days.

THE CENSUS

There are two censuses taken in Numbers. Essentially, the first generation out of Egypt is numbered and then the first generation entering into Canaan is numbered. Only the men able to go to war are numbered, so the actual size of the nation is probably 2-4 times larger, taking into account women, children, the elderly, and those who of fighting age, but not able bodied.

Census Figures in Numbers 1 and 26

Tribe	Reference	Figures	Reference	Figures	Change
Reuben	1:20-21	46,500	26:5-11	43,730	-2,770
Simeon	1:22-23	59,300	26:12-14	22,200	-37,100

Gad	1:24-25	45,650	26:15-18	40,500	-5,150
Judah	1:26-27	74,600	26:19-22	76,500	+1,900
Issachar	1:28-29	54,400	26:23-25	64,300	+9,900
Zebulun	1:30-31	57,400	26:26-27	60,500	+3,100
Ephraim	1:32-33	40,500	26:35-37	32,500	-8,000
Manasseh	1:34-35	32,200	26:28-34	52,700	+20,500
Benjamin	1:36-37	35,400	26:38-41	45,600	+10,200
Dan	1:38-39	62,700	36:42-43	64,400	+1,700
Asher	1:40-41	41,500	36:44-47	53,400	+11,900
Naphatali	1:42-43	53,400	26:48-50	45,400	-8,000
Totals		603,550		601,730	-1,820
Average Size of Tribe		50,296		50,144	-152

A review of the individual tribes will show some of the factors which cause the changes in numbers, but in general, the changes during the wilderness experience were not overly great. While individual tribes changed, the nation only decreased slightly. God continued to preserve His chosen people. Note the trivial amount of change.

- b** Judah was the largest tribe both going into the Exodus and into the Promised land.
- b** While Manasseh was the smallest tribe at the time of the Exodus, it had the largest increase during the wilderness wanderings.
- b** Simeon had the greatest decrease and was the smallest tribe after the wilderness experience.
- b** The Tribe of Levi was not counted since it belonged solely to God, although they are account for separately in chapter 3.
- b** To make up for the loss of Levi as one of the “twelve” Joseph received the double portion of the “first born,” with both of his sons, Manasseh and Ephraim being counted as tribes.

Throughout the Bible, the nation is referred to as the Twelve Tribes, but those who make up the Twelve change based upon the occasion. As stated above, if the Levites are not included, usually it is Joseph’s two sons and not Joseph who is included to make twelve. If Levi is included, then either the twelve sons are all

PURPOSE AND UNITY

Many find a large disunity in this book as segments of stories are mixed with segments of law. God works in history. The entire of Scripture is set in the history of mankind. We live out our lives in history. It is only fitting that the statements of the law which show the moral code God strives to instill in us would be mixed with the wilderness narrative in which the moral code of the nation of Israel broke down time and again. **God's point of this is that "NOW" is the time to apply His rules to your life. If we do not apply His rules now, when will we?**

God is faithful to fulfill His promises and this is shown in His faithfulness to the concepts of the law, the righteousness behind the law. Israel can fulfill this righteousness when they walk with God. It is when they grumble and turn away that disbelief sets in and the righteousness is lost.

There are, then, several purposes to the book of Numbers.

- b** To fill-in the historical period from the Exodus and Sinai revelation to the preparations in Moab to enter the Promised Land
- b** To explain that the 38 year period in the wilderness was a consequence for the unbelief of the older generation (Deut 1:35ff)
- b** To demonstrate God's faithfulness and forbearance against the backdrop of Israel's unfaithfulness, rebellion, apostasy and frustration
- b** To present laws as case studies which do not have a precedent in what has been spoken thus far
- b** To narrate the preparation of Israel for entry into the Promise Land by describing the journey from Sinai to the region beyond Jordan, and the legal decisions made in the wilderness

A BIG CIRCLE

The book of Numbers outlines in three simple steps:

- b** The Old Generation, including disobedience - Chps 1-14
- b** The Wilderness Wanderings, the time of transition - Chp 15-20
- b** The New Generation - Chps 21-36

God guides the path of His children, even when they are not walking a straight line. In Numbers, the nation starts out on its final journey to the Promised Land. God provides the pattern for the manner in which they are to Camp and to March. The nation is on its way! Eventually, the nation comes to the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh-barnea..

Numbers 13:1-2

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.

So, for forty days the spies went throughout all of the land, gathering data on the people and crops. Then they return to Moses, but no in great faith. The spies admit that the land was flowing with milk and honey (13:27), but it was also inhabited by giants and huge machines of war (13:28, 29). The spies report that the Israelites were “*as grasshoppers*” (13:33). Only Joshua and Caleb argued that the nation should rely upon God and enter the promised land.

God responds to Moses prayer of intercession. This is a model of how we should be praying for

The people rebelled and complained. God offers Moses the right to start afresh. God offers to kill the entire nation and start a new nation from the loins of Moses (14:11, 12)! Moses, ever the great leader, pleads for his people. The Lord points out that “*Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it: But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it*” (14:22-24).

The Lord immediately sends a plague which kills all of the spies except Caleb and Joshua (14:37, 38). Then the wilderness wandering begins. It is this section, commencing with chapter 15, where commentators find the analysis difficult because of the mixture of law and history. These scholars fail to find the setting

of God's Word in the history of His people, for as we have seen, and will see, our God is a God Who works in the history of His people – you, me and the Israelites!

The people continue to rebel. Korah rebels and several are swallowed by an earthquake (Chp 16). This episode leads to the test of priesthood using the rods of the leaders of the tribes. Remember these rods are just dead tree limbs. But Aaron's rod buds blossoms and almonds (17:8). God confirmed His Word. The author of Hebrews tells us that Aaron's rod was added to the pot of manna and the tablets containing the Ten Commandments which were kept in or on the Ark of the Covenant (Heb (9:4).

And the rebellions and murmurings continue. At the start of the Exodus, the people had come to Meribah thirsty and God instructed Moses to strike the rock (Exod 17:1-7). Water flowed forth at the power of God's rod. Now, the people come to the same place, but this time God instructs Moses simply to speak to the rock. The murmuring of the people gets Moses so frustrated that he strikes the rock twice. God still delivers water, but Moses forfeits the right to enter the promised land (20:7-20).

During the wilderness experience, the people complain ten times (Exod 14:11; 15:24; 16:2; 17:2; Num 11:1; 14:2; 16:2; 16:41; 20:2; 21:4). These are not events that show apostasy like the golden calf, but rather are complaints at the manner in which God (and Moses) are handling the situation. While God supplies manna and water in response to some complaints, He frequently sends

Aaron dies shortly after this event, and the people set forth on their final journey. While they will continue in a start and stop fashion, they are now headed in a reasonably straight line without any further wanderings. But notice that these final events all take place at Kadesh (20:1), the same place the rebellion started! The people have just spent thirty-eight years walking in a big circle! The New Testament writers make great use of this time period as a reminder of the manner in which God saves His people and as an example of how not to act in repayment of what God has done for us (1 Cor 10:1-12; Heb 3:7-19).

THE LAND

The promise of Exodus, based upon an implied promise to Abraham, is the giving of a land to the nation of God. God took the people out of Egypt with the intention of depositing them in a “new” land. This land is the land God gave to Abraham (Gen 13:14-18). This is the land of Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey, the land known today as Palestine.

A land of milk and honey

The concept of a land flowing with milk and honey speaks to the ability of the land to richly produce crops and livestock. As the history of the nation progresses, this ability is shown to be closely tied to God’s preservation of the nation. When the nation is disobedient, the land suffers famine, in part because the people do not comply with the land usage rules set forth in the giving of the law.

One of the great descriptions of the richness of this land during the time of Moses is given by the spies who went into Palestine. They brought back with them grapes. But not just any grapes. The spies brought back *“a branch with one cluster of grapes and they bore it between two upon a staff”* (13:23). Now, I want to see grapes so large that it takes two men and a pole to carry them!

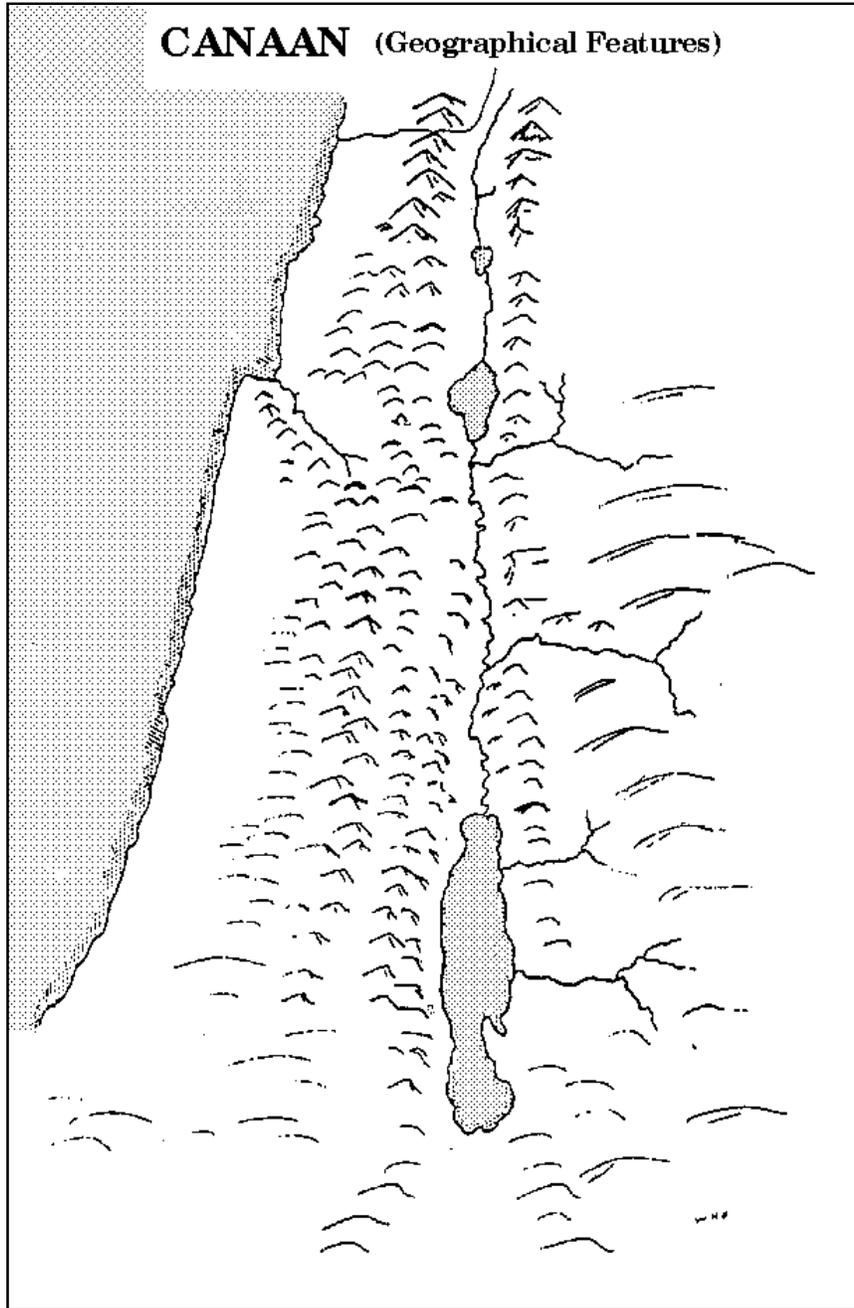
Grapes on a stick

WHAT, THEN, IS THIS LAND?

Palestine is a land mass roughly the size of Vermont, or about a quarter the size of Virginia. In this small area dwelt a number of tribes. Just as one comes to know and understand the habits of one’s neighbors, so, too, would the inhabitants of this region come to understand each other, at least in loose terms. The Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites all dwelt in the land (Exod 3:17). To the south was the land of Edom, the heirs of Jacob’s brother Esau. Across the Jordan River to the east lie the lands of the Moabites and the Ammonites, the heirs of Lot’s incestuous off-spring by his two daughter (Gen 19:30-38).

To the southwest along the coast came the Philistines. These were sea traders who are believed to have migrated to this area during the time of the Judges, or

The Greek form of the term Philistine is where the name Palestine arises.



perhaps, a little earlier to coincide with Israel's entry into the land. The name of the land at the time of the Exodus was Canaan, one of the sons of Ham (Gen 10:6, 15-20).

Geographical Features of Palestine

On the northern coasts were the Phoenicians. This was the land of Tyre and Sidon.

The Amalekites, named after Amalek, the son of Eliphaz, the son of Esau, play a role in the history of Israel commencing in Exodus 17:8-16. Israel battles them during the early Exodus, defeating these people. They, in turn, defeat the Israelites at Hormah following the report of the spies (Num 14:45). Centuries later, Saul's failure to destroy them in accordance with God's specific instructions led to Saul's fall from grace (1 Sam 15:1-9).

The borders of the land have varied a great deal during both biblical and modern history. In general, the western boundary is the Mediterranean Sea, the Great Sea in Scripture. To the north are the mountains of Lebanon. The south is framed by the Negev desert. On the east, the border first stretch well east of the Jordan River as Gad and the half tribes of Reuben and Manasseh settled in the land of the Moabites and Ammonites. During the days of Christ the boundaries went to the Arabian desert. Today, the eastern boundary of Israel is along the Jordan River itself.

The Dead Sea lies at the foot of the Jordan River, thus, along the eastern boundary. The country itself is comprised of several geological areas:

- b** The coastal plains
- b** A central hill country
- b** A southern hill country
- b** The Jordan River Valley
- b** The plateau to the east of the Jordan is known as the Transjordan Plateau or eastern highlands
- b** The sea of Galilee lies in the northeastern part of the country.

The Dead Sea

The Dead Sea is one of the amazing features of God's world. It is about 50 miles long and averages around 10 miles across. The Sea contains rich mineral deposits, but there is absolutely no life in these waters. It is the lowest point on the face of the earth, its surface being about 1300 feet below sea level, with its depth being around another 1300 feet. There is no outlet to this sea. The water is so heavy with minerals that a person can float on its surface with no effort. The Dead Sea is also known as the Salt Sea and the Sea of Arabah. It is unclear if the condition of the waters have been this way since the Fall in the Garden, or if this was a living sea until the time of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

BALAAAM – A LESSON IN PROPHECY

Paul records in Romans the difference between Jacob and Esau –

Romans 9:13

As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

While many view this as a relative hatred, a review of Scriptures might suggest that here Jacob and Esau represent not individuals but the tribes and descendants of these Old Testament characters. As the nation moves forward, the people desire to pass through Edom, but the Edomites, the children of Esau, come out in force against Israel. The nation moves around them (20:14-22). Then, they move towards the plains of Moab and one of the most interesting stories and sources of prophecy in all of Scripture occurs. Chapters 22-24 tell us the story of Balaam and his talking donkey.

In simple terms, Balaam was a “for hire” prophet. His oracles favored those who paid him the best. Balak, king of Moab, hires Balaam to curse Israel. Because of the appearances of God to Balaam, the prophet ends up blessing the nation several times throughout these chapters. The Spirit of God came upon this heathen prophet (24:2) and he spoke of the glory of Israel and the Messianic Kingdom. Notice in particular **Numbers 24:17**, spoken by Balaam.

I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

But Balaam is not the hero this prophecy would suggest he could be. When he cannot curse the nation, he instead councils the Moabites on how to defeat the Israelites. He basically argues that sex is the key and the women of Moab should seduce the Israelites with both their bodies and their gods. And it worked!

Numbers 25:1

And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.

For this Balaam lost his life (Num 31:8). But the legacy of Balaam lives on. His sins are described by three different authors of the New Testament in three different ways:

- 2 Peter 2:15 speaks of the “*way of Balaam*,” that is, the way of the hireling prophet anxious to turn a buck.
- Jude 11 speaks of the “*error of Balaam*,” that is, reasoning of natural morality being blind to the higher spiritual morality of God.
- Revelation 2:14 speaks of the “*doctrine of Balaam*,” that is, the union of world and church, the teaching of following temptation to loose one’s separation from God.

JESUS IN NUMBERS

The picture of Christ in Numbers is very similar to that of Exodus. He is the manna from heaven (6:31-33), the pillar of cloud and fire which leads the nation (Num 10:11), the Rock at Meribah (1 Cor 10:4), and the sacrifice for sin. In Numbers this sacrifice is the Red Heifer (Num 19), a special offering to be used for the cleansing of sins. And, we have seen Jesus in the prophecy of Balaam.

But, there is one other significant type of Christ in this book. Even as the people start their final approach to the Promised Land, they are still murmuring. God sends poisonous snakes into the camp (21:4-9). Many are killed. In response to Moses prayers, God has the prophet and leader of the people make a brass or brazen image of the snakes. This brazen snake is placed on a pole in the center of the camp. Whoever is struck by one of the poisonous snakes needed to only look at the brazen serpent to be healed. Jesus applies this type to Himself.

John 3:14

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

When was the last time God chastised you? Did you learn anything?

DEUTERONOMY

KEY VERSES

4:9
4:23
4:31
10:12-14
30:19-20

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 27
Chapter 28-30

KEY CONCEPTS

Covenant

THOUGHTS FOR READING

We are all given choices in life – choices which are for life or for death.
Which choice do you make?

An eleven day trip turned into a 40 year journey as God punished the Israelite's by directing them through the wilderness after the spies returned from Canaan full of fear and unbelief (Num 13, 14). Now, the nation sat poised on the brink of entry. But, the generation ready to enter into the promised land was not the generation which left Egypt. Those over 20 at that first Passover celebrated in Egypt died in the wilderness. This new generation had not witnessed or understood the events of that Passover night or the events at Mt. Sinai. So, Moses gathers the nation together for a review and refresher course on God, His demands, His love, and His desire for obedience from the Jewish people.

Title

The name "Deuteronomy" means "second law." This name is incorrect, for Moses was not giving a new or second law, but was rather expounding upon and explaining to a new generation the law already given by God to the nation. The idea here is that Moses is "making clear, distinct, explaining or expounding" the law to a generation of Israelites who were not present at Mt. Sinai when God first presented the law to the Nation. The Hebrew title is "And these are the words" from the opening verse. The correct interpretations of both titles are the same. The "words" are the rehearsing of the law to the new generation.

THE DATE OF DEUTERONOMY

The internal record of the chronology from Egypt to Moab is helpful in a reconstruction of the date of 1406 B.C. for the writing of Deuteronomy:

- b** The people departed from Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month-- March/April [Nisan] 15, 1446 (Num 33:3; cf. Ex. 12:2 ,5)
- b** The people reached the wilderness of Sinai on the first day of the third month--May/June [Sivan] 1, 1446 (Ex 19:1)
- b** The tabernacle was erected on the first day of the first month of the second year--March/April [Nisan] 1, 1445 (Ex. 40:17)
- b** Leviticus is given during the one month interval immediately following the filling of the Tabernacle by the glory of Yahweh and before the people prepared to leave Sinai for the promised land--March/April [Nisan] 1-30, 1445 (Num 1:1; cf. Ex 40:17)
- b** Numbers opens with a census taken on the first day of the second month in the second year--April/May [Iyyar or Ziv] 1, 1445 (Num 1:1)

- b** The cloud is taken up to begin to lead the people to the promised land from the wilderness of Sinai on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year-- April/May [Iyyar or Ziv] 20, 1445 (Num 10:11)
- b** The people sin at Kadesh-Barnea (Num 13--14) and are sentenced to wander 40 years in the wilderness (Num 14:33). Numbers covers 38 years and nine months (cf. Num 1:1 with Deut 1:3)
- b** Aaron dies on Mount Hor on the first day of the fifth month in the fortieth year--July/August [Ab] 1, 1406 (Num 33:38)
- b** Deuteronomy opens on the Transjordan on the first day or the eleventh month of the fortieth year after what should have been an eleven day journey-- January/February [Shebat] 1, 1406 (Deut 1:1-3)

This makes the date for the giving of the book of Deuteronomy January or February 1, 1406 B.C.

AUTHOR

Moses is historically considered the author of all five books of the Pentateuch. The authors and heroes of the New Testament treat the Prophet as the author. Notice, however, that Moses probably did not write the last chapter, a chapter which records his death. This other author (Joshua?) may have also done some editorial work on the rest of this book, as is evidenced by the use of the third person narrative rather than a first person / second person narrative (1:1-5; 4:41-43,44--5:1a; 27:1; 29:1; 31:1,30; 32:48; 33:1).

PURPOSE

The lesson of the Exodus is that the nation displayed a severe lack of faith. Faith is the key ingredient looked for in man by God. Remember Abraham –

Genesis 15:6

And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Or the “Hall of Faith” in Hebrews 11?

Moses's ultimate desire is to instill this faith in his people. He desires that the nation might live, possess the land, and obey God (4:1-2; 6:3, 17-19, 24-25; 8:1; 10:12--11:32). At the same time Moses warns the nation about the consequences and judgment which will fall upon them by a lack of faith (6:15-19, 24-25; 7:4, 9-16; 15:4-6,10). This concept of blessing and cursing is set forth in its finest glory in the concluding chapters of this books.

Deuteronomy 30:19-20

19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: 20 That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

The book, then, is a sermon or series of sermons to exhort the people in how to act and live as the chosen people of God. Sounds a lot like Sunday mornings, doesn't it?

A simple outline of the book is:

- b** Preamble - 1:1-5
- b** Review of the wilderness wandering - 1:6 - 4:43
- b** Rehearsal of the Law - 4:44 - 26:19
- b** Ratification of the Covenant – 27:1 - 30:20
- b** Conclusion – 31:1 - 34:12

COVENANT, PROMISE, AND CURSES

Deuteronomy is full of the things which have come before. At its heart is **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**, part of the *Shema*.

4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: 5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy

soul, and with all thy might. 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Rituals

It is difficult for Christians to understand the outward force of this ritual. The Jews placed miniature scrolls containing the full *Shema* (Deut 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Num 15:37-41) in little boxes called phylacteries (Matt 23:5). These boxes are held in place by cords which are wrapped so that one box sits on the arm at heart level and the other on the forehead between the eyes, thus, representing an outward fulfillment of this Scripture. Orthodox Jews still use phylacteries in worship today.

This is the **BASIC FACT** of the book. God is our everything. Jesus couples verse 5 with the commandment from Leviticus to love your neighbor (Lev 19:18) as the statement of the two great commandments (Matt 22:35-39).

The **BASIC TRUTH** is set forth later in this same chapter:

Deuteronomy 6:23

And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers.

This truth points to the **BASIC REQUIREMENT** of the people, obedience.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13

12 And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, 13 To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

The **BASIC PLEDGE** of God is was made to Abraham, but the fulfillment is dependant upon the attitude of the people.

Deuteronomy 4:27-31

27 And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you. 28 And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. 29 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. 30 When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; 31 (For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them.

This should result in a **BASIC DIFFERENCE** on the part of the people.

Deuteronomy 12:10-14

10 But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; 11 Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD: 12 And ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that is within your gates; forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you. 13 Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest: 14 But in the place which the LORD shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee.

This difference is reflected by Christ in His talk with the Samaritan woman at the well.

John 4:20-26

20 *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. 21 Jesus saith unto her, **Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. 23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. 25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. 26 Jesus saith unto her, **I that speak unto thee am he.*****

Finally, the emphasis of Deuteronomy is that these Basics all culminate in a **BASIC BLESSING** to the people.

Deuteronomy 8:3

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

Deuteronomy 6:16

Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.

Deuteronomy 10:20

Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.

It is the blessing of God HIMSELF to which Moses and the Law speak. Notice that Deuteronomy 6:13 says much the same thing as 10:20. It is these verses which Jesus displays as the power of God at work in resisting the temptations of the Devil (Matt 4:1-11). We can draw upon this same power today, just as the nation of Israel should have drawn on it at the urging of Moses.

This is truly the book of the covenant. The word for “covenant” appears 27 times in this book, with chapter 29 being the keystone. Deuteronomy 30 is the

statement of the Palestinian Covenant, the expansion of the Abrahamic covenant as it concerns the giving of the land to Israel. The ultimate promise is that God would be with His people and bless them as long as they remember Who God is and follow only Him. The watch word could be summarized in the words “*watch, lest you forget yourself.*”

Many scholars see the pattern of Deuteronomy as that of a Hittite Suzerainty treaty between the ruler and his people. There is some resemblance. The treaty would have a preamble, a historical prologue, a set of stipulations, a provision for depositing the treaty in the temple, together with a periodic reading of the treaty, a list of gods as witnesses to the treaty, and a set of blessings and curses. Certainly,

Deuteronomy 27-30 contain the final section, the listing of blessings and curses. These curses included invasion by foreign armies (28:49-62) as well as a world-wide dispersion of the people (28:63-68). Looking back, it is amazing how well both the blessings and curses have played out on the Jewish people through the course of history.

JESUS IN DEUTERONOMY

We earlier made reference to the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18:15 which looks forward to Christ the prophet like Moses. Moses himself is a type of Jesus in this book, being the priest (32:31-34), the leader, a type of king (33:4, 5), and the prophet (34:10-12).

Deuteronomy 18:15

The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken

This ends the books of Moses and the Law. The foundation of the Bible has been set. God has revised His pattern of dealing with mankind so that salvation is now coming forth through the Jewish nation (John 4:22, above).

b	Genesis	Ruin	The Fall of man
b	Exodus	Redemption	By blood and the power of God
b	Leviticus	Communion	On the ground of atonement
b	Numbers	Direction	By the will of God
b	Deuteronomy	Destination	By the faithfulness of God

This is the foundation of all that follows.

Where do you place your faith?

THE HISTORY BOOKS

With the books of Joshua through Esther, we now turn to what are classified as the History Books. In the sense in which Scripture is revealed to us by God, this designation is very fitting.

Obviously Genesis-to-Deuteronomy contain history. They cover a broad span of centuries. Genesis provides us with the Abrahamic Covenant. On this covenant is built all of God's relationship with the Israelites and the rest of the world. Further, in the seed of Abraham, and more particularly, in the children of Jacob, we find the roots of the Jewish nation.

In Exodus comes the beginning of the deliverance of the children of Israel from the bondage of sin and human oppression. The balance of the Pentateuch provides the foundation laws which will separate the people of God to Him and away from the world. These laws will make the people different from the pagan nations which occupy and surround the Promised Land. It is in this sense that the Pentateuch represents not history, but the foundational roots of all that comes in the balance of the Old Testament. With the books of history, we find not the revelation of new rules, but rather, the effort of the people to live by, and up to, the standards set by God during the Exodus and the wilderness wanderings. These are the books of application.

Here, in the history books, we will find the examples of how to, and not to, apply the Mosaic law. We will learn what it means to have a heart after God. The cornerstone of trust and belief is explained in the finite details of life. We shall see the efforts of the prophets trying to exhort the people to stay on God's path.

The Exodus and the law form the foundation against which all is to be measured. This establishes the sense of separation between the books of Moses and the Law,

and the books of History. And, as we shall see, they all look forward to the Messiah.

The Psalms make great use of the importance of the Covenant and the failure of the nation to abide in the standards of God. They look back upon the events of the Pentateuch as the foundation for all the nation of Israel suffers. And they discover in the midst of these events the character of the coming Messiah. For example, Psalms 78 and 106 are about the nation during this time period. Psalm 78 looks to the Messiah speaking in parables. But the Psalms are written mostly during the “middle” years of the history of the nation as recorded in the Old Testament.

But the Psalmists are not the only ones to use this history as the foundation for their prayers and petitions. Nehemiah comes to the nation late in its Old Testament history. His prayer / psalm found in chapter 9 is a picture of the petition to God on behalf of a sinful nation which some 1,000 years after the event, still uses the Exodus and its surrounding history as the foundation of the nation’s relationship with God.

Nehemiah 9:4-38

4 Now on the Levites’ platform stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani *and* Chenani, and they cried with a loud voice to the LORD their God.

5 Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah *and* Pethahiah, said, “Arise, bless the LORD your God forever and ever!

O may Your glorious name be blessed
And exalted above all blessing and praise!

6 “You alone are the LORD.

You have made the heavens,

The heaven of heavens with all their host,

The earth and all that is on it,

The seas and all that is in them.

You give life to all of them

And the heavenly host bows down before You.

7 “You are the LORD God,

Who chose Abram

And brought him out from Ur of the Chaldees,

And gave him the name Abraham.

8 **“You found his heart faithful before You,**

And made a covenant with him

To give *him* the land of the Canaanite,

Of the Hittite and the Amorite,

Of the Perizzite, the Jebusite and the Girgashite—

To give *it* to his descendants.

And You have fulfilled Your promise,

For You are righteous.

9 **“You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt,**

And heard their cry by the Red Sea.

10 **“Then You performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh,**
Against all his servants and all the people of his land;
For You knew that they acted arrogantly toward them,
And made a name for Yourself as *it is* this day.

11 “You divided the sea before them,
So they passed through the midst of the sea on dry ground;
And their pursuers You hurled into the depths,
Like a stone into raging waters.

12 **“And with a pillar of cloud You led them by day,**
And with a pillar of fire by night
To light for them the way
In which they were to go.

13 “Then You came down on Mount Sinai,
And spoke with them from heaven;
You gave them just ordinances and true laws,
Good statutes and commandments.

14 “So You made known to them Your holy sabbath,
And laid down for them commandments, statutes and law,
Through Your servant Moses.

15 “You provided bread from heaven for them for their hunger,
You brought forth water from a rock for them for their thirst,
And You told them to enter in order to possess
The land which You swore to give them.

16 **“But they, our fathers, acted arrogantly;**
They became stubborn and would not listen to Your commandments.

17 “They refused to listen,
And did not remember Your wondrous deeds which You had performed among them;
So they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt.

But You are a God of forgiveness,
Gracious and compassionate,
Slow to anger and abounding in loving-kindness;
And You did not forsake them.

18 **“Even when they made for themselves**
A calf of molten metal

And said, ‘This is your God
Who brought you up from Egypt,’
And committed great blasphemies,

19 You, in Your great compassion,
Did not forsake them in the wilderness;
The pillar of cloud did not leave them by day,
To guide them on their way,
Nor the pillar of fire by night, to light for them the way in which they were to go.

20 “You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them,
Your **manna** You did not withhold from their mouth,
And You gave them water for their thirst.

21 “Indeed, forty years You provided for them in the wilderness *and* they were not in
want;

Their clothes did not wear out, nor did their feet swell.

22 **“You also gave them kingdoms and peoples,**
And allotted *them* to them as a boundary.

They took possession of the land of Sihon the king of Heshbon

And the land of Og the king of Bashan.
23 "You made their sons numerous as the stars of heaven,
And You brought them into the land
Which You had told their fathers to enter and possess.
24 "So their sons entered and possessed the land.
And You subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites,
And You gave them into their hand, with their kings and the peoples of the land,
To do with them as they desired.
25 "They captured fortified cities and a fertile land.
They took possession of houses full of every good thing,
Hewn cisterns, vineyards, olive groves,
Fruit trees in abundance.
So they ate, were filled and grew fat,
And reveled in Your great goodness.
26 "But they became disobedient and rebelled against You,
And cast Your law behind their backs
And killed Your prophets who had admonished them
So that they might return to You,
And they committed great blasphemies.
27 "Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their oppressors who oppressed them,
But when they cried to You in the time of their distress,
You heard from heaven, and according to Your great compassion
You gave them deliverers who delivered them from the hand of their oppressors.
28 "But as soon as they had rest, they did evil again before You;
Therefore You abandoned them to the hand of their enemies, so that they ruled over
them.
When they cried again to You, You heard from heaven,
And many times You rescued them according to Your compassion,
29 And admonished them in order to turn them back to Your law.
Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to Your commandments but sinned against
Your ordinances,
By which if a man observes them he shall live.
And they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck, and would not listen.
30 "However, **You bore with them for many years,**
And admonished them by Your Spirit through Your prophets,
Yet they would not give ear.
Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands.
31 "Nevertheless, in Your great compassion You did not make an end of them or forsake
them,
For You are a gracious and compassionate God.
32 "Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and **the awesome God, who keeps
covenant and loving-kindness,**
Do not let all the hardship seem insignificant before You,
Which has come upon us, our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers
and on all Your people,
From the days of the kings of Assyria to this day.
33 "However, You are just in all that has come upon us;
For You have dealt faithfully, but we have acted wickedly.
34 "For our kings, our leaders, our priests and our fathers have not kept Your law
Or paid attention to Your commandments and Your admonitions with which You have
admonished them.

35 "But they, in their own kingdom,
With Your great goodness which You gave them,
With the broad and rich land which You set before them,
Did not serve You or turn from their evil deeds.

36 "Behold, we are slaves today,
And as to the land which You gave to our fathers to eat of its fruit and its bounty,
Behold, we are slaves in it.

37 "Its abundant produce is for the kings
Whom You have set over us because of our sins;
They also rule over our bodies
And over our cattle as they please,

So we are in great distress.

38 "Now because of all this

We are making an agreement in writing;

**And on the sealed document *are the names of* our leaders, our Levites *and* our
priests."**

(NASB)

JOSHUA

Wilderness
wandering
ends
1406 B.C.

Conquest of
Canaan
begins
1405 B.C.

Joshua
leads Israel
1405-1380
B.C.

Dividing of
the land
1398 B.C.

Joshua dies
1380 B.C.

Samson is
judge
110 B.C.

Saul
becomes
king
1050 B.C.

KEY VERSES

1:3

1:8, 9

11:23

24:14, 15

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapters 1-4

Chapter 24

KEY CONCEPTS

Possession

Conquest, Victory

Dividing the land

THOUGHTS FOR READING

How much did you fight for your victory in God?

Joshua 24:15

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

With Joshua we move into the historical books of the Old Testament. The historical books are really a continuation of the narrative portions of the books of Moses. They deal with the occupation of Palestine by Israel and continue through the return of the people from their Babylonian exile. The works are designed to demonstrate the failure of the people in following God, to show the faithfulness of God to His promise, and to set the stage for the coming of Christ.

A simple outline of Joshua is:

- b** Entering the Land - Chps 1-5
- b** Overcoming the Enemy in the Land- Chps 6-12
- b** Occupying and Dividing the Land - Chps 13-24

Title

This book is named after its main character, Joshua. Tradition holds that Joshua is probably the author of most, if not all of this book, although the end must have been added by someone else as the death of Joshua is recorded (24:29-32).

