

# How to Understand the Old Testament – Session 1

The Word of God is primarily **about** God by God written for us to know Him. It is God's story to humanity.

Let's look at this time to build a frame like a jigsaw puzzle. We are going to look at the big picture (a 30,000 ft view) to learn how to think about the Bible.

Ponder the scope of the Bible and what that means about God's character. He didn't just reveal himself in a quick 100 year period of time or to just one man and then claim the activity in all of history. The OT doesn't point to Mohammed, Joseph Smith or anyone else other than Jesus. Yet, Islam understands that the Koran was revealed to Mohammed all at once, miraculously lowered from heaven. The sacred texts of Buddhism and Confucianism are confined to the lifetime of a single man.

- i. Components to the Bible
  1. 40 authors
  2. Over 1500 years (~2000 yrs if you go to Abraham)
  3. Authors in various walks of life – still tell the same story.
  4. 3 different languages
  5. God is the primary author.

The Bible is NOT:

2. An encyclopedia of self-help or God's little answer book
3. Primarily about You (to boost your ego, encourage you on a bad day, etc)
4. Teaching morality (how to behave or act in certain situations)
5. Full of hidden meaning only experts can point out
6. A map/instruction manual
7. A love letter

i. 39 Books OT. 27 Books NT.

ii. Genres –

1.OT

- a.Narrative – Story-formed, Genesis
- b.Law – Exodus, Leviticus
- c.Poetry – Psalms, Song of Songs
- d.Prophets – Major/Minor
- e.Wisdom – Proverbs/ Ecc

2.NT

- a.Gospels -
- b.Letters (Epistles)
- c.Acts - History
- d.Revelation -

iii. Story of the Bible in regards to Christ:

- 1.Anticipation (OT)
- 2.Manifestation – Gospels
- 3.Proclamation – Acts
- 4.Explanation – Epistles

## 5. Consummation – Revelation

- iv. The Bible is the **inspired, infallible and authoritative Word of God**.
  - 1. Authoritative - All the words of Scripture are God's words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey them is to disbelieve or disobey God (Grudem - ST).
    - a. Submit to versus Stand-over
  - 2. Infallible (sometimes seen as inerrant) – without error in the original manuscripts. Ps 19:7-14; 12:6; 119:89,96; Matt 24:35
  - 3. Inspired – God-breathed - 2 Tim 3:16.
    - a. The difference between Lord of the Rings and The Gospel of John
- vi. Translations
  - 1. What are the differences between translations?
  - 2. Word for Word vs Thought for Thought
  - 3. Why we use the ESV
  - 4. See Chart

## 2 Primary Questions to answer today.

**What is the Bible About?  
How is that communicated?**

### Foundational verses

Acts 28:23

When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the **kingdom of God** and trying to convince them about **Jesus** both from the *Law of Moses and from the Prophets*.

Luke 24:44-45

**44** Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about **me** in the **Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.**" **45** Then he opened their minds to understand the Scripture.

### What is the Bible about?

- 1. **The kingdom of God** - unifying theme. Mentioned 98 times in NT, 84 of them are in the Gospels. The thematic framework, nothing exists outside of it. It is the encompassing matrix of interpretation.
  - a. The Tire, The Skin
  - b. Everything mentioned in scripture meets this criteria
    - i. Creation, precise Levitical garments, Samuel hacking Agag to pieces, the book of Judges, the exile, The horsemen in Rev, lots of stuff...

### How is that communicated?

- 2. **Jesus** is the Theological Center. The "bull's eye of biblical revelation". The point, goal, fullness and purpose of the Law. The King of the Kingdom. Without Jesus, the Bible has no use. Is 44:6. The key to understanding the

OT. John 5:39 – “scripture testifies about me” (He means the OT, not NT),  
John 1:1,4, Luke 24:24-25; 44-45 - divine illumination is necessary.

a. The hub of a wheel, the heart.

3. **The Law and the Prophets** - canonical (Bible) structure. This connects the two and holds them together.

a. The spokes, the bones

i. Acts 28:23; Luke 24:44

1. Paul stayed in Rome **2 yrs** at his own expense - teaching the kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus. (v 28:31ff)
2. Acts 1 - Jesus spent 40 days with the apostles he had chosen speaking to them about the kingdom of God.
3. Paul spent 3 years alone being taught by God in Arabia. See Gal 1:16-18.
4. Maybe what he was learning was how the OT was about Jesus.

