

SURVEY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

I. ORIENTATION: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

A. Reasons why people read the Bible

- The Bible as **Literature**
- The Bible as History
- The Bible and Professional Writers
- The Bible and Education
- The Bible and Eternal Life

B. The Contents of the Old Testament

The old Testament is that collection of sacred writings which virtually since their composition have been considered by the Jews to be their scripture. The Christian Church of the first century recognized the Old Testament scriptures as their source of doctrine and ethics, and when their own literature known as the New Testament was composed, it was added to the Old Testament and both together became accepted as God's written word.

C. The Composition of the Old Testament

1. The question must inevitably arise as to the process of selection of the various books which make up the Old Testament. This is especially true in the light of the fact that there were other documents written during the historical period of the old Testament, possibly by some of the Biblical writers. How did the early Hebrews know which of these should be included in their scriptures and which should not?
2. The answer is, a **book was CANONICAL OR NOT** depending upon its adherence to certain **well-defined principles**.

Jewish scholars held that for a document to be scripture it must **have been written by a prophet** or an individual who at least had the prophetic gift.

Once a scripture was written, **it must be of benefit to every subsequent age**. not just the age in which it was written. It could only meet the immediate needs of the generation in which it was compiled, it must not be scripture - it lacked timelessness which is a **characteristic of true scripture**.

INSPIRATION was perhaps the most important fact to be taken into account if it was to be included in the CANON of scripture.

NOTE: Likewise for us in our old Testament Survey. we **MUST** believe the Bible is inspired, and that any statement it makes even with regard to its own inspiration must be believed.

Even the words of Jesus and the apostles teach us that the Old Testament is inspired; therefore, we can with confidence as Christian students accept all that is before us by *faith*. For in the final analysis, what do we believe on any other basis than that of faith? (Hebrews 11:3)

D. Inspiration Defined

Inspiration - Greek, "God-breathed." 2 Timothy 3:16

The influence of the Spirit of God on the mind and spirit of man; the Divine influence exerted on the writers of Scripture, by which they were instructed. 2 Peter 1:20,21

E. Method of Inspiration

Revelation - communication of truth that could not be discovered by human reason.

Inspiration - the process by which the revelation was recorded, and the power which enabled the men God used to write the Divine revelation without error or defect.

Illumination the process of the Holy Spirit enlightening man's understanding to be able to receive revelation of God.

Insures perfect understanding; absolutely necessary for understanding

Natural man without the understanding of the Spirit does not accept the things of God. Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:14

Revelation is reception of truth. Inspiration is recording of truth. Illumination is perception of truth.

Plenary-verbal Inspiration

Plenary = full, complete Verbal = by means of words

Divine touch makes Scriptures infallible; human touch made them understandable

F. False Theories of Inspiration

Natural Theory - Bible written by human genius, superior mental abilities and insight

Illumination Theory - written by men in a state of heightened religious perception

Mechanical Theory - God used man as a mere machine, as a tape recorder or typewriter

Trance Theory - writers caught up in a trance and wrote as they "saw"

Partial Theory - part of Bible inspired, part uninspired

Thought Theory - God gave man ideas and concepts, then left man to express themselves as they wished.

G. Proofs of Inspiration

Predictive Prophecy - 1000's of prophecies uttered before events they predicted took place.

Numerical Structure of Bible - a veritable gold-mine of amazing facts and figures: numerical beyond coincidence.

Unity of the Bible - Bible possesses marvelous unity with great diversity

Written over a period of 1600 years by approximately 40 authors from a vast variety of backgrounds, and social states.

Its harmony of themes is seen throughout also the flowing harmony of the OT and NT. NT is in the OT hidden - NT is the OT revealed.

Miraculous preservation of Bible - for over 3500 years in spite of attacks and opposition.

Influence of the Bible - touched men, nations, cultures. Lives have been changed, histories altered.

H. Bible claims Inspiration

Writers (Deut 4:2; Acts 1:16)

Writings (Ex 17:14; Jer 30:2)

Contents (Is 55:8-li)

I. Results of Inspiration

Genuineness -it is what it claims to be

Credibility - entirely truthful in what it reveals

Inerrant - free for error

Infallibility - means **incapable of error**, not liable to error.

Authority - as we acknowledge the Bible as inspired and infallible, it becomes the supreme authority for all Christians in matters of faith and morals, and the final court of appeals for life and conscience. **If the Bible says it, I believe it and that settles it. Amen.**

J. What about the "Bible-science" Conflict?

There are those who find a conflict between science and the Bible with regards to some of the statements in the Old Testament. For example, when the scriptures speak of the "four corners of the earth" or the "rising of the sun". *Granted*, these are unscientific statements but we should not condemn the prophets for speaking unscientifically, for this way of speaking is obviously colloquialism. who would correct the weatherman and tell him he is speaking unscientifically when he says the same thing?

Let us be fair to the Bible and permit it to use the speech of the workaday world!

It is true that the Bible was not written as a science textbook, but it is equally true that it cannot be dis-proven in its scientific knowledge, far in advance of its own time. for example, Isaiah 40:22, Leviticus 17:11 and Job 26:7, to mention a few.

K. Ways to Read the Bible

Reading the Bible by whole **books**

Reading the **entire Bible as one unit**

Bible reading according **to a plan**

Reading the Bible aloud

Bible reading **Marathons**

The most satisfying Bible reading will always be personal

Bible reading for **devotion and meditation**

L. What Version or Versions?

You may use any version you prefer.

However, I would suggest that you use either the King James or the New King James.

For your own personal Bible reading there are many good versions in modern day English. You might try different ones to help you get the meaning of difficult passages.

[INDEX](#) - [NEXT](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

ORIENTATION II: UNITS OF STUDY

INTRODUCTION

To simplify the approach of the introductory student to the books of the Old Testament, this Old Testament Survey course groups the thirty-nine books chronologically according to the best opinions of their order, wherever such an arrangement works to the advantage **of the student**.

NOTE:

THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT ARE TO BE READ IN JUNCTION WITH THE LESSON ON THAT PARTICULAR BOOK, IN-ORDER TO GET THE FEEL OF THE BOOK, THE BOOK NEEDS TO BE READ IN ITS ENTIRETY IN ONE SITTING. THEN, AFTER HAVING READ THE ENTIRE BOOK IN ONE SITTING, GO BACK AND READ/STUDY EACH CHAPTER AND DO THE CHAPTER SUMMARY IN THE ANSWER BOOKLET FOR THAT BOOK AND CHAPTER.

UNITS OF STUDY

I. The Five Books Of Moses - The Pentateuch

Genesis

Exodus

Leviticus

Numbers

Deuteronomy

II. The Books Of Conquest And Settlement Of Canaan

Joshua

Judges

Ruth

III. The Books Of Kings And Kingdoms

I & II Samuel

I & II Kings

I & II Chronicles

IV. The Prophets of Period of the Divided Kingdom

Elijah

Elisha

**BOOKS OF THE PROPHETS DURING THE
DECLINE AND FALL OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM, 934-721 B.C.
(PERIOD OF THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE, 885 TO 612 B.C.)**

Joel

Jonah

Amos

Hosea

Isaiah

Micah

**BOOKS OF THE PROPHETS DURING THE DECLINE
AND FALL OF JUDAH, 934-586 B.C. (THE FALL OF THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE, AND
BABYLONIAN SUPREMACY, 612 TO 538 B.C.)**

Zephaniah

Nahum

Habakkuk

Jeremiah

V. The Prophets in Exile

Ezekiel

Daniel

Lamentations

Obadiah

VI. The Books of The Return And Restoration

Ezra

Esther

Nehemiah

VII. The Prophets of the Return and Restoration

Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

VIII. The Book of Psalms

IX. The Books of the Wise Men of Israel

Job
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
The Song of Songs

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [INTRODUCTION-THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

O.T. SURVEY - INDEX

[GENERAL INTRODUCTION](#)

[UNITS OF STUDY](#)

UNIT I - THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES, THE PENTATEUCH

[INTRODUCTION](#) * [GENESIS](#) * [EXODUS](#) * [LEVITICUS](#)
[NUMBERS](#) * [DEUTERONOMY](#)

UNIT II - THE BOOKS OF CONQUEST AND SETTLEMENT OF CANAAN

[JOSHUA](#) * [JUDGES](#) * [RUTH](#)

UNIT III - THE BOOKS OF KINGS AND KINGDOMS

[I & II SAMUEL](#) * [I & II KINGS](#) * [I & II CHRONICLES](#)

UNIT IV - THE PROPHETS OF THE PERIOD OF THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

[ELIJAH](#) * [ELISHA](#)

NORTHERN KINGDOM'S FALL AND DECLINE

[JOEL](#) * [JONAH](#) * [AMOS](#) * [HOSEA](#) * [ISAIAH](#) * [MICAHA](#)

UNIT IV continued

JUDAH'S FALL AND DECLINE

[ZEPHANIAH](#) * [NAHUM](#) * [HABAKKUK](#) * [JEREMIAH](#)

UNIT V - THE BOOKS OF THE PROPHETS OF THE PERIOD OF THE EXILE

[EZEKIEL](#) * [DANIEL](#) * [LAMENTATIONS](#) * [OBADIAH](#)

UNIT VI - THE BOOKS OF THE RETURN AND RESTORATION

[EZRA](#) * [ESTHER](#) * [NEHEMIAH](#)

UNIT VII - THE BOOKS OF THE PROPHETS OF THE RETURN AND RESTORATION

[HAGGAI](#) * [ZECHARIAH](#) * [MALACHI](#)

UNIT VIII

[THE BOOK OF PSALMS](#)

UNIT IX - THE BOOKS OF THE WISE MEN OF ISRAEL

[JOB](#) * [PROVERBS](#) * [ECCLESIASTES](#) * [SONG OF SONGS](#)

UNIT I

THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES - THE PENTATEUCH

INTRODUCTION

The first five books of the Bible are called the Pentateuch, which means five books. These books were written by Moses, and are identified in Scripture as "the Law (Deuteronomy 31:24; 31:26);" "The Law of the Lord" (2 Chronicles 31:4); and "the Law of Moses" (1 Kings 2:3).

Although the Mosaic authorship has been questioned, it is affirmed:

By the Old Testament (Exodus 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; Numbers 17:2; 33:2; Deuteronomy 6:9; 24:1,3; 27:3,4; 31:9,19,22,24)

By the New Testament

By Jesus (Mark 7:10; 12:26; Luke 20:37; 24:27,44)

Others (Acts 7:37,38; Romans 10:5,19; 1 Corinthians 9:9; Hebrews 12:21; John 1:45 Rev 15:3)

Conservative scholars and archaeology

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

INTRODUCTION

The name Genesis is taken from the **Septuagint (LXX)**, which is a Greek translation made of the Old Testament in Alexandria about 285 - 247 B.C. Josephus tells us that this translation was made by 72 priests (hence its name) in 72 days. Christ and Paul quoted from this translation of the Old Testament. **It is older than any of the Hebrew texts extant today.**

Genesis is the book of **BEGINNINGS** - the beginnings of creation, man, women, Sabbath, marriage, family, work, sin, murder, sacrifice, races, languages, culture, civilization and **redemption**.

As a **BOOK OF BEGINNINGS**, it falls into **two natural divisions**,

3. **The beginnings of History**
4. **The beginnings of the History of Israel.**

A. THE BEGINNINGS OF HISTORY, CHAPTERS 1 - 11

The ancient world, before the coming of Abraham covers a minimum of 2000 years and could easily be a thousand times longer. **The time period extends to about 2150 BC.**

1. CREATION, Genesis 1:1

Heaven and Earth, 1:1

"Create" (Heb. "bora" - out of nothing occurs only three times, verses 1,21,27)

Gap Theory - a theory that speaks of a span of time between Genesis 1:1, the creation of the Heavens and earth, and Genesis 1:2, which literally says, "And the earth became a waste and void..." The following scriptures seem to support this theory, Genesis 1:2; Isaiah 14:1-14; Jeremiah 4:23-26; Ezekiel 28:11-17; 2 Peter 3:5-6, 13.

2. RE-CREATION - RESTORATION, Genesis 1:2 - 2:25

CREATION WAS EFFECTED -

by God (Proverbs 26:10)

by Christ (John 1:3,10; Col 1:16; Hebrews 1:2)

by the Holy Spirit (Job 26:13; psalms 104:30)

according to **God's purpose** (Psalms 135:6)

for **God's pleasure** (Rev. 4:11; Proverbs 16:4)

in **six days** - The question is frequently debated whether the days were ordinary days or not. NOTE: The Hebrew word "Yom" (day) primarily denotes an ordinary day, but the same word can have a different meaning if the context demands it. While we are free to think in terms of creation days as lengthy periods of time (examples, Psalms 50:15, Ecclesiastes 7:14, Zechariah 4:10), we must admit that the last three days of creation were evidently ordinary, 24 hour days, for they were determined by the earth's relation to the sun (Genesis 1:5, 14-19)

by Faith (Hebrews 11:3) NOTE: Creation as a fact cannot really be grasped by the natural mind. Hereby we can test the type of faith we have. If we have faith in Christ, it seems to follow somehow automatically - we just understand. For even if it were possible to baffle us with arguments which atheists and scientists have, somehow we are not robbed of our experience. we just understand. A "New Creation" really doesn't need to be convinced of the validity of this creation.