It is important to remember that the historical books – Joshua through Esther – provide the framework within which the balance of the Old Testament occurs. The Psalms are written by persons living during these days, as are Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. The prophets all live in the era following the breakup of the nation of Israel into the Northern and Southern kingdoms. By properly locating the prophets in the historical narrative, their messages become more meaningful and the historical significance may be more easily understood.

The book covers three campaigns to conquer the land and then the division of the land. The rest of the Old Testament is about Israel

DATE AND THEOLOGICAL EMPHASIS

It is 1406 B.C. and you, a young Israelite, watch as the great leader Moses disappears in the mist of the mountain top, never to return again. At the ancient leader's side is Joshua, his second in command. How will the younger man fare as leader of this great nation? Can he fill the shoes of Moses? Will God walk with him?

These are the questions the nation was surely asking at the end of Deuteronomy. The book of Joshua sets forth to answer such questions – and to show the faithfulness of God as Joshua does, indeed, lead the Israelites into the promised land of Canaan, under the careful and precise directions of God.

Israel's history is viewed in terms of her loyalty to the covenant--especially Deuteronomy 27-30. Remember the blessings and curses of the rehearsal of the law. Obedience to the Mosaic Law and faith in God brings blessings and prosperity. Disobedience brings curses. Just as the nation murmured and failed to trust God during the wilderness wanderings, the book of Joshua sets the pattern for the balance of the Old Testament. Even as Joshua is a book of conquest and victory in faith, it is sprinkled with signs and examples of disobedience. God remains faithful and does not destroy the nation because of the Abrahamic covenant (Gen 12:1-3). Judges picks up on the opposite end of the spectrum, with complete disobedience. These two books form the theological bookends of the Old Testament.

DATE OF THE CONQUEST

- b** The beginning of the conquest of the land was in 1406 B.C. forty years after the Exodus (1446)
- b** The Actual Conquest lasted for 7 years or until 1399 B.C.
- b** Caleb stated that he was 40 years old when he went to spy out the land in Joshua 14:7
- b** The wilderness wanderings lasted 38 years (from that point) which brings Caleb's age to 78 at the beginning of the conquest (40+38=78)

- b** Caleb then stated that he was 85 years old at the end of the conquest (Joshua 14:10). This is confirmed by Caleb's statement that the Lord provided for grace to the people for 45 years since Kadesh Barnea (38 years of wandering plus 7 years of conquest)
- b** Therefore, if the conquest was begun in 1406 B.C. after the wanderings, and it was completed seven years later, then the book could have been written any time after 1399 B.C.

WHO IS JOSHUA

- b** He was the son of Nun, an Israelite of the tribe of Joseph (half-tribe of Ephraim) born in Egypt, who was a young man at the time of the Exodus (Exod 33:11).
- b** His name was Hosea ("salvation"), but Moses called him Jehoshua or Joshua ("Yahweh saves").
- b** He was Chosen by Moses to be his assistant or personal attendant (Exod 24:13; 32:17; 33:11).
- b** He was present on the mountain when Moses received the Law (Exod 24:13ff).
- b** He was guardian of the tent of meeting when Moses met with God (Exod 33:11).
- b** He was given charge of a detachment of Israelites to repel an Amalekite attack at Rephidim (Exod 17:9).
- b** He was one of the twelve spies sent into the land who trusted in the Lord to give the land to the people (Num 13:8; 14:30)
- b** He was commissioned by God to become leader when Moses died (Deut 31:14f, 23).
- b** He courageously served as a godly servant before the Lord to bring the people into the promised land.

PURPOSE

Joshua closes with the land being given by lots to the tribes. Not all of the enemies inhabiting the land have been driven out, but enough has been conquered that the people should understand God has been with them and will continue to be

with them through the campaign. God will continue to complete the formation of the nation as an elect people who are governed by God under His law and who occupy a land given to them by God. The theme and purpose of this book is to show and confirm that the Lord fulfills His promises as the nation responds in faith. It is, then, a story about victory in faith.

1 John 5:4

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Notice there is in Joshua a wonderful comparison to the New Testament book of Ephesians. In Joshua, the nation enters and possesses the land promised to them by God through the Abrahamic covenant. In Ephesians, the church

Joshua shows us that God has given Israel all of the land, rest, and delivered the nations enemies into its hands. All Israel needs to do is to continue to rely upon God for a continuation of these blessings.

The False Gods of the Land

DEITY	COUNTRY	POSITION	REFERENCE
Baal	Canaan	Young storm god, father god, fertility	1 Kings 16:31
Ashtoreth	Canaan	Mother-goddess, love, fertility	Judges 2:13; 10:6
Chemosh	Moab	National god of war	Num 21:29
Molech	Ammon	National god	Zeph 1:5; 1 Kings 11:5

Dagon	Philistia	National god	Judge 16:23; 1 Sam 5:2-7
Queen of heaven	Canaan	Another name for Ashtoreth	Jer 7:18
Marduk	Babylon	Chief god, storm god	Jer 50:2
Bel	Babylon	Another name for Marduk	Isa 46:1
Nebo or Nabu	Babylon	Son of Marduk	Isa 46:1

Tammuz	Sumerian	Young storm god	Ezek 8:14
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JESUS IN JOSHUA

Jesus is found in this book mostly in the form of types. We have already seen the relationship in the meanings of Joshua's name. Likewise, we have mentioned the rest God provided His people (Heb 2:9, 10; 4:8).

Joshua meets the Commander of the Lord's army (5:13-15). This is the pre-incarnate Christ appearing to Joshua.

The scarlet cord of Rahab, the harlot (2:21), portrays salvation by the blood of Christ (Heb 9:19-22). Rahab was a Gentile who accepted God on faith. She acted upon that faith by saving the Hebrew spies. For this God blessed her and she is part of the genealogy of Christ (Matt 1:5).

MERCY AT WORK

The wonderful pictures of the Bible are frequently lost, being covered by the words of the story. Joshua and the nation enter the promised land in the same fashion they left Egypt. At the Exodus, God parted the Red Sea. At the entrance, God parts the Jordan. At the Exodus, the people are led by the pillar of cloud and fire. At the entrance, the people are led by the Ark of the Covenant. At both events God remains in command and in control. And His mercy is seen not only in His faithfulness to the nation, but in His provisions for the people.

After the division of the land and before the allocation of cities for the Levites, God makes provision for the innocent taking of life. Chapter 20 discusses the establishing of six cities of refuge. An Israelite who accidentally

The avenger of blood who would pursue the killer was a relative, a kinsman avenger who would uphold the family honor. Mentioned as early as Gen 9:5, the Mosaic penal code authorized the avenger to execute the murderer

kills someone may flee to one of these cities. After proving his case to the congregation, he may reside in the city safely until the death of the high priest. After that, he may return home without fear. Christ is our High Priest. Regardless of our “crime,” we may seek refuge in Him and be safe as long as the High Priest lives. Since Jesus lives forever, without beginning or end, we are safe in His arms forever.

IS THE OLD TESTAMENT GOD A DIFFERENT GOD THAN HE IS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

Deuteronomy 20:17

But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee:

Joshua follows this command right from the start of the invasion of the promised land. Of the people of Jericho, Scripture records:

Joshua 6:21

And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

Jesus, Paul, and the other New Testament writers speak of loving one’s enemies. Yet, here, God commands the Israelites to utterly destroy the inhabitants of the land. Is this the same God?

The answer must be an emphatic YES. God is a God of both mercy and judgment. The inhabitants of the land have had many years, going back to Noah and Abraham, in which to learn to follow the true God. They have chosen, instead, to follow the pagan rituals and practices devised by man. They were guilty of gross sin (Lev 18).

Moses records the reasoning behind God’s instructions.

Deuteronomy 18:9

When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

Remember Balaam? This is what he advised the Moabites to do to conquer Israel. Mix and match, create new religions, get the people to stop being 100% faithful to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Viewed as a historical example for the generations to come, the inhabitants of the land are a cancer which can instantly spread through God's people corrupting them. God fought this disease by not leaving the cancer in the area of His people. Only, the Israelites lost faith in their doctor and failed to follow His instructions. The cancer spread and God was lost in the process.

Yes, Jesus and Paul preached a Gospel of love. But, there is judgment and justice involved as well. And, while we are not told to kill the cancer around us, we are directed to avoid it.

2 Corinthians 6:14-17

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

How do you see God?

JUDGES

Period of
the Judges
1380-1050
B.C.

Othniel is
Judge
1370 B.C.

Ehud is
judge
1310 B.C.

Deborah is
judge
1230 B.C.

Philistines
occupy the
Palestinian
coast
1200 B.C.

Gideon is
judge
1190 B.C.

Samson is
judge
1100 B.C.

KEY VERSES

2:15, 16

2:20-23

21:25

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapters 1-2

KEY CONCEPTS

Evil

Judge, Judged, Judgment

Cycles

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Why do we need a Savior?

Once we are saved, do we still need a Savior?

If Joshua is a book about victory, Judges is its counterpart, a book about defeat. The defeat is pictured both as sin against God and oppression by foreign invaders. Judges presents a cycle which is ever present in all of our lives as we try to walk with God.

The following chart will show the contrasts present in the two books.

Joshua	Judges
Creates Faith	Exposes unbelief and Disobedience
Describes Israel's Possession of the Land	Describes Israel's Occupation of the Land
Occurs in Fulfillment of God's Promise	Experiences the Curses and Blessings of the Mosaic Covenant
Presents a Unique Test of Faith	Presents the Normative Experience of a Sinful Nation
Presents the Consequences of Faithful Obedience	Presents the Consequences of Continued, Unchallenged Disobedience

Title

The Hebrew title is a word which means “judges, rulers, deliverers, or saviors.” The idea of this word is one of liberation or deliverance. The concept conveyed is that the judges first freed the people from their enemies and, only then, would they act as a modern judge in weighing and resolving the disputes of the people.

AUTHOR AND DATE

Tradition holds that Samuel is the author of Judges. Some of the descriptions and comments of the work strongly support the proposal that it was written early in the existence of the monarchy, so the tradition has some internal support in the book.

Judges lasts for 340 years from 1390-1050 when Saul began to reign. Based upon these dates, a time frame is:

- b** Introduction and background (1:1--3:6) covers 20 years
- b** The Accounts of the Judges (3:7--16:31) covers 300 years
- b** The Epilogue on the Judges period covers 20 years

However, it may well be that the epilogue is not chronological to the rest of the book, in which event the other two dates would need to be adjusted accordingly.

THEOCRACY

A theocracy is the description used to denote that the Jews were under the direct government of God himself. In simple terms, God was to be the King of the nation. His will was to govern all of His subjects, who should be viewed as the servants of God. God was to rule over the public and private affairs of the people.

Since God is the true Judge of Israel who delivers the people, it is His judgments which are right and just (11:27). The role of the Judges were under the direct control of God. They were:

- b** The deliverers of the people from physical enemies
- b** The rulers in Israel before the time of deliverance (4:4)
- b** The rulers in Israel after the time of deliverance (8:28; 12:7)
- b** Their tasks were to turn the people back from idolatry, restoring the authority of the law (God).

It is important to note that obedience is not a prerequisite to blessing in this book. Judges shows that the blessings of God's covenant are separate from any human merit, which in turn calls for a response of obedience. The judges are weak. God delivers, not on the basis of human merit or might, but according to His choice of covenantal faithfulness to Abraham.

PURPOSE

The opening chapter sets the stage for this book. The nation of Israel did not drive out the inhabitants of the land (1:21, 27, 29, 30). The complete conquest of the land has failed. Since the people do not turn to God, God leaves the inhabitants of the land to be a “snare” or cancer in the sides of the Israelites to test the faith of the nation (2:20-21).

Judges 1:21

And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

The failure of the people lies in their compromise with pagan religions and the things of God.

Judges 17:6

In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

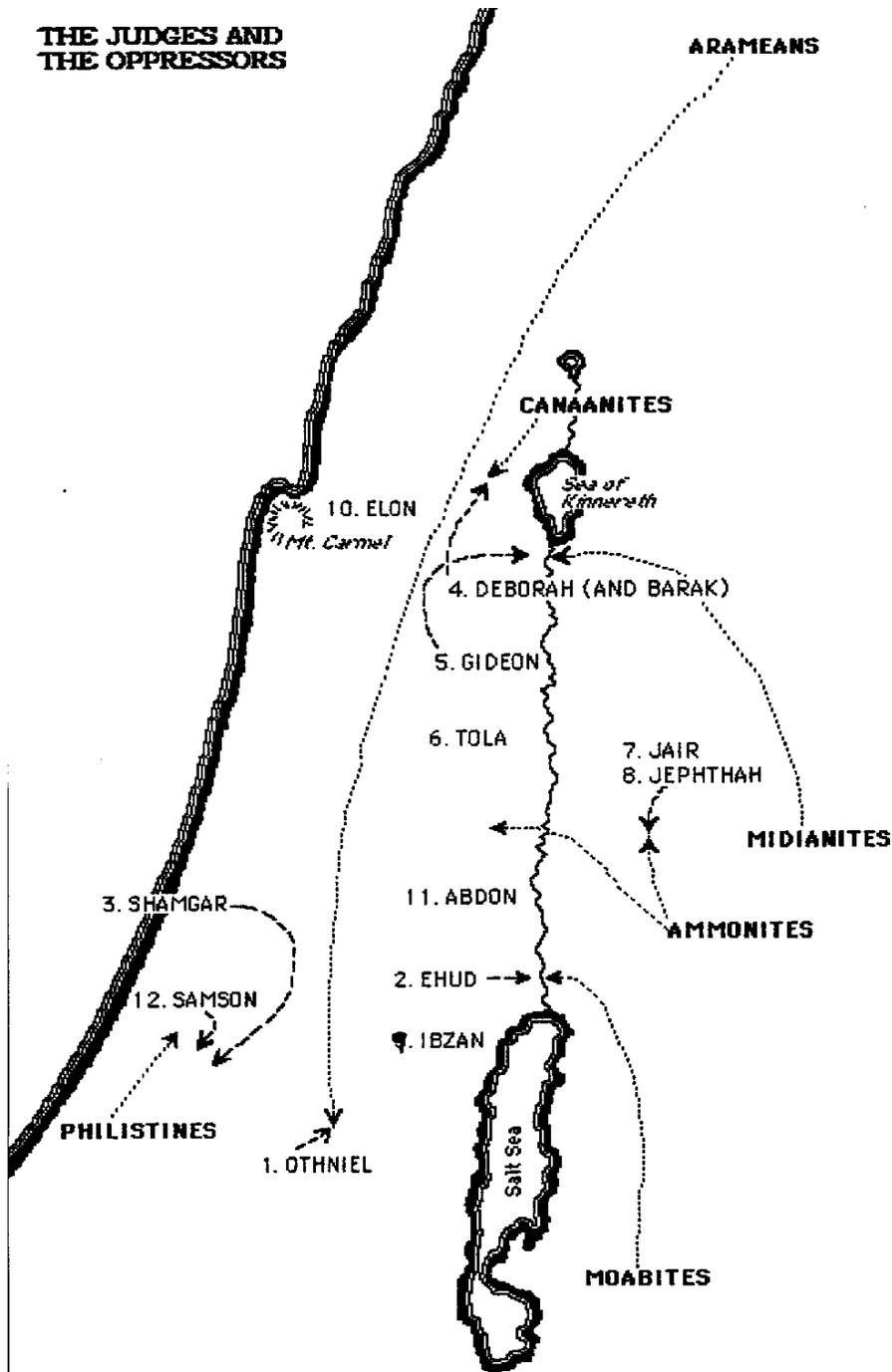
Judges presents a cycle – a cycle in the life of the nation of Israel – a cycle which shows up in the life of each individual person alive today. The measure of the spiritual health of the nation – and of Christians – may be measured by which portion of the cycle predominates in their life.

The cycle starts with the idea that when one becomes prideful and self-sufficient one forgets God.

- b** Sin arrives
- b** Servitude and suffering follow
- b** Supplications and cries for mercy are offered to God
- b** Salvation arrives

In Judges, the servitude is found in the form of invading armies. The salvation is in the form of military and political leadership on the part of the Judges to drive out the invaders and give the people rest in the land.

**THE JUDGES AND
THE OPPRESSORS**



The Land of the Judges

There are six or seven sins or apostasy stories which clearly show the cycle.

Sin	Servitude	Salvation
3:5-8	Mesopotamia - 8 years	Othniel - 3:9-11
3:12-14	Moab- 18 years	Ehud - 3:15-30
4:1-3	Canaan - 20 years	Deborah and Barak - 4:4-5:31
6:1-10	Midianites - 7 years	Gideon - 6:11-8:35
10:6-18	Philistines - 18 years	Jephthah - 11:1-12:7
13:1	Philistines - 40 years	Samson - 13:2-16:31

A seventh cycle is found by many at 8:33 a second deliverance by Gideon.

In addition to these seven “major” judges, the book also records the reign of six other judges.

- b** Shamgar - 3:31
- b** Tola - 10:1-2
- b** Jair - 10:3-5
- b** Ibzan - 12:8-10
- b** Elon - 12:11-12
- b** Abdon - 12:13-15

JESUS IN JUDGES

The Judges themselves are all types of Christ, the savior of the people. Since the Judges are only human, they cannot have a lasting effect on the people. They deliver the people for a short while, giving a period of rest after their conquest. The judges are not national in scope, but provide rest only within a given geographical region. Scripture does not speak to the events in the rest of the area during these time periods, but one may assume the patterns continue everywhere, since the sin-servitude-supplication-salvation pattern still applies to our lives today.

In Judges, then, we see:

- b** The sinfulness of man
- b** The constant failure of man
- b** The constant mercy of God

We also find God delighting in using the weak things of life. Remember what Paul writes?

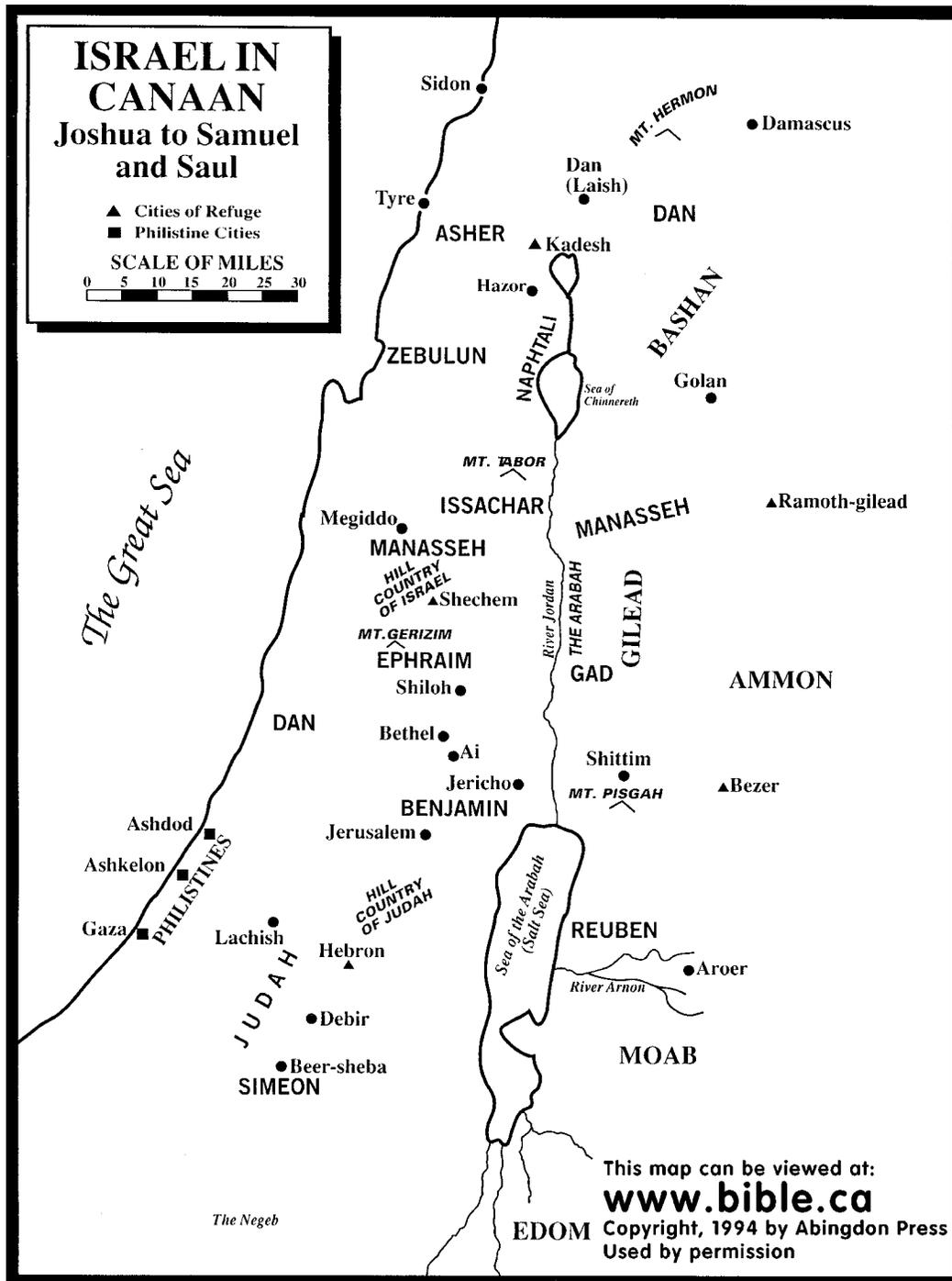
1 Corinthians 1:26-29

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

In Judges God uses men who have no major standing in life and whom we know almost nothing about. But, more than that, we see God using things society thinks of as weak. Think of

- b** Deborah and Jael, two women who defeat the foreign king
- b** Samson using the jaw bone to slaughter the Philistines

Can God use you? Are you weak enough?



Location of the Tribes

RUTH

KEY VERSES

1:15-17

3:11-13

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 1

Chapter 4

KEY CONCEPTS

Kinsman

Redeem

THOUGHTS FOR READING

The lesson here is the need for a kinsman-redeemer.
Can you described Jesus Christ as your kinsman-redeemer?

Title

This is another book named after its principal character. In line with Jewish tradition, it is reasonable to ascribe authorship of the book of Ruth to the prophet Samuel (or Nathan).

SETTING AND DATE

The setting of the book captures the period of the judges. The attitude of the Law towards foreign marriages (Deut. 23:3) allows for an early date of writing during Samuel's life. This dates the book's writing to a time during the early Monarchy (c. 1000 B.C.). The Book of Ruth offers no direct identification concerning its date. Ruth does site its setting with the time of the Judges ("when the judges judged" - 1:1), and probably occurred toward the end of the period. The time when the "judges judged" is also the time when two other accounts from the Bethlehem Trilogy occurred. Since the genealogy given in chapter 4 is only three generations before David, this tends to date the setting fairly late in the period of the judges.

Ruth is one of two books in the Bible named after a woman. Can you

THE BETHLEHEM TRILOGY

Three stories, two at the end of Judges and Ruth make up what is frequently referred to as the Bethlehem Trilogy. All three events occur in or near Bethlehem, the City of David, the birth place of Christ. The placing of these stories within the literary structure of the Bible helps to sharpen the contrast between obedience and disobedience. The first two are the stories of Micah and the Levite (Judges 17, 18) and of the Levite and His Concubine (Judges 19-21). From God's point of view, the two episodes show the depravity of the Israelites, including the ancestors of Saul.

Micah establishes his own religion with his own priest, a Levite from Bethlehem. Micah loses his priest to the people of Dan as that tribe migrates north away from the land God gave them. This migration occurs because they did not drive out the inhabitants of the land and so did not have enough room. The Danites figured this

idea of a private priest would help in their migration. Compromise is seen here at its finest.

In the case of the Levite and his concubine, the concubine left him and ran home to daddy. The concubine's home was in Bethlehem. Eventually, the Levite went after her. One night of the trip home was spent in a town of Benjamin. The Levite stayed there because they were part of the "family." He intentionally did not stay at Jerusalem, which was still in the hands of the Jebusites at this date, since they were not part of the tribes. But, the men of this town of Benjamin wanted sexually relations with the Levite. His host sent out the concubine instead. The abuse of the men killed the concubine. A war ensued in which the other tribes attacked and fought with Benjamin, killing all but six hundred Benjamite men.

Ruth is a breath of fresh air in this trilogy. The account focuses on the loyal ancestors of David, and the faith of a Moabite in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Naomi is from Bethlehem and most of the story is set in this town.

Ruth creates a diamond-like sparkle against the backdrop of Israel in the time of Judges. It also looks forward to the coming of Christ in several ways. A simple outline of the book is:

- b** Decision – Love's choice - Chp 1
- b** Service – Love's response - Chp 2
- b** Rest – Love's security - Chp 3
- b** Reward – Love's reward - Chp 4

JESUS IN RUTH

The entire point of this story is to show the ancestry of David being faithful to God during a period of apostasy and to paint a picture of the work of Christ. Boaz is the "kinsman-redeemer," the one who under the Law could save family and property (Lev 25; Num 35; Deut 19; 25). Ruth becomes a picture of the church, the Gentile taken into the community of God. Boaz is the Savior who accomplishes this bonding.

The Hebrew term translated kinsman-redeemer is *goel*. The term most properly simply means "a

The kinsman-redeemer must:

- b** Be a blood relative of those he redeems (“a kinsman”) – Lev 25:48, 49; Deut 25:5, 7; John 1:14; Rom 1:3; Phil 2:5-8
- b** Be able to pay the price of redemption - Ruth 2:1; 1 Pet 1:18, 19
- b** Be willing to redeem or pay the price - Lev 25:25; Ruth 3:11; Matt 20:28; John 10:15; Heb 10:7
- b** Be free himself, as Christ was free from the curse of sin, being without sin - 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5

What a wonderful picture of the work of Christ this short book of the Bible represents.

Has your redeemer saved you?

1 SAMUEL

Samson is
judge
1100 B.C.

Saul is
king
1050 B.C.

David
anointed
as king
1020/18
B.C.

David king
at Hebron
1010 B.C.

David king
over all
1003 B.C.

Solomon
becomes
king
970 B.C.

KEY VERSES

8:6, 7

13:14

15:22, 23

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 8

Chapter 15

Chapter 16

KEY CONCEPTS

Anoint

Reject

Transition

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Whom do you want to mirror?

The World or God?

1 Samuel 15:22

And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

This is a book of transition. One must read it with the background of Judges clearly in mind, for the closing verse of Judges sets the stage for the events of 1 Samuel.

Title Author

The Talmud names Samuel as the author, but this is hardly probable since he dies in chapter 25. The naming probably relates to the role he played in the first 25 chapters of this history. It is possible that Samuel was compiled from the writings of the prophet Samuel, Gad, and Nathan whose works were preserved within the nation (1 Chron. 29:29; cf. 1 Sam 10:25; cf. 2 Sam 1:18). It is also possible that Samuel wrote chapters 1--25 and then Gad and/or Nathan completed the remainder of the book. The work is named after Samuel, who is the main character in the first book and who represents the prototype of the Old Testament prophet. Remember, also, that in the Septuagint these two books were combined with 1 and 2 Kings, being named the Kingdoms.

The two books of Samuel and the two books of Kings must be contrasted with the two books of Chronicles. The Samuel-Kings unit is a unit of prophecy, written from the view point of the prophets (Samuel – Gad – Nathan) as contrasted to the Chronicles which carry a priestly flavor. While Chronicles parallel 2 Samuel and the Kings, in the Hebrew Scriptures 1 and 2 Samuel are a single book, so it is only natural that the first book would carry the prophetic outlook of the unit.

Prophet v. Priest

1:3 is the first use in the Bible of the name "Lord of hosts." This name is used 11 times in 1 & 2 Samuel,

The prophetic view point does not necessarily mean that the book is full of prophecies. Rather, the emphasis remains on the people's relationship with God and what the people need to do to strengthen, maintain, and/or return to this wonderful relationship. The Chronicles, on the other hand, carry the viewpoint of the importance of

the elements of worship, especially the priesthood and the Temple.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the book is tied to the need for the prophets. The kings and leaders of Israel, time and again, would place their trust in their own armies and armies of their allies as well as the gods of their allies. The call of the prophets was to cease this practice and to place the trust of the nation in God, the supreme being who created the nation and saved it from Egypt.

As a book of transition, it is important to look for the continuation of progressive revelation from God and to determine how this revelation fits with what has come before. In 1 Samuel this progressive revelation may be found in the call of the nation for a king. The book is set against the backdrop of the Judges and of a failure in the priesthood. Samuel, himself, is the last true judge.

You should compare Hannah's hymn of praise (2:1-10) with that in Luke 1:46ff by

Early on the scene is set by the contrast of the faith of Samuel's mother, Hannah, with the faithlessness of the priesthood, especially in the lives of the two sons of Eli the High Priest, Hophni and Phinehas. Because of their evil, the entire household of Eli is judged, and for a short time period, the Ark of the Covenant is lost to the Philistines. Indeed, in some meaning of the word, the Philistines displayed more faith in the God of Israel than did the Israelites. The Ark is returned, but the people have not learned their lessons.

The cry of the people flows from their desire to be like their neighbors.

Judges 21:25

In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

1 Samuel 8:5

And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

This request does not catch God by surprise. Notice first God's immediate response to Samuel.

1 Samuel 8:7

And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

The early giving of the Law presupposes the anointing of an earthly king. While God desired the nation to be a theocracy, God knows that the people will need a visible leader to keep them on track. However, the view of this leader given by Scripture is considerably different from the people's request.

To “anoint” is to set apart for special service. It is a symbol of someone being

The human king was supposed to be a representative of Jehovah, God their divine king (Gen 49:18; Num 24:17; Deut 17:14-19). The people have failed to understand this concept as 1 Samuel 8:5 shows and as God's response demonstrates. The people seemed to assume that they were being oppressed because they had no king rather than because of their own evil. The people will learn that having a king will not resolve their difficulties. Indeed, three times (Chps 8, 10, 12) Samuel will warn the people as to the consequences of their choice.

God Himself acts for the good of Israel and for His own glory even in the face of evil desires on the part of the people. First, God uses Saul to bring temporary deliverance as though the first king was nothing more than another judge. This brings about a repentance among the nation (1 Sam 12:19), as well as exposing the nation to the consequences of a weak king. The ultimate solution of God is to prepare his people for the Messiah. The moral for the people is that a king of the people is no better than a judge of the people. Messiah is the nation's only hope.

God retains control of the entire situation. Saul is God's choice as king, not the people's. The entire order of 1 Samuel shows the continuing “reversal” from the natural order of life. The Lord does all for His glory rather than the glory of the people. Hannah, a woman, is the source of the next hero. Her faith in God is contrasted with the lack of faith on the part of Eli, the High Priest.

In battle, the Philistines have more faith in the powers of God than do the Israelites. From the world's view point, Saul should be the ideal king, but

The importance of prayer is highlighted by the use of this word 30

his son Jonathan is a better warrior. David is a better shepherd. Jonathan is the one who has the discernment to understand David is God's hero. Jonathan will give up his potential inheritance of the throne to follow David. And, of course, there is the story of David and Goliath, where the teenager with a sling defeats the giant in full armor.

While Saul is the first king, he is never identified with *Jehovah*. Samuel predicts it is the Spirit of *Jehovah* (*Yahweh*) which will come upon Saul, but when the event finally occurs, it is the Spirit of God (*Elohim*) who acts in Saul's life, not the Spirit of *Jehovah*, the God of the covenant (cf. 10:6 with 10:10). This may be a small linguistic point, but it demonstrates that Saul's power is from a different perspective in the eyes of God than all of the other spiritual empowerings found in the Old Testament. The only time that *Jehovah* is connected with Saul is at the end of his anointing when it is written that "*the Spirit of the Lord* [*Jehovah*] *departed from Saul*" (16:14). This needs to be contrasted with the work of *Jehovah* in the lives of Hannah, Samuel, Jonathan and David.

1 Samuel 16:7

But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

PROTECTING THE COVENANT

It is clear that no one (with the exception of Jesus) has lived so righteously as to require that God bless him. God acts because of the nature of His own character and the promises He give. God covenanted with Abraham and having made this covenant, God is faithful to keep His promise. Samuel cannot pass his spiritual faith to his sons (8:1-5). Saul trusts in his own natural ability. David does not consistently trust God (cf 1 Sam 21). The Lord acts out of promise and blesses in the context of obedience to the Law (Hannah, Samuel, David), but not because of obedience (Jonathan). God is a faithful God and the nation receives the blessings of this faithfulness. Even as the nation rejects God in their sin, God's purpose toward the nation is that, "*the Lord will not abandon His people on account of His great name, because the Lord has been pleased to make you a people for Himself*" (12:22). This is the reason the nation is not

Ebenezer is frequently used as a church name. It means "the stone of help" and was the site of Samuel's victory over

destroyed for their rejection of the theocracy, the reason Saul is chosen at all (perhaps as poetic justice for the rebellion of the nation) and the reason David is permitted to continue as God's anointed in spite of his own sinfulness.

A simple outline of this book is:

- b** Samuel, the last judge - 1:1-8:22
- b** Saul, the first king - 9:1-15:35
- b** David the shepherd - Chp 16
- b** David the giant killer - Chp 17
- b** David, friend of Jonathan, rejected by Saul - 18:1-19:24
- b** David the fugitive, pursued by Saul - 20:1-26:25
- b** David's refuge in Philistine - 27:1-31:13

WITCHES, EVIL AND OTHER ISSUES

Saul's fall comes through a series of events in which the King displays a severe lack of obedience to the Words of God. Saul is impatient, uses poor judgment, lacks perspective, and is concerned more with saving face than being obedient. While not all of his actions would strike one as "sinful," it is clear that Saul is spiritually bankrupt and the words of Paul echo in our ears.

Romans 14:23

...for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

The presence of evil plays an important role in this book. The power of evil is accentuated as it overwhelms Saul in spite of his better judgment and as it repeatedly attacks David in spite of his continually calling upon God. Eli and his sons demonstrate the force of evil in the priesthood. Again, this is contrasted with the power of God in the life of Hannah and in Samuel. Even Samuel's sons are evil.