1. **Hebrew Bible Order and English Bible order**

a. English bible - 4 divisions: Law, History, Poetry, Prophets

b. Hebrew bible – 3 divisions: Law, Prophets, Writings

**What principles govern Structure in English Bible?**

Macro-structure (Large category like Law or History) is **Genre**,

Micro-structure (Books within categories) is **Chronology then Authorship**

# The Old Testament Canon

*A Comparison of the English and  
Hebrew Bible Arrangements*

## English Bible

### Pentateuch

Genesis  
Exodus  
Leviticus  
Numbers  
Deuteronomy

### Historical Books

Joshua  
Judges  
Ruth  
1-2 Samuel  
1-2 Kings  
1-2 Chronicles  
Ezra  
Nehemiah  
Esther

### Poetry

Job  
Psalms  
Proverbs  
Ecclesiastes  
Song of Songs

### Prophets

Isaiah  
Jeremiah  
Lamentations  
Ezekiel  
Daniel  
12 Minor

## Hebrew Bible

### Law

Genesis  
Exodus  
Leviticus  
Numbers  
Deuteronomy

### Prophets

Joshua  
Judges  
Samuel  
Kings  
  
Isaiah  
Jeremiah  
Ezekiel  
Book of the Twelve

### Writings

Psalms  
Job  
Proverbs  
Ruth  
Song of Songs  
Ecclesiastes  
  
Lamentations  
Esther  
Daniel  
Ezra  
Nehemiah  
Chronicles

## Where did the English OT order come from?

Scholars believe **Josephus**, a 1st Century Jewish historian, tried to explain his Jewish bible to the Greek world (*Against Apion*). Therefore he used Greek categories. He was contextualizing his bible for the Greeks.

“These are authoritative for us, those are for you”... Very Postmodern... Believe he may have gotten it from the Septuagint (assumed, not proved). Then around 400 AD, **Jerome** adopted Josephus' order and gave us the Latin vulgate – This lasted around ~

1000yrs, then **King James Bible** around 1611 became the new standard. With the advent of the printing press...No changes since. This is scholars' the guess.

Quick history of how we got the Bible? Wycliff, Huss, Luther. Only 500 years ago.

### **What is the Hebrew Bible order?**

Luke 24:44; Acts 28:23

### **Luke 11: 50-51 // passage: Matthew 23:33-35**

Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees and the Lawyers in a series of "woe to yous"

**50** so that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, **51** from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be required of this generation.

### **INTERNAL EVIDENCE**

This is a reference to Jesus' Bible. Abel to Zechariah. A to Z, doesn't work in Hebrew alphabet. Jesus is making a reference to the first recorded martyr (Gen 4) and last recorded martyr in 2 Chron 24. ALL the martyrs in My Bible, Jesus is saying, will be avenged.

Also, we mentioned earlier: Luke used these categories in Luke and Acts. Paul as well, since that is what Luke records Paul used to preach about Jesus in Acts.

### **EXTERNAL EVIDENCE**

Other references in Antiquity that make reference to a 3 part OT:

From the Apocrypha – considered important, but not inspired books - Wisdom of Sirach or Ben Sira or Ecclesiasticus around 200 BC. Translated by grandson from Hebrew into Greek, like Septuagint. He added a prologue in which, 3 times, over 130 years prior to Jesus birth, makes a reference to a 3 division Bible.

The Hebrew Bible was Jesus' Bible. He never said it should be changed. If it's good enough for Jesus, it's good enough for me.

### **What principles govern the structure of the Hebrew Bible?**

1. Macrostructure – Governed by covenant
2. Microstructure – Governed by theme or theology

### **3 Main Categories to think of the Hebrew Bible**

Let's look at the chart

**The Covenant** is the Law. (Who is God?)

Gen through Deuteronomy

Relationship to the Bible and Covenant (Ex – 10 Commands)...

The Law is the law of the God's land. It governs the relationship between God and his people. Simply put, by it we know that God was completely faithful. Israel was completely unfaithful.

**Covenant History is The Prophets** (What has He done?)

The Former and Latter Prophets – How did the people live in the land under the covenant.