3. PARALLEL REPETITION - Chapter 2:4-25

In chapter 1, the writer reveals the creative work of God, the Creator, as an accomplished fact. In chapter 2, he is giving a brief history of the world as created, with special emphasis on man as the climax of earthly creation.

Chapter 2 is not another creation account as some would think.

4. THE FALL, Chapters 3 and 4

Root of Sin - Doubting and Disobeying God

Hope Restored - Redemption

Since evil did not originate within man, herein lies the hope of victory. Here in chapter 3:14,15 we have the prophecy of the Covenant of Grace and man's eventual redemption through a promised Savior and victory over the evil one. Meanwhile, man is expelled from the Garden to make his own way in the world, under the penalty of his disobedience.

Fruit of Sin

"Out of the heart proceed.. murder..."

5. DESTRUCTION IMMINENT, Chapters 5 to 11

"My Spirit shall not always strive..."

Genesis 6:2-7. Some suggest that the "Sons of God" in this passage were angels, while the daughters of men were human beings. This interpretation has support from Job 1:6; 2 Peter 2:4; and Jude 6,7.

Other side of coin, argues against above interpretation based on the description of Jesus that angels are sexless (Mark 12:25). They maintain that the daughters of men were the descendants of Cain, while the sons of God could only have been the sons of Seth.

With either interpretation the results was an ungodly offspring, whose evil doings were responsible for bringing on the judgment of the flood.

The Flood - chapter 7

The deluge was the most universal and severe judgment upon the human race in Old Testament times.

God's grace is evident.

Babel - Confusion

Man decides to build a city and a tower for the purpose of homogeneity (Genesis 11:1-4) in defiance to God's clear command (Genesis 9:1) to multiply and replenish the earth. Perhaps man's disobedience resulted from his desire to restart that one place, that Eden and God confused their language and scattered them. There can only be true oneness in the Spirit.

B. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL, CHAPTERS 12 - 50

1. THE STORY OF ABRAHAM (Faith), Chapters 12 to 25:10

Development of FAITH by seven appearances of God

God's Call and Promise, 12:1-3

Promise Renewed, 12:7

Promise Expanded, 13:14-16

God reveals Himself more completely, chapter 15

God makes a Covenant with Abraham, chapter 17

Abram becomes Abraham

Confirms promise of a son

God reveals Coming Destruction of Sodom, chapter 18

God commands Abraham to offer Isaac - Restrains him - Reconfirms Covenant with Abraham, chapter 22

2. THE STORY OF ISAAC (Beloved Son), Chapters 24 to 26

Abraham sends servant for Bride for Isaac - Rebekah returns with him - becomes Isaac's bride, chapter 24

Death of Abraham - birth of Esau & Jacob, chapter 25

God confirms Covenant to Isaac - Isaac misrepresents relationship with Rebekah - Isaac digs well in Gerar, chapter 26

3. THE STORY OF JACOB, Chapters 25:27 to 36

The patriarchal Blessing, chapter 27

Isaac favors Esau

Blessings stolen - Immediate Consequence

The Dream at Bethel, chapter 26:6-22

Family and wealth, chapters 29 to 34

Esau and Jacob reconciled, chapter 35

4. THE STORY OF JACOB AND JOSEPH, Chapters 37 to 50

Joseph's unpopularity, chapter 37

Jacob's unregenerate family, chapters 37:15 to 38

Joseph's unfair treatment, chapters 39 to 40

Joseph's leadership unparalleled, chapter 41

Joseph and His brethren, chapters 42 to 50

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF EXODUS](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF EXODUS

INTRODUCTION

The book of Exodus is a sequel to the book of Genesis. It is the second of the "five-fold" volume known as the Pentateuch. The narrative begins by pointing out the very great increase in numbers of the descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob in Egypt during the 300 years or so between the close of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus.

The contents of the forty chapters of the book of Exodus fall naturally into three important divisions:

5. **The Status of the Israelites in Egypt:**
Their Oppression and Deliverance;
6. **The March from the Red Sea to Mount Sinai;**
7. **Israel's Eleven Months at Mount Sinai.**

1. THE STATUS OF THE ISRAELITES IN EGYPT:

THEIR OPPRESSION AND DELIVERANCE, CHAPTERS 1 TO 15:21

Pharaoh's Changed Attitude Toward Israel, Chapters 1 to 2

Moses - The Call, chapter 3

The confrontation and the Ten Plagues, Chapters 5 to 11

The deliverance, Chapters 12 to 15:21

The Passover, chapter 12

The Exodus, chapters 13 to 15:21

2. MARCH FROM THE RED SEA TO MOUNT SINAI, CHAPTERS 15 TO 18

They Came to Marah, Chapter 15:22-26

Facing Famine, Chapter 16:1-36

Extreme Thirst, chapter 17:1-7

Attacked by the Amalekites, Chapter 17:8-16

3. ISRAEL'S ELEVEN MONTHS AT MOUNT SINAI, CHAPTERS 19-40

The Law of Moses on Sinai, Chapters 19 to 31

Preparation for the giving of the Law, chapter 19

The Commandments, chapter 20

The Book of the Covenant, chapters 21 to 24

The Tabernacle and the Priesthood, chapters 25 to 31

The Apostasy, chapter 32

The Forgiveness, Renewal of Covenant, chapters 33 to 34

Construction of the Tabernacle and its Furnishings, chapters 35 to 40

THE MEANING OF THE BOOK OF EXODUS

A Book of Redemption and Deliverance - Just as God brought the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt, so by redemption we understand that the Redeemer delivers us out of the bondage of sin. Moreover, He also, brings us into a special relationship with Himself, making us His people and His own purchased possession.

The Book of Exodus, therefore, beginning with the great deliverance of God's people from Egypt, and culminating in the *Passover*, **fore-shadow's the still greater redemption achieved by Jesus Christ on Calvary.**

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

INTRODUCTION

NOTE: READ THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS WITH THIS LESSON

The book of Exodus closed with the Israelites still encamped before Mount Sinai. The time of the book of Leviticus is during this same eleven months period of encampment at Sinai. The account of the construction of the Tabernacle and its furniture was given in the last part of the book of Exodus. **The rules for worship in the new Tabernacle are given in the Book of Leviticus.**

MESSAGE: The message is twofold.

1. Leviticus teaches that the way to God is BY SACRIFICE. The word "atonement" occurs 45 times.

"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." (Lev. 17:11)

Atonement means to cover up. The blood of bulls and goats did not actually take away sin. It covered over until Christ came who took away our sins.

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." (Romans 3:25)

2. Leviticus teaches that the walk with God is by sanctification. The word "holiness" occurs 87 times.

"And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people. that ye should be mine." (Lev. 20:26)

God gave strict laws governing the diet, social life, and daily details involving every physical aspect of the lives of His people. These laws have a greater spiritual application to His people today.

Access to God is secured for the sinner through the shed blood of Christ.

"Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world, but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Hebrews 9:25, 26)

Those redeemed by the blood of Christ must live a holy life if they are to enjoy and worship God.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Hebrews 12.20,21)

REMARKS:

Leviticus is a remarkable book, as the contents are considered in the light of the New Testament These suggestions are illustrative of this:

8. The five offerings which open this book are clear crystal cut cameos of Christ. They depict His person in depth and work (chapters 1-7).
9. The consecration of the priests reveals how shallow and inadequate is our thinking of Christian consecration (chapters 8-10).
10. The diet God provided for His people was sanitary and therapeutic, and contains much spiritual food for our souls (chapter 11).
11. The attention given motherhood is a farther example of God's thinking concerning womanhood (chapter 12).
12. The prominence given to leprosy and its treatment, in the heart of this book on worship, demands our attention. Those who have been given gracious insights into Scripture have found here a type of sin and its defiling effect on man in his relation to God. The cleansing of the leper finds its fulfilment in the death and resurrection of Christ in a most unusual sacrifice two birds (chapters 13-15).
13. The great day of atonement is a full length portrait of the sacrifice of Christ (chapter 16).
14. The importance of the burnt altar in the Tabernacle highlights the essential characteristic of the cross of Christ (chapter 17).
15. The emphasis in this book of instructions concerning seemingly minute details in the daily lives of God's people reveals how God intends the human family to be involved with Him (chapters 18-22).
16. The list of feasts furnishes a prophetic program of God's agenda for all time (chapter 23).
17. The laws governing the land of Palestine furnish an interpretation of its checkered history and an insight into its future prominence. The nation Israel and the promised land are intertwined and interwoven from here to eternity (chapters 24-27).

OUTLINE

I. The **FIVE OFFERINGS** and the law of them, Chapters 1-7

1. Sweet Savor Offerings (Person of Christ), Chapters 1-3
 1. Burnt Offering (Christ Our Substitute)
 2. Meal Offering (Loveliness of Christ)
 3. Peace Offering (Christ our Peace)
2. Non-Sweet Savor Offerings (Work of Christ on Cross), Chapters 4,5
 1. Sin offering (Sin as a Nature)
 2. Trespass offering (Sin as an Act)
3. Law of the Offerings, Chapters 6,7

II. The **PRIESTS** (All Believers Are Priests), Chapters 8-10

1. Consecration of Priests
2. Ministry of Priests
3. Restrictions on Priests (Death of Nadab and Abihu)

III. **HOLINESS** in Daily life (God Concerned with His Children's Conduct). Chapters 11-22

1. Food of God's People
2. Children of God's Children
3. Cleansing of Leprosy
4. Cleansing of Running Issues
5. Great Day of Atonement
6. Place of Sacrifice; value of the Blood
7. Application of commandments to Life Situations, Chapters 18-20
 1. Immorality Condemned (Amplification of 6th Commandment, Exodus 20:14).
 2. Social Sins (Application of Commandments)
 3. Penalty for Breaking Commandments.
8. Law for Personal Purity of Priests

IV. The **HOLY HOLIDAYS**, Chapter 23

V. **LAWS and PROPHECIES** for the Promised Land, Chapters 24-26

1. Lampstand, Showbread and Death Penalty for the Blasphemer
2. Sabbatic Year, Year of Jubile and Law of Kinsman Redeemer
3. Conditions of Blessing in the Land (a Prophetic History)

VI. Dedication and Devotion - Concerning VOWS, Chapter 27

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF NUMBERS](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

INTRODUCTION

In the book of Numbers we see the children of Israel depart from Mt. Sinai and march to Kadesh-barnea. At Kadesh-barnea the attitude of unbelief is crystalized into actual disobedience. The light is focused on faith, and they failed. "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Heb. 3:19). After Kadesh-barnea they began to wander until that entire generation died in the wilderness (two notable exceptions were Joshua and Caleb). The years of wandering were a veritable saga of suffering, a trek of tragedy, and a story of straying.

Numbers gets its name from the census in the first chapter and the one in the twenty-sixth chapter. Numbers is know as "a divine history of the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness for about 38 years and 10 months, commencing with the first movement of the camp after the tabernacle was reared."

KEY : 14:29-31

These verses outline the experiences of the children of Israel during the time of wandering until the new generation came to the east bank of the Jordan in the land of Moab.

COMMENTS:

It was 150 to 200 miles from Mt. Sinai to Kadesh-barnea - a journey in that time of 11 days (Deuteronomy. 1:2), They spent 30 days at Kibroth. They spent 40 years on a journey that should have taken 40 days. At Kadesh-barnea walking was turned to wandering. They did not advance an inch after Kadesh-barnea; at the end of the wanderings they came back to the same place (Numbers 20:1).

That their number was decimated is seen by a comparison of the two census:

603,550 fighting men (1:46)

601,730 fighting men (26:51)

1,820 loss (They were told to "be fruitful and multiply.")

The census in the first chapter furnishes a yardstick by which a total figure can be estimated. Dr. Melvin Grove Kyle gave to his students this approximation which he considered a conservative figure.

600,000 fighting men (1:46)

400,000 women

200,000 older men

800,000 children

100,000 mixed multitude

2,100,000 Total (tribe of Levi not included)

From Egypt to Mount Sinai

The first 10 chapters deal with the order of the camp. Israel was not a mob crossing the desert. Every man had to know who he was and where he belonged in the camp.

From Mt. Sinai Onward

The Tabernacle was the center of the camp and the twelve tribes were arranged according to the situation of the Tabernacle. They marched according to their position. The tribe of Levi was directly around the Tabernacle according to their families.

The 40 years of wandering and the unbelief at Kadesh-barnea is not recorded in the "faith" chapter of Hebrews (chapter 11). The record of their unbelief is recorded in Hebrews 3:7-19. This is the "doubting chapter."