God allows evil to be used for His purposes, even though God is not the author of evil (Hab 1:13). God judges evil in the priestly family, in the treatment of the Tabernacle and ark as a fetish, in the people's call for a king like those around them, in Saul's fearful fatalistic slide from king to massive depression, in David's deceit at Nob, and in the young shepherd's bouts of fear which lead him into the heart of enemy territory.

One of the most difficult episodes of evil is found in the issue of the evil spirit from the Lord which settles upon Saul.

1 Samuel 16:14

But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him.

This verse creates a lot of difficulty for many people. God is a God of peace and love, a God who cannot “*behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity*” (Habakkuk 1:13). God is sovereign of all and over all. God cannot do evil (James 1:13), but God has many methods of dealing with men. God’s perfect will is complemented by God’s permissive will. Under His permissive will, events are allowed to occur within the limits God Himself sets. God has “allowed” this evil spirit to invade Saul’s life. Since the Israelites view God as having absolute control of the universe, if Saul is controlled by an evil spirit, such spirit is ultimately sent from God as the final voice of authority. The evil spirit will return often to torment Saul. God uses this evil spirit to teach David lessons. In New Testament terms, one might apply Romans 8:28 as the basis of these episodes. Only music from David’s harp is able to bring soothing to Saul’s tortured soul. Notice that Saul’s servants deal with the symptoms and not the cause of the king’s problems.

<p>What Saul needed was a change of heart not a</p>
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The other issue comes at the end of Saul’s life. This is the episode with the witch of Endor. She raises Samuel from the dead, to both her surprise and terror and to Saul’s great consternation.

There are a large number of Old Testament passages which speak against mediums, spiritists, and witches (Lev 19:31; 20:6; 27; Deut 18:10-14). Saul is a tragic example of what can happen to all of us when we fall too far into sin. Even the Christian can rebel against God to the point where he is unable to distinguish and understand God’s Word (cf. 2 Timothy 3:1-13; 4:1-4). Pushing this far enough brings one to the “point of no return,” the point where the Holy Spirit is so grieved and quenched that the person is no longer aware of the convicting power of God. The heart becomes hardened due to the persistent rejection of the Gospel message. Christians will not lose their salvation, but those who are not saved have passed beyond the point of hope. The unsaved who believe they can continually live in sin and then turn to God whenever they want (“at the last moment”) will be sorely surprised. Pharaoh is an example of this hardening.

But, did the witch of Endor raise Samuel from the dead? If she did, Samuel is still Samuel, even from beyond the grave. He continually stands for the Lord. Saul's future is foretold in great detail. He and his sons will die in battle (28:15-19). And this judgment is not one vaguely far off. It will be tomorrow! On the other hand, the battle forces heavily favor the Philistines, so this "prediction" could just be a wish of the devil. No one but God can bring people from the grave. There are analysis of this passage supporting both positions. The ultimate issue is not whether God allowed Samuel to be brought forth, but rather the teachings we can bring away from the passage.

Saul's story is one of a spiraling fall into depression and despair. While some depression may be the result of a chemical imbalance, the story of Saul shows that as one sin builds upon another, the combined effect creates internal spiritual changes in us which lead us closer and closer to the pit of destruction and death. His jealousy leads him to try to kill David (18:7-11; 19:10), as well as his own son, Jonathan (20:33). In the end, Saul takes his own life (31:1-6).

Besides Saul, Scriptures record five other suicides:
Abimelech (Judges 9:54)
Saul's armor bearer (31:6)
Ahithophel (2 Sam 17:23)
Zimri (1 Kings 16:18)
Judas (Matt 27:5; Acts

JESUS IN 1 SAMUEL

Samuel is a picture of Christ, the combining of priest, prophet, and leader in one person. While Samuel is not a king, he is a judge, indeed, the judge whom God uses to usher in the new age for the kingdom.

David is chased by Saul through Israel and Philistine. In this time of despair, David makes mistakes, on more than one occasion. For example, he runs directly into the heart of enemy territory for shelter! God uses this time to mold David into a leader. For his part, David uses this time to write many of the great Psalms, songs which reflect his personal turmoil and his true love for God.

During this time, David may have written Psalms 7, 18, 34, 52, 56,

The Hebrew word Messiah literally means “the anointed one.” First Samuel is the first book of the Bible to use the word anointed (2:10). This looks forward to Christ. With the introduction of David, a portrait of Messiah is commenced and anticipated. David, the shepherd, was born in Bethlehem, and is the forerunner of the Davidic dynasty through which the Messiah will legally inherit the throne. Paul describes Jesus as:

Romans 1:3-5

*3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, **which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh**; 4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: 5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name.*

The story of Jonathan, Saul’s son, and David is an example of the type of unselfish love and friendship God’s people should all have, one for another. If each of us were willing to give up our garments of authority, as Jonathan did for David, the Christian community would be a better place. Who knows how this might change the world?!

Chapters 13-15 record three strikes against Saul. Obedience is the key. Saul does many things wrong, but the final straw is his direct disobedience with regard to God’s specific command to annihilate the Amalekites. For this.

How often are you disobedient?

Have you used your three strikes?

2 SAMUEL

David
anointed
by Samuel
1020 B.C.

David king
at Hebron
1010 B.C.

David king
over all
1003 B.C.

David &
Bathsheba
990 B.C.

David dies,
Solomon
king
970 B.C.

Solomon
dies, the
kingdom is
divided
931 B.C.

KEY VERSES

7:12-16

12:12-14

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 5

Chapters 11, 12

KEY CONCEPTS

David

Consequences

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Does sin have consequences?

Even after God has cleansed us of our wrong-doing?

In 1 Samuel, there was a second anointing besides that of Saul. After Saul's failures, Samuel was directed by God to anoint David, the son of Jesse, the shepherd boy (1 Sam 15). Much of 1 Samuel is about David's training during Saul's reign as king. The story of David continues in this volume. Here, with Saul's death, David becomes king, first of Judah and, then, of the entire Nation. This will be a time of great glory for Israel, but a time of much personal trouble for David.

The heart of this book is the giving of the Davidic Covenant (7:8-16). This expansion of the covenant given to Abraham deals with the eternal throne given to the house of David, and, thus, to the house of Judah, in line with the prophecy of Genesis 49:10.

2 Samuel 7:12-16

12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: 15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. 16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

David is a man capable of great sin, but unequalled in his repentance and desire to please God, providing the place where God's glorious manifestation to Israel would be housed in the near future by the man of God's own choosing, his son Solomon. David commits two great sins, that with Bathsheba (2 Sam 11) and in numbering the army late in his life (2 Sam 24). Yet, as we read through the remainder of the Old Testament history books, David is the measuring stick against which all others are compared, for his heart was a heart for God.

A heart for God is not a perfect heart, but a heart willing to submit its all to God -- one which promptly seeks forgiveness when

THE THEOLOGY OF 2 SAMUEL

One concept often hard to grasp is the relationship of the various facets of God's character. How, for example, can a loving God be vengeful, as God sometimes seems to be? What we fail to understand or appreciate is the relationship demanded between holiness and justice, between love and mercy, and the need to deal with sin. A review of 2 Samuel puts much of this in some perspective.

b **God is gracious.** This is in spite of man's disobedience. David is raised to be king and almost immediately commits adultery. Yet, God forgives David of his evil of adultery and premeditated murder (cf. Lev 20:10; Exod 21:14). God further, upon David's other great sin, suspends judgment before the angel attacks Jerusalem.

b But, **God is judicious.** God brings Saul's contempt for God and His covenant upon his descendants who, except for Mephibosheth, either die violently or with the shame of barrenness (cf. Michal in 2 Sam 6). God brings David's evil upon his family as the son of his adultery dies along with the king's other sons Ammon, Absalom, and Adonijah, as his daughter is raped, and as his concubines are taken in Absalom's public bid for the throne. Although spiritual forgiveness is provided, the consequences of evil are still felt.

b **God is Sovereign.** God will be the one who will bring David's rule into being (2:1-2). The Lord rejected Saul's line (perhaps including the barrenness of Michal) (6:16, 20-23). David considers the verbal abuse of Shimei (16:5-14) to possibly be of God's sovereignty (16:10).

<p>Psalm 89 is the biblical confirmation and exposition</p>
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A simple outline of 2 Samuel is:

- b** The Triumphs of David the King - Chps 1-9
- b** The Transgression of David the King - Chp 11
- b** The Troubles of David the King - Chps 12-24

PURPOSES

2 Samuel 2:1-11

And it came to pass after this, that David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the LORD said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron. 2 So David went up thither, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail Nabal's wife the Carmelite. 3 And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron. 4 And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, That the men of Jabeshgilead were they that buried Saul. 5 And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabeshgilead, and said unto them, Blessed be ye of the LORD, that ye have shewed this kindness unto your lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him. 6 And now the LORD shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. 7 Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them. 8 But Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, took Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim; 9 And made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel. 10 Ishbosheth Saul's son was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David. 11 And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

These opening verses of the second chapter show examples of the highs and lows of David's life. He continually sought the Lord (2:1), but he also tended to break God's divine law by taking after the women (2:2). Bathsheba was just another in a long string of wives and concubines. The truly unfortunate consequence of David's life is that his son, Solomon, would learn from David's outward example, not from David's inner heart. Just as Lamech

David's Tragedies

Son of the seduction of Bathsheba dies (12:18)

Son Amnon rapes his sister Tamar (13:14)

Son Absalom kills Amon (13:29)

Absalom flees to shelter for three years (13:37)

Absalom "forgiven" but David forbids seeing him (14:24)

Absalom leads revolt against David (15:7-12), causing David to flee Jerusalem.

Absalom sleeps with 10 of David's concubines (16:21-23)

would brag about having outdone his ancestor Cain (Gen 4:23, 24), so Solomon would “brag” through his actions by having wives and concubines that vastly outnumbered David’s (1 Kings 11:1-3). The personal tragedies of David’s life did not have any impact on Solomon.

David begins his reign in Hebron (7 years, 3 months), then becomes king of all Israel following seven years of war with Saul’s last son, Ishbosheth. Shortly thereafter, David captures Jerusalem, making the city the capital of the Nation. With the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, the city becomes the City of God.

But even this event is not tragedy free. Following the methods of the Philistines (1 Sam 6) rather than God’s law, Uzzah is killed. David is distraught and does not bring the Ark into Jerusalem until a time of consultation with the priests (1 Chron 15:1-16:3). Even with the Ark in the city, God pronounces David to be a man of war and bloodshed and will not allow him to build the Temple (7:6). This task will be left to Solomon, although David makes great plans and preparations for his son’s task (1 Kings 5:1-5; 1 Chron 22-29).

**David’s last
victory is
recorded in**

The later years of David’s life are fraught with rebellion and unrest, the consequences of David’s sins. Yet, the kingdom of Israel reached its largest size and, perhaps, exercised its greatest influence under David. David becomes the model by which Israel’s kings are hereafter judged.

JESUS IN 2 SAMUEL

Jerusalem lies on two mountains. Mt. Zion, the City of David, was David’s original conquest and home. Mt. Moriah was the site of Abraham’s offering of Isaac (Gen 22). The Lord stops the Angel of Death on the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite. This is the same site on

As has been suggested in 1 Samuel, David is the picture of anticipation of the Messiah. While David reigns but forty years, Christ’s kingdom will last forever. Yet, Christ will rule on the throne of David. This is the promise of the Davidic Covenant. David’s life and God’s covenant with him are a prophecy of the throne of Christ.

And, notice the on-going progression in God’s revelation.

- b** To Adam, God promised a *race* (Gen 3:15)
- b** To Abraham, God promised a *nation* (Gen 22:18)
- b** To Jacob, God promised a *tribe*, Judah (Gen 49:10)
- b** To David, God promises a *family*

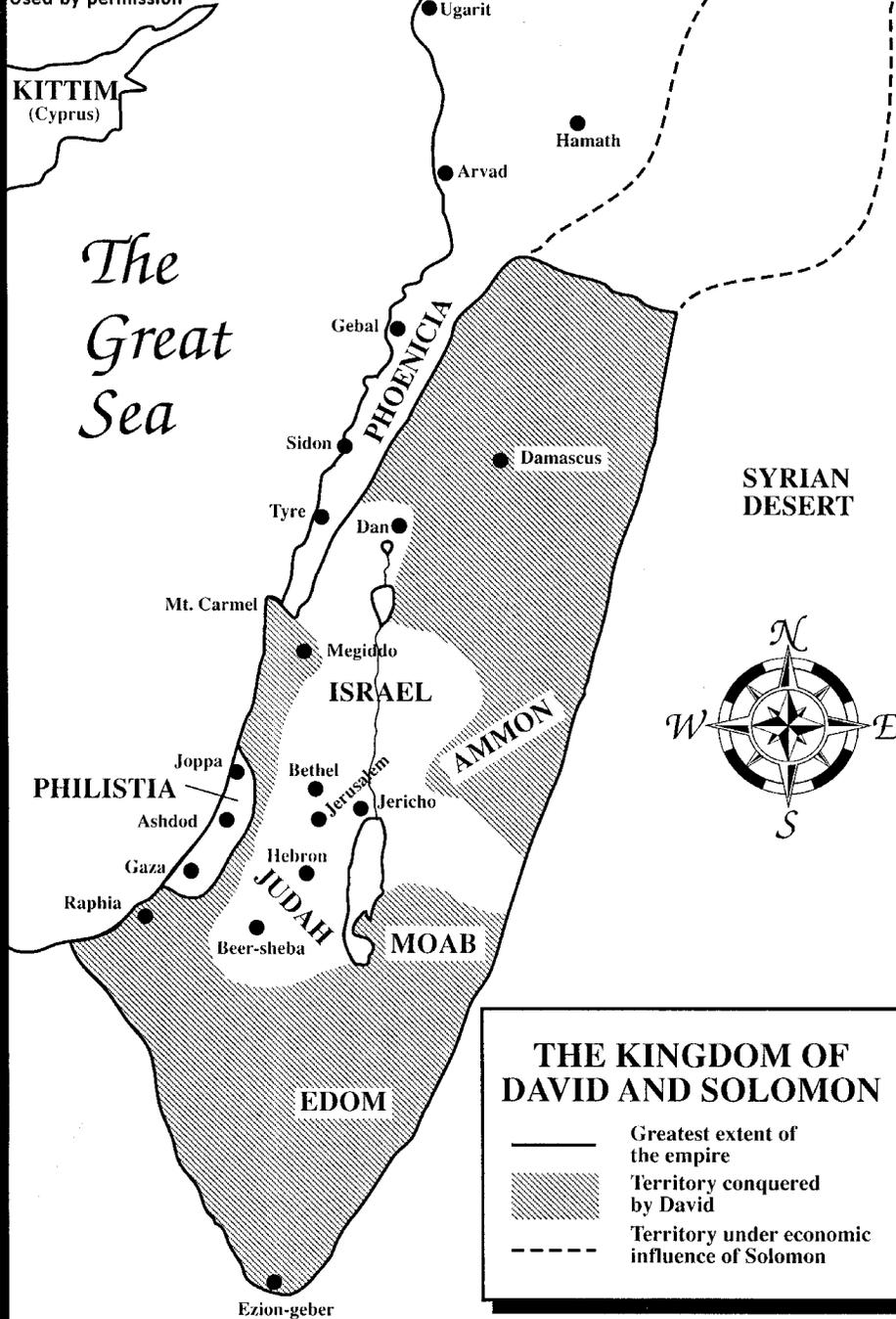
2 Samuel 12:12-14

12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. 13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. 14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

In David, in David's Psalms, in David's actions, we see the picture of forgiveness and mercy God offers to all of us. Lest we forget the lesson, meditate on these verses. God knows what we do behind closed doors. For the proper response of repentance, forgiveness accepted, and life thereafter, review Psalms 51 and 32, written by David as a result of his sins concerning Bathsheba.

How long does it take you to seek forgiveness after you have sinned?

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The United Kingdom

1 KINGS

Solomon
dies
930 B.C.

Kingdom
divided
930 B.C.

Jeroboam I
reigns in
Israel,
Rehoboam
reigns in
Judah
930 B.C.

Asa reigns
in Judah
910 B.C.

Baasha
reigns in
Israel
909 B.C.

Ahab
reigns in
Israel
874 B.C.

Jehoshaphat
reigns in
Judah
872 B.C.

Elijah the
prophet
865 B.C.

KEY VERSES

9:3-7

11:11

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapters 3, 4

Chapter 8

Chapters 11, 12

Chapters 17-19

KEY CONCEPTS

Kingdom

Division (Loss)

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Who will follow David as king?

How will they act?

1 Kings 11:11

Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

In the Hebrew Scriptures the two book of Kings were originally one book. Kings was broken into two books for convenience sake because of its length. As mentioned in the introduction to 1 Samuel, at one point in time the Samuel's and Kings were known as the Kingdoms. The books of 1 and 2 Kings take their titles from the point of their focus, the kings of Israel following David.

Title

The Books of Samuel and Kings cover Israel's period as a nation under a king:

- b** 1 Samuel--Saul
- b** 2 Samuel--David
- b** 1 Kings--Solomon and the divided kingdom
- b** 2 Kings--The fall of the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah

The "author" is an anonymous Editor-Compiler-Author. Jewish tradition holds that Jeremiah is this person. It is clear from the book itself that several sources were used in the construction of the books of kings. Specifically mentioned are:

- b** The "Book of Acts of Solomon" (1 Kings 11:41)
- b** The "Book of the Chronicles/Annals of the Kings of Israel" (mentioned seventeen times in 1 Kings 14:29--2 Kings 15:31)
- b** The "Book of the Chronicles/Annals of the Kings of Judah" (1 Kings 15:23)

The books of Kings were written between 560 and 538/539 B.C. The last event recorded in 2 Kings 25:27-30 is the release of Jehoiachin from prison during the thirty-seventh year of his imprisonment (560 B.C.). This is the earliest possible completion date for the combined books. Further, since there is no mention of a return to Jerusalem after the captivity, the combined books were written before that event in 538/539 B.C. The books cover a period from the end of David's reign (c. 970 B.C.) to the captivity of Israel (587/586 B.C.) and then the release of Jehoiachin (560 B.C.).

That Solomon was to be David's successor is not the surprise that one might assume from the opening pages of 1 Kings. In 1 Chron 28 all of the elders were instructed of Solomon's succession as part of the plans for building the

The book of 1 Kings starts with both promise and the hint of trouble to come. Another near tragedy strikes at David's family. The king is old, unable to care for himself and stay warm. The solution, in typical fashion for this family, is to find him a new virgin, Abishag, to keep him warm (1 Kings 1:1-4). As death approaches, his son, Adonijah, plots to seize the throne. Nathan the prophet and Bathsheba rush to David's side to assure the proper anointing and appointment of Solomon as successor to the throne. The plot is averted, although Adonijah makes a final

effort after David's death by requesting that the virgin Abishag be given to him. In that day and age, the taking of a king's wives and concubines was a symbol of claiming the right to the throne. Solomon ultimately has Adonijah killed (2:13-25).

Solomon commences his reign as the perfect man of God. His early prayer is for wisdom and knowledge (3:5-9). God answers this prayer with the promise of not only wisdom, but also of earthly riches (3:10-15). The story of the two harlots and the one living child quickly demonstrate Solomon's wisdom and the entire world flocks to his doorstep, bringing with it the riches of the world. The nation of Israel grows in wealth and fame on the shoulders of the young king. He is described as loving "*the Lord, walking in the statutes of David, his father*" (3:3).

Solomon also has Abiathar removed from the priesthood, finally resulting in a complete removal of Eli's family from the position of high priest, fulfilling God's prophecy (1 Sam 2:27-36). Chapter 2 also

Solomon builds the Temple of God according to the plans and with the materials and relationships prepared by David (chps 5-6; 1 Chron 22-29). The Ark of the Covenant is brought to the House of God and the Shekinah glory of the wilderness fills the Temple following Solomon's prayer of dedication (chp 8). God appears to Solomon a second time and issues a conditional promise to the king. If Solomon will walk "*as David, thy father, walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and mine judgments,*" (1 Kings 3:14) then God would establish Solomon's throne forever. But the seeds of destruction had already been sown.

1 Kings 3:1

And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall of Jerusalem round about.

1 Kings 11:1-4

But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; 2 Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. 3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. 4 For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.

For these sins and the immoral condition of his heart, God would rip the nation away from Solomon (11:11-13). Solomon dies, his son, Rehoboam becomes king (12:1), and Jeroboam, Solomon's captain of the laborers, revolts, taking the ten northern tribes with him (12:16ff). The divided kingdom has been formed. Jeroboam's actions were taken in direct step with the words of the prophet Ahijah, whom God had sent to the future king (11:29-40).

**One reason for the
division of the nation is**

The Kingdoms

Following the death of Solomon, the nation of Israel divided into two kingdoms.

One retained the house of David as its ruler. This kingdom is known as Judah or the Southern Kingdom. It is comprised of Judah and Benjamin.

The other kingdom is known as Israel or the Northern Kingdom, or sometimes as Ephraim or Samaria. It is comprised of the other ten tribes.

The Levites generally seemed to have followed Judah (because the Temple was there?) and because of the false worship created by

For the most part, the material of 1 & 2 Kings is presented in chronological order from the rise of Solomon to the fall of Jerusalem. There are some thematic sections, such as the summary of Solomon's administration (1 Kings 4) and his architectural achievements (1 Kings 5:1-7:12), but these sections do not detract from the basic chronological pattern.

$A+B+C+D = \text{King}$ Spirit

There is a "formula" structure to the presentation of the accounts of the kings, at least, after Solomon. The kings of Judah are introduced by name, the name of the king's father, a report of the king's accession (almost always synchronized with his Northern

Kingdom counterpart), and then his biographical data. This includes the king's age at accession, the length of his reign, the name of his mother, Jerusalem as the capital of the king, and an evaluation of the king's moral character and spiritual leadership. It is this facet of the king's life which is tied to David as the model. The closing information on each king includes the naming of any additional sources of documentation about his reign, a death and burial statement, and an announcement of the king's successor.

The formula for the Israelite (Northern Kingdom) is essentially the same. Noticeable differences are the lack of the naming of the queen mother and the naming of Samaria as the royal city. And, of course, the reign is synchronized to the ruling king of Judah.

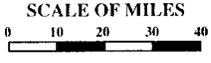
In keeping with the “prophetic” nature of Samuel and Kings, the kings are usually evaluated in line with the Mosaic law. Did the kings keep the commandments of God? Compared to this, the Chronicles emphasize the priestly elements and response to the revealed standards of God. The Chronicles follow the kings of Judah, acknowledging the kings of Israel only when required by the context. The evaluation of the kings is in reference to David and the worship of God.

PURPOSE

The combined books of Kings present a united purpose in the continuing revelation of God’s Word. Some of these purposes may be viewed as:

- b** Completion of the history of Hebrew kingship commenced in 1 Samuel
- b** Setting forth the divine reasons for the fall of the Jewish nation
- b** Showing the covenant failure of the nation, both in its united and divided states
- b** Legitimizing the Davidic dynasty through the agency of the prophetic office (Nathan) because the kingship covenant
- b** Warning the kings and the people of the consequence of covenant disobedience
- b** Demonstrating that the one who was to fulfill the promise of the Davidic Covenant had not yet arrived since none of the kings who followed David were greater than David
- b** Providing hope for Israel that God would fulfill His promise to the house of David and to the nation through Abraham

THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH



This map can be viewed at:
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Map of the Divided Kingdom

THE NATURE OF THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

Israel, the Northern Kingdom, is the less stable of the two. Jeroboam is promised an everlasting kingdom if he will follow in God's commandments. He gets off to a poor start. While making what may be a shrewd political move, Jeroboam seals his fate before the ink dries on his anointment (Chp 12). Fearing the house of David would win the people back when they traveled to Jerusalem for the three annual religious festivals, Jeroboam build two golden calves and places them at the northern and southern ends of his kingdom. The people will not have to travel to Jerusalem. They can worship God here, right where they live.

Then, to solidify this hold on his subjects, the king appoints priests to oversee these new worship centers. While it may all look like what God had established, the priests are not Levites and the centers of worship are not the Temple. God strikes quickly with a prophet delivering the message of doom and gloom to Jeroboam (Chp 13). The new king has forfeited his kingdom. The pattern of all of the future kings of the Northern Kingdom has been established.

- b** The Northern Kingdom only exists as a nation for 209 years
- b** All of its kings are characterized as "evil" because they continued the "golden calf" cult started by Jeroboam
- b** The average reign is ten years
- b** There are nine different ruling families
- b** There are nineteen kings
- b** Seven kings are assassinated
- b** One king commits suicide
- b** One king is stricken by God
- b** One king is taken captive to Assyria

While Judah is the more stable kingdom, its credentials are not that much greater.

- b** Judah exists for 345 years, 136 years more than its Northern relatives
- b** The average reign is a little over seventeen years
- b** There are nineteen kings and one queen

- b** The family of David is the only royal family
- b** Queen Athaliah's evil reign is the only interruption to the Davidic family
- b** Five kings are assassinated
- b** Two kings are stricken by God
- b** Three kings are exiled to foreign lands
- b** Eight of Judah's rulers were "good" because they walked in the steps of David. They are:

Asa
 Jehoshaphat
 Joash [Jehoash]
 Amaziah
 Azariah [Uzziah]
 Jotham
 Hezekiah
 Josiah

<p>Along with David, Hezekiah and Josiah are the only two kings to make a public showing of</p>
--

THE PROPHETS

While Moses and Samuel are characterized as prophets, it is during the period of the divided kingdom that the prophets come to the forefront. While the priests were to be the people's voice to God, the prophets became God's voice to the people. God's appointed kings failed to provide this voice, so God went "outside" the system to communicate with the kings, priests, and the common people. Men of God appear throughout the Old Testament. David had two in his court, Nathan and Gad. But it is during this period of the divided monarchy that the prophet becomes the true hero of the moment.

All of the written books of the prophets fit into this time frame. It helps to grasp this concept fully, for the words spoken by the prophets and recorded in Scripture are delivered against the background of this portion of Jewish history. It is only by reading the prophets "in their place" that their message may be seen as a true Word from God to the people. And, even though they have not written any portion of the Bible, no prophets display more firmly the nature of the true prophet and the message they carried from God than do Elijah and Elisha.

Miracles seem like a fact of life within the pages of the Bible. A careful reading, however, shows three great periods of signs and wonders performed at the hand of God's people. The first of these comes with Moses and the period before, during, and after the Exodus. The third of these comes with Christ and the Apostles. Sandwiched in-between are the ministries of Elijah and Elisha.

JESUS IN 1 KINGS

As was his father, Solomon is a type of Christ, the picture of the future reign of the Messiah on earth, a time of fame, glory, wealth, and honor, a time of great wisdom.

AN OUTLINE OF 1 KINGS

- b** The united kingdom under Solomon's 40-year reign - Chps 1-11
- b** The first eighty years of the divided kingdom - Chps 12-22, covering
 - A. The Cause of Division (12:1-24)
 - B. The Reign of Jeroboam in **Israel** (12:25-14:20)
 - C. The Reign of Rehoboam in **Judah** (14:21-31)
 - D. The Reign of Abijam in **Judah** (15:1-8)
 - E. The Reign of Asa in **Judah** (15:9-24)
 - F. The Reign of Nadab in **Israel** (15:25-31)
 - G. The Reign of Baasha in **Israel** (15:32-16:7)
 - H. The Reign of Elah in **Israel** (16:8-14)
 - I. The Reign of Zimri in **Israel** (16:15-20)
 - J. The Reign of Omri in **Israel** (16:21-28)
 - K. The Reign of Ahab in **Israel** (16:29-22:40)
 - L. The Reign of Jehoshaphat in **Judah** (22:41-50)
 - M. The Reign of Ahaziah in **Israel** (22:51-53)

It is to the Northern Kingdom, during the reign of Ahab, that Elijah the Teshbite arrives. He has no given beginning in Scripture. His parents are not even named. He is the true man of God, willing to stand

Ahab is described as the most evil of the northern kings, at least to this point in time. His wife, Jezebel, is a Gentile and brings Baal worship with her. Ahab's greatest crime is that he builds a temple to Baal. He worships the false god. Still when he

before the king and condemn his actions. Yet, although he takes on and defeats 450 prophets of Baal (Chp 18) and witnesses the glory of God in the “still, small voice,” Elijah runs from Ahab’s wife, Jezebel. He is human, like all of us.

Elijah is a symbol of what God can do when we present Him with a vessel which may be molded and shaped for God’s purposes.

2 Timothy 2:19

*Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal,
The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that
nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*

How often do you run when you ought to stand
still and rely upon God?

The Chronology of the Kings of Israel and Judah

The United Kingdom
Saul - 1050-1010-1 Samuel 8-31; 1 Chron 10
David - 1010-970- 2Samuel 1:1-1 Kings 2:11; 1 Chron 11-22
Solomon - 970-931-2 Kings 12-11:43; 1 Chron 29-2 Chron 11

ISRAEL / NORTHERN	PROPHET	JUDAH / SOUTHERN
Jeroboam - 931-910 1 Kings 12:16; 2 Chron 2:12-19; 11:1-4		Rehoboam - 931-913 1 Kings 12; 2 Chron 12
Nadab - 910-909 1 Kings 14:19		Abijah - 913-911 1 Kings 15:1; 2 Chron 13:1
Baasha - 909-886 1 Kings 15:27	Jehu 1 Kings 16:1	Asa - 911-870 1 Kings 15:7; 2 Chron 14:1; 15:1
Elah - 886-885 1 Kings 16:8		
Zimri - 7 days - 885 1 Kings 16:15		
Omri - 885-874 1 Kings 16:23	Elijah 1 Kings 17:1	
Ahab - 874-853 1 Kings 16:28	Elijah	Jehoshaphat - 872-848 1 Kings 22:41; 2 Chron 17:19
Ahaziah - 853-852 1 Kings 22:51	Elijah Elisha 2 Kings 2:12	
Jehoram (Joram) - 852-841 2 Kings 1:17	Obadiah Elisha	Jehoram - 853-841 2 Kings 8:16; 2 Chron 21:1
		Ahaziah - 841 2 Kings 8:25; 2 Chron 21:18
Jehu - 841-814 2 Kings 9:1; 2 Chron 22:7	Elisha	Athaliah - 841-835 2 Kings 11:1; 2 Chron 22:9
		Joash (Jehoash) - 835-796 2 Kings 11:4; 2 Chron 23:1
Jehoahaz - 814-798 2 Kings 13:1	Joel	

Jehoash (Joash) - 798-782 2 Kings 13:8		Amaziah - 796-767 2 Kings 14:1; 2 Chron 24:25
Jeroboam II - 793--753 2 Kings 14:15;	Amos Jonah	Azariah (Uzziah) - 790-739 2 Kings 14:17; 2 Chron 25:26
Zechariah - 6 months - 753-752; 2 Kings 15:28		
Shallum - 1 month - 752 2 Kings 15:13		
Menahe m - 752-742 2 Kings 15:16 Captivity of the " 2 ½ tribes" - 1 Chron 5:26	Hosea Isaiah	Jotham - 750-731 2 Kings 15:32; 2 Chron 27:1
Pekahiah - 742-740 2 Kings 15:21	Isaiah Micah	Ahaz - 735-715 2 Kings 16:1; 2 Chron 28:1
Pekah - 740-732 2 Kings 15:25		
Hoshea - 732-722 2 Kings 15:29; 17:1		
Captivity of the Northern tribes - 722/721-539 2 Kings 17:6-23	Isaiah Micah	Hezekiah - 715-686 2 Kings 18:1; 2 Chron 29:1
Samaritans repopulate the north - 2 Kings 17:24-41	Isaiah	Manasseh - 696-642 2 Kings 21:1; 2 Chron 33:1
	Nahum	Amon - 642-640 2 Kings 21:19; 2 Chron 33:20
	Zephaniah Habakkuk	Josiah - 640-609 2 Kings 21:23; 2 Chron 33:24
	Jeremiah	Jehoahaz - 3 months - 609 2 Kings 23:29; 2 Chron 36:1
	Jeremiah	Jehoiakim - 609-598 2 Kings 23:34; 2 Chron 36:4 1 st group of captives - 605 B.C.
	Jeremiah	Jehoiachin - 3 months - 598-597 2 Kings 24:8; 2 Chron 36:8 2 nd group of captives - 597 B.C.
	Jeremiah	Zedekiah - 597-586 2 Kings 24:17; 2 Chron 36:10

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		Southern kingdom to final captivity 586-539 B.C. 2 Kings 25:1; 2 Chron 39:8
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Key:

All dates B.C.

Northern Kingdom, bold is the start of a new dynasty

Southern Kingdom, bold / italics is a "good" king, one after the heart of David and God

Tibni and Omri served in different portions of the Northern Kingdom for some joint time period. Some date this as long as ten years. This is unlikely since there is no "formula" concerning the reign of Tibni.

Some sons served as co-regents with their fathers, explaining overlapping dates.

2 KINGS

Ahaziah
reigns in
Israel 853 B.C.

Elijah to
heaven, Elisha
the prophet
850 B.C.

Isaiah the
prophet
760 B.C.

Israel into
captivity in
Assyria 722/1
B.C.

Josiah reigns
in Judah 640
B.C.

Jeremiah the
prophet 609
B.C.

Final captivity
587/6 B.C.

KEY VERSES

17:18-23

23:27

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 2

Chapters 4-6

Chapter 17-19

Chapters 22-25

KEY CONCEPTS

King

Prophet

Captivity

THOUGHTS FOR READING

What is the “canon” followed by the kings?

What is the standard you walk by?

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2 Kings 2:11

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Second Kings picks up where 1 Kings leaves off, demonstrating the consistency and unity which existed in this book prior to the “publishers” dividing it for the convenience of the copyist and translators. It is a continuation of the fall of the two kingdoms. The glorious promise seen in David and Solomon’s early reign give way to more and more apostasy which God ultimately punishes. In between is the occasional bright light of a faithful leader.