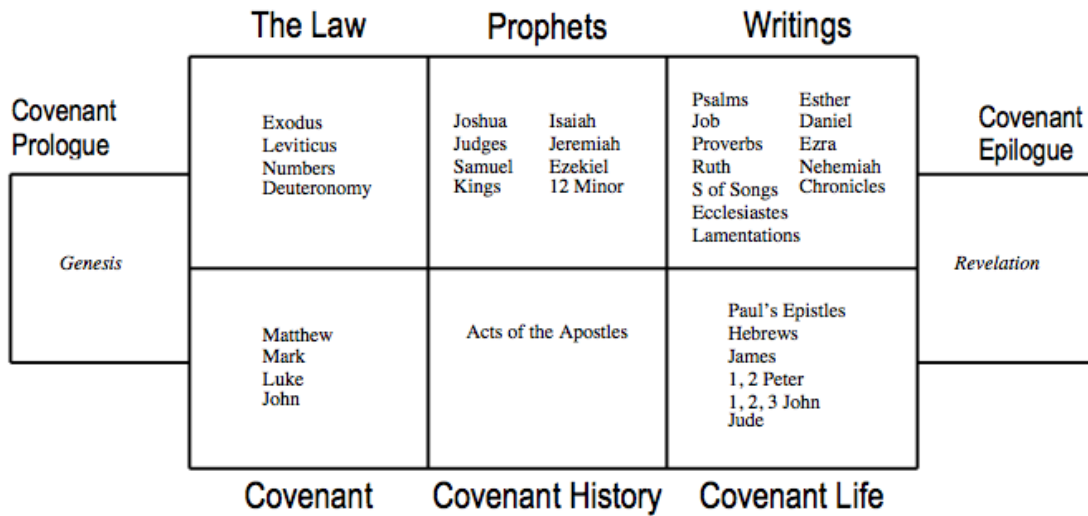
1. History proper (Former Prophets)
  - a. Joshua
  - b. Judges
  - c. Kings
  - d. Samuel
2. Homiletics or The Interpretation of that History (Latter Prophets)
  - a. Isaiah
  - b. Jeremiah
  - c. Ezekiel
  - d. The Twelve
    - i. These are basically Covenant lawyers.
    - ii. Prosecuting attorneys suing the people of God, using the covenant. "Here is the history therefore, get ready to be smoked! Judgment is coming, although there's always hope..." Remember Deuteronomy.

**The Writings** are **Covenant Life** (How do I live in response to that?)

(This is how Paul structured all of his letters! He's a good teacher)

1. Psalms through Chronicles
2. How do you think and live in light of the covenant.
3. Instructions for life/reflections. Practical theology.
  - a. This **is** about you, (law and prophets not so much ... they are FOR you)
  - b. Moralism:
    - i. If God can use Samson, as sinful as he was, certainly he could use you.
  - c. David, obscure, irrelevant, unsuspected boy to become king etc...

# The Covenantal Arrangement of the Christian Bible



## Luke 24:44

He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the **Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.**"

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## SESSION 2

### Review charts -

- v. Storyline chronologically from Genesis to 2 Kings, then following books fit in proper places within the story.
- vii. Max Anders book: Creation, Patriarch, Exodus, Conquest, Judges, Kingdom, Exile, Return, Silence.

#### Genesis:

- 1. Creation
- 2. Fall → 3:15 someone is coming. Jesus is already being looked for.
- 3. Flood → ch 11 the Tower of Babel
- 4. Patriarchs: Abraham Gen 12&15
  - a. Gen 22 – Abraham & Isaac prefigure individually the national day of atonement for Israel
- 5. Isaac, Jacob then the move to Egypt with Joseph.

#### Exodus

- a. A new pharaoh rises up that doesn't know Joseph (Gen 15:13-14)
- b. God remembers his promise to Abraham, hears the cries
- c. Moses is raised up, the 10 plagues, Passover, Deliverance
- d. Giving of the Law,
- e. Golden Calf Episode with Aaron
- f. Tabernacle instructions at Sinai (brought the in-completed presence of God back to the people).

#### Leviticus:

- g. Still at Sinai ~ month.
- h. How to approach a Holy God and obey, instructions for the priests. Sin is serious and must be dealt with.
- i. How to be set apart from other people groups. Ex 19 and 1 Pet 2

#### Numbers –

- j. Leave Sinai, to go to the Promised Land
- k. Should be around 2 week journey...
- l. Number men for war.
- m. In 10 - Head for Kadesh-Barnea. 12 spies, 10 gave fearful report
- n. God judged unbelief → 1 day = 1 year, 40 years in the wilderness.
- o. Everyone over 20 years old would not enter the promised land.
- p. End of book they are opposite Jericho ready to "enter"

#### Deuteronomy – "Second Law"

- a. The law reiterated and covenant renewed (29-31) to the new generation
- b. Prophecies at the end
- c. Blessings and curses, Life and death
- d. Key to understanding the prophets.
  - i. Ch 32 is the primary text for the charges brought against the people by the prophets who act as covenant lawyers
- e. Moses unable to go.