The years of wandering were not exactly wasted God taught them many precious lessons during this period.

The rebellion of Korah led to the confirmation of the priesthood of Aaron by the budding of the almond rod. This has become a picture of the priesthood of Christ which is based on His resurrection.

The offering of the red heifer in chapter 19 sets forth the method God uses to keep believers clean. Chapters 16 through 19 all have to do with the priesthood.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin (1 John 1:7)

The constant complaining of the people led to the judgment by serpents. and the provision of the serpent of brass as the remedy. This teaches us that Christ was made sin for us.

Numbers 22-25 gives us the account of Balaam, one of the badmen of the Bible, a rogue of revelation, a scoundrel of Scripture, a villain of the volume. He was a strange character. He was a heathen prophet with magical powers (Num. 22:6). He is specifically labeled a soothsayer (Joshua 13:22). He received the rewards of "divination" (Num. 22:7). He confessed that he used these methods (Num. 23:3).

He gave four of the most remarkable prophecies in the Scriptures regarding Israel:

1st prophecy-Num. 23:8-10

2nd prophecy-Num. 23:20-24

3rd prophecy-Num. 24:5-9

4th prophecy-Num. 24:17-24 (This is a source from which the wise men could have known about the star.)

He had some knowledge of God and God used him (Num. 22:9,20,22,31). He is a strange anomaly. The Scriptures have a great deal to say about him - Num. 31:16; Deut. 23:4,5; Joshua 13:22: 24:9,10; Neh. 13:2; Mic. 6:5; Jude 11; 2 Pet. 2:15; Rev. 2:14.

Scripture distinguishes between the **way** of Balaam, the **error** of Balanin, and the **doctrine** of Balaam.

"**The way of Balaam**" (2 Pet. 2:15) was that he prostituted his gift for gain, he was covetous, he commercialized his office.

"**The error of Balaam**" (Jude 11) was that he concluded a righteous God must curse Israel. He was unaware of the grace of God revealed in God's redemption of Israel out of Egypt.

"**The doctrine of Balaam**" (Rev. 2:14) was his counsel to Balak. Finding that he could not curse Israel, he showed Balak how to break down the wall of separation by marriage with women of Moab (Num. 31:15,16).

At chapter 25 the new generation has come of age. The generation that came out of Egypt has died in the wilderness.

Preparation is made for entering the promised land.

The contents of the book of Numbers may be grouped into three main divisions:

18. **The Camp at Mount Sinai and Preparations for the Departure for the Land of Canaan;**
19. **The Journeyings from Mount Sinai to the Plains of Moab;**
20. **Israel's Encampment in the Plain of Moab.**

OUTLINE

1. THE CAMP AT MOUNT SINAI AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE DEPARTURE FOR THE LAND OF CANAAN, CHAPTERS 1 - 10:10

The first census of the people, Chapter 1

Israel organized to be Mobilized, chapter 2

Trinitarian Benediction, chapter 6:24-26

2. THE JOURNEYINGS FROM MOUNT SINAI TO THE PLAINS OF MOAB, CHAPTERS 10:11 - 22:1

Murmuring and complaining of the people, Chapters 11 to 12

The Twelve Spies and their Report, chapters 13 to 14

Rebellion and Consequences, chapter 16

Miriam's Death - Moses disobedience - Aaron's death, chapter 20

The Brazen Serpent - Type and the Truth, Chapter 21

3. ISRAEL'S ENCAMPMENT IN THE PLAINS OF MOAB, CHAPTERS 22 - 36

The Error of Balaam, Chapters 22 to 24

The Second census of the People, chapter 26

Joshua Chosen As Moses Successor, chapter 27:10-23

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

INTRODUCTION

"The Book of Experience and Obedience"

WRITER: Moses

Moses talked with **God face to face**.

Moses knew God.

"He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel" [Psalms 103:7].

The children of Israel] saw the acts of God but did not know Him. Moses knew His ways. Deuteronomy is the result of this intimate knowledge plus the experience of 40 years in the wilderness.

Deuteronomy 34:5-12 was probably written by Joshua and belongs to the Book of Joshua. When the Book of Joshua was written, it was placed on the scroll of the Pentateuch, making a Hexateuch.

TITLE: Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy means "second law." This is not to infer that it is a repetition of the law as given to Moses on Mt. Sinai. It is the law interpreted in the light of as years' experience in the wilderness. New situations and problems arose which were not covered by the law specifically. There needed to be an application of the law to life situations. (A notable example of this [Num 27] is the case of the inheritance of the daughters of Zelophehad who had left no sons.)

Deuteronomy therefore, is more than a mere recapitulation of the law of Sinai, it is another illustration of the law of recurrence (29:1). Specific laws that needed emphasis are repeated and enlarged upon (e.g., the 10 Commandments in chapter 5). Deuteronomy is a commentary on the Mosaic law.

KEY: Love and obey

Love of God 4:37; 7:7-8; 23:5

Obey God - 4:40; 11:26-28; 30:8-20

Love for God - 6:4-5; 30:6,16,20

This book teaches man to love and to obey God. The word "love" occurs 22 times, "obey" occurs 10 times. The motive for obedience is love. The Lord Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The true motive for obedience is stated in Deuteronomy 6:4,5. God's love for man is the motive for His government and the giving of laws. Man's love of God is the motive for his obedience. This is not the Gospel, but the principle of it is here. This is the pathway of blessing. It is likewise the answer to those who do not find love in the Old Testament. There is love in the Old Testament, and there is law in the New Testament. Moses pleads with them to obey.

Why obey? Pleading of Moses:

Israel belonged to God (14:1)

God loved them (4:37)

God wanted to preserve and prosper them (4:1)

Their show of gratitude (4:7,8)

COMMENTS:

A new generation had arrived on the east bank of the Jordan River (Dent. 1:5) one month before entering the Promised Land (Deut. 1:3). Those of the generation which had left Egypt were dead and their bones were bleaching beneath the desert skies because of their unbelief and disobedience.

They had broken God's law - sins of Commission;

They had failed to believe God - sins of Omission.

The law was "weak through the flesh."

Moses gives to this new generation his final instructions from the Lord before he relinquishes leadership of the nation through death. He reviews the desert experiences, reemphasizes certain features of the law reveals their future course in light of the Palestinian Covenant, teaches them a new song, blesses the twelve tribes, and then prepares to die. A requiem to Moses concludes the book.

This new generation was unfamiliar with the experiences of Mt. Sinai, and they needed to have the law called to their attention and interpreted in the light of their experience and future dwelling in the Promised Land.

This Book of Deuteronomy has been the center of attack by the critic. The authorship of the book was first challenged. The original criticism was that Moses could not have written it because there was no writing in existence in Moses' day: That has subsequently been soundly refuted. The critic stated that the purpose of the

book was to glorify the priesthood at Jerusalem, but neither the priesthood nor Jerusalem is mentioned in Deuteronomy.

The probable reason for the satanic attack upon the Book of Deuteronomy is that the Lord Jesus Christ quoted exclusively from this book in beating back Satan's temptation. Little wonder Satan hates the book.

1st temptation - Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4 compare Deut. 8:3

2nd temptation - Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12 compare Deut. 6:16

3rd temptation - Matt. 4:10; Luke 4:8 compare Deut. 6:18 and 10:20

The Old Testament prophets quoted from Deuteronomy frequently. Also there are over 80 references to it in the New Testament.

Deuteronomy exalts the Word of God:

"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"[Dent. 6:7].

STRIKING FEATURES:

1. **Greatest doctrinal statement in Old Testament:**
"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one Lord" [Deuteronomy 6:4].
2. **First mention of the Great Tribulation:**
"But if from there thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. 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 (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 swore unto them" [Deuteronomy 4:29-31].
3. **Promise of a coming Prophet:**
"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, according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him"[Deuteronomy 18:15-18].
4. **Test for determining true and false prophets:**
But the prophet, who shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him" [Deuteronomy 18:20-22].
5. **Pre-written history of Israel in the land before they enter the land: Deuteronomy 28-30**
6. **Palestinian Covenant Deuteronomy 29-30:10.**
7. **The Song of Moses - Prophetic: Deuteronomy 32**
 1. Call to hear (1-4)
 2. The nation returns evil for the grace of God (5,6)
 3. Jehovah's goodness (7-14)
 4. Apostasy of the nation (15-18)

5. Judgment of God upon them (19-25)
6. Longing of God for His people (26-42)
7. Nations of the world blessed with Israel (43,44)
8. Lonely and strange death of Moses. (One translation has it, "... died by the kiss of God" - God kissed Moses and put him to sleep. What a lovely thought!): Deuteronomy 34:5-8.

OUTLINE

I. Reviewing the Journeys, Chapters 1-4

II. Restating the Law -- Love and Obedience, Chapters 5-26

4. Repetition and Interpretation of 10 Commandments, Chapters 5-7
5. Religions and National Regulations, Chapters 8-21
 1. God's Past Dealings are Assurance for Future - 8
 2. God Knew Israel - Past Was Not Good - 9
 3. God Sent Israel to Egypt; God Brought Them out of Egypt - 10
 4. Promised Land not Like Egypt; Principle of Occupancy - 11
 5. Israel Has Only One Place to Worship in Land - 12
 6. Warning Against and Test of False Prophets, False Gods - 13
 7. Diet for Israel - 14
 8. God's Poverty Program; the Permanent Slave; the Perfect Sacrifice is Christ - 15
 9. Three Main Feasts - All Males Required to Attend (Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles) - 16
 10. Sundry Laws - 17
 11. Priests and Prophets: Test of True Prophet - 18
 12. Cities of Refuge; Extent of Land and Extremity of Law - 19
 13. Laws Regulating Warfare - 20
 14. Laws Regarding Murder, Marriage and Delinquent Sons - 21
6. Regulations for Domestic and Personal Relations, Chapters 22-28
 1. Miscellaneous Laws Concerning Brother Relationships, Dress, Building Code, Planting Seed, and Marriage - 22
 2. The World, the Flesh and the Devil - 28
 3. Divorce - 24
 4. Punishment of Guilty (40 Stripes); Law Protecting Widows; Punishment for Crimes; Judgement of Amalek - 25
 5. First Fruits - Thanksgiving - 26

III. Regarding the Future in the Land 27-30

(Blessings and Curses)

IV. Requiem to Moses 31-34

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [UNIT II-THE BOOK OF JOSHUA](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

UNIT II

THE BOOKS OF CONQUEST AND SETTLEMENT OF CANAAN

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

INTRODUCTION

JOSHUA AND THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

Joshua was the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim, one of the two sons of Joseph by his Egyptian wife Asenath. Originally he had the Hebrew name Hoshea, which was changed by Moses to the more significant form of Jehoshua, meaning "Jehovah is salvation" (Deuteronomy 32:44; Numbers 13:8,16). It later developed into Joshua. The Greek form of the Hebrew name is Jesus. Joshua is seen as a type of Jesus the Son of God, both in name and life.

The Book of Joshua is important for three main reasons:

The book records the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham and descendants of Canaan as their inheritance;

The book reveals how God helped Israel to victory in a critical period of history;

Reveals God's own righteousness and His standards for those who follow Him.

QUESTION: What of the rights of the Canaanites, whose lands were invaded and possessed?

The answer to this question is found in Deuteronomy 9:4; 20:16-18 and Numbers 33:52,53. Their wickedness to the extreme had placed them in the category of Sodom and Gomorrah, to be utterly destroyed. Archaeology has confirmed Canaanite religion was utterly licentious and cruel, ritual prostitution and child sacrifices were "normal" (Luke 19:44).

According to Jewish tradition Joshua wrote the book that bears his name. Internal evidence that Joshua wrote at least part of the book is recorded in chapter 24:25-26.

The OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE BOOK, like the five books of Moses, is to reveal God to His people and His plans for their redemption. Joshua like Moses and Paul (many centuries later), is preaching the doctrine of the unmerited grace of God, because of His choice and love of His people and not because of any righteousness of their's (chapters 23,24).

The **CONTENTS** of the book of Joshua fall into three divisions:

The Conquest of Canaan;

The Division of the Land, and the Permanent Settlement of each of the Twelve Tribes of Israel;

Joshua's Farewell Addresses.