The first ten chapters are really about the ministry of Elisha, although chapter 1 and the start of chapter 2 deal with the end of Elijah’s career. Elijah becomes the picture of the believer translated to heaven without dying. The faithful prophet receives the reward of avoiding death. His return is foreseen by Malachi (Mal 4:5, 6). John the Baptist comes in the power of Elijah and the prophet is blessed to appear with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt 17:1-9).

James calls Elijah a man like us, given to fervent, effective prayer (5:16-18). He should be our example of how to pray.

Elisha is no less God’s man. Elijah’s successor performs more miracles than any prophet in the Scriptures, save for Jesus. If miracles are designed to confirm the messenger, Elisha was at the top of the list!

2 Kings 10:28

Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.

The New American Standard used the verb “eradicated” to describe this event. This characterizes the proper attitude the Jewish kings were to display toward the foreign gods. It is sad that most fail to do this. From chapter 11 to the end, the book of 2 Kings is the story of the fall of the nations.

A SIMPLE OUTLINE OF 2 KINGS

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- b** The Divided Kingdom (1:1-17:41)
 - The Reign of Ahaziah in **Israel** (1:1-18)
 - The Reign of Jehoram (Joram) in **Israel** (2:1-8:15)
 - The translation of Elijah (2:1-11)
 - The beginning of Elisha's ministry (2:12-25)
 - Elisha's ministry (4:1-8:15)
 - The Reign of Joram (Jehoram) in **Judah** (8:16-24)
 - The Reign of Ahaziah in **Judah** (8:25-29)
 - The Reign of Jehu in **Israel** (9:1-10:36)
 - The Reign of Athaliah in **Judah** (11:1-16)
 - The Reign of Jehoash (Joash) in **Judah** (11:17-12:21)
 - The Reign of Jehoahaz in **Israel** (13:1-9)
 - The Reign of Jehoash (Joash) in **Israel** (13:10-25)
 - The Reign of Amaziah in **Judah** (14:1-22)
 - The Reign of Jeroboam II in **Israel** (14:23-29)
 - The Reign of Azariah (Uzziah) in **Judah** (15:1-7)
 - The Reign of Zechariah in **Israel** (15:8-12)
 - The Reign of Shallum in **Israel** (15:13-15)
 - The Reign of Menahem in **Israel** (15:16-22)
 - The Reign of Pekahiah in **Israel** (15:23-26)
 - The Reign of Pekah in **Israel** (15:27-31)
 - The Reign of Jotham in **Judah** (15:32-38)
 - The Reign of Ahaz in **Judah** (16:1-20)
 - The Reign of Hoshea in **Israel** (17:1-41)
- b** The Surviving Kingdom of Judah (18:1-25:30)
 - The Reign of Hezekiah (18:1-20:21)
 - The Reign of Manasseh (21:1-18)
 - The Reign of Amon (21:19-26)
 - The Reign of Josiah (22:1-23:30)
 - The Reign of Jehoahaz (2 Chron. 36:1-4) (23:31-33)
 - The Reign of Jehoiakim (23:34-24:7)
 - The Reign of Jehoiachin (24:8-16)
 - The Reign of Zedekiah (24:17-25:21)
 - Rebellion against Babylon and destruction of the Temple (24:17-25:10)
 - Third deportation to Babylon (25:11-21)

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The Governorship of Gedaliah, a Puppet Governor (25:22-26)

The Release of Jehoiachin in
Babylon (25:27-30)

As was mentioned in the introduction to 1 Kings, a few of the kings of Judah walked properly in the eyes of God. Hezekiah and Josiah are two of the great kings of the period. Both lead revivals which draw the nation back to God. Both have their faults, but both had hearts pointed to God. Josiah's religious revival may be the greatest of the entire period. He centralized the worship of the entire nation in Jerusalem, inviting the people from the Northern Kingdom to attend the renewal of the covenant in the cleansed Temple. A book of the law (perhaps, Deuteronomy, but probably the entire Pentateuch) was found in the Temple and read to all the people. God's Word was heard by all.

Hezekiah is described as walking in the ways of David. The description is that he trusted in the Lord so that there was none like him, either before or after (2 kings 18:3, 5). His is the only story to be told in three books of the Bible –

Of the good kings, only Hezekiah, Joash, and Josiah make public commitments of their faith. How

Despite a great reign, Josiah fell victim to his own ways. This is a time of great conflict between the rival empires of Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt. Egypt is in decline. Babylon has not yet blossomed to its full height. Palestine is the battle ground between these nations. Egypt moves to fight its enemies and Josiah insists against God's advice that he must go and fight. Josiah is killed ending another great reign (23:29, 30).

In the north, Israel reaches its height under the reign of Jeroboam II, who reigns for 41 years. Jeroboam II dies in about 747 B.C. and the plight of the Northern Kingdom is all downhill. Chapters 15-17 tell of the final days of the Northern Kingdom and the removal of the tribes into captivity by the Assyrians in 722/721 B.C. God has punished the nations for the sins of Jeroboam I and all who followed after his false cult.

The Assyrians brought in peoples from other lands to keep the ground and pay taxes on the crops. These people settled around Samaria and inter-married with the poor Jewish people left

To show that it is all in the heart and not in one's genes, Hezekiah's son, Manasseh, becomes the worse of the kings of Judah. His evil deeds included:

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- b** Rebuilding the high places of idol worship
- b** Erecting altars to Baal
- b** Building Asherah poles
- b** Building altars to other gods in the Temple
- b** Sacrificing his own son
- b** Practicing sorcery and divination
- b** Consulting with mediums and spiritists
- b** Putting an Asherah pole in the Temple
- b** Leading the people astray

Yet, God allowed Manasseh to reign fifty-five years, the longest reign in either kingdom. He was taken captive by the Assyrians, an event which caused even this sinner to call out for God (2 Chron 33:11-19). God heeded his prayer, allowing him to return to Palestine. Upon his return, Manasseh showed his true repentance was valid by removing the high places and the idols from the Temple. Unfortunately, his son Amon followed the evil ways. God allows Josiah's revival to undo some of this damage (2 Chron 36:16, 17).

In the end, the failure of the Southern Kingdom is like that of their brothers to the north. By now Babylon has come into power and defeated the Assyrians. Jehoiachin surrenders to Nebuchadnezzar and is carried into captivity. The fall of the Southern Kingdom has begun. Ultimately, there will three deportations of the people of Judah into the Babylonia kingdom and the Temple will be destroyed. Second Kings ends with the release of Jehoiachin in Babylon. He eats at the table of the King of Babylon, a foreshadowing of the promise to come to the Jewish nation.

This is the second deportation in about 597 B.C. Daniel was carried into

JESUS IN 2 KINGS

Elijah represents the forerunner of John the Baptist and the ministries of both Elijah and Elisha are similar to that of Christ's, although the analogy would best run to the ministry of Elisha following the ministry of Elijah, just as Christ followed the Baptist. The differences between the two prophets is similar to that of John and Jesus. Elijah performed public acts, before kings,

"The man of God" is first used in Scripture as a description of Moses. This description applied

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while Elisha performed a huge number of miracles, especially for individuals in need. While Elijah emphasized the law, God's judgment, and the severity of such judgment, Elisha shows grace, love, tenderness, a caring for people. Elijah came preaching repentance. Elisha came showing kindness. Both performed miracles to attest to their ministry. What a great picture of the Messiah to come!

Miracles are a part of the Bible. Except for the time of Jesus and the Apostles, there are two periods of Miracles. One is that of Moses. The other is the time of Elijah and Elisha. Consider, for example, the miracles of Elisha:

Parts the Jordan River	2 Kings 2:13-14
Makes Jericho spring drinkable	2 Kings 2:19-22
Sends bears to punish irreverent youths	2 Kings 2:23-25
Floods ditches to confuse Moabites	2 Kings 3:1-27
Multiplies widow's oil	2 Kings 4:1-7
Shunammite woman bears a son	2 Kings 4:8-17
Resurrects Shunammite's son	2 Kings 4:18-37
Purifies poisoned stew	2 Kings 4:38-44
Heals Naaman's leprosy	2 Kings 5:1-14
Gehazi struck with leprosy	2 Kings 5:15-27
Floats lost ax head	2 Kings 6:1-7
Gives special sight to king's messenger	2 Kings 6:16, 17
Blinds the Aramean army	2 Kings 6:8-23
His bones resurrect a dead man	2 Kings 13:20, 21

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1 AND 2 KINGS IN CONTRAST⁴

There is a decided contrast between the beginning and end of these two books. It is the story of a fall into bondage based upon a life of sin.

1 Kings	2 Kings
Begins with King David	Ends with the king in Babylon
Opens with Solomon's glory	closes with Jehoiachin's shame
Begins with the blessings of obedience	Ends with the curse of disobedience
Opens with the building of the Temple	Closes with the burning of the Temple
Traces the progress of apostasy	Describes the consequences of apostasy
Shows how kings failed to rule God's people	Depicts the consequences of that failure
Introduces the prophet Elijah	Introduces the prophet Elisha
Emphasizes the patience of the Lord	Confirms the Lord's sure punishment of sin

GOD WORKS IN AND THROUGH HISTORY

The Bible is not a book set in a vacuum or in a fairy tale land or myth. It is a book about real people set in a real time and place in history. Much of the modern debate over the Scriptures is a denial of the historical accuracy of the Bible. Yet, over the years, discoveries prove, rather than disprove the events of Scripture. Consider the following list of kings which are known by the secular historians to have ruled. Note as well, the accuracy of the biblical references to them.

There has not been a single archaeological discovery which disproves any part of the Bible. Any arguments of archaeology which

Foreign Powers Mentioned in the Books of Kings

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Nation/King	Biblical Reference
Egyptians An unnamed Pharaoh	1 Kings 3:1
Shishak [945-924]	
So or Osorkon [726-715]	
Necho [609-594]	
Aramaeans (Syrians)	
Rexon [940-915]	1 Kings 11:23-25
Tabrimmon [915-900]	1 Kings 15:18
Ben-Hadad I [900-960]	1 Kings 15:18, 20
Ben-Hadad II [860-841]	1 Kings 20;
Hazael [841-806]	2 Kings 8:15
Ben-Hadad III [806-770]	2 Kings 13:3
Rezin [750-732]	2 Kings 15:37
Phoenicians Ethbaal [874-853]	1 Kings 16:31
Edomites Hadad [?]	1 Kings 11:14-22
Moabites Mesha [853-841]	2 Kings 3:4ff
Assyrians	
Tiglath-Pileser III [745-727]	2 Kings 15:19-22; 2 Kings 17:3-6
Shalmaneser V [727-722]	Isaiah 20:1; 2 Kings 18:17
Sargon II [721-705]	2 Kings 18--19
Sennacherib [704-681]	2 Kings 20:12-13
Babylonians	
Merodach-Baladan II [703]	2 Kings 24--25
Nebuchadnezzar [604-562]	2 Kings 25:27-30
Evil-Merodach [562-560]	

God's Word is not a history book or a science book or a medical book, but when the Bible speaks of such things it does so with the truth of God, a truth that is 100% accurate!

Isn't there a lesson here? When Jesus says, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me*" (John 14:6), we had best listen, for this is the 100% accurate Word of God!

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Have you listened?

1 & 2 CHRONICLES

KEY VERSES

1 Chron 11:1-3

1 Chron 17:11-14

1 Chron 29:11-12

2 Chron 7:14

2 Chron 16:9

KEY CHAPTERS

1 Chron Chapter 17

2 Chron Chapter 7

2 Chron Chapter 34

KEY CONCEPTS

David

Davidic Covenant

House of God

Priests

THOUGHTS FOR READING

What is the proper way to worship God?

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Title

The Hebrew Title is "The Words [or Events] of the Days" which is equal to saying "The Annals." Unlike most of the Hebrew names, this comes from 1 Chronicles 27:24, not from the first verse of the books. The Greek title means the book of the "Things Left Out." This carries across the idea that Chronicles is a supplement to the history of the Jewish nation as told in Samuel and Kings. This name fails in that much of the material is a repeat, not a supplement to, the stories in 2 Samuel and the Kings. In addition, the compiler/author/editor of Chronicles has his own agenda to accomplish.

Our English title comes from comments made by Jerome in the 4th Century. Although his Latin title followed the Greek, he states in his prologue to the books of Samuel and Kings "we might more significantly call it the *chronikon* [chronicle] of the whole sacred history." As the early reformers created translations, this is the title which stuck to the English versions.

**These are not
the "Chronicles"
mentioned in the
books of Kings.**

AUTHOR

Tradition states that Ezra wrote the books of Chronicles. If he did not, another Levite Priest of the same time period is the author. The earliest possible date for the book is 538 B.C. when Persia was established over Babylon and Cyrus issued the decree for the Jews to return to Jerusalem and build the temple, a fact which ends the two books (2 Chron. 36:20-23). The latest date of writing must be the middle of the third century B.C. since the books are included in the Septuagint.

Most conservative scholars date the book between 450-400 B.C. David's descendants are listed to the eighth generation after Jehoiakim (Chronicles 3:1-24). This would allow for a date as late as 400 B.C. Jehoiakim was 18 years old in 597 B.C. when he was taken captive by the Babylonians (2 Kings 24:18). If the average of 25 years per generation is used, eight generations would yield 200 years, placing the earliest date around 400 B.C.

As has been previously mentioned, Chronicles were originally one book or scroll. The translators of the Septuagint divided the materials into two books, a pattern followed by Jerome in the Latin Vulgate and by the English translators. In about 1448 the Hebrew Scriptures commenced to divide the materials into two books.

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Chronicles were part of the third division of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Writings. This division came about in the 4th Century and the Chronicles were placed last in this section. Cyrus' decree closes the Hebrew Scriptures..

PURPOSE

As has been mentioned, the Chronicles are written from a priestly, as opposed to a prophetic, point of view. They are designed to give the returning Jews the true spiritual foundation of the theocracy and to bear witness to the continuity of the proper, obedient response within the history of the nation. This emphasis on worship and the place of the Temple in the lives of the nation shows the unity of God's Will for His chosen people. This stress shows the place of the holy Scriptures in the lives of the people, thus, showing the emphasis of the need and importance of the Temple and the priestly worship. This is all set around God's eternal covenant with Abraham and, therefore, with his descendants, the Jewish people.

Keep in mind that there is this comparison between the view points of Chronicles and the Samuel/Kings history. While it is easy to state that Chronicles is priestly and the Samuel/Kings are prophetic, such a comparison is too simple.

SAMUEL/KINGS	CHRONICLES
Viewed both North and South	Viewed on the South
Emphasis on the throne	Emphasis on the Temple
Civil / political history	Religious history
Emphasis on the prophet	Emphasis on the priest
Wars prominent	Wars less prominent
Indictment of the two nations	Encouragement for the remnant
Sees events as historical	Sees events as theological
1 Sam 12 - Isaac's son called Jacob	1 Chron 1- Isaac's son called Israel
1 Sam 31 - Philistines killed Saul	1 Chron 10 - God killed Saul
2 Sam 2:8 - Saul's son called Ish-bosheth ("man of shame")	1 Chron 8:33 - Saul's son called Esh-baal ("man of Baal")

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2 Sam 6 - one chapter on the recovery of the Ark of the Covenant	1 Chron 13-16 - three chapters on the recovery of the Ark
2 Sam 6 - Uzziah smitten with leprosy	1 Chron 15 - Why Uzziah was smitten
2 Sam 7 - David told he cannot build the Temple	1 Chron 22ff – Why David could not build the Temple
2 Sam 11, 12 - David's sin with Bathsheba	Chronicles does not mention this sin
2 Sam 24 - David sinned in numbering Israel	1 Chron 21 - Satan instigated David to number Israel
1 Kings 11:1 - Solomon's sin with foreign wives	2 Chron 9 - No reference to this sin

A “chronicle” is an account of events arranged in order. It is fitting that the books commence with an orderly account of the genealogies, the

Many find the opening verses tiring and boring, for the author spends ten chapters giving the genealogies from Adam to Nehemiah. For the Jewish nation these show the unity and continuity of the people. Those returning from the exile and setting up the “second nation” were all really part of the first nation chosen by God through Abraham. First Chronicles 11 moves on to stories of David. Second Chronicles 2 through 9 give the story of Solomon and the balance of 2 Chronicles covers the same grounds from Judah’s point of view as that of 1 and 2 Kings, from the division of the Kingdom to the

exile. This provides a simple outline for the two books.

- b** The Generations - 1 Chron 1-9
- b** David - 1 Chron 9-29
- b** Solomon - 2 Chron 1-9
- b** Judah - 2 Chron 10-36

To the author of Chronicles, the Temple was the symbol of the unity of the Nation. The Temple also served as a reminder of the Nation’s place before God (Exod 19:1-6) and as a sign that Israel was God’s chosen people. The Temple was, if you will, the sign of the Covenant. It is against this background that one must compare 2 Samuel and the Kings to Chronicles. The Chronicles are more statistical and “official” than the Samuel-Kings unit. The “keeping” of the Nation

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by the Temple officials is the underlying theme, a theme which is taught in the abstract against the background of apostasy and rebellion. To the author, the entire theme of both books rests upon the Nation's response (or lack thereof) to God. This is the decisive factor in the history of Israel.

2 Chron 7:14

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

If you want to take just one verse away from the Old Testament, this may be the verse to memorize! This "tells it all."

David's importance in the eyes of the author is seen from the amount of material devoted to him. While Solomon may have built the Temple, it is David who forms the Nation. His first great act, as recorded by Chronicles is the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (1 Chron 13-16). Then, with the Ark in God's city, the Davidic Covenant is repeated (1 Chron 17:7-15). The emphasis on David's importance to the spiritual well-being of the Jewish people is continued with the emphasis on his gathering the materials for the eventual building of the Temple. In addition, much space is related to David's organizing the various families of Levites into "courses" or orders for the Priests, Temple Levites, singers, porters, and so forth. This creates workable shifts and assures a smooth bureaucratic operation of the Temple once it is built.

David's great sin with Bathsheba is not mentioned in Chronicles. It has nothing to do with the Temple

Keep in mind that under the Mosaic law, only the Levites could be priests. Remember, however, that David acts as a priest at the return of the Ark (1 Chron 15:27; 16:1-3) and Solomon acts as a priest at the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings 8, 9; 2 Chron 2), even though they are from the tribe of Judah. This foreshadows the line of priests after the order of Melchizedek (Gen 14; Heb 4:14-16; 7:20-28) looking toward Christ

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While the sin of David as it relates to Bathsheba is not part of the Chronicles, his sin of numbering the people plays an important role in Temple history. It is repeated here since this becomes the source for the Temple ground (1 Chron 21:28; 2 Chron 3:1).

The Temple is built on the same ground purchased by David at this conclusion of the plague from God as punishment for David giving in to Satan's temptation of numbering the army. Notice this is Mt. Moriah the location of Abraham's

In 2 Chronicles, there is growing conflict and tension between the Temple and the Throne. The Throne was to be the voice of God on earth. The Temple was the representative of God. All of this being true, the Throne would, indeed, must lose this conflict. In the end, the nation is banished to exile because the Throne failed to be the true representative of the Theocracy. The priests may have been "bad" and failed to be God's voice to the people, but the kings failed to be God's true leaders. The emphasis of all of the history books is not on the failure of the priesthood, but on the failure of God's leaders to rule as God would want them. In the end God's principle as stated by Paul rules the day.

Galatians 6:7

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Yet, in the end, the Chronicles conclude with the glorious promise of the future. While 1/2 Kings stop at the exile, the Chronicles contain the promise of deliverance. God has sent a "judge," a savior, from a strange source.

2 Chron. 36:22-23

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, 23Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is

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in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.

It is doubtful that Cyrus ever became a believer in the God of Abraham. Indeed, if one thinks about it, there are plenty of good, practical, political reasons for wanting “friendly” subjects in the areas around the borders of your kingdom. But God did use Cyrus to fulfill His prophecy.

2 Chron. 36:21

To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

Many see the Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah as being a single history of the Nation, a unit written separate and apart from the other books of history.

Chronicles is the RETROSPECTION of Israel

Ezra is the RESTORATION of Israel

Nehemiah is the RECONSTRUCTION of Israel.

JESUS IN THE CHRONICLES

As with Samuel, the picture of David in 1 Chronicles is a type of Christ. The same thoughts expressed earlier about this typology would equally apply here. As one moves into 2 Chronicles, David still remains the background picture of Christ, but more in the form of God’s faithfulness to the Davidic Covenant. The throne has been destroyed, and murder, treachery, and captivity all threaten the Messianic line. But, as Chronicles shows from start to finish, the line of David remains clear and unbroken from Adam to Zerubbabel. This fulfillment is emphasized in the genealogies of Christ given by Matthew 1 and Luke 3.

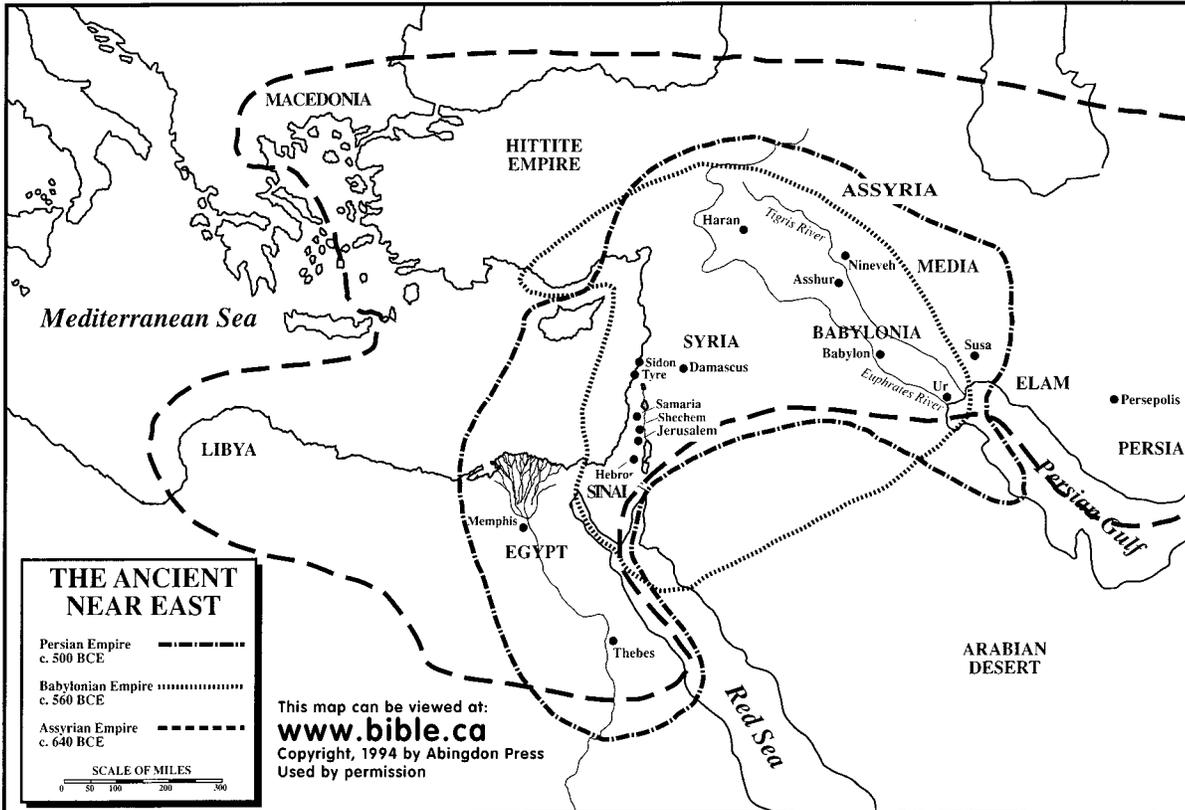
At the same time, as with the Tabernacle, the Temple itself is a type of Christ (Matt 12:6; John 2:19; Rev 21:22).

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God's faithfulness is seen through the promises which are kept.

What promises has God kept for you lately?



The Lands of Babylon and Assyria

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EZRA

Captivity
586 B.C.

Cyrus
reigns in
Persia
559 B.C.

Cyrus
conquers
Babylon
539 B.C.

First Jews
return
538 B.C.

Temple
constructi
on begins
536 B.C.

Darius
reigns
521 B.C.

Haggai &
Zechariah
520 B.C.

Temple
finished
515 B.C.

Esther
486-465
B.C.

Ezra - 458
B.C.

Nehemiah
444 B.C.

KEY VERSES

1:3

2:1

6:21, 22

7:10

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 1-3

Chapter 6-9

KEY CONCEPTS

Jerusalem

Temple

Return

THOUGHTS FOR READING

How important was the Temple to Israel?

How important is one's roots?

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Ezra 1:3

Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.

EZRA / NEHEMIAH AS A UNIT

It seems that in the Hebrew canon Ezra and Nehemiah were one book (Ezra-Nehemiah). The Masoretic text provides statistical data for the unit rather than for the individual books. Some speculate that the Chronicles - Ezra - Nehemiah combination formed a first and second volume of Jewish history. It was not until 1448 that the Hebrew canon divided these into two separate books. The Septuagint originally grouped these two books together, titling them as 2 Esdras or 2 Ezra. However, by the time of Origen (2nd Century), the Septuagint was treating the two books as individual volumes. Likewise, Jerome's Vulgate divided the books into two separate volumes.

Ezra 1:1-4 repeats the decree of Cyrus used to close 2

Remember, Ezra is credited with starting the Great Synagogue which collected

Tradition and internal evidence strongly supports the contention that Ezra is the author of Ezra and Nehemiah is the author of Nehemiah, although at some date a third party may have edited the volumes.

Jewish tradition holds that Ezra wrote the Chronicles as well as the Ezra-Nehemiah unit. The first person is used in Ezra 7:27-9:15 supporting most of this contention.

However, the first person is used extensively in Nehemiah strongly suggesting that Nehemiah himself is the author of the volume bearing his name. It is possible that Ezra is the original compiler of the unit, incorporating the writings of Nehemiah with his own.

EZRA

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Ezra's arrival in Jerusalem was probably in 458/457 B.C. This is dated as the fifth month of the seventh year of the king (Artaxerxes I Longimanus, 464-423 B.C.). Nehemiah 8:2 appears to identify Ezra as a contemporary. Ezra, as a priest, has returned to provide the people with spiritual guidance. To accomplish this, Ezra's primary task is to oversee the rebuilding and restoration of the Temple, a structure that laid dormant during the seventy years of captivity.

The term "Jew" apparently came into use during the captivity. Until then, the Israelites were

Nehemiah's first arrival in Jerusalem was probably in 445/444 B.C., the twelfth year of the reign of Artaxerxes and twelve-to-thirteen years after Ezra (Neh 1:2; 2:1). Nehemiah returns at some point to Babylon and then returns to Jerusalem in 433/432 B.C. (Neh 13:6, 7).

Many Jews, mainly those who had become established, remained in Babylon. Was this a sin? God's

God's prophecy through Jeremiah (2 Chron 36:21; Jer 25:11,12; 29:10) was that the captivity would last 70 years, one year for each Sabbath year the people had failed to observe. Just as Isaiah had prophesied (Isa 44:28; 45:1-4), the Babylonians fell to the Persians, led by Cyrus. This came about in 540 B.C. Ezra begins in the first year of Cyrus' reign (1:1). Cyrus was a forward looking leader, allowing the exiles of many countries to return to their homelands and to practice their own religions. This would tend to keep the people

peaceful and help Cyrus maintain rule. By 536 B.C., the Jews began to return home, with the Temple articles (1:7). Notice, however, that only 42, 360 persons returned.

The prophets Haggai & Zechariah

Jerusalem, as well as the Temple, lay in ruins. To return to this situation was a tremendous undertaking for the Jewish people. Safety, as well as every day needs like food and shelter were pressing problems (3:1-7). Yet, the people laid the foundation for the Temple during the second year of their return. Still, fourteen years pass between foundation laying and the actual work on the Temple (Ezra 4). Much opposition arose against the Jews, especially from the Samaritans. The work on the Temple was finished in the sixth year of the reign of Darius, 516 B.C. (Ezra 6).

In the period between Ezra 6 and 7 falls the story of

Ezra's actual arrival to Jerusalem comes 82 years after Cyrus took position of Babylon. Ezra is a priest who loved the Lord and desires to teach the people about God. Notice that

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this is the true task of the priesthood. Ezra was a learned man who lived up to his training and position in life.

Ezra 7:10

For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

One of the major problems Ezra faced with that of intermarriage between Jew and non-Jew, a clear violation of the Levitical law (Deut 7:1-4).

Ezra responded to this situation with intense public grief and prayer. This produced a positive response on the part of the people. The men of Israel combined to renounce their sins and to separate themselves from their foreign wives (10:7-17).

The sins of Solomon revisited?

The Ezra-Nehemiah unit provides the continued historical record of the nation of Israel. The unit demonstrates the reconstruction of the present upon the physical and spiritual roots of the past. The covenant given to the nation is renewed and emphasized. The continuity of the nation is stressed around the covenant and the Temple. God's faithfulness is seen through the rebuilding of the Temple.

A simple outline of the book is:

- b** Restoration, The Return under Zerubbabel - Chps 1-6
- b** Reformation, The Return under Ezra - Chps 7-10

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One of the positions of many cults is that they represent the "lost" tribes of Israel. This position arises due to the historical facts that 1) Assyria carried off the Northern Tribes and Babylon only carried off Judah and Benjamin and 2) it is a return from Babylon recorded in Scripture. Such a position misses several key points:

•Ezra reflects that "all of Israel" returns (1:3-5; 2:10; 6:17; 8:29).

•The genealogies of 1 Chronicles covers all of the Tribes. This would not have been necessary if Ezra knew only two tribes were returning.

•Revelation reflects the existence of all the tribes (cf. Rev 7).

•The promises of the prophets is that the entire nation will return.

•The assumption that only two tribes were carried away into captivity by Babylon is wrong since the Levites were living in Judah and were carried into captivity along with

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Jesus is seen more implicitly than explicitly in this book. The promises of the covenant, particularly the line of descendants being kept alive for Messiah, as the Son of David, find their continued fulfillment in the restoration of the people to the land. As a priest, Ezra keeps the emphasis on God and on the Temple worship, which to the Jewish nation, was the proper way to worship God.

Ezra 6:21-22

And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD God of Israel, did eat, ²²And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the LORD had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

What roots do you look back upon?

NEHEMIAH

Captivity
586 B.C.

Cyrus
reigns in
Persia
559 B.C.

Cyrus
conquers
Babylon
539 B.C.

First Jews
return
538 B.C.

Temple
constructio
n begins
536 B.C.

Darius
reigns
521 B.C.

Haggai &
Zechariah
520 B.C.

Temple
finished
515 B.C.

Esther
486-465
B.C.

Ezra - 458
B.C.

Nehemiah

KEY VERSES

4:6

6:15, 16

8:8

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapters 1, 2

Chapters 3-7

Chapter 9

KEY CONCEPTS

Wall(s)

Build, Building, Rebuilding

THOUGHTS FOR READING

How important is prayer?

What should we learn from the past?

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Neh. 4:6

So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.

As we saw in the last chapter on Ezra, the unit of Ezra-Nehemiah was originally a single book. It continues the history of the Jewish nation after the exile. The people had returned home and after many years of neglect, the Temple was built under Ezra the priest.

Nehemiah holds a high position under Artaxerxes the Persian king. He gives up this position of authority to go to Jerusalem and rebuild the city walls. Where Ezra was concerned with the spiritual restoration of the people, Nehemiah is concerned with the physical restoration of the city. Nehemiah is the layman serving in a political capacity as governor to repair the city walls. He is able to accomplish his task in fifty-two days (6:15), once construction actually is able to begin.

Nehemiah's name means "God consoles or comforts."

An interesting bit of Bible trivia is that some of the great prayers of Scripture all fall in chapter 9 –

The book of Nehemiah is not just about physical restoration, however. In 1:5 we find that Nehemiah's response to the condition of Jerusalem is prayer and fasting. In fact, prayer is a key element of this entire book. Nehemiah was one with a lot of "quick" prayers every time he faces a decision.

Nehemiah identifies with the people. He is not separate and apart from them.

Neh. 2:17

*Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that **we** are in, how Jerusalem liveth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let **us** build up the wall of Jerusalem, that **we** be no more a reproach.*

The story shows that he is also a superb administrator, analyzing, investigating, and planning before advising and executing. He was one who was slow to speak

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and fast to listen (James 1:19). And, he faced much opposition, not only from without, but from within. Just review chapters 4 - 6. No one wanted the walls rebuilt!

A SIMPLE OUTLINE

- b** The Rebuilding of the Walls - Chp 1-7
- b** The Restoration of the People Chps 8-13

It should be noted that the difficulties of the nation, their failure to endure and keep God's commandments, still plagues the people. It has been but a short time since Ezra chastised the people for intermarriage. Nehemiah finds the same problem (Chp 13). He, once again, takes steps to correct the issue of maintaining a separation between the people of God and the people of the world. Fifty-to- a-hundred years later, the prophet Malachi will face similar issues. Each new generation must learn for themselves the lessons of God afresh. No one wants to learn from the past, yet, this is the restoration message of Ezra and Nehemiah.

JESUS IN NEHEMIAH

Nehemiah is a picture of Christ in the governor's willingness to step from his high position to act as a servant of the people to bring them restoration. The decree of Artaxerxes marks the beginning point of Daniel's seventy weeks (Dan 9:25-27). This is the countdown to Messiah's triumphant return.

How often do you pray?

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ESTHER

Cyrus
conquers
Babylon
539 B.C.

First Jews
return
538 B.C.

Temple
constructio
n begins
536 B.C.

Darius
reigns
521 B.C.

Haggai &
Zechariah
520 B.C.

Temple
finished
515 B.C.

Esther
486-465
B.C.

Ezra - 458
B.C.

KEY VERSES

4:14

8:17

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 3

Chapters 6-9

KEY CONCEPTS

Jews

Providence

THOUGHTS FOR READING

God works His purposes, even when we aren't in step with His desires.

Can you think of an example of this in your life?

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Esther is unique among the books of the Bible. We will consider this uniqueness as we review this last book of the history division.

Title

The book is named after the character "Esther." The name probably comes from a Hebrew word derived from the Persian word for star. The author is unknown, although Mordecai and Nehemiah are two names frequently suggested.