- f. End of Deuteronomy looks for Jesus "... not since Moses..." Hmm

#### Joshua –

- a. "Conquer and divide" the land
- b. Jericho – victory
- c. Ai – defeat, over confidence
- d. Achan's tragedy → see Acts 5 with Ananias and Sapphira
  - i. Implications for holiness in the church today? 1 Cor 5
- e. Rest of book (mostly) is one of victory and settling into tribes
  - i. Gad, Reuben and ½ Tribe Manassah to the East of Jordan River

#### Judges – loose federation of tribes

- a. 3 things told not to do by Moses, that were done
  - i. Destroy the Canaanites
  - ii. Do not intermarry
  - iii. Do not worship their gods
- b. More like generals: Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson
- c. Main phrase... "Did what was right in their own eyes."
- d. Very post modern – syncretism → eg. Judges 11: Jephthah
- e. Chart of sin and defeat. Downward spiral, not just a cycle.
  - 1. Sin, Servitude, Supplication (prayer), Salvation

#### Ruth – wait for next session

#### Samuel

- a. Transition from a loose federation of tribes to a kingdom
- b. "We want a king like the nations." Predicted from Gen 17, Deut 17
- c. Rejected God as their King like their fathers in Numbers 13, (we wished we would have died in Egypt or in this wilderness!)
- d. United Kingdom
  - i. First king Saul – 1 Sam 8 ff - brought Stability. 40 yrs – 1051 BC
  - ii. Rise of David – 2 Sam 1-2; 40 yrs – 1011 BC

#### Kings

- e. Reign of Solomon – 1 Kings 1-11 – Glory Years of Israel. – 971 BC
  - i. Built the Temple for God. 7 years
  - ii. His house took longer ... 13 years. hmm
  - iii. Too many foreign wives turned his heart from God. Ch 11
  - iv. Death in 1 Kings 12
- e. Divided Kingdom 931 BC – (reading starts to get confusing here)
  - i. Jeroboam (N) – Rehoboam (S)
  - ii. Jeroboam - the new Moses? but was the new Aaron (golden calves)
    - i. North – Israel
      - 1. 2 Kings 17 – Assyrians 722 BC defeated and deported Israel
    - ii. South – Judea (8 'good' kings)
      - 1. 2 Kings 25 – Babylonians 605, 597, 586.
        - 1. 586 the Temple was destroyed
- g. 70 years of exile (per Jeremiah)

Chronicles – does not further the storyline, but has a different emphasis. Will discuss. Written after the return of Judah to their land, after the exile at a time of discouragement.

Ezra

- a. Cyrus' heart stirred by the Lord 538 BC
- b. Zerubbabel brought back folks (50,000) to **Rebuild the Temple** in 536
  1. Finished in 516 BC (interrupted 520) Hag, Zach
- c. Ezra comes back in 457 to teach the people the Word of God
  - 1.Rebuild the People - repentance**

Nehemiah

- a. Came back to **Rebuild the Wall**. 444 BC in 52 days.

Esther

- a. Takes place between Ezra 6 and 7
- b. Will cover in next section

**So that's the storyline of the whole of the OT.**

**Poetical Books** – will cover these in the next section.

**Prophetical Books -**

**Major/Minor Prophets – Where do these guys fit in?**

5 Major – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel,  
12 Minor

Refer primarily to length not importance, but even this is inconsistent.

Eg Major Proph: Daniel 12 ch, Lam (Jer) 5 vs Minor Zech 14 – go figure...

The Prophets are divided into 3 Main Categories

**Pre-Exilic**

**Exilic**

**Post-Exilic**

Draw the Prophets diagram

**Prexilic**

Northern Kingdom Prophets:

Amos – lawsuit of Deut 32 against the people, f/b word of hope

Hosea – Gomer

Southern Kingdom:

Joel – swarm of locust were a fore-taste of the coming judgment

Isaiah – 1-39 for both S and N kingdom, 40-66 for Judah - consolation

Micah – some attention to the N. Kingdom, primarily Southern

Zephaniah – “Day of the Lord” Judgment: Punishment and Blessing are coming

Habbakuk – God will raise the Babylonians to judge Israel, then judge them.