OUTLINE

A. THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN, CHAPTERS 1-12.

8. Commission and Command of Joshua, chapter 1
9. Contact of spies with Rahab, chapter 2
10. Crossing the Jordan, chapter 3
11. Construction of 2 Memorials, chapter 4
12. Conditioned for Conquest, chapter 5
13. Frontal attack, chapters 6-8
 1. Jericho

2. Ai
14. Campaign against South, chapters 9-10
15. Campaign against North, chapters 11-12

B. THE DIVISION OF THE LAND AND THE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT OF EACH OF THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL. CHAPTERS 13-22

7. Command of Joshua terminated - Confirmation of land to 2 and 1/2 tribes, chapter 13
8. Caleb given Hebron, chapter 14
4. Dividing of land to the tribes of Israel, chapters 15-19
5. Cities of Refuge, chapter 20
6. Cities of Levites, chapter 21
7. Command to 2 and 1/2 Tribes to return home - Construction of altar to "See To", chapter 22

C. JOSHUA'S FAREWELL ADDRESSES, CHAPTERS 23-24

1. Call to Leaders of Israel for Courage & Certainty, ch. 23
2. Call to all Tribes of Israel for Consecration and consideration of Covenant with God - Death of Joshua, chapter 24

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF JUDGES](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

INTRODUCTION

The book of Judges describes the **first three centuries of Israel's occupation of the land of Canaan** - not a detailed history, but a selective one.

Joshua defeated the main forces of opposition, yet many locales remained in the hands of the Canaanites and others. Joshua warned Israel not to mix or intermarry. The record indicates they were only partially obedient.

Israel had no political capital in the days of the judges. Shiloh was established as a religious center. There was no central place where judges officiated. The judges rose to leadership as the local or national situation demanded it. Some were military leaders, while others were magistrates to whom the people looked for legal and political decisions.

The writer of the Book of Judges is unknown. However, judging by the phrase which occurs four times, "In those days there was no king in Israel" (17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25), the book was written during the period of the monarchy. Cf. also 18:30,31. Many scholars are of the opinion that the Book of Judges, along with 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, and 1 & 2 Chronicles were probably written by the prophets from the 11th to the 8th centuries B.C., chief of whom was the prophet Samuel.

The Book of Judges serves a twofold purpose.

Historically it records the history of the nation from the death of Joshua to Samuel, the last of the judges and the first of prophets. It bridges the gap between Joshua and the rise of the monarchy. There was no leader to take Joshua's place in the way he had taken Moses' place. This was the trial period of the theocracy after they entered the land.

Morally it was the time of the deep declension of the people as they turned from the unseen leader and descended to the low level of **"In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.** (Compare Judges 1:1 with 20:18.) This should have been an era of glowing progress, but it was as dark day of repeated failure.

The Book of Judges falls naturally into three main divisions:

21. Introduction and an Outline of Israel's Cycle of History during the period of the judges
22. The cycle of History unfolding
23. Two added stories, The Danites and the Benjaminites

A. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF JUDGES AND AN OUTLINE OF ISRAEL' S CYCLE OF HISTORY DURING THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES, CHAPTERS 1-2.

B. ISRAEL'S CYCLE OF HISTORY UNFOLDING, CHAPTERS 3-16

1st Apostasy; conquered by Mesopotamia; Delivered through Othniel, the Judge, 3:1-11

2nd Apostasy; Conquered by Moabites and Philistines; Delivered through Ehud and Shamyar, the Judges, 3:12-31

3rd Apostasy; Conquered by Jabin, King of Canaan; Delivered through Deborah and Barak, the Judges, 4:1-5:31

4th Apostasy; Conquered by Midian; Delivered through Gideon, the Judge, 6:1-8:32

5th Apostasy; Civil War; Delivered through Abimelech, Tola, Jair, the Judges, 8:33-10:5

6th Apostasy; Conquered by Philistines and Ammonites; Delivered through Jephthah, Ibzan, Abdon, the Judges, 10:6-12:15

7th Apostasy; Conquered by Philistines; Delivered partially through Samson, the Judge, chapters 13-16

C. TWO ADDED STORIES, CHAPTERS 17-21

In chapters 17 to 21, the writer records two additional stories which reveals the moral declension of the children of Israel ending with the words of 21:25, "**In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.**"

9. The first of these stories deals with the tribe of the Danites and their migration to the far north, including the story of how they robbed a certain Ephraimite, Micah.
10. The second is the story of the unspeakable crime at Gibeah, in the tribe of Benjamin; and how the other tribes of Israel almost wiped out the tribe of Benjamin in their war of vengeance against it

D. NOTEWORTHY FEATURE OF THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Women occupy quite an important role in Judges.

Deborah, chapters 4 - 5

Jael, 5:17-24

The unknown woman who slew Abimelech, 9:53-54

Jephthah's daughter, 11:29-40

THE BOOK OF RUTH

A. THE BOOK OF RUTH AND THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES

Here in the Book of Ruth we have an example of the Biblical short story, a masterpiece which has been called one of the world's greatest short stories. It is simple, natural, complete, and so true to the life according to the customs of the day, that the reader would not willingly change any part of it.

Ordinary short stories, we think of as fiction. However, here is a true story, as delightfully presented as the best of fiction.

The events recorded in the story occurred in the days of the Judges, as the author announces to the reader at the outset. And from the context of the story, we infer that the writer lived after the events of his narrative, or about the time of David or a little later.

The story of Ruth reads like the calm after a storm. After reading the book of Judges and its stories of crime and bloodshed, of lawlessness and savage revenge, the reader once more is happy to come across such a lovely story of life as the common people no doubt really lived it.

The story of Ruth therefore supplements the book of Judges, by giving the reader a picture of domestic life such as he does not find in the other book, and thus tends to soften his judgment of the historical period of the Judges.

B. THE CONTENTS AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOK OF RUTH

In the days of the Judges, because of famine, a certain man of Bethlehem in Judea, Elimelech, went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife Naomi, and their two sons.

While they were there, the two sons married two daughters of Moab, whose names were Ruth and Orpah. Time dealt harshly with Naomi, and her two daughter-in-laws, for the three men died and left them widows.

So when Naomi learned that the famine in her own country was no more, she blessed her daughter-in-laws and made ready to return to her own people at Bethlehem. Both young women wept. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and departed. But Ruth clung to her, because she loved her, and would not leave her. So Ruth returned with Naomi to Bethlehem.

How Ruth found a new husband in the substantial person of Boaz, Naomi's kinsman, and became the great-grandmother of David, is related in the remainder of the book. And it is for Ruth that the author has written and named his story.

At the close of the story, in verses 4:17-22, the writer puts his finger on the heart of the matter behind the story, and the reason no doubt for which the book of Ruth was written, namely, to reveal the genealogy of the Messiah.

Ages before, Abraham had been called to found a Nation for the purpose one day of bringing a Savior to mankind. Moses knew of God's plan and prophesied that "the Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me . . . Him you shall heed." **The book of Ruth describes the founding of the family within the Hebrew nation from which the Savior would come.**

From here on, every true Israelite knew that the Messiah was to spring from the family of King David. And, too, throughout the remainder of the old Testament, the writers again and again remind the reader of the "Branch" of David which should be the promised One.

The Gospel of Matthew follows the tradition stated here in the book of Ruth, that is, the line of Joseph (1:1-17). However, Luke's account differs from the genealogy of Ruth and Matthew, in that it gives the line of Mary, instead of the line of Joseph (Luke 3:23-38). Evidently Matthew traces the royal line of David, and Jesus as the legal heir of David. Luke seems to be tracing the human ancestry of Jesus, showing that Jesus was "of the seed of David according to the flesh." Romans 1:3.

UNIT III

THE BOOKS OF THE KINGS AND KINGDOMS

THE BOOKS OF I AND II SAMUEL

INTRODUCTION

The Biblical narratives of I and II Samuel, like those of I and II Kings, have long been favorites with readers in every land. Here we have a stirring account of a people in their struggle and rise to greatness, and told in the classic Hebrew manner according to the best of the Old Testament traditions.

In the original Hebrew text, the two books of I and II Samuel appeared as one book. The Greek translators of the Hebrew Old Testament, in their Septuagint Version about 270-150 B.C., were the first to divide the book into two, which they called "Books of the Kingdoms," because the books contained the history of the first two kings of Israel.

In 1516-1517 A.D., Daniel Bomberg printed a Hebrew Bible at Venice in which he retained the division into two books, but for the first time used the new title, first and second "Books of Samuel." Since this time most Hebrew Bibles have followed this arrangement, as have the English versions, although some English Bibles have a sub-title, the first and second "Books of the Kings."

There is much justification for the use of the title Samuel for these books. For one thing, Samuel was the leading person during the first half of the historical period covered. And he was one of the greatest of the prophets of Israel, of any period. Also, he was God's agent in the selection of both Saul and David for the throne. And long after his death, his influence over Saul and David lived on.

In the Hebrew canon, the book of Samuel, like the book of Joshua and the book of Judges, is placed in the general division of the Hebrew Scriptures called "Former Prophets."

Samuel is considered the author up to I Samuel 25 (his death), with Nathan and Gad being the ones who completed the writing (I Chron 29:29).

The exact date of the composition of the book is unknown. However, since, II Samuel 5:5 gives the total length of David's reign, the date needs to have been after the death of David. Also that I Samuel 27:6 mentions the kings of Judah reveals the period of the Divided Kingdom, and therefore a date not earlier than that of Rehoboam, Solomon's son.

The approximate overall dates of the period are from about 1100 B.C. to 974 B.C.

The contents of I and II Samuel deal mainly with the historical stories of the three chief men of the period; The prophet Samuel, King Saul, and King David.

A. SAMUEL THE PROPHET, I SAMUEL, CHAPTERS 1-24

SAMUEL'S BIRTH, Chapter 1

Shiloh was a town just north of Bethlehem. Here the tabernacle was permanently set up by Joshua (Joshua 18:1, 19:51).

Elkanah, Samuel's father was a Levite who remained true to the Lord in the midst of spiritual decline. He regularly attended annual feasts at Shiloh together with his wife, Hannah, who was childless. Hannah was a remarkable woman and the circumstances surrounding Samuel's birth reveal so many types of Jesus.

1. **Barrenness** (vs.5). This is typical of the barrenness under the law, for the law of sin and death produce nothing (Heb. 7:19 and Heb 2:10).
2. **Brokenness** (vs. 10 and 15). This is also typical of Jesus (Heb 5:7).

3. **Misunderstood** (vs. 14). Here again Jesus was despised (Isaiah 53:3,4,10, John 7:5; Matthew 10:25).
4. **Sanctified** (vs. 11, 24 and 28). Sanctification is 'set apart.' (John 17:18-20).G
5. **Glorified** (Chapter 2:1, Isaiah 53:11). He shall see the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

As soon as the child Samuel was weaned, Hannah, his mother took him to the tabernacle at Shiloh and placed him under the charge of the high priest Eli, to train for his sacred duties.

SAMUEL IN THE TEMPLE, Chapters 2 and 3

"The child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days, there was no open vision." (chapter 3:1)

The corruption of Eli's sons (chapter 2:12-17 and 22-25) was unacceptable to God. Eli was high priest and judge. Even Shiloh was corrupted, the very place where God manifested His glory (Jer. 7:14).H

However, God is about to raise up a prophet. This child Samuel was the product of a Christlike spirit. While yet a child, Samuel was called and equipped by God for a very special divine service. Nevertheless, what boldness this young child needed as shown from verses 12-15 of chapter three.

Chapter 4 records the taking of the ark of the covenant, the death of Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. Which deaths when heard by Eli caused him to fall off his seat backward thereby, breaking his neck and bringing on his death. Thus Samuel was to be God's man for the hour. The last of the judges, and in many ways, the best.

SAMUEL'S REMARKABLE MINISTRY, Chapters 4-24

"And the word of Samuel came to all Israel." (4:1) - Cf.,also chapter 3:19-21

Read I Samuel 2:34-36. Technically, Samuel could not be a priest for he was not of the sons of Aaron (Numbers 18:1-7). It was a time of emergency, and Samuel must have fulfilled something of the duties of the priest. From Samuel onwards, hundreds of years, the prophet was the power behind the throne of Israel.

Samuel was a man of prayer:

1. Mighty man of prayer - Psalm 99:6
2. Man of public prayer - I Samuel 7:5
3. Man of private prayer - I Samuel 8:6
4. Man meticulous in prayer - I Samuel 12:23
5. Man devoted to prayer - I Samuel 15:11
6. Man who prevailed in prayer - Jeremiah 15:1

SAMUEL'S SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS

To make his judgeship more effective, Samuel established a judicial "circuit" on which he went year after year, with his headquarters at Ramah, his birthplace and home, six miles north of Jerusalem. From Ramah he went to Bethel, to Gilgal near Jericho, and from there to Mizpah and possibly to other towns not mentioned. (I Sam 7:15-17).

It seems that at least in some of these towns on Samuel's judicial "circuit" that he established schools of prophets, which for generations afterward exercised a great influence upon the moral and religious life of the nation. There were schools of prophets at namah (Naioth, a suburb of Ramah) Bethel, Gilgal, Jericho, and possible elsewhere (I Samuel 10:5-10; 19:18-20; II Kings 2:1-7; 4:3a).

The most famous of the schools was the one at Naioth. It became a community of prophets who gathered about the prophet Samuel as their leader (I Samuel 19:18-20). The word Naioth is sometimes translated as a "house of learning." Saul was directed to go there as a part of his anointing, to receive "the Spirit of God." and later, David went there to hide from Saul.