The book is written around the Mid-to-Late Fifth Century B.C. (464-415 B.C.). The Hebrew "Ahasuerus" is usually identified with Xerxes I (486-465/64 B.C.). The book reflects the Jewish background of the dispersion in Babylon and reflects a knowledge of both Persian customs and geography. Persian names and loan-words throughout the book. As was mentioned previously, the events of Esther occur between Ezra chapters 6 and 7. The events of Esther appear to cover about a decade of time.

PURPOSES

Esther is written to provide a continuity for the Jewish community remaining in Babylon following the return of Israelites to the Promised Land. There is an emphasis to the religious significance of the Jewish people. The account would act as an encouragement to both those who returned to Palestine and to those who remained behind. The book further explains the historical basis for the feast of Purim, a feast still celebrated today.

Purim is the plural of "pur," the Persian word for "lot." The feast reflects the casting of the lot by Haman to pick the day of destruction. Proverb 16:33 tells us it is

Esther is written to demonstrate God's continuing loving care and concern for His people. Yet, the book is unique in that the Name of God is not mentioned a single time, in any form, in this book. This is the only book of the Bible which does not use God's Name. The book does, however, demonstrate God's control over situations of life for the Jewish nation, whether in their home land or in exile. Matthew Henry writes, "If the name of God is not here, His finger is."

Esther 4:16

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Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

Without addressing several of the practical theological concerns raised by this book, the story is simple. Esther, a young Jewish girl, becomes queen of Persia. The king's advisor, Haman, plots to kill all of the Jews. The lot is cast to pick the date. Esther's cousin, Mordecai persuades Esther to try and save her people. At the risk of her own life, Esther goes to the king and foils Haman's plot. Haman is hung on the gallows designed for Mordecai. The Jews are warned of the pending attack and legally allowed to defend themselves. They achieve a great victory which becomes the basis for the feast of Purim.

Another uniqueness of this book is the inference of prayer, without prayer ever being mentioned. Esther talks of fasting, which would normally be accompanied by prayer, but there is no mention of prayer in the book.

JESUS IN ESTHER

Esther provides a picture of Christ as she willingly puts herself in harm's way for her people's salvation. Likewise, her appearance before the king is a picture of Christ's advocacy for His people. Further, the work of the Messiah in providentially protecting His chosen people is seen in this book.

At the same time, one may see Esther as a type of church in her beauty, exaltation, and intercession, while Haman is a type of the "man of sin," and Mordecai is a type of the Jewish remnant during the Tribulation.

A simple outline of Esther is:

- b** Danger to the Jews - Chps 1-3
- b** Deliverance of the Jews - Chps 4-10

For our modern applications, one must remember that the picture to take home with us is the spiritual applications of Esther and not her outward actions. For example, the story of Esther's rise to queen ship is not a pattern to be

**The displaced
queen, Vashti's
name means
"beautiful"**

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followed by our daughters. Consider that in the day and age of Esther, the queen was chosen for her beauty and her bedroom abilities. Essentially, the king ran a beauty contest, sleeping with each contestant. The losers were doomed to the harem, perhaps, never to see the king again. Esther entered this contest at the urging of her cousin Mordecai. Esther won the contest. Is this a pattern to follow?

**Providence means:
“pro” – before
“video” – I see
God sees what His
people will do, even out
of His will. God takes
steps to use those who
call upon His name.
Esther is an application**

Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

The history books of the Old Testament ends with the Ezra-Nehemiah-Esther unit. The message of these books is applicable to all of us. God is always with His people. His Word should lead us to greater faith and spiritual blessings. At the same time, His laws affect all of life, not just

our's, but everyone's. God will help His people accomplish their God-given goals, even when we occasionally fall away and have to be brought back onto the path. But, like Esther, we need to pray for God's revealed purposes in our lives. We need to want to walk with Him on a daily basis. As Jesus tells us,

Luke 9:23

*And he said to them all, **If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.***

Have you seen God's Providence at work in your life?
Do you follow God's rules, or use the "best worldly" means
available to accomplish your goals?

HEBREW POETRY AND WISDOM

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. ¹⁴For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

With the book of Job we move from the books of history to those which are labeled wisdom and poetry. It should be remembered that all of the books which follow, both the ones of wisdom and poetry, as well as those of the prophets, fit into the historical scheme of the first seventeen books. These books are the books of experience. The authors and characters involved have lived out various events of their lives and have recorded their circumstances and reactions for the benefit of those who follow. These books relate to the spiritual life of the people, to the condition and reactions of their hearts. They deal with people, individuals, rather than with a nation.

Overall, these five books may be viewed as one's spiritual life in differing events or conditions.

b Job is the book on suffering, but a suffering which produces great blessing

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- b** Psalms is really a book of praise and prayer.
- b** Proverbs is the true book of wisdom, the application of God's Word through precepts.
- b** Ecclesiastes is the book about man's vanity, the negative approach of mankind.
- b** Son of Solomon is the book about true human love.

JESUS IN THE POETICAL BOOKS

While we will consider this in more detail, a brief overview of the place of Christ in these five books is in order. This should be viewed against the background of the books of the law and history.

- b** The books of the law set the foundation for Christ.
- b** The books of history show the preparation for Christ.
- b** Now, the books of poetry show the desire for Christ in the hearts of true believers.

This expectation is expressed in varying forms. Mediation, communion, wisdom, satisfaction, and union with Christ are all present in the various works. In this sense, the aspiration of the poetry books is the same as the rest of Scripture.

HEBREW POETRY

All of these books, including Job, are considered to be primarily Hebrew poetry. Hebrew poetry differs from modern English poetry in that it does not emphasize rhyme and meter. Rather, Jewish poetry uses parallelism, comparisons, and figures of speech for its impact. Lyric poetry was created to be accompanied by music (Psalms). Didactic poetry was designed to teach the principles of life through the use of maxims and comparisons (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes). Finally, dramatic poetry uses dialog to communicate its purposes (Job, Song of Solomon). As a result, the two key elements of Hebrew poetry are parallelism and figures of speech.

The following summary comes from Keathley (p. 41):

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The Two Key Elements of Hebrew Poetry

Parallelism. In contrast to English verse which manipulates sound and emphasizes rhyme and meter, Hebrew poetry repeats and rearranges thoughts rather than sounds. Parallelism refers “to the practice of balancing one thought or phrase by a corresponding thought or phrase containing approximately the same number of words, or at least a correspondence in ideas.”⁵ There are several types of parallel arrangement of thoughts, with three being basic.

1. *Synonymous*--the thought of the first line is basically repeated in different words in the second line (2:4; 3:1; 7:17).
2. *Antithetical*--the thought of the first line is emphasized by a contrasting thought in the second line (1:6; 34:10). They are often identified with “but.”
3. *Synthetic*--the second line explains or further develops the idea of the first line (1:3; 95:3).
4. *Climactic*--The second line repeats with the exception of the last terms (29:1).
5. *Emblematic*--One line conveys the main point, the second line illuminates it by an image (42:1; 23:1).

Figures of Speech. Like the Hebrew language itself, Hebrew poetry uses vivid images, similes, metaphors, and other rhetorical devices to communicate thoughts and feelings. Some of these are as follows:

1. *Simile*: This is the simplest of all the figures of speech. A simile is a comparison between two things that resemble each other in some way (cf. Ps. 1:3-4; 5:12; 17:8; 131:2).
2. *Metaphor*: This is a comparison in which one thing is likened to another without the use of a word of comparison as in “like” or “as.” In Psalm 23:1, David says, “The Lord is my Shepherd,” that is, He is to me like a shepherd is to his sheep (see also 84:11; 91:4).
3. *Implication*: This occurs when there is only an implied comparison between two things in which the name of one thing is used in place of the other (cf. Ps. 22:16; Jer. 4:7).
4. *Hyperbole*: This is the use of exaggeration or over statement to stress a point (Ps. 6:6; 78:27; 107:26).
5. *Paronomasia*: This refers to the use or repetition of words that are similar in sound, but not necessarily in sense or meaning in order to achieve a certain effect. This can only be observed by those who can read the original Hebrew text. Psalm 96:10 reads, “For all the gods (*kol-elohay*) of the nations are idols (*elilim*). This latter word means *nothings*, or things of *naught*; so that we might render it, “The gods of the nations or imaginations.”⁶ (see also Ps. 22:16; Prov. 6:23).

her, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1994, Electronic Edition, 1997, Parsons Technology, Inc.

⁵ E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1898, Reprinted in 1968, p. 311.

6J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*, Six Volumes in One, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1960, 69 of “volume 3.”

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6. *Pleonasm*: This involves the use of redundancy for the sake of emphasis. This may occur with the use of words or sentences. In Psalm 20:1 we are told, “MAY the LORD answer you in the day of trouble! May the name of the God of Jacob set you *securely* on high!” Here “name” appears to be redundant. It means *God Himself* and has more emphasis than if only the term “God” had been used.
7. *Rhetorical question*: The use of a question to confirm or deny a fact (Ps. 35:10; 56:8; 106.2).
8. *Metonymy*: This occurs where one noun is used in place of another because of some relationship or type of resemblance that different objects might bear to one another (Ps. 5:9; 18:2; 57:9; 73:9).
9. *Anthropomorphism*: The assigning of some part of the human anatomy to God’s Person to convey some aspect of God’s being like the eyes or ears (cf. Ps. 10:11, 14; 11:4; 18:15; 31:2).
10. *Zoomorphism*: The assigning of some part of an animal to God’s Person to convey certain truths about God (cf. Ps. 17:8; 91:4).

JOB

KEY VERSES

2:3-6

13:15

42:5, 6

42:10

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapters 1-2

Chapters 38-42

KEY CONCEPTS

Affliction, misery, hardship

Righteous, Righteousness

Sovereignty

THOUGHTS FOR READING

We all suffer, but God is faithful to sustain us as we suffer.

Do you have an example of this in your own life?

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Job 2:3-6

And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. ⁴And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. ⁵But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. ⁶And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

Title

To the modern English ear, Job does not resemble a book of poetry, but it certainly is a book of wisdom. The book is named for its main character. Job's name means "to come back or repent." This is an appropriate name for a man upright in God's eyes who allows his pride to get the better of him.

Job is probably the oldest book in the Bible. It is about a physical and spiritual experience of an ancient patriarch whose faith was tested to the uttermost.

Job or Elihu may be the author of this book, although there is some tradition that Moses is the author. The patriarchal family structure of the book and the offering of sacrifices by the head of the family suggests a time similar to that of Abraham. Moses could, then, have written this book from other records or oral stories which were present.

PURPOSES

- b** Reveals Who God Is
- b** Shows the kind of trust God wants His children to have
- b** Reveals God's favor toward His children and His absolute control over Satan
- b** Answers Man's Questions about why the righteous may suffer while the evil enjoy health and prosperity
- b** Emphasizes that man is unable to view life from God's vast perspective

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For most of us, the point of reading Job is to answer the modern question, “Why do good people suffer?”

God’s answer is simple. God knows best. This is set against the background of Job’s three friends and “comforters” who provide stereotyped views on life and pain.

A simple out line of the book is:

- b** Prologue - Chps 1-2
- b** Three cycles of comfort from the three friends - Chp 3-31
- b** The words of Elihu - Chp 31-37
- b** God’s Revelation - Chps 38-42:6
- b** Epilogue - 42:7-17

The poetry of Job is found from 3:1 to 42:6. Chapters 1 & 2 are a prologue, while the closing verses form an

Job 13:15

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.

Job looks to God and forward to God (19:25-27). Yet, Job is prideful like all of us. Chapter 29 records Job using “I,” “Me,” or “My” fifty-two times! Just like all of us, Job can not keep “self” out of the way. But God is patient with Job, just as He is with all of us. God knows what is best for us, for God is God, and we are not! This is the true lesson of Job. God allows Satan to take virtually all Job owned and possessed as a test of faith.

Job was not meant to know the explanation of his trial...If Job had known, there would have been no place for faith...The Scriptures are as wise in their reservations as they are in their revelations. Enough is revealed to make faith intelligent. Enough is reserved to give faith scope for development.⁷

Job’s three friends can only see events from man’s viewpoint:

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- b** Eliphaz based his statements on his own personal experience and dreams, not on revelation from God. He believed all suffering is punishment for sin (doctrine of strict retribution) and accused Job of living as a fool in vanity and social injustice.
- b** Bildad's philosophy believed that when a man suffers, he falls into the pit that he has dug for himself. This is basing one's beliefs on human tradition or authority. He, in essence, confronted Job for walking as an unbeliever.
- b** Zophar was the legalist of the group. He rebuked Job for being simple and wicked and causing his own problems. His solution was for Job to repent. Zophar displayed the common attitude of being dogmatic and arrogant, a "holier-than-thou attitude."
- b** Elihu was closer to the truth. His goal was to encourage Job to live above his circumstances, to walk by faith and not by sight. Although the youngest of Job's comforters, his views were closest to God's answer and response. Elihu's philosophy is that God is good and He is above man. God always does what is right. Sufferings are often God's way of refining the righteous. God is God!! Elihu stresses the Sovereignty, Justice, Power, Goodness, and Care of the Creator.

<p>Elihu means "God is his" or "My God is Jehovah" or "He is my</p>
--

God comes out of the Whirlwind, asking Job more than 70 rhetorical questions. This is the longest divine speech recorded in the Bible. It shows the contrast of human frailty as against God's Deity and Sovereignty.

Psalm 46:10

"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

Job is humbled, and God has not made a single direct statement to Job!

Job 40:4-5

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“I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. 5 I spoke once, but I have no answer— twice, but I will say no more.”

Job 42:1-6

Then Job replied to the LORD: 2 “I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. 3 You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?’ Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. 4 “You said, ‘Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.’ 5 My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. 6 Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.”

Bible reasons for trials and afflictions

- bDiscipline - Heb 12:5-11**
- bPreventive measure - encourage our humility - II Cor. 12:7-9**
- bEducate us - Rom. 5:1-5**
- bExamine or test us - I Peter 1:7**
- bStrengthen our testimony - Acts. 9:4-22, esp. v. 16**
- bEquip us for ministry - II Cor 1:3-7**
- bEncourages our dependence upon the Lord - James 1:2-6**

JESUS IN JOB

Job seeks a Mediator who can stand for him before God (9:33). Job knows there must be a Redeemer (19:25-27). Ultimately, Job seeks his answers to these questions in God, the one Who can serve these functions. Job looks forward to one who can identify with his sufferings and answer Satan’s accusations. Who is this but Jesus (Heb 2:14-18; 4:15; Rom 8:28-34)?

[Job 19:25-27](#)

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For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: ²⁶And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: ²⁷Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

Remember, the book ends with Job still NOT knowing about God's conversation with Satan in Chapters 1 & 2. The book

Another lesson from Job is the reality of Satan. At the same time, Job should provide great comfort concerning our victory over Satan, even if viewed only from the Old Testament:

- Satan is accountable to God (Chps 1, 2)**
- Satan is neither all present nor all knowing. Only God has these powers**
- Satan can do nothing without God's permission (38:11)**

Isaiah 48:10

Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

Can you find God's refining in your life?

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PSALMS

KEY VERSES

1:1-3
19:8-11
19:14
119:9-11
145:21

KEY CHAPTERS

Psalm 1
Psalm 22-24
Psalm 37
Psalm 78
Psalm 100
Psalm 119
Psalm 121

KEY CONCEPTS

Worship, Praise
Bless, Blessing

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Where should we seek our comfort?

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Psalm 1:1-3

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. ²But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. ³And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Psalms is the book about the human heart. It is the longest book of Scripture, and is, perhaps, the most widely used. This is because of the broad reach of its teachings and the many area of human life which are covered in these 150 songs.

The Greek, *psalmos*, transliterated as “psalm,” means “plucking,” then “playing” (a

The Book of Psalms is subdivided into five smaller books:

- b** Book 1 contains 41 psalms, all of which are ascribed to David except 1, 2, 10, and 33, which, though anonymous, may also be ascribed to him.
- b** Book 2 contains 31 psalms (42–72), 18 of which are ascribed to David, 1 to Solomon (72), with the rest being anonymous.
- b** Book 3 contains 17 psalms (73–89). David is ascribed as the author of Psalm 86, while the 88th is ascribed to Heman the Ezrahite and the 89th to Ethan the Ezrahite.
- b** Book 4 contains 17 psalms (90–106). The 90th is ascribed to Moses and the 101st and 103rd are ascribed to David.
- b** Book 5 contains the balance of 44 Psalms. Fifteen of these are ascribed to David, while Solomon is stated as being the author of number 127.

Each book concludes with a doxology, except the last where Psalm 150 serves as the doxology.

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There are a variety of ways of looking at the purpose behind the divisions and breakdown of the Psalms. For example, they can be viewed as dealing with the history of the nation in light of the Davidic covenant. In this case the breakdown might look like:

- b** Introduction 1--2
- b** David's conflict with Saul 3--41
- b** David's kingship 42-72
- b** The Assyrian crisis 73--89
- b** Introspection about the destruction of the temple and the Exile 90--106
- b** Praise and Reflection on the Return and the new era 107--145
- b** Conclusion in praise to God 146--150

Another view sees the Psalms corresponding to the Pentateuch. This view sees

- b** Genesis in 1-41, man and creation
- b** Exodus in 42-72, Israel and redemption
- b** Leviticus in 73-89, Temple worship
- b** Numbers in 90-106, our journey in this life
- b** Deuteronomy in 107-150, praise for God

There are other breakdowns which include dividing the songs into those of worship, petition, and praise. The Psalms are all about God and man, and man's relationship with God – or lack thereof.

This really sets forth the purpose of the Psalms. The Psalms are the theological treatise of the Old Testament. Here man works out his views of Who God is and how man should relate to God's rules. The Old Testament believer failed to understand the concept of an eternal judgment. Theology was, thus, formed in concepts of earthly events. Since the wicked appear to prosper on earth, these issues became difficult to resolve (Ps 73). The Psalms stress the need of the "wise" person to be upright in his standing before God and to wait on God's blessings (Ps 1).

**Theology is
the study of**

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The Psalms, then, may be viewed as to their type or category.

- b** Laments or Petitions were both individual (Ps 3) or National (Ps 44)
- b** Likewise, Psalms of Thanksgiving or Praise were both individual (Ps 30) and National (Ps 65)
- b** Many Psalms were cries for justice, calling upon God to avenge the wrongs done (imprecatory Psalms) (Ps 35, 52, 137)
- b** Many Psalms stress the need to trust God (Ps 4)
- b** Repentance or sorrow Psalms reflect on disobedience to God (Ps 32, 51)
- b** Testimonial Psalms speak to telling others about what God has done (Ps 30, 34)
- b** Enthronement or royal Psalms look to the King of the Davidic covenant, (Ps 2, 110)
- b** Wisdom Psalms stress true teaching (Ps 1, 37, 119)
- b** Pilgrim Psalms, the “song of ascents,” were known as the “hallel,” the songs song on pilgrim journeys to the Temple. Ps. 136 is generally called “the great hallel,.” although the Talmud includes also Ps. 120–135. Ps. 113–118, inclusive, as the “hallel.” These are the Psalms recited at the great feasts, at the new moon, and on the eight days of the feast of dedication. It is possible that the songs song by Christ and the Apostles on the way to the Garden were from these Psalms.

HALLELUJAH — praise ye Jehovah, frequently rendered “Praise ye the LORD,” stands at the beginning of ten of the psalms (106, 111–113, 135, 146–150), hence called “hallelujah psalms.” From its frequent occurrence it grew

Many are about other themes, such as creation (Ps 8, 19), memory devices (Ps 111, 112), and the Exodus (Ps 78).

Part of the vogue of modern criticism is to attack the ascriptions of the Psalms. It is unclear if these were part of the original writings or added by later Jewish teachers. However, the general

The Psalms set forth the message of hope and comfort as the common theme of worship and praise. God is in control and will cause all things to become good, in accordance with His will and plan, in His time. This, as we have seen and will see in more detail, is the great prophecy of the prophetic books. The Psalms reflect this same philosophy. The Psalms, then, reveal the character of God through the praise, complaint

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and exhortation. It is through these common experiences that man may encourage each other.

Paul writes a commentary on the Psalms when he says:

2 Cor. 1:3-4

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; ⁴Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

JESUS IN PSALMS

There is another category of classification for the Psalms. This is to determine which Psalms are Messianic in nature, speaking to the Person and Work of Christ.

- Typically Messianic, not types, but a general view that the personal experiences of Jesus and the Apostles fit within one or two verses of the Psalm (34:20; 69:4, 9; 109:8)
- Prophetic Type – final historical fulfillment in Christ (22)
- Indirect views of current events which find their final fulfillment in Jesus (2, 45, 72)
- Prophetic - a direct reference to Jesus (110)
- Enthronement or eschatological, looking to the Second coming of the Lord (96-99).

Along with the direct reference of Psalm 110 by both Jesus and the Apostles as being written about the Messiah, there are other specific prophecies fulfilled in Christ:

Birth of Christ	104:4	Heb 1:7
Christ's humiliation	8:4	Heb 2:6
Christ's Deity	45:6	Heb 1:8
Christ's ministry	69:9	John 2:17
Christ's rejection	118:22	Matt 21:42

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Christ's betrayal	41:9	John 13:18
Crucifixion	22	Matt 27:39, 43, 46; Luke 23:35
Resurrection	2, 16	Acts 2:27
Ascension	68:18	Eph 4:8
Christ's Reign	102:26	Heb 1:11

Psalm 119 is the longest book of the Bible. It, together with Psalm 19, celebrates the place of God's Law in our lives. Ten different words are used in this Psalm to represent God's law. All but four of its 176 verses contain one of these ten words. The Psalm is written in what is called acrostic, alphabetical order. The Psalm is divided into 22 sections of eight verses each. There is one section for each letter of

Psalm 117 is the shortest book of the Bible, having only two verses!

Psalms 2, 8, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 31, 35, 40, 41, 45, 50, 55, 61, 68, 69, 72, 89, 96, 97, 98, 99, 102, 109, 110, 118, and 132 are all considered Messianic in, at least, one verse. Psalm 110 is the most quoted of these in the New Testament

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THE PSALMS AND THE CHRISTIAN

One might well ask the place of these Old Testament words in the heart and life of a New Testament Christian. These are the Words of God as they relate to His treasury of spiritual help. These Words speak to our hearts and souls in times of trouble and despair. Whatever our mood, whatever our needs, whatever our conditions and circumstances, God has preserved these ancient poems and songs to help us endure the everyday experiences of life. Use these passages to allow the Holy Spirit to work in your life and draw you closer to God.

When was the last time you reflected and meditated on one
of the Psalms?

PROVERBS

KEY VERSES

1:5-7

3:5, 6

9:10

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 1

Chapter 8

Chapter 31

KEY CONCEPTS

Wisdom, wise

Instruction

Teach, Taught

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Whom do you go to for wisdom and advice?

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Title

The Hebrew title, "Proverbs of Solomon" comes from a term meaning "parallel" or "similar." The idea is one of comparison. The Greek title carries the same concept, using a word meaning "being like" or "similar." Solomon is noted as having written over three thousand proverbs (1 Kings 4:32). Many of them are found in the book of Proverbs. The sections of the book which Solomon wrote are:

- b** 1:1--9:18
- b** 10:1--22:16
- b** 25:1--29:27 (these were selected by a committee appointed under king Hezekiah (726-698 B.C.))

Other of the sayings are credited to "wisemen," who may be those attending Solomon (1 Kings 4:31). The two sections attributed to them are 22:17--24:22 and 24:23-34. Agur, the son of Jakeh is the named author of section 30:1-33. Chapter 31, or at least 31:1-9, is the work of King Lemuel. This creates some dilemma for there is no Jewish king of that name. One answer is that this is a foreign king, perhaps from Uz, who worshiped the true God.

Solomon is called "Jedidah" by God (2 Sam 12:25), a name meaning "beloved of God." Lemuel means "devoted to God." Could this have been Bathsheba's nickname for her

Proverbs 1:5-7

A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:⁶To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

⁷The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

PURPOSES

Wisdom, wise, and the like occur some 110 times in this book and may be viewed as the predominant theme and purpose of the work. This is related to the other

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key terms, instruction or teach, which occur 23 times. Designed to instill an awe for the position of God, the Proverbs are directions for developing skill in living. This still relates to morals, wise dealings, righteousness, justice and equity. The older generation is passing along its wisdom to the younger. The idea is to learn from the experiences of others. These experiences are placed in short, pithy sayings which would be easy to remember and memorize.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. ⁶In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

There are three general types of parallelism in this book.

- b** Synonymous parallelism has the second clause restate the first. An example is:

Proverbs 19:29

Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools.

- b** The second type is contrast parallelism where the second clause states an opposite truth from the first. This normally tends to place more emphasis on the importance of the truth of the first clause. An example is:

Proverbs 13:9

The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

- b** The third type is synthetic or completive parallelism. Here the second clause develops the concept of the first. An example is:

Proverbs 20:2

The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul.

Some of the Proverbs do not, of course, follow this outline. Many parts of the book are more of a semi-narrative, such as chapter 1 or the things which God hates:

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Proverbs 6:16-19

These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: ¹⁷A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, ¹⁹A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

JESUS IN PROVERBS

Chapter 8 of Proverbs becomes a the personification of wisdom. It is a picture of Christ, “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:3). In chapter 8 we find that wisdom is:

- Divine (8:22-31)
- The source of life (8:35, 36)
- Righteous and moral (8:8-9)
- Available to all who will receive it (8:1-6, 32-35)

Sounds a lot like Jesus, doesn't it?

1 Cor. 1:30

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

Who do you turn to for wisdom?
Is Christ the source of your understanding?

ECCLESIASTES

KEY VERSES

1:2
2:24
12:13, 14

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 12

KEY CONCEPTS

Vanity, empty

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Is life worth living?
How many useless things have you collected?
What good will they do you “in the end?”
What makes life worth living?

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Eccles. 12:8

Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity.

Title

In Hebrew the book is titled "Qohelet," a word which either means teacher, preacher, or leader of the assembly. Some, however, understood it to be a proper name. In general, those finding it to be a proper name do not attribute authorship of the book to Solomon. Jewish tradition is that Solomon is the author of this book. The Greek word, which is carried into English as Ecclesiastes, means "one who calls an assembly," a preacher.

Solomon is most probably the author of the book. There is little direct evidence for this position, but historical external evidence supports the tradition. The internal evidence is stronger, for the author identifies himself as the son of David who is a King over Israel in Jerusalem (1:1, 12). Since verse twelve expands the description of king as "*king over Israel in Jerusalem,*" Solomon is the only one who meets this description. Further, other description the author gives to himself matches Solomon: increased in wisdom more than all before him (1:16); a builder of great projects (2:4-6), a possessor of many slaves (2:7), herds of sheep and cattle (2:7), and great wealth (2:8), and a claim to be greater than all who lived in Jerusalem before him (2:9).

**King
over
Israel**

Another area of disagreement on this book is the unity and structure of the Book. Or to state it another way, is there a common theme to the account? At one time, the thought was prevalent that the book was a combination of the contradictory views of a skeptic, a wise man, and a believer. This view has lost favor over the years.

A second view supports the contention that the book is a collection of wisdom sayings built around a very loose theme (wisdom) but having no true structure.

A third view is that the book repeats set formulas throughout, with the addition of an introduction and conclusion. These threads are:

b Introduction: The Futility of All Human Endeavor 1:1-11

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- b** The Futility of Human Achievement Empirically Demonstrated 1:12--6:9
- b** The Limitations of Human Wisdom Empirically Demonstrated 6:10--11:6
- b** Conclusion: Life Joyously and Responsibly in the Fear of God 11:7--12:14

The “cloudiness” of views is set against the present emphasis on literary criticism and an indifference on the part of many to decide the book should be viewed positively throughout or if the work is negative.

A BOOK OF THE WORLD

Just as Proverbs is full of contrasts, of good versus bad, with the bad being used to emphasize the position of the good, so should Ecclesiastes be read as the contrast to Proverbs. Where Proverbs contains the positive side of the wisdom of a relatively young Solomon, Ecclesiastes is written later in the King’s life, after he has experienced the “pleasures” of earthly life. These are the same pleasures which face us – wealth, prestige, power, sex, control, fame, and fortune. Solomon looks back on this life of the “rich and famous” and discovers the offerings of the world are not worth anything. Ecclesiastes, then, presents the wisdom of the world.

Viewed in this fashion, Ecclesiastes is Solomon’s effort to demonstrate the futility of life apart from God. He attempts to demolish man’s confidence in his man’s own achievements. The argument is that the “*ways which seem right to a man*” (Prov 14:12; 16:25) are of little or no use in the face of God.

After all the emptiness of man’s ways, the work concludes on a high point looking to God. The intent, then, is to show that man must walk by faith rather than by sight (2 Cor 5:7). Life’s “surprises” cannot be explained by man. Man cannot understand or comprehend or control much of life.

This all leads to the conclusion that man left to his own devices will find life empty, frustrating, and mysterious – “vanity of vanities.” Natural man will find little under the sun which satisfies all of his desires and needs. The final conclusion of Solomon catches the reader off guard.

Eccles. 12:13-14

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Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. ¹⁴For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

JESUS IN ECCLESIASTES

Against the conclusion, one must look to a Savior to reach God. The perplexity of life is only removed through a personal relationship in Christ. Jesus is the conclusion of the matter!

The Vanities of Ecclesiastes

- ' **Human wisdom** - 2:15, 16
- ' **Human labor** - 2:19-21
- ' **Human purpose** - 2:26
- ' **Envy** - 4:4
- ' **Greed** - 4:7
- ' **Fame** - 4:16
- ' **Wealth** - 5:10
- ' **Coveting** - 6:9
- ' **Frivolity** - 7:6
- ' **Recognition** - 8:10, 14

How many do you seek?

SONG OF SOLOMON

KEY VERSES

7:10

KEY CHAPTERS

2

KEY CONCEPTS

Love

THOUGHTS FOR READING

How much does God love you?

Title

Both the Hebrew and Greek titles come from the first words of the book, “the song of Songs.” The entire verse continues on, “which is Solomon’s” giving rise to the alternative title of “Song of Solomon.” The Hebrew could also be translated as

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the “best of songs.” The Latin title means essentially the same thing, but a portion of the Latin title is *Canticum* from which we derive our English word “canticles.” This, too, has become an alternate name for the book. The Latin word also means “song.”

There are seven verses which refer to Solomon by name (1:1; 1:5; 3:7, 9, 11; 8:11-12), as well as references to the author as “king” (1:4, 12; 3:9, 11; 7:5). This, together with tradition and a great deal of similarity in language and literary style with Ecclesiastes, supports the position that both are written by the same person, Solomon, son of David, king of Israel.

The book should be dated to an early portion of Solomon’s career while he was still walking close to God, at a point where his harem had not grown large. This would date the book to around 965 B.C. This book records only sixty queens and eighty concubines. This makes the setting in the early years of Solomon’s reign. First Kings’ statistics are much larger for the brides of Solomon who led him astray later in life.

THEORIES OF INTERPRETATION

The major issue with this book has always related to the issue of interpretation. There is little doubt that the work is about true love, outwardly the love of the King for a Shulamite girl. The progression of the work is seen by dividing the verses by speaker, of whom there are four:

- b** The King (Solomon)
- b** The Shulamite girl (the beloved)
- b** The maidens or chorus (daughters of Jerusalem)
- b** The bride’s brothers or “friends” (6:10; 8:5, 12)

The work then describes courtship, marriage, the honeymoon, and later, matured love. But, is this “all” there is to the book?

The first approach, mostly of Jewish scholars, is to see the book as an allegory. They see hidden meanings in the language. The Jewish allegory is that the book is about God’s love for Israel. The problem with this approach, is that by adopting an

On the other hand, many Jewish rabbis viewed the book literally, calling it the Holy of Holies of Scripture and forbidding young men

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interpretation unrelated to the actual words, one must find a spiritual counterpart for every physical detail. Also, if the work is viewed as wisdom, this runs contrary to the allegorical approach. Note, too, that some Christian scholars have adopted this same approach finding the story about God's love for the church.

A second approach to interpretation is to find an extended type where Solomon typifies Christ and his beloved, the Shulamite girl, typifies the church. This approach finds Solomon and his beloved to be historical persons, but also finds the "true" meaning of the story in what they represent. This avoids the need to match every detail of the story to a spiritual meaning. This results in an interpretation very similar to that of the allegorical approach, namely a view of the love Christ has for His church. At issue here is any other support in Scripture for finding Solomon as being a typical picture of God's relationship to His people. Indeed, the historical setting of Solomon and the fact he fails to abide with one true love speaks against such an interpretation.

The third approach is to accept the story as a drama about the love of the King for his beloved. There is no indication that the book is written in this form, however. While a true drama may break down into scenes and acts, it is impossible to analyze Songs in this fashion. Also, there is no indication that this type of play or presentation was present in any literature at this early date.

**Other
interpretative
suggestions
include a
collection of
wedding songs**

Psalm 45, the royal marriage hymn or "Songs of Love," is a key to the proper interpretation of Song of Solomon. While the Psalms references are to Solomon, it looks

A last, and the most probable view of the book, is that it is a poetic song of wisdom about the ultimate relationship of marriage, a literal view. Solomon's name being attached to the work sets the stage for this approach. The book is designed to extol sexual love between a married couple and to affirm God's design for sexuality. As mentioned above, the book unfolds into the entire spectrum of a maturing love relationship between a man and a woman. It is, in this sense, God's counseling guide for the married couple.

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A simple outline for the book is:

- b** Title and falling in love (1:1-3:5)
- b** Marriage (3:6-5:1)
- b** The struggle of marriage (5:2-7:10)
- b** Maturing in love (7:11-8:14)

JESUS IN SONG OF SOLOMON

The best view of interpretation is to understand there is a combining of the literal view and the typical view. The book is obviously about true love and there is no reason to take this interpretation away from the work. But, in typical fashion, the book may be seen as a picture of Christ's love for the church, His bride (2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:23-25; Rev 19:7-9; 21:9).

Who is your true love?

THE PROPHETS

Deut. 18:15

The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

As we leave Song of Solomon and turn to Isaiah we move into the last section of the Bible, the world of the prophets. We emphasized earlier the necessity of keeping the prophets in their historical settings and it was pointed out where each of them probably played their role in God's history. In this brief introduction to the prophets we will consider who they were and what prophecy really means in Old Testament terms.