Jeremiah – 2:13 2 evils: forsaken me..., and hewed out cisterns for themselves.

## **Exilic**

Lamentations – destruction of the Temple recorded 586 BC by Jeremiah

Ezekiel – Taken in the 597 BC Babylonian captivity.

Daniel – Taken in the 605 BC captivity.

## **Post Exilic**

Haggai – encouraged the people to complete the Temple

Zechariah – encouraged return to work on the Temple as well

Malachi – People lapse back into their old ways (surprise), Malachi calls them back to live in obedience. ~420 BC

## **3 prophets that don't fit these categories**

Obadiah – Word against the Edomites and comfort for the S. Kingdom because Edom refused to help Judah in a day of trouble.

Jonah – supposed to preach repentance to the Ninevites. Ran, etc. Finally did and Non-Hebrews(!) repented and turned to God.

Nahum – about 100 yrs after Jonah, Assyria returned to their old ways and defeated the N. Kingdom of Israel. Now they were threatening the S. Kingdom. This encouraged the S. Kingdom that the Assyrians would be destroyed. This happened around 612 BC by the Babylonians...

## SESSION 3

**Review charts and storyline of OT** - esp overview of the box chart - why we aren't to be like the Cv, Cv Hx, except in Cv Life, we ARE supposed to be like them. Share the gospel in 5 min and talk about its relationship to the NT arrangement.

### **Chiasm of the Whole Bible. Gen 1,2,3 vs. Rev 20,21,22.**

In the Hebrew Bible, **Structure dictates function**. That is, where a book is located in the Bible helps you know how to interpret and understand it.

Explanation for the Rationale of Book order. This is meant to be helpful for understanding the books of the bible better. Nothing says this is why the books are like they are.

### **Covering the Writings**

#### **LIFE IN THE LAND (1<sup>st</sup> 6 books)**

#### **Psalms**

The first thing to know about being in relationship with the Creator God is described in Psalms (WORSHIP). All of life is about God, His worship.

There are several different kinds of Psalms including:

- 1.Lament
- 2.Specialized Laments (imprecatory and penitential)
- 3.Thanksgiving
- 4.Salvation history
- 5.Songs of Trust
- 6.Hymns
- 7.Liturgies
- 8.Royal
- 9.Covenant
- 10.Wisdom

The most prevalent is the lament, which spotlights next book – Job.

#### **Job**

The next book in the Canon, is a story spotlighting what it is like to suffer for nothing more than to **prove the value of God**. It is an illustration of what a worshipping life looks like. How do you worship? If God were to give you nothing but Himself – would you feel that He was infinitely gracious to you? If He were to give you everything you wanted, but withhold Himself, then this would be regarded as the ultimate cruelty in the mind of the Psalmist and Job. To worship well is to live with this mindset.

So, Psalms is the teaching, ie the theology of worship. Job is the illustration. See the thematic arrangement?

Once you know worship is of the utmost importance and what that looks like – how do you live in the land? Like a wise person or a foolish person?

**Proverbs** is about how to live and think wisely.

Prov 1-9 theology of wisdom, 10 ff practical stuff...

Teaching then illustration. Indicative-imperative model. How to think (be) – How to behave (do)

(Like Paul's letters. He is a good Pharisee. In Romans 1-11, then wham Chapter 12 “therefore,” here's how to live in light of what I said.)

Anecdotally, Proverbs is written to teach young boys how to live. See ch 1:2-4 and many others mention to “Hear, my son...”

The climax of Hebrew wisdom in chapter 31 - get a good wife! (May make an appeal to creation to show the importance of a good wife theologically. Day 6 in Gen 2 commentary)

So, everyone knows Proverbs 31. This passage describes a wife of strength or valor (lit). This word appears 3 times in the Bible to describe a woman - 2 times in Proverbs 31 (the beginning and ending of the acrostic) as the ideal wife. The other time is in reference to Ruth by the men at the gates (v 3:11).

## **Ruth**

Ruth, a narrative, between Proverbs and Lamentations (high poetry books) doesn't seem to fit. This violates genre and chronology principles.