What a shame that Israel should be weary of the government of such a man as Samuel who was looking forward to Israel's future by preparing men who had a vital contact with God.

This prophetic band under Samuel's leadership must have wielded considerable influence (I Samuel 19:18-24). It is quite likely that Nathan, Gad, and other prophets active in David's time received their impetus from Samuel. Now, a school of prophets here is not to say that a prophet could be trained to prophecy, FOR INDEED THE PROPHETIC FUNCTION IS CHARISMATIC. We assume that these schools of prophets were schools where men who had been called of God would go to learn about God and His ways.

Maybe it is not coincidental that, with the establishment of a monarchy, an office which could very easily become secularized and dictatorial, God would raise up a standard of prophetic spokesmen. Their task was to speak to their own day and to keep the monarchy in line as much as possible.

B. KING SAUL, CHAPTERS 9-31

GOD AND THE KING

In chapter eight we see the elders of Israel coming to Samuel demanding a king to rule over them. In verse 22 the Lord told Samuel to go ahead and make them a king. Thus when Samuel reluctantly consented to this, he had no idea who God would choose.

But one day he was met by a Benjaminite who came to consult him concerning his father's straying donkeys. Samuel entertained Saul, privately anointed him a captain over his inheritance, thereby indicating that kingship was a sacred trust.

NOTE, a strange fact about Saul - Saul betrayed an astonishing lack of knowledge about the things going on in Israel beyond his own village (I Samuel 3:20). Saul's family only lived twenty miles from Samuel. Saul apparently knew little or nothing about Samuel. Saul and his servant seemed to regard him as a sort of fortune teller who for money might tell them where their lost donkeys were. Pitifully, Saul seems to revert back to this kind of superstitious attitude when, at the end, he disguised himself and secured the services of a witch.

SAUL WHY OR WHY SAUL??

If the choice of Saul as a man fit to be a king" was debated, both the negative and affirmative could score points. For and against.

1. He was originally humble (I Samuel 15:17).
2. He was unassuming (I Samuel 10:16).
3. He did not justify himself (I Samuel 10:27.)

4. He was presentable (I Samuel 9:2).
5. He was considerate (I Samuel 9:5).
6. He was retiring (I Samuel 10:21).
7. He was anointed and changed (I Samuel 10:9-10).

Note the particular significance of this anointing and ordination. This new king is a prophet-king. What credentials for leading a holy nation were available, if only he could have maintained his communion with God.

How pitiful to behold:

1. His disobedience (I Samuel 15:10-11, chapters 21-23).
2. His dismay (I Samuel 17:11).
3. His displeasure (I Samuel 18:8).
4. His despair (I Samuel 28:4-6)

REJECTION POINT

It could be said that God was using Saul to teach Israel a lesson. Saul was chosen and changed. Saul himself, however, chose to disobey, and at that point sensed the rejection of God! It appears that Saul's besetting sin was his pride in his own ability as soldier. Saul had no scruples about putting people to the sword, but he spared Agag, king of the Amalekites. Probably he wanted to enjoy displaying him as a captive of war.

Oh the sin that did so easily beset him. Note that Saul's rebellion equates him with the sins of witchcraft (I Samuel 15:23). Saul's rebellion leads him into witchcraft. He now consults precisely what he had cast out previously (28:9-10).

SAUL AND THE EVIL SPIRIT

I Samuel 16:14 says, "The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." Now instead of Saul being a prophet-king, he is a possessed king. The tactics of Satan: a house divided against itself. Saul is now so unpredictable. He who once was mighty and brave in battle is paralyzed with fear when the Philistines gather against Israel. He has allowed a divided kingdom (satanic) to divide his kingship. Saul even prophesies, but I don't think it was by the Spirit of God (I Samuel 19:24). Prophecy not of God cannot always be immediately detected by what is prophesied. The nature of an evil spirit is more readily discerned by the fruits of the person it possesses and the fruits it produces.

On the eve of his tragic death, Saul is so desirous of a word from the Lord (I Samuel 28:15). However, the only word was concerning his demise! (I Samuel 26:21). Saul said of himself to David, "I have played the fool."

C. DAVID - GOD'S MAN, I SAMUEL, CHAPTERS 16-31, AND II SAMUEL

DAVID ANOINTED AS KING OF ISRAEL

"And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons." (I Samuel 16:1).

Chapter 16 of I Samuel tells the unusual story of how David was chosen and anointed secretly to be Saul's successor and king of Israel.

I Samuel 16:13-14, tells of the transfer of kingship from Saul to David. "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and **"the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward . . . But the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit front the Lord troubled him."**

David was the eighth and youngest of the sons of Jesse, a native of Bethlehem in Judah. We recall from the book of Ruth, how Ruth married Boaz of Bethlehem and became the great grandmother of David. A thousand years hence, Jesus, a descendant of David, would also be born at Bethlehem.

Question: Did Samuel publicly explain to David the meaning of his anointing? It is unlikely that he did, but David soon learned the secret of his destiny. From the shepherd's task, he was quickly promoted to the battlefield, because the anointing was upon him. He heard the defiant challenge of the Philistines' champion and the anointing began to stir him. It was through this battlefield that David was elevated to the palace.

Now in the Royal palace we see something of the wonderful attitude of David (I Samuel 18:5, 14, 15, and 30).

DAVID BECOMES A FUGITIVE

And Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David... and Saul became David's enemy continually. (I Samuel 18:28,29).

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David needed very definite direction in those days:

1. Regarding the Philistines (vs. 2).
2. Regarding the fears of his own men (vs. 3 & 4)
3. Regarding the trap of Saul (vs. 7 & 8)
4. Regarding the betrayal of those he had freed (men of Keilah) (vs. 10-12) "bring hither the ephod."
5. Regarding prophecy from Jonathan (vs. 16,17).

DAVID SPARES SAUL'S LIFE (chapter 24)

Notice David's heart:

David's heart smote him (vs. 5)

He, Saul, is the anointed of the Lord (vs. 6) - Cf Chron 16:22)

David bowed himself with his face to the earth when addressing Saul (vs.8)

The Lord judge between me and thee, but my hand shall not be upon thee (vs. 12)

The results of David's pure heart affected Saul, and the truth began to be spoken. (vs 18, 19, 20, 21).

DAVID AS KING

The last chapter of I Samuel closes with the story of the downfall and death of Saul, the defeat and slaughter of the army of Israel, and the death of Jonathan and two other sons of Saul.

The first chapter of II Samuel opens with David as king in his own right.

DAVID'S DAYS OF MOURNING

When the news of Israel's disaster, and the death of Saul and Jonathan came to David at ziklag, he mourned their death as a personal loss and as a national calamity. He expressed his grief in the writing of a beautiful and touching eulogy (II Samuel 1:19-27).

David challenged the young Amalakitite who boasted he had slain Saul. Orders him slain (vs. 16). Notice the absolute priority David placed on this precept (I Chron. 16:22).

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After seeking God's guidance, David left Ziklag and came to Hebron, where his own tribe anointed him king over the house of Judah.

The defeat and death of Saul had entirely changed David's relation to the people of Israel and their future. But Saul's followers were yet alive and had to be reckoned with, before David would be king of all Israel. For more than 7 1/2 years there was fighting between David's army and the army of the followers of Saul. But the day came when Captain Abner fell out with Saul's son and came and offered David the whole of Israel.

However, David announced that he would only accept Abner's proposal if Michal, Saul's daughter and his former wife, were returned to him. In so doing, he made himself again legal son-in-law of King Saul, legitimate ruler of Israel, and not a usurper (II Samuel 3:13).

DAVID MADE KING OVER ALL ISRAEL, Chapter 5

David never lost heart. He was convinced that he genuinely was anointed as a youth by Samuel in Jesse's house to be king of Israel (cf. 1 John 2:27).

Now king of Israel, Jerusalem must be his capital, and he made it so.

The capture of Jerusalem marked a most important event in the history of Israel. Before, the nation had no real center or capital. At best the residence of a Judge or a Prophet or a King was only a temporary meeting place, such as the Palm Tree of Deborah, the house of Samuel at Ramah, or the house of Saul at Gibeah, or the military headquarters of David at Hebron. From this time on, however, the national center was fixed at Jerusalem.

DAVID AND THE ARK OF THE COVENANT, Chapter 6

The ark had been taken by the Philistines at the time of the downfall of the house of Eli. Now after 70 years, David decided to bring the ark from the house of Abinadab where it had been, to Jerusalem.

However, something went wrong, and God smote Uzzah. They had made certain mistakes with the presence of God.

1. verse 3, They set it on a new cart.
2. verse 5, All manner of instruments instead of worship.
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When they get it right, God blesses the return of the ark. King David gave himself to absolute ecstasy in public. But Michal, David's wife, despised and charged her husband with shameless indignity. David's only defense was, "It was before the Lord." (vs. 21).

NOTE: Because of that fact, God judges Michal and she remained childless until the day of her death. We need to be particularly careful as to how we react toward others when what they do, they do before the Lord (Romans 14:12,13,20-22).

DAVID BLESSED BY GOD - EXTENDS HIS KINGDOM, Chapters 7-10

David's heritage was to be unique in that God promised that his family should become an Eternal Throne. (chap 7:12-16)

David's marvelous military victories against enemy nations are briefly summarized in chapters 8 to 10, and David is shown as their overlord to whom they paid tribute.

DAVID'S PRIVATE LIFE AND TROUBLES, chapters 11-20

Here is presented episodes dealing mainly with the private and domestic life of King David. The first of these is the ugly and criminal story of David and Bathsheba.

David repented; and God forgave him. But the grievous consequences followed him all his life, as he lived under God's pronouncement, chapter 12 verse 10. This was only too true, as David lived to see. For in the chapters that follow, we read:

1. How David's daughter was outraged by her brother, Ammon.
2. The murder of Ammon by his brother Absalom.
3. The rebellion and conspiracy of Absalom against David
4. David's exile from the palace
5. David's wives violated in public
6. Old feud with followers of Saul stirred up
7. Sheba's conspiracy against David

Although his great transgression, and its consequences, took some of the luster from David's glorious reign, he sincerely repented and his later life was such that he was called "the man after God's own heart."

D. AN APPENDIX, chapters 21 - 24

These chapters record stories of a famine; some exploits against the Philistines; the "Song of Deliverance," which was revised and printed as Psalm 18; the "Last Words" of David; a list of thirty of David's chief heroes; and a census of the people of Israel and Judah.

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOKS OF I & 2 KINGS](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

UNIT III

THE BOOKS OF THE KINGS AND KINGDOMS

THE BOOKS OF I AND II SAMUEL

INTRODUCTION

The Biblical narratives of I and II Samuel, like those of I and II Kings, have long been favorites with readers in every land. Here we have a stirring account of a people in their struggle and rise to greatness, and told in the classic Hebrew manner according to the best of the Old Testament traditions.

In the original Hebrew text, the two books of I and II Samuel appeared as one book. The Greek translators of the Hebrew Old Testament, in their Septuagint Version about 270-150 B.C., were the first to divide the book into two, which they called "Books of the Kingdoms," because the books contained the history of the first two kings of Israel.

In 1516-1517 A.D., Daniel Bomberg printed a Hebrew Bible at Venice in which he retained the division into two books, but for the first time used the new title, first and second "Books of Samuel." Since this time most Hebrew Bibles have followed this arrangement, as have the English versions, although some English Bibles have a sub-title, the first and second "Books of the Kings."

There is much justification for the use of the title Samuel for these books. For one thing, Samuel was the leading person during the first half of the historical period covered. And he was one of the greatest of the prophets of Israel, of any period. Also, he was God's agent in the selection of both Saul and David for the throne. And long after his death, his influence over Saul and David lived on.

In the Hebrew canon, the book of Samuel, like the book of Joshua and the book of Judges, is placed in the general division of the Hebrew Scriptures called "Former Prophets."

Samuel is considered the author up to I Samuel 25 (his death), with Nathan and Gad being the ones who completed the writing (I Chron 29:29).

The exact date of the composition of the book is unknown. However, since, II Samuel 5:5 gives the total length of David's reign, the date needs to have been after the death of David. Also that I Samuel 27:6 mentions the kings of Judah reveals the period of the Divided Kingdom, and therefore a date not earlier than that of Rehoboam, Solomon's son.

The approximate overall dates of the period are from about 1100 B.C. to 974 B.C.

The contents of I and II Samuel deal mainly with the historical stories of the three chief men of the period; The prophet Samuel, King Saul, and King David.

A. SAMUEL THE PROPHET, I SAMUEL, CHAPTERS 1-24

SAMUEL'S BIRTH, Chapter 1

Shiloh was a town just north of Bethlehem. Here the tabernacle was permanently set up by Joshua (Joshua 18:1, 19:51).