**In the Greek,
"Pro" means not
beforehand, but
rather "in place
of."
"Phemi" means
"to speak"
Prophemi means
"to speak in
place of."
The "nronhemi"**

Prophecy in its broad sense means a message from God. Notice that this message need not be foretelling some future event. Unfortunately, the idea of foretelling is the meaning most often connected with prophecy today. We should be mindful of Paul's words on spiritual gifts.

1 Cor. 14:3

*But he that prophesieth
speaketh unto men to
edification, and
exhortation, and*

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comfort.

The prophet has always been God's voice to men, designed to exhort and encourage the people. Sometimes, in this process, God would use the prophets to reveal things of the future. A careful review of Scripture will show this revealing (or prophecy) always carried a present purpose of edification, exhortation, encouragement, or comfort for the people.

There is much confusion about the exact meaning of the Hebrew word translated as prophet. Along with being called prophets, these spokesmen of God are also called seers, watchmen, men of God, messengers, and servants of the Lord. While the general meaning of prophet is "one who calls or announces," some of the other terms are connected with a word meaning "to see what does not lie in the arena of natural sight." This gives the view of the supernatural prophecy most often spoken of in today's world. Still, your review of the history books should make it clear that the primary role of the prophet was that of acting as "God's authorized spokesperson."

God's
Voice

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROPHETS THEN?

First, and foremost, the prophets were the preachers and evangelists of their day. They wandered the country side "speaking God." As the priesthood fell from God's favor into the mud of the world, God would bring forth His spokesman to "tell it like it is." Their message was one of rebuking sin, calling for repentance, and pleading for a return to God so the people could walk God's way.

Second, they were the predictors of future events. While at times these predictions dealt with specific details, most of the time the prophecy was related to the message of repentance. Sin must be punished and if the people would not get right with God, God would send punishment. This need to judge sin becomes the foundation for most prophecy. The message is one of judgment, deliverance, and salvation. This is pictured in terms of a future reign of the Messiah.

"Forth-telling" is insight into the meaning of God's will. It is exhortative, a call to obey.

"Fore-telling" involves foresight into the plan of God. It is predictive in content

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Predicting the future is not a way of satisfying man's curiosity. The point of prophecy is to authenticate the messenger of God, thus, showing the messenger's words about God are true. It is, then, a means of authenticating God. God knows and controls the future. The prophecy, like miracles, would prove the trustworthiness of the predictions. Indeed, the test of a true prophet was whether or not his predictions occurred. The failure of a prediction was proof it had not arisen with God (Deut 18:2-22).

Remember that all of prophecy, foretelling or forth-telling, is a message to a historical people. God's ongoing plan of redemption is always at work, so all prophecy is an unveiling of God's plan. The foretelling prophecy was always connected to the current situation of the prophet and the nation. It is clear that the human author understood his message in the historical setting in which it was given. What is not as clear is if the prophet knew the prediction also applied to a future event. In many cases only God understood the final point of the message to be Christ or the end times.

God also viewed the prophets as his watchmen (Ezek 3:17). They were the true guards of Israel. Their task was to warn against apostasy and warn the people of current events which indicated a falling away of the nation from God.

At least one writer has characterized the role of the prophets as that of being the prosecuting attorney of God, bringing indictments against the people of Israel for the violations of the Mosaic covenant. This picture gives a great view of the true function of the prophet.

MAJOR V. MINOR

The writings of the Old Testament are generally divided into the sections of the major and minor prophets. The major prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, while there are twelve minor prophets. This division is based not upon the actual importance of the prophets but rather the relative length of their writings. The longer authors are the major prophets, while the shorter books comprise the minor prophets.

Lamentations is generally included with the major prophets because it was written

The message of all the prophets is the same. In modern

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terms, it calls for an end to “lip service” only toward God. The call is one to obedience. If repentance must come first, then let it come. All predictive messages arise from this overall word from God. If a prediction was made, it was to the people of the prophet’s day and was related to a call for repentance. The prophets did not foretell for the sake of curiosity or their own satisfaction. The prophecies all related to God’s message to the people of that day.

2 Chron. 7:14

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

This was the message of the prophets.

The interpretation of prophecy must be made in the context in which it was originally given. Almost all prophecy had two meanings, a near and a far. The near meaning applied to the day of the prophet. The far meaning relates to an event in the life of Christ. The destruction of Babylon, for example, by Mede-Persia was an event in the life of Israel. But the final destruction of the

WHO WERE THE PROPHETS?

There is no real pattern to the “creation” of a prophet. The man of God was always around, lurking somewhere in the shadows ready to deliver God’s message. While Jesus is the supreme example, God always had a prophet in the wings ready to come forth. Not all of the prophets reduced their exhortations and predictions to writing. Some found their writings used in the royal courts but not in the pages of the Bible. All dealt with the moral and religious life of his own people.

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- ' All were Hebrews.
- ' All were Men of God.
- ' There is some difference as to the message of the prophets from one “period” to the next. A grouping of periods could be viewed as those in the early period of the monarchy, those who were counselors to the monarchy, and those who are the classical prophets we most often think about.
- b** Moses and Deborah are examples of the first category. Their purpose was that of national leadership and their message was one of spiritual guidance. They acted as an overseer of justice. Notice that Moses’ final address predicts the course of the nation and, so, predicts the messages of each group of prophets.
- b** Nathan, Gad, Elijah, Elisha and Micah are examples of those who are counselors to the monarchy. Not all of the kings wanted or heeded their advice, but this was their appointed task. Their messages were of rebuke and blessing.
- b** Jonah and Isaiah represent the bridge from the court counselors to the classical prophet.
- b** Jeremiah is the example of the classical prophet. His message was a social / spiritual commentary on the life of the nation. His message was to all the people, not just the leaders. The message of the classical prophets covered the inevitable result of the way of life of the people. This was the Babylonian captivity. But, the message also includes the promise of eventual restoration. The message, like that of all the prophets, was of rebuke and blessings. The message was a call for repentance and justice.

Jeremiah 1:4-10

Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, ⁵Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. ⁶Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

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⁷But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. ⁸Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. ⁹Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. ¹⁰See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

So, who were the prophets? They were fore-runners of Christ. Christ is the ultimate prophet. He displays the characteristics of a true prophet:

- A heart devoted to doing His Father's Will (John 5:30)
- A strong sense of calling and knowledge that the prophet had been sent by God for a specific purpose (Matt 16:21-23)
- A messenger bringing God's Will to the earth (Heb 1:1-2)
- A forth-teller, challenging His contemporaries to repent and to live by faith instead of trusting the ways of man (Matt 17:15:1-7; 23:16-28)
- A fore-teller, predicting the future as God directs ((Mark 13:3-27; Luke 23:34, 54-62)
- Used a variety of techniques to convey His message
 - Parables (Luke 15:3-16:31)
 - Quotes from the Old Testament ((Matt 15:17-19)
 - Illustrations (Mark 9:36, 37)
 - Actions (Matt 21:1-5; Mark 11:15-17)

ISAIAH

Amos the prophet 765 B.C.

Isaiah the prophet 760 B.C.

Hosea the prophet 755 B.C.

Ahaz reigns in Judah 735 B.C.

Israel into captivity in Assyria 722/1 B.C.

Hezekiah reigns in Judah 715 B.C.

Manasseh reigns in

KEY VERSES

7:14

9:6, 7

53:4-7

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 53

KEY CONCEPTS

Salvation

THOUGHTS FOR READING

How big is your God?

Title
Author

Isaiah is the longest of the prophetic books. This causes him to be placed first among the writings of the prophets,

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although many might assume that his position is the result of his great predictions about Christ.

He is identified as Isaiah son of Amoz (1:1). He came from an important family and knew royalty, giving advice on foreign affairs (7:3,4; 8:2 30:1-7; 36:1--38:8, 21f cf. 2 Kings 18:3--20:19). He was even married to a prophetess (8:1), having at least two children: Shearjashub, "a remnant will return", and Mahershalalhashbaz, "hurry spoil, hasten booty." Most of the prophets worked from outside the system. Isaiah worked from within. His standing in life makes many think Isaiah was among the "rich and famous," and that this standing created his calling. Could this be true? In fact, Isaiah knew his place in life. The prophet knew who he was compared to Whom God. Isaiah had a heart for God.

Isaiah 6:5-8

*⁵Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. ⁶Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: ⁷And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. ⁸Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, **Here am I; send me.***

DATE

Isaiah lived most of his life in Judah. Tradition states that Isaiah was a cousin of Uzziah or a nephew of Amaziah. His ministry commences around the time the Northern kingdom is carried into captivity. About 150 years remain before the Southern kingdom follows in these footsteps. The prophets actual period of ministry covers about 40-60 years, ranging from around 740 B.C. to 680 B.C.

Sennacherib's death (Isa. 37:38) occurs about 745 B.C. and 2 chronicles 26:22 hints that Isaiah may have been active in Uzziah's court prior to the king's death. Uzziah's death comes in 740 B.C. and the passage above records the prophet's vision and calling. Isaiah's ministry would extend through the reigns of Jotham (750-731), Ahaz (735-715), and Hezekiah (716-687). It

Tradition is that Manasseh had Isaiah put to death by sawing him in half inside of a hollow log.

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is probable that the prophet was active into the reign of Manasseh (696-642).
Isaiah lived through the reigns of four Assyrian kings as well:

- ' Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727)
- ' Shalmaneser V (727-722)
- ' Sargon II (722-705)
- ' Sennacherib (705-681)

Isaiah was a contemporary with Amos, Hosea and Micah for, at least, part of his ministry. A brief background of the history of this time is as follows:

- ' Tiglath-Pileser had conquered all of northern Syria by 740 B.C.
- ' Assyria (Shalmaneser or his successor Sargon II) moved against Israel and after a three year siege, took the capital of Samaria (722/1) and carried the people into captivity
- ' Assyria expanded unto the northern boundary of Judah.
- ' The city states of Palestine and Syria along with Egypt rebelled against Assyria and were put down in 720 B.C.
- ' Judah (under Hezekiah) joined an uprising along with Egypt, Edom, and Moab against Assyria (713-711)
- ' Sargon (of Assyria) took Ashdod and Gath leaving Judah vulnerable
- ' Sargon died in 705 leading to revolt by many including Judah under Hezekiah along with Babylon (2 kings 20:12-19; Isa. 39:1-4)
- ' Sennacherib (of Assyria) retaliated in 701 defeating Sidon, receiving tribute from Ashdod, Ammon, Moab, and Edom, subjugating Ashkelon and Ekron, and surrounding Hezekiah, forcing him to pay tribute to Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:13-16)

It is against this background that one must read Isaiah as he came attacking social problems that show a break in the covenant relationship with God (1:3-9; 38:6-10). As with all of the prophets, the purpose of Isaiah's message was that the Israelites should place their trust in the covenant God for deliverance. Isaiah's message is full of foretelling since future judgment became the cornerstone of his message, a message of warning to the people. The Northern Kingdom becomes the symbol of this message for the people of Judah.

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FACTS AND FICTION

The great critical debate of the liberal side of religion attacks the authorship and date of Isaiah. These scholars find two or even three authors. This attack is based primarily upon the lack of faith in miracles. In the case of Isaiah, these miracles are the prophecies of the future, particularly the naming of Cyrus as the leader who will send the Jewish remnant home from the Babylonian exile (44:28; 45:1-4). This prophecy comes some 150 years before the event, well before the birth of Cyrus.

Jewish historian Josephus (1st century) asserted that Cyrus was shown Isaiah's prophecy and "an earnest desire and ambition seized upon [Cyrus] to fulfill what

The liberal scholars assume that chapters 40- 66 were written by a Second Isaiah at the end of the exile. This broad generalization is not a necessary conclusion. If one accepts that God is in control and has the power of a true God, there is no reason to discount such prophecies. Earlier in 1 Kings 13, an unnamed man of God names the name of Josiah some 300 years before his birth. The nature of these prophecies is such that those who believe in the true God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have no difficulty accepting these as true – and that Isaiah wrote the entire book bearing his name.

The structure of Isaiah is part of the difficulty the liberal community finds with this book. It resembles the Bible in miniature format. Just as the Bible has 66 books, so Isaiah has 66 chapters. Just as the Bible has an Old Testament of 39 books and a New Testament of 27, Isaiah breaks down into two sections, the first being 39 chapters long and the other being 27 chapters. Where the Old Testament speaks to the foundation of the coming of Christ, Isaiah 1-39 speak's of the need of mankind for salvation. The second part of Isaiah resembles the New Testament in that this section through prophecy reveals God's provision of the offering of Salvation through the Messiah and the Messianic Kingdom. So, the book of Isaiah is about Messiah and foreshadows both His first and second Advents.

Appropriately enough, Isaiah means "salvation"

Isaiah is clearly the most Christological book of the Old Testament. An outline of Isaiah is:

b Prophecies of judgment against

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- b** Judah (1:1-12:6)
- b** Babylon (12:1-14:23)
- b** Assyria (14:24-27)
- b** Philistia (14:28-32)
- b** Moab (15:1-16:14)
- b** Damascus and her ally, Israel (Chp 17)
- b** Ethiopia (Chp 18)
- b** Egypt (Chps 19, 20)
- b** Babylon (21:1-10)
- b** Edom (21:11-12)
- b** Arabia (21:13-17)
- b** Jerusalem (Chp 22)
- b** Tyre (Chp 23)
- b** Prophecies on the Day of the Lord (Chps 24-27)
- b** Prophecies against Israel and Judah (Chps 28-35)
- b** Prophecies against Sennacherib (Chps 36-39)
- b** Prophecies of Delivery and God's Greatness (Chps 40-48)
- b** Prophecies of the Suffering Servant (Chps 49-57)
- b** Prophecies of the Glorious Future (Chps 58-66)

JESUS IN ISAIAH

No single Old Testament book sees Jesus as completely as does Isaiah. Features of the Christ in Isaiah include:

- Messiah's Sovereignty (Chp 6)
- Birth and humility (7:14; 9:6; 11:1)
- Ministry of the Spirit (11:2f)
- Divine Nature of Messiah (7:14; 9:6)
- Messiah Davidic descent (11:1f)
- Messiah as our Substitute Redemption (Chp 53)
- Messiah's ministry as the Servant Savior (Chp 49-57)

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Isaiah’s ministry is one of the most exciting in the Old Testament. Yet, review his call in chapter 6. God told him to go forth and prophesy. At the same time, God told him no one would listen! His ministry would be a failure!

Would you serve God under these conditions?

Isaiah obeyed and through him, God issued many great prophecies. Isaiah not only sees the birth of the Christ (7:14; 9:6), he sees the Cross (Chp 53). He also sees the Second Coming (11:1, 6, 8; 59:20, 21). The great prophet may not have understood all of the ramifications of this message from God, but he was faithful to deliver it to the people.

Isaiah is quoted over 66 times in the New Testament. Many have called his book the fifth

While the outline of this book suggests the enormous amount of prophecies in this book, it is important to remember the initial comments about all prophets. Review the verses from chapter 6 stated at the beginning of this chapter. Isaiah knew he was a sinner and could not stand before God. This is reflected in his reactions to the vision of the Lord on the throne of heaven. Then, God cleansed Isaiah, a picture of the cleansing all of us need in order to relate to God. Thanks to many of the prophecies of Isaiah, we can now understand this cleansing comes through the shed blood of God’s Suffering Servant, Jesus Christ. All of this shows Isaiah’s recognition of the place of sin in people’s lives.

The Suffering Servant is seen in no better detail than in Isaiah 52:13-53:12

	Servant’s Description	Fulfillment
52:13	Raised, lifted up, exalted	God has and will exalt Him fully (Phil 2:9-11)
52:14	Appearance disfigured	Beating at His trial (Matt 26:67)
52:15	Sprinkled many nations	Sprinkling of His blood brings forgiveness (1 Peter 2:9)
53:3	Despised and rejected	Rejected (John 11:47-50)

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53:4-6	Suffered for our sin; stricken by God	Died for our sin according to God's plan (1 Cor 15:3)
53:7	Silent before oppressors	Silent before accusers at His trial (Mark 14:60, 61)
53:8	Killed for the people's sin	Died for our sin (2 Cor 5:14, 15)
53:9	Assigned a grave with the wicked and rich, but did no wrong	Crucified between two robbers, buried in a rich man's tomb (Mark 15:27, 28, 43-46)
53:10	Lord's Will to crush him; he will see his offspring	God prepared Him as our sin offering (Rom 5:9)
53:12	Receives great reward because he poured out his life	Receives great reward because He poured out His life for us (Phil 2:9-11; Heb 1:3, 4)

Isaiah sees sin as the problem of mankind. Isaiah also recognized that sacrifices were of no power against sin.

Isaiah 1:1-16

The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. ²Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. ³The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. ⁴Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

⁵Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. ⁶From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. ⁷Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. ⁸And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. ⁹Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very

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small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.

¹⁰*Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.* ¹¹*To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.* ¹²*When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?* ¹³*Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.* ¹⁴*Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.* ¹⁵*And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.* ¹⁶*Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;*

Here is the message of the prophets and the hope of the future. Isaiah looked forward to a remnant of Israel being faithful and being saved. He also saw the need for the Messiah to come and save mankind through faith.

Isaiah 28:16

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

How do you respond to such a message?

Have you found rest in Christ?

JEREMIAH

Jehoahaz
reigns in Judah
609 B.C.

Jehoiakim
reigns in Judah
609 B.C.

Habakkuk the
prophet 609/6
B.C.

Jeremiah the
prophet 609
B.C.

1st group of
captives to
Babylon 605
B.C.

Daniel to
captivity
605 B.C.

Jehoiachin
reigns in Judah
598 B.C.

Zedekiah
reigns in Judah
597 B.C.

2nd group of

KEY VERSES

1:4-10

7:23, 24

8:11, 12

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 1

Chapter 23

Chapter 31, 32

KEY CONCEPTS

Backsliding

Unfaithfulness

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Are you walking with God?

Or, have you walked away from Him?

<p style="text-align: center;">Title Author</p>

Jeremiah's name means "God establishes" or "throws/lays a foundation." With the assistance of his servant, Baruch, this prophet is the author of the book bearing his name. Indeed, God commanded Jeremiah to write down the words which He had given to the prophet (36:1-3). In fact, King Jehoiakim destroyed Jeremiah's first scroll as it was read to him, but the prophet had Baruch make another copy (36:32). It is likely that chapters 26-52 may be an appendix added to the prophet's original scroll by Baruch after Jeremiah's death.

Jeremiah was the "son of Hilkiah" (1:1). The prophet commenced his ministry at about age twenty in the thirteenth year of Josiah (626 B.C.). He was of a priestly family (1:1) and lived in Anathoth, about three miles from Jerusalem. He may have been well off financially since he bought the estate of his bankrupt kinsman, apparently without any difficulty. After the death of Josiah, Jeremiah suffered great persecution. Under Jehoiakim, Jeremiah was forbidden to enter the Temple precinct.

At this point, the prophet starts to use Baruch as his spokesperson. It appears the prophet dictated the messages Baruch delivered.

<p style="text-align: center;">Jeremiah is known as:</p> <p>▮The weeping prophet (9:1; 13:17)</p> <p>▮The lonely prophet (16:2, the command not to marry)</p> <p>▮The reluctant prophet (1:6)</p>

King Zedekiah allowed the nobles to arrest Jeremiah as a traitor urging the nation to submit to Babylon. At the same time, King Zedekiah was also fearful of Jeremiah because of the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy of the Chaldean invasion (598). As a result, Zedekiah rescued Jeremiah, providing him safety until the fall of Jerusalem.

After the fall of Jerusalem, the Babylonians offered Jeremiah a place of honor since they viewed his efforts as an urging to the Jews to submit to the invaders. The prophet rejected this honor, however, and chose to remain in Palestine. After Gedaliah was murdered, the remnant of Jews carried Jeremiah off to Egypt, against the desires of the prophet. Jeremiah's message to the people continued to be to trust God and to remain in the land. Jeremiah apparently died in Egypt after a few years of living there.

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Accordingly, the dates of Jeremiah's prophecy covered the period from around 627 B.C. to at least 586 B.C., and perhaps to 582 B.C.

God chose Jeremiah to be His prophet for this time. Jeremiah, like Isaiah, recognized his short comings for fulfilling his prophetic office.

**Zephaniah,
Habakkuk,
Daniel, and
Ezekiel all fall**

Jeremiah 1:4-8

Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. 6 Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. 7 But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. 8 Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Northern Kingdom fell to the Assyrians in 722/721 B.C. Josiah brought about the final spiritual revival for Judah when he came to the throne about one hundred years later (622 B.C.). The Assyrian Empire fell to the Babylonians during Josiah's reign. Their capital city, Nineveh, fell in 612 B.C. and The Assyrian army fell in 609 B.C.

The valley of Meggido plays an important role in both past and future history. *Armageddon* in Hebrew means the mountain of Megiddo. The valley or plain is generally believed to be the plain of Esdraelon (Joshua 17:11; 1 Chron 7:29). Here, Solomon walled the city (1 Kings 9:15). It is the valley where Deborah defeats Sisera (Judges 5:19). Ahaziah dies here (2 Kings 9:27) and Josiah is slain here by Pharaoh-neco (2 Kings 23:29,30; 2 Chron 35:22-24). It has been the site of important battles ever since, including one fought by Tuthmosis III in 1468 B.C. and

The Babylonian empire came to prominence under Merodach Baladan, the father of Nabopolassar and grandfather of Nebuchadnezzar. It was Merodach who sent ambassadors to Hezekiah (Isa 39; 2 Kings 20:12-19). In October 626 B.C. Nabopolassar defeated the Assyrians outside of Babylon. Then Nabopolassar expanded his kingdom by joining forces with the Medes. It was this alliance which destroyed Nineveh. Josiah removed Judah from Assyrian control and remained independent until

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609 B.C. when Judah lost the battle with Egypt on the plains of Meggido, at which time Josiah was killed (2 Chron 35:20-24). Egypt and Assyria both disappear as a world power., although Egypt still exercised power over Judah. Necho replaced Josiah's son, Jehoahaz, with another son, Jehoiakim, after Jehoahaz had been king for only three months (2 Kings 23:34-35). The Jewish treasury was plundered and Jehoahaz was carried into captivity in Egypt. In 605 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar defeats the Egyptians at Carchemish. Showing some worldly shrewdness, Jehoiakim moves his loyalty to the Babylonians (2 Kings 24:1). Nebuchadnezzar returns to Babylon due to the death of his father, Nabopolassar. He takes hostages with him, including Daniel (Dan 1:1-6).

In 598 Jerusalem is attacked by Babylonia leading to Jehoiakim's death. The city surrenders under the hand of his successor Jehoiachin (597). Jehoiachin is replaced as king after only three months of reign. He and 10,000 other leaders are deported. Jerusalem is looted and Zedekiah becomes the vassal king (cf. 2 Kings 24:12-16). Zedekiah forms a coalition with Egypt to revolt against Babylon. This leads to the final destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 586 B.C.

**Jeremiah fits
within the
scope of 1**
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Evil-Merodach (Ewal Marduk) restored Jehoiachin on the 27th day of the 12th month of the 37th year of the captivity (506 B.C.; 2 Kings 25:27), but he did not allow the Jewish king to return home.

PURPOSES

Jeremiah's mission was clearing to warn Judah of impending judgment. As with almost all of the prophets, this message was in the form of a call to repentance and obedience of God's Word. Further, the message was designed to provide a historical record of Jerusalem's defeat and the fall of Judah into captivity. This defeat is clearly tied to the disobedience of God's Word. At the same time, Jeremiah's message contains the seed of promise of restoration. Indeed, the final portion of the expansion of the Abrahamic covenant is found within the pages of Jeremiah's prophecies.

**The Septuagint
version of Jeremiah is
about 25% shorter
than the Masoretic
Text. The reasons for
this are unclear,
although it is possible
a different version of
Jeremiah was**

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Jeremiah 31:31-34

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

The “new” of the New Covenant:

- _Written on the human heart, not on stone tablets**
- _Fulfills the ideal of the Abrahamic covenant by creating a new relationship between God and His people**
- _The barriers between all people are finally destroyed**
- _The new covenant is one based solely on the forgiveness of sin.**

Jeremiah was a man of prayer (11:18-12:6; 15:10-21; 17:12-18; 18:18-23; 20:7-18). He saw sin for what it was (17:-9) and his message was one of the need for repentance (chps 3, 4). The great prophet found God in the small things of life. For example, it is from Jeremiah we get the picture of God as the potter (chps 18, 19). Jeremiah found religion to be a personal experience. Religion was not set in the trappings of rituals, but in the personal relationship one has with God (3:16; 7:9-15; 20:7-18). This message is contrary to the apparent teachings of the Mosaic rituals and Temple worship which seem to stress the corporate nature of the Jewish religion.

A simple outline of the book is:

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- b** Jeremiah's Call - Chp 1
- b** Messages before the fall of Judah - Chps 2-38
- b** The fall of Judah - Chp 39
- b** Messages to the Jewish Remnant - Chps 40-44
- b** Prophecies against the Gentile Nations - Chps 45-50
- b** Looking back on the fall of Judah - Chp 51

JESUS IN JEREMIAH

Jesus is pictured in many portions of this great book. He is:

- The fountain of living water (2:13)
- The balm of Gilead (8:22)
- The Good Shepherd (23:4)
- The Righteous Branch (23:5)
- The Lord our Righteousness (23:6)
- The one who brings the New Covenant (31:31-34)

Jeremiah has one other prophecy of extreme importance to the Messiah. In 22:28-30, the prophet curses Jehoiachin (also known in Scripture as Jeconiah and Coniah). The curse is that no physical descendent of Jehoiachin will succeed to the throne.

Matthew' genealogy (1:1-17) traces Christ through Solomon and Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) to His legal, but not physical father, Joseph. This establishes the legal rights to the throne without violating the curse.

Luke's genealogy (3:23-38) traces Christ through David's

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One of the great prophecies of Jeremiah relative to the history of the Jewish nation is found in Jeremiah 25:9-13 where the prophet looks to the end of the Babylonian captivity by predicting its length of 70 years. It is apparently this prophecy which Daniel is reading in Daniel 9:2 when he determines the end of the captivity is near and presents his great prayer to God. The prayer is followed by Daniel's great prophecy of time, the "seventy weeks" of Jewish history (9:224-27). We will look at the meaning of this prophecy when we consider Daniel.

Are you clay?

Have you allowed God to shape you as He wants?

One Old Testament method of finding God, which apparently develops into a ritual in the New Testament among the Pharisees, is the issue of fasting. People fasted to seek God's favor (2 Sam 12:21); to mourn the dead (1 Sam 31:130, to commemorate a tragic time (Zech 7:5). The people fasted individually (1 Kings 21:27) and in groups (John 3:5). The New Testament church seems to practice fasting (Acts 13:3), perhaps in response to the words of Christ (Matt 6:16-18). Consider the words of Isaiah on this topic: *Isaiah 58:1-7*

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. ²Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God. ³Wherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and thou seest not? *wherefore* have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. ⁴Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as *ye do this day*, to make your voice to be heard on high. ⁵Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? *is it* to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him?* wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD? ⁶*Is* not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? ⁷*Is it* not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

As Christians should we fast today?

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SOCIAL ISSUES TODAY

All of the prophets spoke against the social issues of their day. While the terms may have changed, the social ills remain the same. Men turn from God toward their own lusts – power, sex, alcohol and drugs, murder, stealing, lying. Consider the following and reflect on how much things remain the same. “*There is no new thing under the sun*” (Ecc 1:9).

- *Affair* – fornication, adultery, illicit sex
- *Alternate lifestyle* – homosexuality

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- *Abortion* – killing of unborn babies
- *Becoming a man or becoming a woman* – giving up one's virginity
- *Sexually active* – promiscuous, sexually immoral
- *Pro-choice* – in favor of killing unborn babies
- *Adult entertainment and videos* – pornography, girlie magazines, strip joints
- *New Age Philosophy* – Eastern religions recycled and mixed with modern philosophy
- *Intolerant* – not agreeing with a non-biblical view of God or morals
- *Old Fashioned* – sticking to the principles of the Bible, especially on morals
- *Prude* – sexually inactive and sticking to God's morals

Would the message of the prophets be any different today?

LAMENTATIONS

KEY VERSES

2:5, 6
3:21-24

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 3

KEY CONCEPTS

“A River of Tears”
Mourning

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Does God cry over your actions?

Lament. 2:5-6

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The Lord was as an enemy: he hath swallowed up Israel, he hath swallowed up all her palaces: he hath destroyed his strong holds, and hath increased in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation. ⁶And he hath violently taken away his tabernacle, as if it were of a garden: he hath destroyed his places of the assembly: the LORD hath caused the solemn feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and hath despised in the indignation of his anger the king and the priest.

Title

The meaning of the Hebrew title to this book is a word meaning "How," "Alas," or "Oh." This term is the first word in the Hebrew text for n 1:1, 2:1 and 4:1. The Hebrew term was commonly used for funeral dirges in the Old Testament (2 Sam 1:19; Isa 42:12). The Greek title bears a meaning of "lament." The Latin Vulgate originally transliterated this term for the same title, then expanded it into on meaning "The Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet." Obviously, the English title is a shortened version of the Latin.

Lamentations seems to be a postscript for Jeremiah's book. Authorship is given to the prophet by tradition. It is an emotional expression of grief over the fall of Jerusalem (587/586 B.C.). This would probably relate to Jeremiah 39:1-18, 2 Kings 24 and 25 and 2 Chronicles 36. The grief is not only over the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, but also sorrow comes because of the cause of the fall. This, of course, is the on-going sin of Judah in following her own ways and disobeying

"Lamentation" means a dirge. The book is five funeral dirges over the fate of

Jeremiah looks toward the fall of Judah. Lamentations

God. The book also provides a ray of hope for the survivors of Jerusalem. As Paul writes on the purpose of Scripture (3 Tim 3:16, 17), Lamentations offers reproof and instruction to Israel. God has chastised the nation for its sins. The correct response to such chastisement is to repent and turn back to God.

While Deuteronomy is not completely the beginning of the history of Israel, it is the final instructions to the nation before it enters the promised land. Likewise, Jeremiah is not the end of Old Testament history for the nation, but the events following the during and following the exile do not approach the glory of the nation at any time prior to the exile. So, in this sense, the two books represent the beginning and end of the earthly glory of Israel. As such, parallels between the two books are worth noting.

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LAMENTATIONS	DEUTERONOMY
<p>Lament. 1:3 Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits.</p>	<p>Deut. 28:65 And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:</p>
<p>Lament. 1:5 Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper; for the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions: her children are gone into captivity before the enemy.</p>	<p>Deut. 28:44 He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.</p> <p>Deut. 28:32 Thy sons and thy daughters <i>shall be</i> given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail <i>with longing</i> for them all the day long: and <i>there shall be</i> no might in thine hand.</p>

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<p>Lament. 1:6 And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed: her princes are become like harts <i>that</i> find no pasture, and they are gone without strength before the pursuer.</p>	<p>Deut. 28:25 The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.</p>
<p>Lament. 1:18 The LORD is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow: my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.</p>	<p>Deut. 28:41 Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them; for they shall go into captivity.</p>
<p>Lament. 2:15 All that pass by clap <i>their</i> hands at thee; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, <i>saying</i>, <i>Is</i> this the city that <i>men</i> call The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?</p>	<p>Deut. 28:37 And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee.</p>

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<p>Lament. 2:20 Behold, O LORD, and consider to whom thou hast done this. Shall the women eat their fruit, <i>and</i> children of a span long? shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?</p>	<p>Deut. 28:53 And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:</p>
<p>Lament. 2:21 The young and the old lie on the ground in the streets: my virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword; thou hast slain <i>them</i> in the day of thine anger; thou hast killed, <i>and</i> not pitied.</p>	<p>Deut. 28:50 A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:</p>
<p>Lament. 4:10 The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.</p>	<p>Deut. 28:56 The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter,</p>

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<p>Lament. 5:2 Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens.</p> <p>Lament. 5:11 They ravished the women in Zion, <i>and</i> the maids in the cities of Judah.</p>	<p>Deut. 28:30 Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof.</p>
<p>Lament. 5:5 Our necks <i>are</i> under persecution: we labour, <i>and</i> have no rest.</p>	<p>Deut. 28:65 And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind:</p>
<p>Lament. 5:10 Our skin was black like an oven because of the terrible famine.</p>	<p>Deut. 28:24 The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.</p>

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Lament. 5:12 Princes are hanged up by their hand: the faces of elders were not honoured.	Deut. 28:50 A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:
Lament. 5:18 Because of the mountain of Zion, which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it.	Deut. 28:26 And thy carcase shall be meat unto all fowls of the air, and unto the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray <i>them</i> away.

A simple outline of the book is:

- b** The Destruction of Jerusalem - Chp 1
- b** God's Anger at His People - Chp 2
- b** Jeremiah's Distraught - Chp 3
- b** Jerusalem's People Defeated - Chp 4
- b** A Prayer for Restoration - Chp 5

JESUS IN LAMENTATIONS

Jesus is found in two forms in this book. First, He is the Man of Sorrow who has faced the grief of affliction and scorn by His enemies (1:12; 3:19). Secondly, just as Jeremiah weeps over Jerusalem, so too, Christ weeps over the City (Matt 23:37, 38).

In the midst of the grief and anger, Jeremiah sees hope and promise, just as Christ does.

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A Form of Poetry

Chapters 1, 2, 4, & 5 each have 22 verses – one for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. In fact, each line of chapters 1, 2, & 4 start with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet – in order (a, b, c, ...). This is called an “acrostic pattern.”

Chapter 3 has 66 verses, running the alphabet in triplets in the Hebrew. The first three verses start with the Hebrew “a,” the next three with the Hebrew “b,” and so on.

Lament. 3:22-24

²²*It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*

²³*They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.* ²⁴*The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.*

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Is the Lord your portion?
Do you place all of your hope in Him?

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EZEKIEL

Jeremiah the prophet 609 B.C.

1st group of captives to Babylon 605 B.C.

Daniel to captivity 605 B.C.

Jehoiachin reigns in Judah 598 B.C.

Zedekiah reigns in Judah 597 B.C.