Why is Ruth after Proverbs? Proverbs 31 is the teaching. Ruth is the illustration. This is what a good wife looks like.

It is not just an idyllic love story sandwiched in the midst of war and despair to give a sort of relief. Its placement has purpose.

## **Song of Songs**

Now we know what the climax of Hebrew wisdom is and what a good wife looks like. Now, how do you treat a good wife?

There is some controversy with this book. Some say it is about marital romance. Some say it is an allegory of God and Israel or Christ and the church. Maybe the truth is somewhere in the middle.

## **Ecclesiastes**

Book of **anti-wisdom**. Most used phrase in this book (not “vanity of vanities”) is “under the sun.” It addresses worldview: Life with Christ (or in this case, faith in God) or life without. We must address this book from a different worldview because it tells us in:

Ecc 1:15 – “What is **crooked** cannot be made straight, and what is lacking cannot be counted.” But in Isaiah 45:2 - “I will go before you And **make** the **crooked** places **straight**; I will break in pieces the gates of bronze And cut the bars of iron.”

Ecc 1:9 – “What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is **nothing new** under the sun.”

Then in Isaiah 43:19 – “Behold, I am doing a **new thing**; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”

How can we reconcile these things? We must read Ecclesiastes with a different worldview to understand what is being communicated.

Ecclesiastes teaches that meaning and lasting joy can only be found by viewing life as a gift by the Creator. Therefore, being satisfied with Him alone.

## **LIFE IN EXILE (2<sup>nd</sup> six books)**

**Lamentations** – Jeremiah recounts the destruction of the Temple. If you know that Jeremiah is talking about the Temple, the book will mean so much more than just picking it up and trying to relate to your life.

### **Esther**

How does a woman live in the exile? Faithful unto death. “if I perish, I perish...” willing to die for the sake of the people. A love for the church and faithfulness to God at all costs.

### **Daniel**

How does a man live in the exile? The same way – faithful unto death. How to live in persecution. Story of the Lion’s Den. The Fiery Furnace with the famous line, “Our God is able to save us, but even if He does not...”

### **Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles.**

Covered in last session with the storyline of the OT, but in the Hebrew Bible we learn something the English Bible doesn’t inform us of.

In the Hebrew Bible, **chronology teaches theology**. Even History is the servant of the Canon.

Ezra and Nehemiah are about the people of Israel coming home from exile in answer to the Decree of Cyrus in 538 BC, which starts the book of Ezra. The next book is Chronicles which ends with the same Decree of Cyrus in 538. Why? Chronologically that doesn’t make any sense to a Western mindset.

Without speaking, the order of the Bible tells us that the return is an epic failure. They are caught in a cycle that needs a greater savior than Nehemiah, although he is a good man. He isn’t enough.

### **The Passover – A new Exodus**

Now, the significance of **The Passover** is reiterated. If you look up “Passover.” It is highlighted in the Exodus event (21 in the Law). It is hardly ever mentioned again (almost 1000 years) until the end of Chronicles, then an explosion of the term (17 in 2 Chronicles 30ff)

They celebrated Passover before the exodus originally, now they are preparing again for Passover, what will they expect? A new exodus?!

## **The Temple – the new Temple**

In Haggai: 2:9, we read “the latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former”. The new temple will outshine Solomon’s house. From Ezra 3:12-13, we know that older priests and men who had seen the older temple - wept aloud when they saw the new temple’s foundation. WHY?

The younger folks were excited to see it and thought things were going well. The older generation wept because they recognized the failure of the new temple. It was not as great as the first one and they knew Haggai 2:9. The new Temple was not going to be brick and mortar. This is not the Temple they are to look for, there is a greater one.

## **The Genealogies – with purpose.**

Two books in the bible begin with **genealogies**: Chronicles and Matthew. These (genealogies) are usually placed at points where redemptive history is advancing.

The size listed in Chronicles (nine chapters), you know something major is happening (9 ch). Gen 4/5 isn’t near this long. It lets us know a new phase is coming. Reading the genealogy prepares us. Chronicles highlights two primary thoughts: the kingship of David and establishment of the Temple. It is preparing the people to look for a new David and a new Temple.

Now, knowing that the **Exodus is an event where the Lord fights as a warrior for his people to bring deliverance**. Let’s look at the end of the Hebrew Bible.