Elkanah, Samuel's father was a Levite who remained true to the Lord in the midst of spiritual decline. He regularly attended annual feasts at Shiloh together with his wife, Hannah, who was childless. Hannah was a remarkable woman and the circumstances surrounding Samuel's birth reveal so many types of Jesus.

6. **Barrenness** (vs.5). This is typical of the barrenness under the law, for the law of sin and death produce nothing (Heb. 7:19 and Heb 2:10).
7. **Brokenness** (vs. 10 and 15). This is also typical of Jesus (Heb 5:7).
8. **Misunderstood** (vs. 14). Here again Jesus was despised (Isaiah 53:3,4,10, John 7:5; Matthew 10:25).
9. **Sanctified** (vs. 11, 24 and 28). Sanctification is 'set apart.' (John 17:18-20).G
10. **Glorified** (Chapter 2:1, Isaiah 53:11). He shall see the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

As soon as the child Samuel was weaned, Hannah, his mother took him to the tabernacle at Shiloh and placed him under the charge of the high priest Eli, to train for his sacred duties.

SAMUEL IN THE TEMPLE, Chapters 2 and 3

"The child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days, there was no open vision." (chapter 3:1)

The corruption of Eli's sons (chapter 2:12-17 and 22-25) was unacceptable to God. Eli was high priest and judge. Even Shiloh was corrupted, the very place where God manifested His glory (Jer. 7:14).H

However, God is about to raise up a prophet. This child Samuel was the product of a Christlike spirit. While yet a child, Samuel was called and equipped by God for a very special divine service. Nevertheless, what boldness this young child needed as shown from verses 12-15 of chapter three.

Chapter 4 records the taking of the ark of the covenant, the death of Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas. Which deaths when heard by Eli caused him to fall off his seat backward thereby, breaking his neck and bringing on his death. Thus Samuel was to be God's man for the hour. The last of the judges, and in many ways, the best.

SAMUEL'S REMARKABLE MINISTRY, Chapters 4-24

"And the word of Samuel came to all Israel." (4:1) - Cf.,also chapter 3:19-21

Read I Samuel 2:34-36. Technically, Samuel could not be a priest for he was not of the sons of Aaron (Numbers 18:1-7). It was a time of emergency, and Samuel must have fulfilled something of the duties of the priest. From Samuel onwards, hundreds of years, the prophet was the power behind the throne of Israel.

Samuel was a man of prayer:

7. Mighty man of prayer - Psalm 99:6
8. Man of public prayer - I Samuel 7:5
9. Man of private prayer - I Samuel 8:6
10. Man meticulous in prayer - I Samuel 12:23
11. Man devoted to prayer - I Samuel 15:11
12. Man who prevailed in prayer - Jeremiah 15:1

SAMUEL'S SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS

To make his judgeship more effective, Samuel established a judicial "circuit" on which he went year after year, with his headquarters at Ramah, his birthplace and home, six miles north of Jerusalem. From Ramah he went to Bethel, to Gilgal near Jericho, and from there to Mizpah and possible to other towns not mentioned. (I Sam 7:15-17).

It seems that at least in some of these towns on Samuel's judicial "circuit" that he established schools of prophets, which for generations afterward exercised a great influence upon the moral and religious life of the nation. There were schools of prophets at namah (Naioth, a suburb of Ramah) Bethel, Gilgal, Jericho, and possible elsewhere (I Samuel 10:5-10; 19:18-20; II Kings 2:l-7; 4:3a.

The most famous of the schools was the one at Naioth. It became a community of prophets who gathered about the prophet Samuel as their leader (I Samuel 19:18-20). The word Naioth is sometimes translated as a "house of learning." Saul was directed to go there as a part of his anointing, to receive "the Spirit of God." and later, David went there to hide from Saul.

What a shame that Israel should be weary of the government of such a man as Samuel who was looking forward to Israel's future by preparing men who had a vital contact with God.

This prophetic band under Samuel's leadership must have wielded considerable influence (I Samuel 19:18-24). It is quite likely that Nathan, Gad, and other prophets active in David's time received their impetus from Samuel. Now, a school of prophets here is not to say that a prophet could be trained to prophecy, FOR INDEED THE PROPHETIC FUNCTION IS CHARISMATIC. We assume that these schools of prophets were schools where men who had been called of God would go to learn about God and His ways.

Maybe it is not coincidental that, with the establishment of a monarchy, an office which could very easily become secularized and dictatorial, God would raise up a standard of prophetic spokesmen. Their task was to speak to their own day and to keep the monarchy in line as much as possible.

B. KING SAUL, CHAPTERS 9-31

GOD AND THE KING

In chapter eight we see the elders of Israel coming to Samuel demanding a king to rule over them. In verse 22 the Lord told Samuel to go ahead and make them a king. Thus when Samuel reluctantly consented to this, he had no idea who God would choose.

But one day he was met by a Benjaminite who came to consult him concerning his father's straying donkeys. Samuel entertained Saul, privately anointed him a captain over his inheritance, thereby indicating that kingship was a sacred trust.

NOTE, a strange fact about Saul - Saul betrayed an astonishing lack of knowledge about the things going on in Israel beyond his own village (I Samuel 3:20). Saul's family only lived twenty miles from Samuel. Saul apparently knew little or nothing about Samuel. Saul and his servant seemed to regard him as a sort of fortune teller who for money might tell them where their lost donkeys were. Pitifully, Saul seems to revert back to this kind of superstitious attitude when, at the end, he disguised himself and secured the services of a witch.

SAUL WHY OR WHY SAUL??

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[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOKS OF I & 2 KINGS](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOKS OF I AND II CHRONICLES

INTRODUCTION

Are the Chronicles a duplication of Kings? Although they cover the same ground from Saul to Zedekiah, they are not duplications. The Greek translators gave Chronicles the title of "Things Omitted" - there is more here which does not occur in the other historical books. Thus a supplement to I and II Samuel and I and II Kings. Here we find another instance of the law of recurrence or recapitulation, seen previously in Genesis 2 and Deuteronomy, by which God goes over ground which has already been covered in order to add details and to emphasize that which He considers important. This is exactly the case in Chronicles.

For instance, the additions concern mainly the Temple and its services and such incidents as stressed the religious aspects of the nation, in contrast with the civil. These omissions shows primary interest in what is know as "two divine institutions": The Temple worship and ritual, and the Davidic line of kings.

Thus I and II Chronicles omits Saul, except incidental reference to his death, and omits David's troubles, including the Bathsheba episode, Absalom's rebellion, Adonijah's attempted usurpation of the throne, and other sins related

to the house of David. And the same may be said for his treatment of the reigns of Solomon and the subsequent kings of Judah during the period of the Divided Kingdom.

That is to say, most of the sins and weaknesses of David and Solomon, and sometimes those of the later kings of Judah are omitted. A notable addition Chronicles makes to the story of the Kings, is the stress placed on the Temple worship and ritual during Josiah's reign, and the relative lack of attention he gives to his reforms.

The books of the Kings records the political history; Chronicles records the religious history. The Chronicles gives us God's viewpoint while Kings gives man's viewpoint . For this reason I and II Chronicles should be read in conjunction with the books of Samuel and Kings; otherwise, Chronicles would give an unbalanced view of the history of the Hebrew nation.

The authorship of the books of Chronicles according to Jewish tradition is Ezra. There is a striking resemblance in style and language to the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Evidently Chronicles was written during the Babylonian Captivity. It could have been a compilation of diaries and journals of the priests and prophets, assembled by Ezra.

These two books of Chronicles not only constituted one book in the original, but apparently also included Ezra and supports the Jewish tradition. Scholars have noted a similarity in the Hebrew of all four books.

THE CONTENTS OF I AND II CHRONICLES

The contents of I and II Chronicles fall historically into three main divisions, as follows:

2. Hebrew Genealogies, I Chronicles, Chapters 1-9;
3. David and Solomon, I Chronicles 10-29 to II Chronicles 9;
4. Divided Kingdom; History of Judah, II Chronicles 10-36.

A. HEBREW GENEALOGIES, I CHRONICLES, CHAPTERS 1-9

Without heading or introduction I Chronicles begins with a series of genealogies.

These are taken with a few unimportant variations, directly from chapters 5, 10, 16, 21, 25, 36, of Genesis.

One group refers to peoples, another to locations, and a third and much larger group refers to families, which are genealogies in the strict sense.

This last group became extremely important after the exile when descent from Aaron was faithfully required as a condition for the priesthood, and when strong efforts were made to prevent intermarriage with foreigners and to maintain the purity of the Jewish race.

Genealogies are important to God. We must be sons of God before we can do the work of God. "Ye must be born again" John 3:7. These help explain the two genealogies of Christ in Matthew and Luke. (cf. I Chronicles 3:5 with Luke 3:31).

B. THE HISTORY OF DAVID AND SOLOMAN

DAVID'S REIGN, I Chronicles, chapters 11-29

Briefly: The death of Saul; David made King, first of Judah, and then of all Israel; David's wars, victories, and triumphs; the Ark of the Lord brought to Jerusalem; a Psalm of thanksgiving; David's further victories against the Philistines; his purpose to build a House of the Lord, its plans and specifications; David's farewell, and death.

SOLOMAN'S REIGN, II Chronicles, chapters 1-9

Briefly: Solomon anointed king; Solomon, not David, builds the great Temple, The house of the Lord; the dedication of the new Temple; Solomon consolidates his kingdom and extends its borders until "he ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines, and

to the border of Egypt"; the visit of the Queen of Sheba; the declaration of Solomon's riches and wisdom.

And then closes Solomon's history abruptly and refers the reader to other sources for "the rest of the acts of Solomon." No mention is made of Solomon's great defection in the second half of his reign, such as that recorded in the eleventh chapter of I Kings.

Building the Temple is Solomon's most important accomplishment.

C. DIVIDED KINGDOM: THE HISTORY OF JUDAH, II CHRONICLES 10-36

REFORMATIONS GIVEN PROMINENCE:

Asa's, chapters 14-16

Jehoshaphat's, chapters 17-20

Joash's, chapters 23-24

Hezekiah's, chapters 29-32

Josiah's, chapters 34 -35

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [UNIT IV-THE PROPHET ELIJAH](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

UNIT IV

THE PROPHETS OF THE PERIOD OF THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION

Beginning with Samuel and continuing up to the close of the Old Testament Canon prophets played a major role in the old Testament history. We remember that Samuel established several schools of prophets during the period in which he judged Israel. There were schools of prophets at Naioth (a suburb of Ramah), Bethel, Gilgal, Jericho, and possibly elsewhere (I Samuel 10:510; 19:18-20; II Kings 2:1-7; 4:38).

This prophetic band under Samuel's leadership must have wielded considerable influence (I Samuel 19:18-24). Most likely it was from one of these schools that Nathan, Gad, Ahijah, Shemaiah, Elijah, Micaiah, Elisha and the other prophets active during the period from David until The Southern Kingdom went into exile, came with God's message.

Through these prophets God raised up a standard of prophetic spokesmen to speak to their day and to keep the kings in line as much as possible. An Old Testament Survey course would not be complete without taking a look at the two most active of the prophets mentioned in the Books of Kings, Elijah and Elisha, as well as place in their proper order the Books of the prophets of this period.

ELIJAH, THE PROPHET

Elijah is introduced into the history of Israel in I Kings, chapter 17. Elijah's birth and family are unknown. He came from Tishbeth in Gilead, a mountainous region east of Jordan. He came upon the stage of Israel's history like a crash of thunder. He disappeared from the world in a whirlwind, truly a man of lightning, thunder, fire and whirlwind. **NOTE:** In Matthew 16:13-14, Jesus was thought by some to be Elijah returned to earth.

Elijah was sent by God (I Kings 17:1) to Ahab's palace declaring a drought which would be terminated only by his word (James 5:17). His announcement of no rain went like an arrow to the soul of Ahab, and Elijah goes into hiding. **NOTE:** For Elijah to declare a drought was an outright attack on the power of Baal. This pagan god was often called the storm god. Baal allegedly brought rain and guaranteed fertility in the fields and flocks. (cf. James 1:17).

A. FED BY RAVEN, I Kings 17:2-7

For Elijah to avoid the wrath of Jezebel during 3½ years of drought and then pray for rain, meant going into hiding (vs. 3). God said at the Brook Cherith (meaning cutting place where water seeps down and cuts its way through the rock), "I have commanded the raven to feed thee there." (vs. 4). For Elijah, this prospect must have been somewhat repulsive. Ravens are regarded as omens of misfortune and tragedy in the Orient and Occident. In the Hebrew tradition they were regarded as unclean and an abomination because of their scavenging habits. Normally, they could only have brought Elijah scraps of flesh from rotting carcasses, but God promised bread, too.

B. TO THE WIDOW AT ZAREPHATH, I Kings 17:8-16

The brook dried up. Further steps of faith: Zaraphath - Zidon - a widow (vs. 9). Zarephath was Jezebel's hometown, this was courting disaster.