2nd group of captives to Babylon 597 B.C.

Final captivity 587/6 B.C.

Daniel & Ezekiel act as prophets 586

KEY VERSES

36:24-30

36:33-35

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapters 36-39

KEY CONCEPTS

Restoration

Glory

Revelation

They “shall know I am the Lord”

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Do you know the Lord?

Why does God look toward the re-institution of sacrifices?

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Title

The book is named after its principal character and author, Ezekiel. The prophet's name means "God strengthens." The Greek title merely transliterates the Hebrew.

The prophet's ministry occurs during the exile (593 - 562 B.C.). Ezekiel, himself, dates almost all of his messages based upon the exile of King Jehoiachin, which commenced in 597 B.C. Thirteen of the messages are dated precisely to the day, month and year of the King's exile.

Interestingly enough, although the dates are tied to Jehoiachin's exile, Ezekiel never mentions the release of the king in 560 B.C.

Ezekiel came from a line of priests. Under the law, priests began their duties at the age of 30. The reference in 1:1 to the 30th year, most likely means Ezekiel's age at

Ezekiel was part of the second exile to Babylon (597 B.C.). His ministry commenced about five years later (Ezek 1:2; 8:1). Ezekiel's messages were about the impending doom of Jerusalem, a strange message to people already in exile. But, there was a continual note of exhortation and hope which looked forward to the conclusion of the exile and the release of the captives to return home.

The prophet's visions arranged by date are:

Vision	Reference	Date
Chariot Vision	1:1-3	June 593 B.C.
Call to be a Watchman	3:16	June 593 B.C.
Temple Vision	8:1	August/Sept 592 B.C.
Discourse with Elders	20:1	August 591 B.C.
Second Siege of Jerusalem	24:1	January 588 B.C.
Judgment on Egypt	29:1	January 587 B.C.
Judgment of Tyre	26:1	March/April 587/6 B.C.
Judgment on Egypt	30:20	April 587 B.C.
Judgment on Egypt	31:1	June 587 B.C.
Lament over Egypt	32:17	April 586
Fall of Jerusalem	33:21	Dec/Jan 586/5 B.C.

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Lament over Pharaoh	32:1	March 585
New Temple Vision	40:1	April 573
Judgment on Egypt	29:17	April 571 B.C.

As can be seen from the above chart, the prophet's visions are not recorded entirely chronologically. The listing of the visions also provides a general outline of the book, although there is more to the book than this:

- b** Ezekiel's Call - Chps 1-3
- b** Prophecies against Jerusalem - Chps 4-7
- b** Reasons for Jerusalem's Judgment - Chps 8-11
- b** Symbols and Messages of Judgment - Chps 12-24
- b** Judgment on Judah's Enemies - Chp 25-32
- b** Restoration of Israel - Chps 33-39
- b** Israel in the Kingdom Age, the Temple - Chps 40-48

PURPOSES

Think back on our trip through Jewish history. No sooner has God led the people out of Egypt than they turn from Him to make a golden calf. "Ten times" the people murmur against God in their wilderness travels. They enter the promised land and fail to obey the command to drive out the pagan inhabitants. The period of the Judges witnesses the repeat of the salvation - sin - servitude - supplication - salvation cycle time and again. Saul loses his kingship because he will not obey God. The northern tribes revolt and establish a "fake" method of worship. They are carried into captivity. The prophets come and preach a message of repentance. Judah does not listen, and some are carried into captivity, like Daniel, King Jehoiachin, and Ezekiel. Jeremiah preaches to a nation about to be destroyed. Ezekiel preaches to those carried into captivity.

No one listens!

False prophets and idolatry carry the day. Judah, it thinks, is the nation of God and God would not allow these things to happen.

**Daniel was God's
spokesman in the
courts of the kings
of Babylon.**

Ezekiel was God's

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Ezekiel's messages are a final warning to the nation. God's sovereignty is emphasized through the words of judgment and restoration. The visions stress the responsibility of the individuals making up the nation. It is not the "nation" which is at fault, but the individual people of the nation. As the people travel, so travels the nation.

Ezekiel's task is to act as the "watchman" of the nation. His task is to warn the people. He is not responsible for their decision, but he is responsible in God's eyes to deliver the message of imminent judgment.

Ezekiel 3:19, 21

Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.

Ezekiel uses much symbolic action to convey his message. These include:

- b** Being unable to speak - 3:26-27; 24:27
- b** Sign of the brick - 4:1-3
- b** Lying on his side in public for 430 days - 4:4-8
- b** Shaving his hair - 5:1-17
- b** Removal of household goods - 12:1-17
- b** No mourning at the death of his wife - 24:15-27

Ezekiel's messages were both dramatic and dynamic. And, still, the people failed to listen.

JESUS IN EZEKIEL

The prophets of this general period all see Jesus as the branch or twig. Ezekiel's vision sees the tender sprig planted on a high, lofty mountain (17:23, 24). This may be compared to the Branch of Isaiah 11:1, Jeremiah 23:5 and 33:15, and Zechariah 3:8 and 6:12. Ezekiel also see Jesus as the King Who owns the right to

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govern (21:26, 27) and as the Good Shepherd (34:11-31), a familiar picture of Jesus.

This is against the background of the glory of God departing from the Temple (Chp 11). The fate of the Temple and Jerusalem were sealed. What a terrible moment and vision this must have been for the prophet. The cloud which led the Israelites through the Exodus and which filled the Temple at Solomon's dedication, now departs the Jewish nation.

At the same time, the end of the book foresees the wonderful restoration of the nation. The Millennial Temple is described in chapters 40-42, the reign of Christ and the return of God's glory is seen in chapter 43, and this entire section speaks of the memorial sacrifices to be offered during the millennium.

While chapter 34 looks toward the True Shepherd, Christ, the Shepherd needs a flock. In chapter 37, the prophet sees the restoration of the two divided kingdoms into a unified nation restored to their own land. This is the well-known vision of the valley of dry bones which come alive. This picture is the symbol of national restoration. The prophet again uses a picture symbol, two sticks which are tied together to become one (37:22).

While Christ offered the final, single sacrifice, the nation of Israel will offer sacrifices during the millennium.

In the midst of the prophecies of judgment against the nations is one of the two great pictures in Scripture of the fall of Satan. Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Isaiah 14:12-17 both speak of the reason for Satan's fall, his

Are you like Satan? Does your pride get in the way too often?

DANIEL

Jeremiah the prophet 609 B.C.

1st group of captives to Babylon 605 B.C.

Daniel to captivity 605 B.C.

2nd group of captives to Babylon 597 B.C.

Final captivity 587/6 B.C.

Daniel & Ezekiel act as prophets 586 B.C..

Cyrus reigns in Persia 559 B.C.

Cyrus conquers Babylon 539 B.C.

KEY VERSES

2:20-22

2:44

7:14

9:24-27

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 9

KEY CONCEPTS

King, Kingdom

THOUGHTS FOR READING

How does the captivity influence Daniel?

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Daniel 2:44

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Title

The English title follows that of the Greek, naming the book after its principle character, Daniel. The Hebrew title is a word meaning “God is my Judge,” which is the meaning of the prophet’s name.

As we move into Daniel, we move into the great prophecy of time. Daniel’s prophecies of history are really a telescopic view of the history of the Jewish nation. With the captivity, the Jews truly came under the power of the Gentile nations. Even though the nation would be returned to the promised land, they would come home as a servant kingdom to a variety of kings. Except for very quick moments in time, the Jews would not rule their homeland until the establishment of the new state of Israel following the end of World War II.

Scripture views this entire era from Babylon to the Second Coming of Christ as the “times of the Gentiles.”

Luke 21:24

*And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until **the times of the Gentiles** be fulfilled.*

This is the “age” in which we live. When the **times of the Gentiles** is fulfilled, the church will be raptured to heaven and the Tribulation, also foreseen by Daniel, will begin. The Tribulation ends with the Second Coming of Jesus. This is the end of the **times of the Gentiles**. The Jewish nation will truly be restored to its home land, fulfilling the Abrahamic covenant.

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Daniel was one of those carried into Babylon with the first group of captives in 605/4 B.C. (1:4). He becomes a key figure in the foreign kingly courts, being the true, great wise man of the land. His visions see the future of the controlling powers, both in terms of current events as well as eschatological events. God uses the prophet to interpret dreams. His story includes several of the children's Bible stories learned when one is young.

“Eschatology” comes from a Greek word meaning “end” or “last.” Thus, eschatological events are events of the

Daniel's prophecies almost all are received in the form of visions. The word appears 32 times in this book.

Modern critical studies want to date Daniel's writing to the time of the Maccabees. By placing such a late date on the writing, many of the events would be history, thus, avoiding the details of supernatural prophecy. This type of attack is not really, modern, having been first suggested by an anti-Christian, Porphyry around A.D. 250. The existence of Daniel as a real person is testified to by Jesus when He identifies Daniel as the prophet who spoke of the *"abomination of desolation"* (9:27; 11:31; 12:11) in the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24:15-16; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20). This, and the use of Persian and

Aramaic loan words which Daniel would have learned during his many days in the king's court, make the arguments of the liberal scholars very unlikely.

PURPOSE

Daniel was written as a book of exhortation looking forward to the future restoration of the nation. The book sees God's chastisement on the nation in the form of new Gentile conquerors, the **times of the Gentiles**. This chastisement is of the same form seen and predicted in Joshua and Judges. The Hebrews failed to cleanse the Holy Land and God used the foreign invaders as His chastisement rod. What Daniel sees is an extended version of this type of chastisement. But, the prophet sees the end as well. God is faithful to keep His promises. God will restore the nation and honor the Abrahamic covenant. Indeed, as we saw in our study on Jeremiah, Daniel's visions are based on part of the prophet's faith in the writings of Jeremiah.

Daniel is the Old Testament Apocalypse, comparable to the New Testament

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As a result, Daniel's lessons are designed to instruct, admonish and lead the Jewish nation during this particular crisis of faith. It is a challenge to those separated from the roots to be true to God, just as He is true to the nation.

JESUS IN DANIEL

Christ is portrayed in several ways in Daniel's prophecies. Jesus is the stone which will crush the kingdoms of the world (2:34, 35). He is the Son of man (7:13) and the Ancient of Days (7:22). The angel of chapter 10 is most likely a Christophany, an appearance of the Angel of the Lord, the pre-incarnate Christ (compare Rev 1:12-26 with Daniel 10:5-9). But, perhaps, most importantly, Daniel sees the crucifixion. The Messiah will be "cut off," a clear reference to the Cross (9:25, 26).

Jesus Himself uses Daniel's descriptions. We have seen above the reference to Daniel's prophecy as to the actions of the anti-Christ. Jesus applies another of Daniel's visions to Himself as a description of His Ascension.

Daniel 7:13-14

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. [14] And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

A simple outline of Daniel is that chapters 1-6 are history and chapters 7-12 are the prophecy. This pattern is not entirely true, but it gives the general sense of the book. To understand Daniel, one must have some knowledge of the New Testament book of Revelation. To understand Revelation, one must have knowledge of Daniel. The two go hand-in-hand. When God tells Daniel to seal up the prophecies (12:8, 9), God, then, tells John to reveal in Revelation (5:1-5).

The themes of Daniel are the themes of the New Testament. These include:

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- b** The coming of the anti-Christ, the man of sin
- b** The Great Tribulation
- b** The Second Coming of Christ
- b** The resurrections and the judgments

THE PROPHECIES

Although we said that the first six chapters of Daniel are history, this is true only in a relative sense. The interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is essentially the same vision Daniel has in Chapter 7. About sixty years separate the two chapters. Notice that most, but not all, of the visions are interpreted to some extent. All of the other prophecies are built around or upon these two visions.

A better outline of the book is:

- b** Personal History of Daniel - Chp 1
- b** Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image - Chp 2
- b** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the fiery furnace - Chp 3
- b** Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the great tree - Chp 4
- b** Belshazzar's feast with handwriting on the wall - Chp 5
- b** Daniel in the Lion's Den - Chp 6
- b** Daniel's vision of the four beasts - Chp 7
- b** The vision of the ram, the goat, and the small horn - Chp 8
- b** The vision of the seventy weeks- Chp 9
- b** The historical panorama of Israel - Chp 10-12

Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego are Babylonian names. One way a ruler exercised his authority was to change a person's name. Remember how God changes Abram's name to Abraham and Jacob to Israel? Foreign kings did the same

In looking at these prophecies, keep in mind Daniel's comments to the Babylonian king before the prophet provides the interpretation of the king's dream.

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Daniel 2:20-22

Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: [21] And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: [22] He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Image	Fulfillment	Daniel's vision
2:31-34	World Powers	7:1-27
Head of Gold (2:38)	Babylon	Lion (7:4)
Breasts & Arms of silver (2:32, 39)	Medo-Persia	Bear (7:5)

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Belly & Thighs of Brass (2:39)	Greece	Leopard (7:6)
Legs & feet of Iron (2:40)	Rome	Diverse Beast (7:7, 19)
10 Toes of Iron and clay (2:41, 42)	Old Roman Empire	10 Horns (7:7, 20)
	Anti-Christ	Little Horn (7:8, 21)
The Stone (2:34, 35, 45)	Christ	Ancient of Days (7:22)
The Mountain (2:35)	Millennial Kingdom	Everlasting Kingdom (7:27)

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The visions of chapter 8 are an expansion of the details about the second and third kingdoms, the Bear and the Leopard, Medo-Persia and Greece. Chapter 11 is best read with a good study Bible in hand. Most of the history of the nation during the Old Testament **times of the Gentiles** found Israel bouncing back and forth between Egypt and Syria, the remnants of the Grecian empire. Ptolemy and his heirs ruled Egypt. Seleucus and his heirs ruled Syria. The two would fight over the years, one than the other, controlling the Holy Lands. Chapter 11 is a vision of these two families as they affect Israel.

Useless fact:

Cleopatra was a Ptolemy, but she is not mentioned in the Bible.

During the period of 170-160 B.C., the Syrians, the form of Antiochus Epiphanes, rule the promised land. When the Egyptians reject Epiphanes on his march to Egypt, he returns home through Jerusalem in a fowl mood. His desecration of the Temple and destruction of the city becomes the picture of the Anti-Christ. His pagan idol and sacrificing of pigs in the Temple becomes the initial “Abomination of Desolations” (9:26).

The prophecy of chapter 9 is the other great prophecy of this book. It is the true time table for the **times of the Gentiles**.

Daniel 9:22-27

And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. [23] At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. [24] Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. [25] Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. [26] And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. [27] And he shall

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confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

The background of this prophecy sets the perspective. It is 538 BC, 67 years into Daniel's captivity. Chronologically this chapter follows chapter 5. There has been a change in government, the Medo-Persian empire has conquered Babylon. Daniel is reflecting upon the Scriptures of his God. He is reading the words of Jeremiah the prophet (9:2). It appears he is most likely reading the following two passages:

Jer 25:11

And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

Jer 29:10

For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. 11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. 12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. 13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. 14 And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

For about the first twenty years of Daniel's exile, his and Jeremiah's ministries overlap each other. Here, some 40 years later Daniel reflects upon the writings of his contemporary prophet. The force of the writings leads Daniel to one of the great prayers recorded in Scripture. God answers Daniel's prayer by sending an angel with a new message to Daniel. God wants us all to have an accurate perspective of His plan, so that His truth can set us free. While we are not to

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become obsessed with revelation and forget about our Father's business, He desires that we understand His plans.

Here, Daniel receives two understandings. The first is that his reading of Jeremiah is correct. The second is a new revelation concerning the **times of the Gentiles**.

The reason behind seventy years of captivity prophesied by Jeremiah is found in the history books.

2 Chron 36:20-21

20 And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: 21 To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

The nation ignored God's law and so God sent them into captivity one year for every Sabbath year they did not observe. God then explains to Daniel how the captivity fits into the "times of the Gentiles."

The 70 years of captivity did not end, in God's eyes, the needed chastisement of the nation. We have seen from the events of history, that the Jewish nation remained under the thumbs of Gentile rulers from the captivity onward. There are to be seventy more "weeks" of Gentile rule -- that is, there are to be 70x7

The Hebrew word translated as "seventy weeks" in 9:24 means a collection of "seven" things. It is used of days, weeks, or years. The context dictates how the collection should be

You need to exercise a mild degree of caution with the dates of all of this. In Scripture lunar years of 360 days are used. A variety of scholars have translated all of this into our solar dates to arrive at the date of the crucifixion. There is, however, some degree of guess work. God did not provide enough milestones to truly calculate the date. For example, one scholar calculates the date to April 6, A.D. 32, "Palm Sunday" (Luke 19:28-44 and Matt 21:1-10). Others have concluded that the crucifixion has to be in either A.D. 30 or 33. And there is about a 40 years gap between the Cross and the initial destruction of the Temple. This shows the dilemma of using any set of real dates. The point is that God's prophecy fits the real events as we

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decreed years remaining, or 490 years.

The prophecy is to the Jews, as noted by the description of “*thy people, thy holy city, the sanctuary*” (9:24). J. Vernon McGee writes:

The Seventy Weeks, or the seventy sevens, answer two questions. Israel's kingdom will not come immediately. The seventy sevens must run their course. These seventy sevens fit into the Times of the Gentiles and run concurrently with them. They are broken up to fit into gentile times. The word for determined literally means "cutting off." These seventy sevens are to be cut off, as the following verses will indicate. The seventy sevens for Israel and the Times of the Gentiles will both come to an end at the same time, that is, at the second coming of Christ. This is important to know for the correct understanding of the prophecy.⁸

The first seven weeks of forty-nine years bring us to 397 B.C. and to Malachi and the end of the Old Testament. These were "troublous times," as witnessed by both Nehemiah and Malachi.

"The prince" is a Gentile; he is the "little horn" of Daniel 7, "the beast" of Revelation 13. After the church is removed from the earth (the Rapture), he will make a covenant with Israel. Israel will accept him as her Messiah, but in the midst of the "week" he will break his covenant by placing an image in the temple (Rev. 13). This is the “*abomination of desolation*” (Matt 24:15). What Israel thought to be the Millennium will turn out to be the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:15-26). Only the coming of Christ can end this frightful period (Matt. 24:27-31).

The purpose of this period is to “*to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins*” (9:24), that is, to refine the Jewish nation and bring in everlasting righteousness. This includes putting an end to seal up vision and prophecy until the most holy [one] is anointed. In other words, the purpose of all of this is to chastise Israel and cleanse the peoples with the anointing of Messiah.

Gee, *Thru The Bible*, Volume III, Proverbs through Malachi, Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982, 587.

⁸Paul N. Benware, *Survey of the Old Testament*, Everyman's Bible Commentary, Chicago: Moody Press, 1988, 221.

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The prophecy runs from the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (9:25). There are three decrees recorded in Scripture:

- b** Cyrus (538 BC - Ezra 1:1-4; 5:13-17), to restore Temple
- b** Darius (517 BC - Ezra 6:1-12), reaffirming Cyrus'
- b** Artaxerxes (March 14, 445 BC - Neh 2:5-8), to restore the City

This last decree in 445 B.C. is the only one related to the rebuilding of Jerusalem and is the decree from which all else is measure. From this date, the prophecy tells us there will be "69 weeks" until Messiah is cut off (9:26). Notice that 9:25 & 26 divide this time into two periods:

- b** Seven "weeks" (sevens) to complete the city (79 years)
- b** plus sixty-two "weeks" (sevens) to the cutting off of the anointed one (434 years)
- b** Notice the cutting off is "after" the 69th not during the 70th week.
- b** The total then is 49+434= 483 years.
- b** Then comes the gap of the present church age

Eph 3:4-6

Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

1 Pet 1:10-12

10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

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The thing to note is that God did not reveal to Daniel the existence of the gap between the 69th and 70th weeks. This is the period from Pentecost (Acts 2) to the Rapture (1 Thess 4:13-18). Yet, it is seen in Scripture. At the Jerusalem council, James, the brother of the Lord, the head of the church at Jerusalem, cites Amos 9:11 in talking about the setting aside of the Jewish nation for the **times of the Gentiles**.

Acts 15:14-16

14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

Daniel's prophecy continues after the "cutting off" of Messiah to talk of the "*prince that shall come*." This is a picture of both "near" and "far" events. The "prince that shall come" is the anti-Christ (Rev 13:1), but he is also all of the agents of God who have served the Will of God to do His chastising. For example, the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem in 70 AD by Titus fulfills part of this verse wherein he *shall destroy the city and the sanctuary*" (9:26). In the end, it will be the anti-Christ who attempts to destroy the city and the sanctuary. These are the reflections of Daniel 9:27 and the book of Revelation. Daniel 9:27 sets forth the time table for the Revelation.

Many view the war found in Ezek 38, 39 as the event which breaks the peace at the mid-point

Revelation is about "*the covenant with many for one week*." This is the tribulation, the seventieth seven (Matt 24:21,29 Rev 7:14), the Time of Jacobs Trouble (Jer 30:7; Dan 7:25, Rev 11:2, 12:6,14, 13:5), the Covenant with death and hades (Isa 28:18). This covenant of peace with the anti-Christ is made at the beginning of the seventieth week. In the middle of the week, the covenant is broken with the cessation of sacrifices. The anti-Christ deifies himself, corrupts the sanctuary, and completes the desolation. This is the "*abomination of desolation*" spoken of by Jesus. This entire verse (9:27) sets the timing of Revelation 6-20.

Then comes the anointing of the most holy one, the millennial reign of Christ (9:24).

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Daniel was told to seal up his prophecies. This should be viewed as a statement that the fuller knowledge of the prophecies were not to be revealed to the people of his time. Between the events of history and the Revelation of Jesus Christ as given to John the Apostle, we have before us the events of the history of the **times of the Gentiles**. We may not know when the tribulation is coming, but we can rest assured it is coming. For this reason, the words of Daniel are as applicable to us today as they were to the Jews of Daniel's day.

Daniel 12:3

And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Are you in captivity?

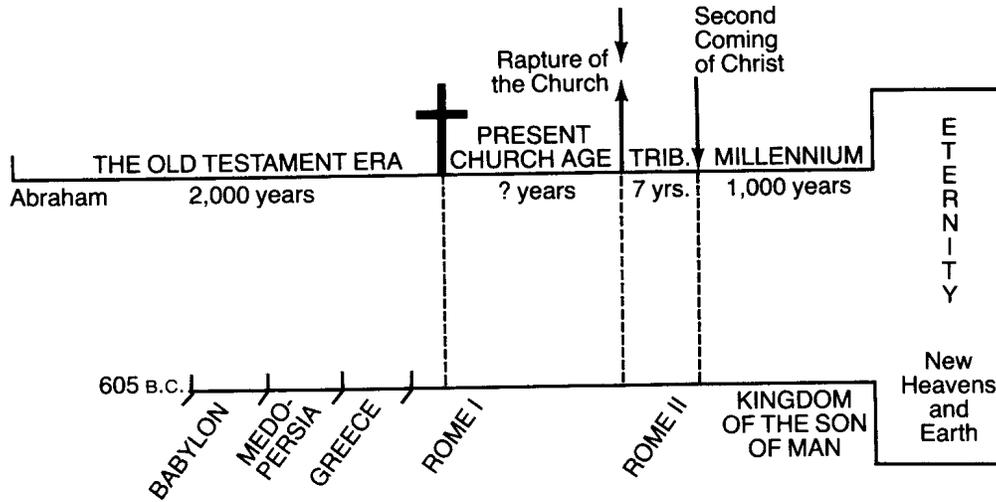
To sin, your lusts, or your circumstances?

How do you get released from this captivity?

Could God change your name?

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THE PROPHETIC CALENDAR AND DANIEL'S "TIMES OF THE GENTILES"



Daniel's Visions and the Time of the Gentiles⁹

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THE MINOR PROPHETS

The last twelve books of the Old Testament are referred to as the Minor Prophets. This caption apparently arose in the late fourth century A.D., during the time of Augustine, although there is no indication that he coined this title.

The Minor Prophets are minor only in the sense that their writings are shorter than the major prophets of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. As with all of the prophets of God, the common themes of the minor prophets are judgment and restoration. Some hit one theme more than another. While these writings vary a great deal in size, they follow a general pattern:

- ' Warning of judgment due to sin
- ' A description of the sin
- ' The coming judgment
- ' A call for repentance
- ' The promise of future restoration

The minor prophets may be classified two different ways. One is by time period based upon the exile. The other is by their audience. This latter category actual has three groups – the Northern Kingdom, the Southern Kingdom, and those who return to Israel after the exile.

Although we have looked at the list before, here are the minor prophets:

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Group	Book	Date	Message
Pre-exilic to Israel	Jonah	780-750	Judgment on Nineveh
	Amos	765-750	Social Righteousness, Abused Privilege
	Hosea	755-715	God's love
Pre-Exilic to Judah	Obadiah	840	Judgment on Edom
	Joel	835-796	Judgment & salvation, Day of the Lord
	Micah	740-690	Justice, mercy, & love
	Nahum	630-612	Fall of Nineveh
	Zephaniah	625	The Day of the Lord & Blessings
	Habakkuk	606-604	God's slackness in judgment
Post-Exilic	Haggai	520	Exhortation to rebuild the Temple
	Zechariah	515	Exhortation to rebuild the Temple
	Malachi	430	True worship & sanctity of marriage

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HOSEA

Azariah
(Uzziah)
reigns in
Judah 790
B.C.

Jonah the
prophet 780
B.C.

Amos the
prophet 765
B.C.

Isaiah the
prophet
760 B.C.

Hosea the
prophet 755
B.C.

Zechariah
reigns in
Israel 753
B.C.

KEY VERSES

3:1

4:1

4:6

11:7-9

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 4

KEY CONCEPTS

Harlot, Harlotry

Love, loyal love

THOUGHTS FOR READING

God compares our relationship with Him to an adulterous affair.

Is this accurate?

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Hosea 3:1

Then said the Lord unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine.

<p>Title Author</p>

Hosea, whose name means “salvation,” is described as being the son of Beeri (1:1). He preached to his own people in Israel, the Northern kingdom. His name should actually be spelled “Hoshea” based upon its meaning. This change in spelling does help us to distinguish the prophet from Hoshea, the last king of Israel (732-722 B.C.). Based upon his apparent knowledge of religious affairs, Hosea may have been a priest, but this is not stated in Scripture.

Hosea is a living parable of God’s true love for His chosen people, even when they turn away. The prophet has three children, Jezreel, "God sows" (1:4), Lo-Ruhamah, "No compassion" (1:6f), and Lo-ammi, "Not my people" (1:8ff). There is a hint of suggestion that the last two children may have been born from the adulterous relationship Hosea’s wife, Gomer, had and were not the prophet’s natural heir (2:4).

<p>Harlots and rejection v.s. True love</p>
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The prophet’s ministry dates to about 790-686 B.C. His ministry is during the reign of Jeroboam II king of Israel (793-753) and it appears that Hosea lived beyond the captivity of the Northern kingdom because of the mention of Hezekiah’s reign (729-686 B.C.). This makes the prophet’s ministry occurring during the reign of four kings in Judah – Uzziah (790-739), Jotham (750-731), Ahaz, (735-715), and Hezekiah.

PURPOSE

The listing of the kings of Judah suggests that although Hosea’s message is primarily directed to the Northern kingdom, it was intended for all of Israel. It is a call to repentance. God’s loyal love and faithfulness as compared to the idolatry and unfaithfulness of the nation. The prophet’s message is demonstrated through the picture of his marriage to the harlot Gomer and the birth and naming of the

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children. Just as his wife is unfaithful, so the nation has become unfaithful toward God and lack knowledge of him.

Hosea 4:6

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

At the same time, the actions of the prophet in going after his adulterous wife and bringing her home reflect the loving concern of God for His people.

A simple outline of the book is:

- b** Hosea's marriage as a portrait of God dealing with Israel - Chps 1-3
- b** Judgment and Restoration - Chps 4-14

JESUS IN HOSEA

Jesus is seen as the Son of God (11:1 compared with Matt 2:15). As the Son of God He is the only Savior of His people (13:4 compared with John 14:6). Christ is also seen as

- One who is the ransom payment (13:4 compared with 1 Cor 15:55)
- One who loves us without limit (11:4)
- One who heals those who return to Him (6:1)

Hosea 1:2

The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea. And the Lord said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord.

The issue of God's command to Hosea to marry a harlot gives many a pause for concern. There is a moral concern over the concept of a man of God marrying a sinner, an unsaved person, indeed, a harlot. Three views of interpretation have arisen.

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- b** Some interpret the passage allegorically, viewing the characters as representing spiritual and symbolic truths. While one can argue this approach avoids the moral problem of God directing the unequal yoking, it does not remove the command itself.
- b** Some interpret the book purely literally, seeing the marriage as an object lesson to Israel. This approach ignores the actual moral issue behind God's command.
- b** A third approach is to treat the book basically literally, but to see Hosea as looking back as he tells the story. This allows Gomer to be a virgin at the time of the marriage. She then becomes an adulterous wife during the relationship. Hosea looks back with the voice of experience and concludes that Gomer was a harlot from the start, thus, God commanded the prophet to marry a harlot. The value of this view is that it resolves the moral dilemma of God commanding Hosea to marry a harlot.

The third approach is the most palatable for the church, but there is little basis in the words of Scripture to suggest this is the correct reading. If the book is read literally, God commanded the prophet to marry a harlot. There is no direct sense in the book that the prophet wrote based upon his actual life experiences.

**Was Abraham “pure” when God called him?
Was the nation pure when God sent Moses?
Scripture is silent on these issues too.**

Hosea married and loved the unfaithful Gomer. When Gomer repents, Hosea brings her home. This is the picture of God and Israel. This is the real intent of the prophet's message. God desires obedience, not mere ritual. God desires faithfulness of heart, not a “sign” that says “I am a Jew [Christian].”

Hosea 6:6-7

For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. [7] But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.

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The children of the prophet are the sign of the judgment and restoration.

- b** Jezreel meaning “God sows or scatters” (1:5) will become “gathered together.”
- b** Lo-Ammi, “not my people” will become Ammi, “my people.”
- b** Lo-Ruhamah, meaning “not obtained mercy or compassion” will become Ruhamah, “have obtained mercy.”

How faithful have you been?

Do you observe the “rituals” but miss the true relationship
with God?

JOEL

Jehu reigns
in Israel 841
B.C.

Joash
reigns in
Judah 835
B.C.

Joel the
prophet
835 B.C.

Jehoahaz
reigns in
Israel 814
B.C.

Jehoash
reigns in
Israel 798
B.C.

KEY VERSES

2:11

2:28-32

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 2

KEY CONCEPTS

Day of the Lord

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Is vengeance sweet?

Title
Author

The prophet's name means "The Lord is with me." Nothing is known about Joel other than he was from Pethuel (1:1) and that he was from

The meaning of Joel's name is the reverse of the meaning of Elijah's name. Elijah's name

eatio

dating references in the book. It is, however, best to see Joel as having his ministry around 609-586 B.C.

Joel's message is to the Southern kingdom of Judah. It is a message of judgment, about the impending Day of the Lord. As with the other prophets, the messages calls for repentance based upon the promise of a future restoration of the nation.

A simple outline of Joel is:

- b** The historic picture of the Day of the Lord - Chp 1
- b** The prophetic, future Day of the Lord - 2:1-27
- b** Restoration - 2:28-3:21

The prophet uses the picture of the devastation of a recent invasion of locusts to demonstrate the coming Day of the Lord. This will be a day of judgment upon the nations, including Israel.

The “Day of the Lord” is a favorite phrase of the prophets. It is used by Obadiah, Joel, Amos Zephaniah, Zechariah, and Malachi among the minor prophets. In addition, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel use the description. The Day of the Lord is referred to in Acts, 1 & 2 Corinthians, 1 Thessalonians, and 2 Peter in the New Testament. It is used 25 times in the King James version, with a similar number of occurrences in the NIV and NASB. Related phrases such as “that day,” “the great day,” and “the day”

JESUS IN JOEL

Creatio

Jesus is the giver of the Holy Spirit (2:28). He is the judge of the nations (3:2, 12), and is the refuge of Israel (3:16).

Peter quotes Joel 2:28 as part of the events being fulfilled at Pentecost with the formation of the church. Joel looks forward to the final Day of the Lord, the Second Coming of Jesus following the events of the Tribulation, but like many of God's prophecies, the effects of the prophecy benefit the "Gentiles," the church of Christ.

Joel 2:28

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Have you received the Spirit of God?
Do you make good use of this gift?

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AMOS

Azariah
(Uzziah)
reigns in
Judah 790
B.C.

Jonah the
prophet 780
B.C.

Amos the
prophet 765
B.C.

Isaiah the
prophet
760 B.C.

Hosea the
prophet 755
B.C.

Zechariah
reigns in
Israel 753
B.C.

KEY VERSES

3:1, 2

4:11, 12

8:11, 12

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 9

KEY CONCEPTS

Transgress, Transgression

Judgment

THOUGHTS FOR READING

How many burdens does Amos bear?

Creatio

Amos 4:11-12

I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. ¹²Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.

**Title
Author**

Amos is described as a southerner of Tekoa, a town south of Jerusalem near Bethlehem (1:1). However, God calls him to preach in the Northern kingdom at Bethel (7:15). Amos was apparently a sheep breeder and a grower of sycamore trees. He was not called to be a

prophet from his days in the womb (1:1; 7:14). Bethel was the center of idol worship for the Northern kingdom, so his task could not have been pleasant. Following his evangelistic efforts there, Amos then preached in Judah against Jeroboam II's resistance (2:4-5; 3:1; 6:1).

**Amos means
“burden” or
“burden-bearer” in**

**During this
time, Adad
Nirari III (810-
753) reigned in**

All of this makes the dating of Amos around 767-753 B.C. His ministry came under the reigns of Uzziah (Azariah) in Judah (790-740) and Jeroboam II in Israel (793-753). His ministry is dated as being two years before "the earth quake" (1:1 cf. Zech 14:5), but there is no other reference in Scripture or secular records to date this event. Judah was under the influence of Jeroboam II of Israel during this period, which is probably the height of power for the Northern kingdom (2 Kings 14:25-28; Amos 6:14)

PURPOSE

Amos 7:8

And the LORD said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more:

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The “plumbline” is used in Scripture to represent strict justice (Jer 1:11-13 Zech 5:2). God would now renav

In one simple statement, then, Amos is about the judgment of God against the nation for its abuse of its privileged position.