## **The Deliverer – the new David**

Through out the book of Judges - there is a phrase, “Let him go up” or “Who will go up?” meaning, who will fight for the people. It is a one word Hebrew Holy-War verb. It is repeated at the very end of Chronicles.

The Hebrew language usually puts its verbs up front. If the verb is last in a sentence, especially at the end of a book, the sentence is asking you to really look at it.

“Let him go up” in Hebrew is a holy-war verb and the last phrase in the Hebrew Bible. Judges 1:1-2 “who shall go up for us.... Judah shall go up first. Judges 20:18 Last battle in Judges, “Judah shall go up.” The tribe of Judah fights the 1st and Last battle of the book of Judges.

Therefore the “reflex” of a Jewish man when he reads the last phrase – “Let him go up” - of the book of Chronicles would be, “who will go up for us?” Then we need to answer the question, which is done for us in the next book - Matthew. Who will go up? Matt 1:1 – “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ...” Judah will go up again for the LAST TIME.... A Savior who is Christ the Lord.

The Jewish Bible ends expecting and looking for: A greater prophet (Moses – see Deut 34), a greater king, greater temple and a new Exodus.

Genealogies - Jesus is the goal of all OT genealogies. Jesus is the goal of the whole Bible. All of creation from Adam on - had as its goal, the incarnation son of God to come as a warrior to save us from our sins in an act of warfare.

## Session 4

### An Introduction to Practical Tools for Studying the Bible

#### Review wk 1-3. Overview of OT Story.

Discovering the wealth of the Bible

- A. Observation**
- B. Interpretation**
- C. Implication**
- D. Application**

**A. Observation:** What do you see?

a. Questions to ask

i. Who?

1. Who wrote it?
2. Who was it written to originally? (Jews, Gentiles, 1<sup>st</sup> century culture, etc)
3. How would they have read it?
4. Who are the main characters?

ii. What?

1. What is going on?
2. What is the author saying?
3. What is wrong with the picture?

iii. Where?

1. Where is the writer? (Paul in prison, sometimes exile, etc)
2. Where are the original readers? (Paul's letters, )
3. Where is the text taking place? (think Moses writing the Law: Sinai, wilderness, plains of Moab, etc)

iv. When?

1. When was it written?
2. Did the events take?
3. What was culture like at that time? (ie, don't apply the Sinai Covenant to Noah or Adam and Eve etc)
4. What was normative?

v. Why?

1. Why is the author writing this?
2. Why is this included in Scripture?
3. Why did the events happen the way they did?
4. Why did the author say things a certain way? (eg. Gal 3)

vi. Repetition/Space

1. 2 Cor 1:3-7

- a. **3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, **4** who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. **5** For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. <sup>F1</sup> **6** If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. **7** Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.

vii. Compare and Contrast

1. Rom 6:23

- a. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

viii. Types – don't over do it!

1. Romans 5:14

- a. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

ix. Patterns

- a. Broad overview throughout OT
- b. Compare events to the Garden

x. Observe:

1. Individual verses
2. Paragraphs
3. Observe entire lines of thought

## Interpretation

- a. What does it mean?
  - i. Context, context and context
  - ii. Context means "that which goes WITH the text."
    1. Determine original intent of author
    2. Original Meaning
    3. A text cannot mean what it never meant...
    4. Eg Phil 4:13
    5. Differentiate OUR context from THEIR context
      - a. Our preconceived notions
      - b. Our culture

- i. Language
- ii. Customs
- iii. Concept of family
- iv. “values”
- v. Ethnicity
- vi. Politics
- vii. Gender
- viii. Religion(s)
- ix. Pride – Standing over the text vs. submitting to it.

4. Genres – each has unwritten rules

a. OT

- i. Narrative
- ii. Law
- iii. Poetry
- iv. Prophets
- v. Wisdom

b. NT

- i. Gospels
- ii. Letters
- iii. Acts
- iv. Revelation

**Implication** – How Does it Relate?

- a. What are the TIMELESS TRUTHS?
  - i. Principle that applies to all people over all time.
    - 1. Eternal
    - 2. Cross-cultural
  - ii. Compatible with the rest of Scripture
  - iii. Applicable (to our time and the Bible time period)

**Application** – How do I respond or what do I do? Focuses on Action.

- a. Meditate on the timeless truth
- b. Application “action” (behavior) should flow from Identity
  - i. Who is God?
  - ii. What has He done?
  - iii. Who am I because of what He has done?
  - iv. How do I think and live in light of that?
  - v. How do I share it? Disciple making (Matt 28)
- c. Eg. Eph 2:8-10
  - i. For by grace you have been saved through faith, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- Must interpret within genres differently.  
Eg Isaiah vs Ecclesiastes in Session 2