Zarephath means place of refining. It required great faith and direction for Elijah to confront that widow for sustenance (vs. 10-12). Elijah knew that this was to effect his future blessing, even if it was presuming upon a widow (Deut. 24:19).

C. RAISING THE WIDOW'S SON, I Kings 17:17-24

Notice verse 18 - thou art come - to call my sin to remembrance and slay my son. This Old Testament concept was prevalent prior to Jesus. It wasn't God who did it (John 10:10). Elijah, however, would have none of that. What Elijah did was one of the most magnanimous gestures in the Old Testament. In greatness, generosity, and gentleness, he took the dead body of the child into his own embrace. He and she were in this suffering together (Lev. 21:1-4). **NOTE:** He was fulfilling the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2) in actual identification. **RESULTS: Life returned to the dead body.**

D. TROUBLER OF ISRAEL, I Kings 18:17

Elijah returned from Zarephath to meet Ahab. Instead, he meets Obadiah, the king's chamberlain. Obadiah was a bewildering character. He held wicked Ahab in respect, yet appears to reverence Jehovah. Obadiah sheltered one hundred prophets when Jezebel was exterminating them. Even though afraid, Obadiah obeys Elijah and went to the king. Ahab did not insist that Elijah be brought before him. Instead he went to the man of God. When the king charged Elijah with troubling Israel, the prophet boldly reprimanded Ahab for neglecting the commandments of God. Elijah accuses Ahab of being the troubler by repudiating and violating God's law.

E. CONTEST WITH BAAL, I Kings 18:19-40

Elijah was not content to charge Ahab, but challenged Ahab to gather the prophets of Baal and Ashteroth, 450 and 400 respectively. Elijah was determined to exorcise and eradicate all evil forces from Israel in one confrontation.

Elijah did not demand a lamb or a kid or a pair of turtle doves which could have inferred a sacrifice for himself only. He demanded a bullock signifying his identification with the house of Israel (Lev. 16:6). This also was typical of Dan. 9:3-6. Verse 24, "Let the God that answers by fire!"

God did answer by fire. It was all over in a few short seconds. Now stood only a burned blackened depression and molten rocks to prove it. Israel was convinced, the prophets of Baal were taken and slain at the Brook Kishon (meaning the ensnared).

F. ELIJAH AFRAID, I Kings 19:1-7

The prophets of Baal were slain. Elijah prayed 7 times and God sent the rain. Elijah then outran Ahab's chariot some sixteen miles to Jezreel. In fact, he ran a total of about two hundred miles because of Jezebel's threat upon his life, (I Kings 19:4). Elijah is suggesting to God that death now according to his father's life span would be normal. How convenient! However, he only needed good sleep and a good meal and then another sleep. **NOTE:** Why did not God provide an angelic waiter instead of ravens 3½ years ago? Surely God is a God of variety! Finally, there is an unearthliness about Elijah that seems to overawe us as we read and maybe cannot relate in practical outworking today. The Holy Spirit knew this and thus inspired James the Lord's brother to write the following:

James 5:16-17.

G. ELIJAH ON SINAI, I Kings 19:8-18

Vs. 9 - Notice a cave is mentioned here on the mount of God and Horeb. Is this the same place Moses in his depressed condition repaired to? Moses was hidden in the cleft of the rock (cleft meaning prepared place) only to be covered by the hand of God as God passed by (Exodus 33:21-23). ONE THING WE DO KNOW, this was no accident as an exhausted man might wander. Elijah was here by divine appointment. **Notice** his statement - vs 10 - a contrast to the response of chapter 18:39. Was Israel committed to God now? Let us make no mistake, Elijah knew their decision, but also knew of their need for restoration and sanctification (Heb. 6:1).

God was preparing him for a new ministry of anointing. This ministry of anointing would take him five hundred miles further to anoint a king in Syria, a nation who would later chasten and scourge Israel. He must then anoint the unlikely Jehu as the new king over Israel. Then he must anoint one in his own place, Elisha, unknown and unsuspecting. The insignificant voice assured him of 7,000 others also and the prophet was mightier than the monarch. I believe that when Elijah left Horeb, he was not the same man, he had a different dimension of faith.

H. ELIJAH'S MANTLE TRANSFERABLE, I Kings 19:19

Elisha was to be servant and successor to Elijah. He was the son of Shaphat, who must have been very wealthy. Few people after the drought could have twelve yoke of oxen to plow with. Young Elisha was hard at work. Recent rains had softened the soil - what an inopportune time to be called into the ministry. Without challenging or coaxing or prophesying or even stopping, Elijah anointed Elisha - not with a horn of oil like a king, but with his mantle. Elisha, in a single, sudden, severe stroke of severance gave up family, friends, farm, and burned his plow. **NOTE:** This was the first step in his future fifty years ministry of plowing up the fallow ground of the hard-hearted Israelites.

I. NABOTH'S VINEYARD, I Kings 21:1-29

Despite all that the Lord had done, Ahab and vicious Jezebel drifted further in debauchery. The end came finally as they desired a tiny plot of ground near the palace, belonging to a poor farmer named Naboth. By deceit and lies Jezebel arranges for Naboth to be accused of Blasphemy against God and the king, for which he was stoned. Ahab then strolled down to see the land to which he laid claim when suddenly Elijah confronts him. "You have found me out again, my enemy."

Elijah who had fled in fear from this spot approximately seven years previously, NOW FEARLESSLY pronounces doom on Ahab and Jezebel and their family. Ahab, after ten years of resisting Elijah, now humbles himself (vs. 29). This postpones the inevitable. Ahab was later slain in battle, and the dogs licked up his blood from his chariot precisely where Naboth was stoned. As for Jezebel, her body never received a royal burial. Flung from a place window, she was trampled under Jehu's horses feet and scavenging dogs consumed her corpse until only her hands and feet and skull remained as a grim reminder of her cruel and ungodly rule (II Kings 9:30)

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE PROPHET ELISHA](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

ELISHA - THE DOUBLE PORTION PROPHET

Possibly for ten years, Elijah and Elisha had been inseparable companions. God had put them together. **NOTE:** Often great men are loners, but not great men in the church of Jesus Christ and not so for Elijah. Before Elijah had the final revelation for Elisha, it could well be that he felt Elisha needed some personal experience, not as a protegee. From Bethel to Jericho to Jordan, Elijah seemed to discourage the young prophet from following. **NOTE:** Apparently, Elijah journeyed to these places as a last act of encouragement to the sons of the prophets, and they were not following their Master. Elijah and Elisha cross over the Jordan (**Jordan denotes death to self**). As Elijah is taken up his mantle falls on Elisha and Elisha was driven by the anointing from then on.

A. ELISHA OPENS THE JORDAN, II Kings 2:14-15

Elisha smote the Jordan with the mantle of anointing. Notice immediately afterward God allows his weakness to be evident although the anointing resting on him was obvious (vs. 15-is).

B. ELISHA HEALS THE WATER, II Kings 2:19-22

The men of the city refers to Jericho (vs. 19). Something in the water caused the trees to be barren or to prematurely shed their fruit. Herbs likewise did not conceive or miscarry. Barrenness or abortion spread to the people of Jericho. It is thought that the problem was a result of a carry-over of Joshua's curse. The curse was upon the rebuilders, so God graciously performed a miracle through Elisha (vs. 22). **NOTE:** There is a spring today Ames-Sultan which is thought to be the same one. This spring continues to be a source of life to the plain of Jericho. Maybe God directed Elisha to first use salt, but only as a symbol of preservation or permanence, maybe even to this day.

C. ELISHA PERSECUTED AND AVENGED, II KINGS 2:2

At Jericho, Elisha is received with new respect. At Bethel (house of God) he is held in contempt, for if the young reiterate it, the parents most likely already believe it. God here was giving warning that he held his prophets in high esteem, as lights in a dark world (1r Chron. 36:16). This can be likened to the wrath of God following the reaction and rapture of the church in the near future. **NOTE:** Skeptics have long since used this example as an inconsistency in the dealings of God. We must never forget the goodness and severity of God (Proverbs 26:2).

D. ELISHA ON THE BATTLEFIELD, II Kings 3

Now on the international scene, Jehoram reigns instead of his father King Ahab. He was not quite as wicked as his father and his mother Jezebel. Apparently, he sought to purge the worship of Baal. His reforms were not very successful, however, due to the continuing strong influence of his mother, Jezebel. The Moabites were required by Ahab to pay an annual tribute to Israel - 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 more lambs. They refused because of a new king.

Jehoram enlisted Jehoshaphat of Judah and Edom as a military coalition to attack Moab. They chose to cross south of the dead Sea, but because of drought there were no water supplies. Jehoram despaired, but Jehoshaphat called on them to turn to Elisha for help. For Jehoshaphat's sake he did. Elisha called for a minstrel and began to prophesy (vs. 16-19). Elisha's prophecy was fulfilled to the letter.

E. ELISHA AND THE WIDOWS'S OIL, II Kings 4:1-7

This miracle followed, I believe, in order for us to see God manifest not only internationally, but personally and compassionately. **NOTE** verse 1 - Maybe one of the schools of the prophets, a student of Elijah, deceased perhaps during Elisha's international debut. A widow in need is also a New Testament precept (Acts 6:1). Elisha has no ready-made answer (vs. 2). **NOTE:** The pot of oil was almost certainly the pot of anointing oil used following the washing of the body.

The emphasis here is multiplication of anointing which can only be accompanied by:

Gathering empty vessels (Joel 2:15-17 & 23-24).

Pouring out (Is. 53:12).

Paying the debt (Rom 1:14).

NOTE: The motive for God's abundance is so that we may adequately pay our debt spiritually.

F. ELISHA AND THE SHUNAMITE WOMAN'S SON, II Kings 4:18-37

The sequence of these miracles prove God's grace. **NOTICE:** Elisha had previously identified himself with a widow. Now God sees to it that a woman of wealth endeavors to make him feel part of their family, offering comfort and hospitality. Thus God ministers to his needs. This woman had no other motive but to bless the servant of God, and thus she was blessed (Matt 10:40-42). She seemed as if she had no need, but God gave her the desire of her heart.

The story moves ahead several years, and the young son dies. The mother hastens to Elisha and answers Gehazi first, "It is well." This statement shows her peace, her faith. However before Elisha, she seems to weaken in faith. Elisha first sends Gehazi and then goes himself.

Elisha first has only partial results (vs. 34). God though had mercy and honored that woman. The significance of the seven sneezes of the child is not told us. However seven speaks of completeness and something is now complete.

G. ELISHA - HEALING THE DEADLY THING, II Kings 4:38-44

Elisha was visiting the school of the prophets. It was a time of dearth and famine so different to when Israel prospered under David and Solomon. It was discovered that the vegetable stew was deadly and could not be eaten. **NOTE:** Elisha did not put on a performance of the miraculous as some have done by quoting Scripture (Mark 16:18) and then proceed to eat the poison food, etc. Genesis 3:17 maintains the ground was cursed because of Adam's sin. Now if Satan can turn that curse into our destruction and we unwittingly fall victim to it, we can claim deliverance from it (Mark 16:18).

Elisha vs. 41 asks for meal to be brought and he cast it into the pot.

NOTE: Meal in the Old Testament was a type of Christ portrayed in the meat (i.e. meal) offering of Leviticus, chapter 2. In other words, by the coming of Jesus into the sin-cursed pot of this world, we are safe (Luke 10:19). Furthermore, our rejoicing is not in demonstration but in redemption and sanctification. **NOTE:** In the midst of dearth and famine, they had the means obviously for a meal offering. In the midst of difficulty, we have Jesus to turn the tables (Acts 28:3-6).

H. ELISHA - FEEDING THE MULTITUDE, II Kings 4:42-44

A man from Shalisha brought of the first-fruits of his crops to Elisha, it appears, to feed the sons of the prophets. This man was not a prophet, any more than the boy whose lunch Jesus blessed was an apostle. But God used them at the precise time of need. **NOTE:** Elisha uses the precise statement that Jesus used instructing his disciples (vs. 42).

"Give ye them to eat." (Mark 6:37). Elisha has same opposition which Jesus had from his disciples (vs. 43). In vs. 44 we see the God of the over plus.

I. ELISHA - HEALING THE LEPER, II Kings 5

Verse 1 provides a description of Naaman's greatness. He was held in the highest esteem by his master, the king of Syria. But all this greatness was marred by his being a leper. However, Naaman was given hope by the testimony of an Israelite slave girl who testified regardless.

As a result of the slave girl's testimony, Naaman came with a diplomatic yet almost demanding approach to King Jehoram (Ahab's son) who was previously rebuked by Elisha. Elisha agreed to receive Naaman upon hearing of Jehoram's dilemma. Naaman almost missed being healed by refusing Elisha's command to dip seven times in the Jordan. **NOTE:** The Jordan has special significance in the Bible, but not because of its healing properties. Jordan has the spiritual meaning of dying to self, judging self. People came to John confessing their sins prior to baptism in the Jordan. Jesus alluded to baptism as death (Luke 12:50). Naaman, however, humbly complied to dipping himself seven times in the Jordan.