As with all of the prophets, Amos looks to the coming vindication of God through judgment. This vindication will be against the Gentile nations for their evil doings and against the Jewish nation (all twelve tribes) for their breach of the Abrahamic / Mosaic covenant. In Amos, the breach of the covenant is seen through the social oppression of the people, empty religious ritual, and arrogant self-confidence. Yet, as with all of the prophets, Amos sees a time of restoration, a time of the blessings fulfilled under the covenants.

“Transgress” & “transgression” are used 12 times in Amos.

A simple outline of Amos is:

- b** Introduction to Amos - 1:1, 2
- b** Eight Judgments against the nations - 1:2-2:16
 - Damascus
 - Philistia
 - Tyre
 - Edom
 - Ammon
 - Moab
 - Judah
 - Israel
- b** Sermons of the prophet - Chps 3-6
- b** Visions of the prophet - Chps 7:1-9:10
- b** Restoration Promise - 9:11-15

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JESUS IN AMOS

Amos gives us Christ as:

- The One who rebuilds the Davidic kingdom (9:11)
- The One who restores the people (9:11-15)

Amos 3:3

Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

Who do you walk with?
How many burdens do you bear by yourself?
Should you bear them alone?

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OBADIAH

Jehoram
reigns in
Judah 853
B.C.

Joram
(Jehoram)
reigns in
Israel 852
B.C.

Elijah to
heaven,
Elisha the
prophet
850 B.C.

Obadiah the
prophet 840
B.C.

Ahaziah
reigns in
Judah 841
B.C.

KEY VERSES

10

15

21

KEY CHAPTERS

Entire Book

KEY CONCEPTS

Judgment

THOUGHTS FOR READING

God rejoices over saving sinners,
not over punishing them.

Obadiah 1:15

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For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.

Title Author

The Hebrew title means "servant of the Lord." The Greek transliterates this word as the name of the prophet. There are no historical records of Obadiah apart from this single book. The book itself does not tell us anything about the prophet.

There is a great deal of differences in opinion on the dating of this letter. The possible dates range from around 840 B.C. to as late as the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in 586/85 B.C. There were four significant invasions of Judah at which time Edom could have "rejoiced." These were by the Egyptians in 926 B.C. (1 Kings 14:25, 26), by the Philistines in 848-841 B.C. (2 Chron 21:16, 17), by the Northern kingdom in 790 (2 Kings 14:13, 14), and by Babylon between 605-586 B.C. (2 Kings 24-25). Most likely, Obadiah's prophecies come in connection with either the second or last of these, that as a result of either the Philistine invasion or the Babylonian invasion.¹⁰

If written in connection to the Philistine invasion, Obadiah is the

Remember, Edom is from the descendants of Esau, Jacob's

The prophet's message is to proclaim judgment upon Edom for rejoicing over the fall of Jerusalem. The message is then extended to all of the nations who have been hostile to God. At the same time, the prophet sends a message of hope to Judah.

History tells us that Edom fell to the Babylonians about five years after the final fall of Jerusalem. The people do not disappear, for the Herods are Idumeans, the descendants of the Edomites. But, as a nation, Edom is judged and disappears.

dating is not particularly important to the message of the prophet, but is open for much discussion. The invasion by Egypt and the invasion by Israel must be discounted since there is no recorded capture and spoiling of Jerusalem at either invasion. Those that argue for the 586 B.C. date see the damage viewed by Obadiah's descriptions (10-14) as being much greater than that described at the Philistine invasion. The other dating issue is the apparent quoting of Obadiah by Jeremiah. This would call for an older date for Obadiah. Those who favor the 586 B.C. see Jeremiah and Obadiah both quoting from some other source. Those arguing for this date see Psalms 137:7, Lamentations 4:21, 22, and Ezekiel 25:12-14 as all describing the events Obadiah 10-14 covers. Those arguing for the older date view Obadiah 11-12 as being compared to Joel 3:3-6 and Obadiah 1-9 being the actual verses used by Jer 49:7-22.

¹⁰The dates are based upon the Julian Calendar and the biblical dates used by Haggai and Zechariah. The "days" may be incorrect but the modern months and years are accurate.

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JESUS IN OBADIAH

Jesus is seen as Judge (15, 16), Savior (17-20), and Possessor of the kingdom (21).

Obadiah is the only one chapter book in the Old Testament and with only 21 verses is the shortest book in the Bible. There are four one-chapter books in the

Obadiah 1:10

For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.

Do you rejoice over the fall of a good person?

Obadiah 1:21

And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.

JONAH

Azariah
(Uzziah)
reigns in
Judah 790
B.C.

Jonah the
prophet
780 B.C.

Amos the
prophet 765
B.C.

Isaiah the
prophet
760 B.C.

Hosea the
prophet 755
B.C.

Zechariah
reigns in
Israel 753
B.C.

KEY VERSES

2:8, 9

3:10

4:2

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 3

KEY CONCEPTS

Sovereignty

Prepared

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Running from God is no fun.
God is faithful to forgive all who truly repent.

Jonah 3:10

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And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Title Author

The book is named after God’s prophet, Jonah, whose name probably means “dove.” Jonah’s prophecy needs to fall between the reign of Jerobaom II in the Northern kingdom (793-753 B.C.) and the destruction of Nineveh in (612 B.C.). This means that Jonah, Amos, and Hosea were all active at the same time and their ministries came just before Isaiah’s.

With the advent of modern criticism which views miracles as non-events, several forms of interpretation are suggested for this book. Some see Jonah as an allegorical picture of Israel’s fall to Babylon. There is nothing, however, in the book to suggest this as a basis of interpretation. Further, the giant fish is a means of deliverance for Jonah, while Babylon was clearly a means of punishment for Israel. Also, allegories in the OT have unmistakable indications of their allegorical nature (Eccl. 12:3ff; Jer. 25:15ff; Ezek. 19:2ff; 24:3ff; 27:3ff; Zech. 11:4ff). Jonah has none of these indications.

Some see Jonah as a parable. This is unlikely because the work lacks all of the normal characteristics of a parable. There is no setting which affirms if it is such a story. It does not contain a generic introduction as do most parables. Jonah is much more complex than the average parable. The moral point is not explained nor made clear. Compared to other Old Testament parables, the account of Jonah lacks the traits of a parable (Judges 9:8ff; 2 Sam. 12:1; 14:6; 1 Kings 20:39ff; 2 Kings 14:9).

This leaves the only one option for Jonah. It is a historically accurate account of a true prophet of God. The central reason for wanting to have the story be an allegory or a parable is the unwillingness to accept the miracle of Jonah in the belly of the fish. In support of this being a true account is the “realness” of Jonah and Nineveh. The details of the account and the reactions of the sailors’ all fall within a normal historical framework. The book begins with a standard formula for the prophets – Jonah 1:1: *“Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying.”*

Jonah is mentioned by name in 2 Kings
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The New Testament provides the final support for Jonah being a true historical account (Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4; Luke 11:29-32).

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PURPOSE

Although frequently used as the example of the reluctant worker of God, the book really emphasizes the value of repentance and justifies the message of the prophets. Even a Gentile nation is cared for by God and will receive the blessings of God when it repents. God's concern is for all people and not just Israel. God is "*not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*" (2 Peter 3:9). **Salvation is from God and is available even for those in rebellion.**

The book does also teach about the need to submit to the Lord's command. God's plans are higher than ours (Isa 55:8, 9) and we frequently do not understand the workings of God. When we are a part of God's plan and we fail to cooperate, He will drag us along any way. Isn't it better to walk with God than to ride in the belly of the fish? How often are we like Jonah and allow our spiritual pride to deprive us of golden opportunities to work for God's kingdom?

The structure of Jonah falls around two parallel calls of the prophet from God (1:1- 3 & 3:1-3). In each Jonah responds to God, but not in the same way. In each, Jonah encounters pagans who are forced to consider the power of God (1:4-11 & 3:4-10). Jonah is then required to confront God because of his attitude (1:12-17 & 4:1-9). Each section ends with God providing deliverance (2:1-9 & 4:110-12). In the first section, God delivers both the sailors and Jonah. In the second, God delivers both Nineveh and Jonah.

JESUS IN JONAH

Jesus uses Jonah as the sign of His resurrection (Matt 12:40). Jesus is the prophet to the Gentiles and is the Savior of the nations. Jonah himself is a type of the history of the Jewish nation. He is also a type of Christ in that he is a "sign" to the Jews and the world (Luke 11:29, 30). Jonah's description of God is a description of Jesus.

Jonah 4:2

And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled

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*before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and **merciful**, slow to anger, and **of great kindness**, and repentest thee of the evil.*

Matthew 9:36-38

*But when he saw the multitudes, he was **moved with compassion on them**, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. [37] Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; [38] Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*

Ultimately, Jonah is a book about the priorities of our concerns and compassion. Jonah believed salvation was for the Jews and no one else. He worried more over the vine than he did the Ninevehites.

Jonah 4:10-11

Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: [11] And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?

Where is your compassion directed?

What are your priorities?

MICAH

Jotham
reigns in
Judah 750
B.C.

Pekahiah
reigns in
Israel 742
B.C.

Micah the
prophet 740
B.C.

Pekah
reigns in
Israel 740
B.C.

Ahaz reigns
in Judah
735 B.C.

KEY VERSES

1;5-9

6:8

7:18-20

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapters 6, 7

KEY CONCEPTS

Hear

Desolation, Desolate, Destruction

Gather, Assemble

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Are there degrees of sin?

Does it matter?

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Micah 7:7

Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.

<p>Title Author</p>

Micah comes from the town of Moresheth which may be the same as Moresheth-gath (1:1, 14). This means he lived about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem near Gath of Philistia (the home of Goliath). Most likely he was not part of the official court or Temple families. He lived during the times of Jotham (750-732/35), Ahaz (735-713/16), and Hezekiah (716-687), kings in Judah. This makes him a contemporary of Isaiah and Hosea, and probably Amos.

Micah wrote to both the of the divided kingdoms, although his message appears to be primarily for Judah.

<p>Micah's name means "Who is like the</p>

PURPOSE

Micah's message was one of confirmation. He emphasized God's justice and love even as he warned of the impending doom of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms. The thrust of his message is that Judah was as guilty of Israel, so they would be judged the same way. Micah does contain a message of hope in God's future restoration of Israel, but this is not a primary message of this book.

A simple outline of Micah is:

- b** Judgment for both kingdoms - Chps 1, 2
- b** Doom will be followed by deliverance - Chps 3-5
- b** Denunciation for sin and a promise for blessing - Chp 6, 7

Micah places great emphasis on the failure of the people to live up to the covenant of God. This is the same message as that of the other prophets. Micah delivers three messages with the theme of judgment playing a major role in each. At the same time, the principle of a remnant finds its place in each of the messages (2:12; 4:7; 5:7, 8;

<p>Throughout both the Old and New Testaments exists the idea of a "remnant" of believers who will be saved and receive the blessings of God. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Micah speak of a remnant which return to the land Zephaniah &</p>

Creatio

7:18). The prophet looks forward to the restoration of the nation.

Micah's call is a lot like that of Hosea. The people should not walk in the rituals of religion. They need to find God in their hearts and lives. Chapter 6 is a courtroom scene with God serving as judge, witness, and jury. There is little doubt of the outcome.

Micah 6:8

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

JESUS IN MICAH

One of the great prophecy of Scripture is found in **Micah 5:2:**

But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

In response to Herod's question as to where the Messiah is to be born, the priests and scribes quote this passage (Matt 2:1-6).

In addition, Jesus is seen as the God of Jacob (4:2), the future Ruler of the nation (5:2), and the Judge of the Gentile nations (4:3).

The elders of Jeremiah's day quote Micah 3:12 in support of Jeremiah's own message of coming judgment (Jer

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Micah 3:12

Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.

Six prophecies of Micah have been fulfilled:

- ▣ Fall of Israel – 722/21 B.C. - (1:6, 7)**
- ▣ Invasion of Judah – 605 B.C. - (1:9-16)**
- ▣ Fall of Jerusalem – 586 B.C. - (3:12,; 7:13)**
- ▣ Captivity in Babylon – 586 B.C. - (4:10)**
- ▣ Return from captivity – (4:10; 7:11)**

Have you been faithful to seek forgiveness of your sins?

Do you ignore the examples of those around you?

Or, have you been chastised?

NAHUM

Josiah's
reign in
Judah 640
B.C.

Nahum the
prophet 630
B.C.

Amon
reigns in
Judah 642
B.C.

Josiah
reigns in
Judah 640
B.C.

Zephaniah
the prophet
625 B.C.

KEY VERSES

1:7, 8

3:5

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 1

KEY CONCEPTS

Avenging, Vengeance

THOUGHTS FOR READING

God is faithful.
Sin is, and will, be punished.

Nahum 1:3

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The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

Title
Author

Nahum identifies himself as an Elkoshite. This is most likely the town from which the prophet comes. However, the location of this town is not known. His name means "consolation" or "comfort." This fits his message since Nahum preaches on the destruction of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, the nation which carried the Northern kingdom into captivity. This dates the message as occurring before 612 B.C., the actual date of Nineveh's destruction by a Babylonian / Medes alliance. The book talks of the Assyrian destruction of the Egyptian city of Thebes (3:8), an event which occurred in 663 B.C. This, then, sets the time frames for this prophet. It is likely that the actual message was delivered within ten years or so of the conquest of Thebes, so the book dates to 663-654 B.C. The later date is tied to the concept of delivering the prophecy prior to the rebuilding of Thebes.

Nineveh was so destroyed that in the second century A.D., there was no certainty as to

On the other hand, many read Nahum to be saying that the fall of Nineveh is imminent (2:1; 3:14, 19), interpreting this to mean "shortly" in human terms. This would place the prophet much closer to the 612 B.C. date. Of course, the return of Jesus is imminent and there has been a two thousand year wait so far. The older date gives more historical force to the prophecy.

Nahum's message sounds much like that of Jonah, which was delivered some 150 years earlier. While the people of Jonah's day may have repented, the city has again fallen away.

PURPOSE

Nahum's prophecy is clearly a judgment on Nineveh and Assyria. What is interesting is that, unlike the other prophets, there is no similar condemnation upon Judah. This message is clearly a message of comfort for Judah. The clear message is that God is in control and will fight for His people. This is a principle frequently encountered in the Old Testament history books.

Nahum 1:7-8

Creatio

The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him. ⁸But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies.

A simple outline of Nahum is:

- b** Prophecy of God's wrath against Nineveh - Chp 1
- b** The description of God's judgment - Chp 2
- b** The cause for God's judgment - Chp 3

JESUS IN NAHUM

This book contains no direct or indirect prophecies about Christ. However, with the understanding that all Scripture is about or points to Jesus, one may see Christ as Nahum's Judge, the jealous God and avenger of His adversaries (1:2).

To be effective, repentance must be from the heart.

Has your's been that deeply desired?

Or, has your repentance been a mere ritual?

HABAKKUK

Jehoahaz
reigns in
Judah 609
B.C.

Jehoiakim
reigns in
Judah 609
B.C.

Habakkuk
the prophet
609/6 B.C.

Jeremiah
the prophet
609 B.C.

1st group of
captives to
Babylon
605 B.C.

Daniel to
captivity
605 B.C.

KEY VERSES

2:4

3:17-19

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 3

KEY CONCEPTS

Why?

Faith

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Is it proper to question God?

Is it alright for God to use a sinner in accomplishing His plan?

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Habakkuk 3:17-19

Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: ¹⁸Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. ¹⁹The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.

<p>Title Author</p>

Habakkuk was a prophet (1:1), who may have been part of the liturgical singing performed at the Temple. Based upon the Apocrypha, he was from the tribe of Levi. There is a Rabbinic tradition that identifies Habakkuk as the son of the Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4:16).

This book dates to the period just before the fall of Judah to the Babylonians (626 to 605 B.C.). This makes Habakkuk a contemporary of Jeremiah.

<p>The prophet's name means "embrace," as in one who embraces</p>
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PURPOSE

Habakkuk foresees the Babylonian conquest of Judah. God will bring judgment on Judah's sins using the foreign invaders as His instrument. Yet, there is a strong message of restoration and hope. God is the protector of His people and although he will use the Babylonians, God promises to deliver the people from their captivity. God will judge the unjust Babylonians.

The message is built around the prophet's perplexity over the coming invasion of Babylon. But, the prophet's concern was not because of the potential punishment of Judah. Indeed, Habakkuk seems to think the punishment of Judah is long over due (1:2-4). The prophet cannot, however, understand how God could use the sinful Babylonians to accomplish this chastisement (1:12-2:1).

A simple outline of the book is:

b The perplexities of faith tested - Chps 1 & 2

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b Faith is triumphant, resulting in praise - Chp 3

JESUS IN HABAKKUK

Christ may be found as the Savior of the nation. The word salvation appears three times in 3:13, 18. This is the Hebrew root word of the name "Jesus." Christ is the Holy One of God (1:12 compared with John 1 John 1:9). He justifies the righteous by faith (2:4) and will fill the earth with the knowledge of the Lord (2:14).

Habakkuk 2:14

For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Habakkuk is not a preaching message but a conversation between the prophet and God. Habakkuk takes his perplexities to the Lord. God answers his questions leading the prophet to offer a prayer of praise. What a wonderful pattern for all of us to follow!

How do you talk to God?

ZEPHANIAH

Josiah reigns
in Judah 640
B.C.

Zephaniah
the prophet
625 B.C.

Jehoahaz
reigns in
Judah 609
B.C.

Jehoiakim
reigns in
Judah 609
B.C.

Habakkuk the
prophet 609/6
B.C.

KEY VERSES

1:7

1:12

1:14, 15

2:3

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 3

KEY CONCEPTS

Day of the Lord

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Do the people listen to Zephaniah
How do you know?

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Zeph. 1:14-15

The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. ¹⁵That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

**Title
Author**

Unique among the prophets, Zephaniah's introduction traces his ancestry back four generations (1:1). He is the Son of Cushi, the Son of Gedaliah, the Son of Amariah, the Son of Hezekiah. This may be the famous king of Judah (716-687 B.C.). The author places himself during the reign of Josiah, king of Judah (641-609 B.C.). The prophet

anticipates the fall of Nineveh (Zeph 2:13-15), so his message comes before 612 B.C. He preaches to the people of Judah. Since the message seems to come before the reforms of Josiah, this would date the message before 622 B.C.

**The prophet's name
means "hidden of**

**We might wander
if the reforms and
revival under
Josiah arose out
of the preaching**

This is the book about The Day of the Lord, a theme which also is found in Obadiah, Joel, and Ezekiel. The term "Day of the Lord" occurs some 23 times in this short book. This is the time when the Lord will come and destroy the evil around His people, delivering His people from their bondage. Zephaniah looks to the local aspects of this prophecy, judgment on Assyria and Babylon, but this merely foreshadows the ultimate judgment and deliverance of God's people which the

Messiah will bring.

PURPOSE

Coming on the heels of the reigns of Manasseh and Amon, Judah is spiritually dull. God must judge the unfaithfulness of Judah's ruler. But, there is a message of hope in this judgment as the Day of the Lord is also the time when God will deliver Israel as a complete nation. This is a message of hope to the remnant of Judah as the restoration is promised and judgment issued against the surrounding nations (Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Assyria, Ethiopians/Egyptians).

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A simple outline of Zephaniah is:

- b** Judgment for sin of Judah- 1:1-2:3
- b** Judgment for sin of the nations - 2:4-3:8
- b** Promise of future restoration - 3:9-20

JESUS IN ZEPHANIAH

This book, like many of the other minor prophets has no direct mention of or prophecy about Christ. He is pictured though in the ideas of the Righteous One of Israel (3:5) and as their King (3:15).

Zeph. 2:3

Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.

Are you pessimistic, always looking for the Day of the Lord?

Or, are you optimistic, looking toward the great Coming of the Lord?

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HAGGAI

**First Jews
return
538 B.C.**

**Temple
construction
begins
536 B.C.**

**Darius
reigns
521 B.C.**

**Haggai &
Zechariah
520 B.C.**

**Temple
finished
515 B.C.**

KEY VERSES

1:7, 8

1:14

2:7-9

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 2

KEY CONCEPTS

House, Temple

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Should we yearn for the “good old days?”

Haggai 1:7, 8, 14

Creatio

Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. ⁸Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.¹⁴ And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God,

Title
Author

This book was probably written by Haggai, “the prophet” (1:1). No other identification is given in the book. Haggai the prophet is mentioned by Ezra (Ezra 5:1; 6:14). This probably makes Haggai a returnee from Babylon. There is also some room to conclude he may have been a priest. The book is unique in that the book is written in the third person, probably for emphasis.

Haggai preached his messages during the second year of the reign of Darius I (521-486 B.C.) Mede-Persia. These are the best dated prophetic messages of Scripture since each is dated to the king’s reign. The messages are delivered within a fifteen week period from August 29 to December 18, 520 B.C.¹¹

Haggai’s name means “festival” or “festive.” This leads to speculation that the prophet was born during one of the feasts, but there is

Haggai is a contemporary of Zechariah, the prophet, and Zerubbabel, the governor. The first return from Babylon was lead by Zerubbabel n 538 B.C. pursuant to the decrees of Cyrus (Ezra 1-6). Haggai and Zechariah preach encouragement about he rebuilding of the Temple, a work completed under Darius I (Ezra 5:1). The Levitical sacrifices were re-instituted on an alter built for burnt offerings according to Ezra 3:1-6. The foundation for the Temple was laid in the second year of the return (536 B.C.; Ezra 3:8-13; 5:16). Resistance from the neighboring peoples led to a halt of the rebuilding program for a 16-year period (Ezra 4:4, 5). Haggai and Zechariah deliver their messages of encouragement from 520-518 B.C.. The Temple is completed in 515 B.C. (Ezra 5-6).

The second return of exiles comes under Ezra’s leadership in 457 B.C. (Ezra 7-10). There is a third return under

PURPOSES

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Haggai is a book of encouragement. There is encouragement to the remnant to make an effort to rebuild the Temple. There is encouragement to commence Temple worship as the main goal of the returned nation. There is encouragement that obedience to these things will bring God's blessings. And there is encouragement as to the future blessings of God despite the just concluded exile.

Haggai fights two problems. First, many people were pessimistic about their ability to rebuild the Temple. Haggai points out the problem is their neglect of the issue. Secondly, the people were discouraged because the Temple was not being rebuilt to the splendor of Solomon's. Haggai's response is to look forward to the ultimate Temple of Christ (Haggai 2:7-9, below)

A simple outline of the prophet's messages are:

- b** A call to rebuild the Temple - Chp 1
- b** A call to find encouragement in God's promises - 2:1-9
- b** A call to a clean life - 2:10-19
- b** A call for confidence in the future - 2:20-23

<p>Haggai is the second shortest book in the Old</p>

JESUS IN HAGGAI

Jesus is the Restorer of the Temple (2:7-9) and the Conqueror of the nations (2:22).

Haggai 2:7-9

*And I will shake all nations, and the **desire of all nations** shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.*

⁸*The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts.*

⁹*The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.*

Come, **Desire of nations** come! Fix in us Thy humble home:

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Rise, the woman's conqu'ring seed, Bruise in us the serpent's head;

Adam's likeness now efface, Stamp Thine image in its place:

Second Adam, from above, Reinstale us in Thy love.

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King.

Verse 4, *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*

Music by Mendelssohn

Words by Charles Wesley

How often do your problems arise through neglect?

Remember Jesus is coming soon!

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ZECCHARIAH

First Jews
return
538 B.C.

Temple
construction
begins
536 B.C.

Darius reigns
521 B.C.

Haggai &
Zechariah
520 B.C.

Temple
finished
515 B.C.

Esther
486-465 B.C.

Ezra - 458 B.C.

Nehemiah 444
B.C.

KEY VERSES

4:6

8:3

9:9, 10

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapter 14

KEY CONCEPTS

Word of the Lord

Lord of Hosts

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Is the Temple important?

To the Israelites?

To us?

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Zech. 1:3

Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts.

<p style="text-align: center;">Title Author</p>

Zechariah was a Levite who was born in Babylon (Neh 12:1, 16), the son of Berechiah and the grandson of Iddo the priest (Zech 1:1; cf. 12:4, 16; Ezra 5:1; 6:14). While Zechariah was a common name, it is possible the prophet was a priest. His name means “God remembers.” He is a contemporary of Haggai, the prophet, Zerubbabel, the governor, and Joshua, the high priest (Ezra 5:1-2; Zech 3:1; 4:6; 6:11).

The dates for Zechariah’s messages in chapters 1--8 place his ministry in concurrence with Haggai’s ministry (520 B.C.). His ministry begins between Haggai’s second and third message.

PURPOSE

Zechariah writes to comfort and encourage the returned remnant to repent of their evil ways, to return to the Lord, and to rebuild the Temple. The people who had just returned from exile felt like their efforts were insignificant and the future was uncertain. The people recognized they were still a client state of the ruling force, not an independent country. The prophet focuses on the future restoration of the nation and the judgment of the evil empires at the establishment of the Messianic kingdom. He proclaims that God would send the Messiah to establish His Kingdom through the destruction of the Gentile empires and the salvation of His people Israel.

The theme of Zechariah might be seen in 1:3, quoted at the beginning of this chapter. This is the need of the people to return to God and restore fellowship, so that God could return to them. This theme is similar to that of Jeremiah (cf. Jer 3:1, 7, 10; 4:1).

<p>Haggai used the formula “The Lord Almighty says” or “the Lord declares” some 25 times. Zechariah uses the formula “the Word of the Lord” 13 times</p>

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Jeremiah 24:7

And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.

These verses make it clear that a return of Israel to the Lord is a prerequisite of God's blessings. The people must repent. Zechariah and Haggai show the prominence of the Temple in the spiritual restoration of Israel. God needs to dwell among the people in order for the people to become spiritually whole. This is the purpose of the Temple, to provide this place of communion.

Zechariah's messages come in eight visions, four messages, and two oracles. The following chart provides the outline of the book.

Chapters 1-6 Apocalyptic Eight Night Visions	Chapters 7-8 Ethical Prophecy Four Messages	Chapters 9-14 Predictive Prophecy Two Oracles
The Horse Patrol		
4 Horns & 4 Craftsmen	Rebuke	

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Man & measuring line		Burden against the nations
Joshua clothed	Reminder	
Lamps and Olive Trees		
Flying Scroll	Restoration	
Woman and Ephah ¹²		Burden for Israel

a dry measure, equal to about 13 quarts.

¹²G.L. Robinson, *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956, 5:3136, *Agnes Master Christian Library* electronic version.

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The Chariot Patrol	Return	
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*In the present writer's judgment, his book is the most Messianic, the most truly apocalyptic and eschatological, of all the writings of the Old Testament.*¹³

JESUS IN ZECHARIAH

This is the proper view of Zechariah. The prophet sees Christ in both of His Advents. Further, Jesus is seen as Servant and King, as Man and God. He is:

- b** The Angel of the Lord (3:1)
- b** The Righteous Branch (3:8)
- b** The Stone (3:9)
- b** The One pierced (12:10)
- b** The coming, humble King (9:9-10)
- b** The smitten Shepherd abandoned by all (13:7)
- b** The coming Judge and Righteous King (14)

Two of these prophecies speak to the two advents of Christ. The first is well-known amongst all Christians, even if they do not know the source. The second is, perhaps, less well known. Zechariah writes about Palm Sunday:

Zechariah 9:9-10

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. 10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall

Creatio

be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.

That Jesus comes to Jerusalem riding on a donkey, the colt, the foal of an ass, is well known amongst church goers. But do you remember where Jesus ascended into heaven? Do you know where He will return to earth?

We are told in Acts 1 that the Ascension is at the Mount of Olives.

Acts 1:11-12

11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

*12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the **mount called Olivet**, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.*

Zechariah foretells the return.

Zechariah 14:4

*4 And **his feet shall stand** in that day upon the **mount of Olives**, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.*

That will be a glorious day!

Are you ready for the return of Christ?

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MALACHI

Esther
486-465
B.C.

Ezra - 458
B.C.

Nehemiah
444 B.C.

Malachi's
ministry 400
B.C.

"400 years
of silence"

John the
Baptist born
6/5 B.C.

Jesus is
born 6/5
B.C.

KEY VERSES

2:17

3:1

4:5, 6

KEY CHAPTERS

Chapters 3, 4

KEY CONCEPTS

"You say"

Curse

THOUGHTS FOR READING

Have you wearied the Lord with your actions?

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Malachi 2:17

17 Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?

Title
Author

Nothing is known of Malachi except what is stated in this book, the last of the Old Testament. Malachi is obvious written after 515 B.C., the date of the completion of the Temple. That the worship ritual has degenerated implies at least some passage of time after the worship had commenced. There are other similarities that suggests a date relatively close to Ezra and Nehemiah. One of the major problems faced by the prophet is inter-marriage with non-Israelites, a problem similar to that of Ezra and Nehemiah (Ezra 9--10; Neh 13:23-27; Mal 2:11). Further, the nation's failure to tithe is prominent in Nehemiah and Malachi ((Neh 13:10-14; Mal 3:8-10). Also present, although more of a general prophetic theme is that of social injustices (Neh 5:1-13; Mal 3:5). Malachi, thus, can fit into any time frame related to Ezra and Malachi, a period that stretches from 468 B.C. to any time thereafter. Most feel the prophet came after Nehemiah and preached against a people who had forgotten the lessons Nehemiah taught them. This places the date between 435 B.C. and 400 B.C.

Malachi means "my messenger." It may be a shortened form of a compound word similarly spelled which means

PURPOSES

Most of us may be familiar with Malachi because it is one of the strongest messages on tithing in the Old Testament and, thus, is frequently used by pastors.

Malachi 3:10

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

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But Malachi is much more than this. As with the other prophets, Malachi is a call to repent and return to the covenant for blessings. The prophet reminds the people of what God will do for His people. But, the book is also a warning of judgment. The prophet stresses that God will bless the people in that judgment if they are faithful. The message is one delivered to a people who had gotten beyond the “high” of Nehemiah’s revival and had succumb to the temptations of everyday life. Malachi preaches for a return to the revival standard.

A simple outline of Malachi is:

- b** The Privilege of Israel - 1:1-5
- b** The Pollution of Israel - 1:6-3:15
- b** The Promise to Israel - 3:16-4:6

JESUS IN MALACHI

Malachi is the prophecy of the coming of Christ. This, the last prophet of the Old Testament literature, foresees the last Old Testament prophet, John the Baptist. This vision occurs not once, but twice.

Malachi 3:1

*Behold, I will send **my messenger**, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.*

Malachi 4:5-6

*5 Behold, **I will send you Elijah** the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: 6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.*

Still, Malachi sees Jesus as well as His herald (Matt 11:10-14; Luke 1:11-17; John 1:21).

Malachi 3:2-5

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2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: 3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. 4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years. 5 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.

The Old Testament ends with this look toward the arrival of Christ. It is based upon the sending of John the Baptist with the message of repentance one final time. John will lead the people to the One Who can forgive sins – Jesus Christ. This is all necessary because the people do not listen to the words of any of the prophets – at least not for any sufficient length of time.

Malachi 4:4

4 Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

Have you remembered the Words of Scripture and applied them to your life?

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AFTERWARDS

Ezra 7:6

This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him.

About 70 years after Malachi, Alexander the Great conquered his world, including Palestine. At his abrupt death the empire was divided between four of his generals. One ruled the area around Syria, while a second ruled the area around Egypt. Palestine became the battleground for these two kings. As has been mentioned, in 168 Antiochus Epiphanes presented the world with a picture of the anti-Christ as he desecrated the Temple. The Maccabees captured the City and the Temple away from Epiphanes a couple of years later. The rededication of the Temple became celebrated as the Feast of Lights or the Feast of Dedication, Hanukkah. Then, came the Romans. Daniel's prophecies were being fulfilled, one after another.

Then, in a dirty stable, a baby is born who will change the world. The Messiah has come. His cousin, John the Baptist, becomes the voice of the King's herald. John is the last of the Old Testament prophets. His King, Jesus Christ, the Messiah, is God's final revelation to the world.

Jesus fulfills over 300 Old Testament prophecies at His first Coming. The mathematical odds of this occurring are not imaginable. Yet, for all of this fulfillment, the Old Testament prophets missed one of the great surprises God provides to His people. As Paul puts it, the mystery of the church is not found until the coming of Christ.

Eph 3:3-6

How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, ⁴Whereby, when ye read, ye may

Creatio

*understand my knowledge in the **mystery of Christ**) ⁵**Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;** ⁶**That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:***

This mystery is the unified body of believers of whom Christ is the Head. This is the afterward of the Old Testament. This was the conflict of the Pharisees with Christ. God had come to earth in the flesh to save sinners. Yet, the sinners did not come to him, just as today they still do not come.

Ezra 9:15

O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this.

Have you come to Christ? The teaching of the Old Testament is that God reveals Himself in stages and expects belief and trust in Him at each stage.

About Abraham it is written:

Genesis 15:6

And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Jesus comes preaching repentance and the need to trust God.

Mark 1:15

*And saying, **The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.***

And what is this trust to be? It is to be in the revealed Word of God. The Mosaic sacrifices are a thing of the past. God has now revealed Himself through His Son, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, Jesus Christ. As it is written in John,

John 3:36

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He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Have you placed your faith and trust in Jesus Christ? We live in the “afterward” of the Old Testament where God reveals to us things not revealed to the Old Testament prophets. What a great blessing and responsibility this presents to us. This mystery is life in Christ. This mystery is God indwelling those who believe. This mystery is the Holy Spirit dwelling with us now and the future hope and promise seen by the prophets that some day we who believe will dwell with God in the true sense of the word, similar to the fellowship enjoyed between God and Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden before the fall.

Don't you want to be part of this? Empty your heart and repent. Accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Accept God's continuing revelation. Trust God. Trust Jesus.

This simple prayer will help guide you.

Dear Father God,

Your Word shows that I have sinned and need to be saved by Jesus Christ. I hereby confess my sins and repent of them, turning to you, Jesus. I believe that you died for my sins, were