**Quick Hints**

- a. OT Narrative/History
  - i. Common mistakes
    - 2. Allegorizing – eg David and Goliath,
    - 3. Moralizing – There’s no “moral to the story”
    - 4. Personalizing – Man-Centered. Eg Samson
    - 5. Appeal to session 2’s Hebrew Bible Ordering.
  - ii. Look at:
    - i. Individual History
    - ii. National History
    - iii. Redemptive History
- b. Did we mention Patterns? Us being dumb over and over again.
- c. Law
  - i. Over 600 laws in the 1<sup>st</sup> 5 books of the OT
  - ii. The Law itself is a covenant between God and his people
  - iii. Understanding Different Categories of Law
    - 2. Civil Law – Israel no longer confined to a nation
    - 3. Ceremonial Law – Eph 2:15, not separated
    - 4. Moral Law – Restated in the NT by Jesus, Paul, etc
    - 5. Civil and Ceremonial Laws are not restated in the NT, while the Moral Law is (General Rule – gets complicated!).
- All of the OT is God’s Word **FOR** us even though it isn’t God’s command **TO** us.
- Remember the OT is God acting in history preparing us for the arrival of the Deliverer (Jesus) who will fight for His people to save them from their sins.

Studying Poetry and Prophet Sections: Refer to Session 2 for Interpretation help (where the book is, etc). Then apply Observation, Interpretation, Implication and Application.

- a. Gospels – different perspectives
  - i. Matthew - written to Jews (Kingdom of Heaven vs God)
  - ii. Mark – Written to the Romans (immediately, etc)
  - iii. Luke – Written to Greeks. An orderly history...
  - iv. John – written to the world.
- b. Acts -
  - ii. Acts is the sequel to Luke
  - iii. Organized geographically
    - 1. 1-7 Church in Jerusalem
    - 2. 8-9 Church in Judea and Samaria
    - 3. 10-28 Church in the end of the earth
  - iv. Descriptive vs. Prescriptive
    - 1. eg. Acts 6 –
- c. Epistles (Letters) –
  - ii. Not written as theological treatises (a comprehensive work)
  - iii. Written to a specific situation
    - 1. Argument appeals to creation, therefore Timeless truth
    - 2. 1 Tim 2 regarding men’s and women’s roles.
  - iv. Doctrine to be straightened out

## **Helpful Tools**

All information presented in this class were from the following sources, none of it was original material.

NIV or ESV Study Bible

Good Study Bible NIV or ESV APPS are available.

### **Online resources:**

StudyLight.org

BibleGateway.org

Blueletterbible.org

Monergism.org

Equip.org

CCEL.org

Gotquestions.com

### **Software:**

E-Sword (free for Windows)

Logos

Accordance

### **Books for Further Study**

#### **Overview Books:**

30 days to Understanding the Bible by Max Anders

What the Bible is All About by Henrietta Mears

Old Testament History and Books of the Bible by John Sailhamer (Summaries)

How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth by Gordon Fee

#### **Biblical Theology Books:**

From Creation to New Creation by Tim Chester

God's Big Picture by Vaughn Roberts

According to Plan by Graeme Goldsworthy

Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible by Stephen Dempster

#### **Textbooks**

Old Testament Theology by Paul House

Introduction to Old Testament Theology by John Sailhamer

Chronological and Background Charts of the OT by John Walton

The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church by Roger Beckwith

#### **Classes to take via MP3:**

How to Study the Bible by David Platt (Secret Church.org)

#### **Biblical Training.org**

Introduction to the OT via Hebrew Bible - Miles Van Pelt

Approaches to the OT - Paul House

Why Study the OT - Paul House

Clarifying the Bible - Mitch Mayer at [clarifyingthebible.com](http://clarifyingthebible.com)

**ITunesU: Audio**

**Old Testament: Reformed Theological Seminary**

Genesis through Joshua - Dr. Richard Belcher

Judges through Esther - Dr. Richard Belcher

The Pentateuch - Dr. Richard Pratt

Isaiah through Malachi - Dr. Richard Pratt

Judges through Poets - Dr. John Currid

Covenant Theological Seminary - OT Overview Classes