J. ELISHA - THE IRON AXE HEAD FLOATS, II Kings 6:1-7

With so many varied miracles, here is a brief insight into Elisha's ministry - the school of prophets. **NOTE:** Making no provision for ministry is not God's will. Verse 1 seems to suggest that they respectfully called Elisha's attention to a real need - cramped quarters. As they are cutting down trees to make lumber, one loses his axe head which happened to be a borrowed one. Elisha cast a stick into the water and the axe head floats and is recovered.

K. ELISHA'S PRAYER - EYES WITH NEW SIGHT, II Kings 6:8-23

While Elisha lived at Dothan, his servant rushed into his presence and declared a hopeless situation. They were surrounded by the Syrians. Vs. 16 and 17 - Elisha is so gracious with his servant, saying "Fear not." Then he did not rebuke or even command - he prayed. His prayer was not for the Lord to change the circumstances, but that the Lord would open his eyes that he may see (Hebrews 1:14). Elisha prays another two prayers - one to bind and another to loose as far as the Syrian's sight is affected.

I. ELISHA PROMISES FOOD, II Kings 7:1-20

Following Elisha's merciful attitude toward the Syrian host, King Jehoram seems confused and certainly harassed. Why now, if Elisha knows the strategy of Israel's enemies, are they besieged in Samaria by Benhadad again? The

people of Samaria were starving, even boiling their own children and paying exorbitant prices for repulsive sustenance. Chapter 6, verse 32 - Jehoram's anger explode against Elisha.

Chapter 7, verse 1 - Elisha now prophesies victory and indeed plenty within twenty-four hours. One of the king's lords scorned it, and within that time, he is killed in the rush of the people to partake of it. The Syrians had hastily vacated their camp for the Lord had caused them to believe a rumor upon hearing the noise of chariots, which obviously the angels of the Lord sounded.

J. ELISHA FULFILLS ANOTHER PROPHECY, II Kings 8:7-15

When Elijah was on the mountain with his head wrapped about with his mantle of anointing, he was told to anoint Hazael king over Syria and thus punish Israel (I Kings 19:15). Now Elisha before his departure had to fulfill this. Through the healing of Naaman, Elisha is known as a man of God even in Damascus. Elisha makes a visit to Damascus. When Benhadad heard this he sent his servant Hazael to Elisha with many gifts. Hazael made inquiry of Elisha whether his king would recover from his illness. The prophet fulfilled the commission of Elijah by confiding to Hazael that he would be the next king of Syria. Hazael smothered his ailing king with a wet blanket and seized the throne of Syria (as God had told Elijah so long before).

K. JEHU - KING OF ISRAEL, Chapter 9 and 10

Elisha now comes on the Israeli national scene again. He sent one of his prophets to anoint Jehu to be king of Israel. Jehu was proclaimed king and attacks Jezreel, and Jehoram is fatally wounded where Ahab, his father, split Naboth's blood. Queen Jezebel appealed to Jehu. She was thrown out of the upstairs window to her death and Jehu (a furious driver) mangled her body beneath his chariot wheels. Scavenger dogs fulfilled prophecy literally, thus destroying the complete family of Ahab according to the word of the Lord.

L. ELISHA'S DECEASE, II Kings 13:14; 20-21

Elisha becomes sick and dies of that sickness. Later another funeral service is disturbed by invading Moabites. In their haste they place the corpse of the dead man on top of Elisha's bones, and the man revived and stood upon his feet. Even in death Elisha was anointed.

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF JOEL](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

BOOKS OF THE PROPHETS DURING THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM, 934-721 B.C. (PERIOD OF THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE, 885 to 612 B.C.)

THE BOOK OF JOEL

When placed in chronological order, most conservative Bible scholars agree, Joel is the first of the writing prophets. He was a prophet to Judah probably about the time of the reign of Joash, king of Judah. Possibly he knew both Elijah and Elisha.

Little is known about the personal life of Joel. His name means Jehovah is God. The written prophecy which we have of Joel shows that he saw the eternal reflected in the temporal. For example:

In the locust plague, he could see the sign of the inevitable day of the Lord (vs. 4-7). NOTE: There is a need to watch as well as pray (Matthew 16:2-3).

The coming of rain upon the parched earth spoke to Joel of the outpouring of the spirit upon man a thirsty soul (Joel 2:23). NOTE: Peter could have been despised for saying, "this is that" seeing it was localized (Acts 2:16). Nowhere in Joel's prophecy (chapter 2) does he indicate a time period or even sequence (Joel 2:17-19; 28). For this reason, Joel is very up to date.

The theme of Joel's prophecy is "The day of the Lord" (Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14). "The day of the Lord" is an expression that is loaded with meaning. It seems to include not only the coming Millennial Kingdom, but also to include all the judgments which precede the setting up of the Kingdom and the return of Christ.

OUTLINE

1. Literal and Local PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS, chapter 1:1-14
2. Looking to the DAY OF THE LORD (Prelude), chapters 1:15 - 2:32
3. Looking at the DAY OF THE LORD (Postlude), chapter 3
 1. The Great Tribulation, vs. 1-15
 2. The Millennial Kingdom, vs. 16-21

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF JONAH](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF JONAH

QUESTION: Is the book of Jonah the Achilles heel of the Bible? It is, if we are to accept the explanations of the critics. The translators of the Septuagint were the first to question its reasonableness. They set the pattern for the avalanche of criticism which was to follow. To many the book of Jonah is a allegory and not actual events that took place.

Jonah was an historical character. The historical record of the kings of Israel and Judah is accepted as reliable. Jonah is mentioned in

II Kings 14:25 as the son of Amittai. He was an acknowledged prophet. It is not likely that there were two Jonahs, both having a father named Amittai and who were prophets (especially since it is not a common name). Obviously the Lord Jesus considered Jonah a real person, and He accepted the record of the book of Jonah as true (Lk. 11:30; Matthew 12:39-41).

Jonah lived during the reign of Jereboam II. He was really a successor to Elisha as messenger to the ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel. Furthermore, Jonah had a popular message to give in Israel (II Kings 14:26-27). In times of oppression, the promise of prosperous days was most welcome. The fulfillment of his prophecy in the extension of Israel's territory under Jereboam II enhanced his popularity in his homeland.

Now Jonah is commissioned by God to go to Ninevah. Assyria was the last place in the world an Israelite would choose for a missionary venture, so Jonah took off in the opposite direction.

Properly speaking, the book of Jonah is not a prophecy, and seems to be out of step among the other books of prophecy. It contains no prophecy, although Jonah was a prophet. The book of Jonah is the personal account of a major event in the life of Jonah. As the narrator, he told of his experience which was a sign of the greatest event in the **history of the world - the resurrection of Jesus Christ.**

Keep in mind that the fish is not the hero of the story - neither is it the villain. The book is not about a fish. The chief difficulty is in keeping a correct perspective. The fish is among the props and does not occupy the star's dressing room. We need to distinguish between the essentials and the incidentals. The incidentals are the fish, the gourd, the east wind, the boat, and Ninevah. The essentials are Jehovah and Jonah - God and man.

SIGNIFICANT SUBJECTS IN THE BOOK OF JONAH

1. This is the one book of the Old Testament **which sets forth the resurrection.** **When a** wicked and adulterous generation was seeking after a sign, Jesus referred them to the book of Jonah for the message: "As Jonah.. .so Jesus." (Matthew 12:40).

2. Salvation is not by works. Salvation is by faith which leads to repentance. The book of Jonah is read by the orthodox Jews on the Great Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). One great self-evident truth from the ritual of this day is that the way to God was not by works, but by the blood of a substitutionary sacrifice provided by God. The most significant statement in the book of Jonah is in 2:9: **"Salvation is of the Lord."**

3. God's purpose of grace cannot be frustrated. If Jonah had refused to go to Ninevah the second time, God would have raised up another instrument, or more likely, He would have had another fish ready to give Jonah the green signal toward Ninevah. The book shows God's determination to get His message of salvation to a people who will hear and accept it.

4. God will not cast us aside for faithlessness. When Jonah failed the first time, God did not give him up. The most encouraging words which a faltering and failing child of God can hear are, "And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time."

5. God is good and gracious. The most penetrating picture of God in the entire Bible is in 4:2. It is wrong to say that the Old Testament reveals a God of wrath, and the New Testament a God of love. He is no vengeful deity in the book of Jonah!

6. God is the God of the Gentiles. It has been suggested that Romans 3:29 be written over this book. It is the answer to the critics who declaim that the Old Testament presents a local and limited deity, a tribal deity. The book of Jonah is a great book on world missions.

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF AMOS](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF AMOS

Amos the prophet ministered during the reign of Jeroboam II, king of Israel, and Uzziah, king of Judah. He was a contemporary of Hosea in Israel and of Isaiah and Micah in Judah. The exact time was "two years before the earthquake" (Amos 1:1). This earthquake was of such proportions that Zechariah mentioned it 200 years later (Zechariah 14:5), and identified it as having come during the reign of Uzziah.

Amos prophesied to arouse Israel from her religious apostasy and moral corruption (Amos 5:2-4) and the invasion of Assyria (Amos 3:1,12). Let us observe several things concerning Amos:

He was not a trained prophet - not one of the schools of prophets (Amos 7:14-15)

He was mighty in prayer. God showed him impending disaster, and he prayed to God to be merciful on two occasions (Amos 7:1-6).

He would not be manipulated by the priest Amaziah to take himself and his prophecy to Judah because Israel was not able to receive it (Amos 7:10-13).

He prophesied in spite of the background of material prosperity during the reign of Jeroboam II (II Kings 14:23-29).

Amos presented God as the ruler of this world, and declared that all nations were responsible to Him. The measure of responsibility is created by the light which a nation has. The final test for any nation (or individual) is found in Amos 3:3: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" In a day of prosperity, he pronounced punishment. The judgment of God awaited nations living in luxury and immorality.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF AMOS

A. Judgment on Surrounding Nations, chapters 1:1-2:3

5. Introduction, 1:1-2
6. Judgment against **Syria** for cruelty, 1:3-5
7. Judgment against **Philistia** for making slaves, 1:6-8
8. Judgment against **Phoenicia** for breaking treaty, 1:9-10
9. Judgment against **Edom** for Revengeful Spirit, 1:11-12
10. Judgment against **Amon** for violent crimes, 1:13-15
11. Judgment against **Moab** for injustice, 2:1-3

B. Judgment on Judah and Israel, chapters 2:4-6:14

11. Judgment against **Judah** for despising the Law, 2:4-5
12. Judgment against **Israel** for immorality and blasphemy, 2:6-16

13. God's charge against the **Whole House of Israel** (12 tribes), chapter 3 (Privilege creates responsibility; the higher the blessing, the greater the punishment.)
14. Israel punished in **Past** for iniquity, chapter 4
15. Israel will be punished in **Future** for iniquity, chapter 5
16. Israel admonished in **Present** to depart from iniquity, chapter 6

C. Visions of Future, chapters 7-9

8. Vision of **Grasshoppers**, 7:1-3
9. Vision of **Fire**, 7:4-6
10. Vision of **Plumbline**, 7:7-9
11. Historic Interlude, 7:10-17 (Personal experience of prophet)
12. Vision of basket of **Summer Fruit**, chapter 8
13. Visions of world-wide **Dispersion**, 9:1-10
14. Vision of world-wide **Regathering** and **Restoration** of Kingdom, 9:11-15

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF HOSEA](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF HOSEA

Hosea ministered during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah in Judah. In Israel, Jeroboam II reigned. It was a time of continuous revolution with king after king within a few short years in the Southern Kingdom. Hosea deals mainly, however, with the Northern Kingdom. During the early part of Hosea's life, Israel was enjoying great material prosperity (II Kings 14:23-29). With this prosperity was also deep religious apostasy and moral corruption.

Hosea was contemporary with Amos, another prophet to Israel, and also contemporary with Micah and Isaiah, prophets to Judah. His ministry extended over half a century, and he lived to see the fulfillment of his prophecy in the captivity of Israel.

The theme of the book of Hosea is seen in Hosea 6:1, "Return unto the Lord." "Return" occurs 15 times in the book.

What Jeremiah was to do to Judah at the time of the captivity of the Southern Kingdom, Hosea was to Israel, over a century before, at the time of the captivity of the Northern Kingdom. Both spoke out of a heartbreaking personal experience.

Hosea's experience was in the home while Jeremiah's was in the nation. Jeremiah was commanded not to marry. Hosea was commanded to marry a harlot, or, as he brutally stated the case, "a wife of whoredoms." He married Gomer, and she bore him two sons and a daughter. Afterward she played the harlot again, and Hosea put her out of his home. But God commanded him to go and to take this unfaithful harlot and to bring her back into his home and to love her again. "Now," God said in effect to Hosea, "you are prepared to speak for me to Israel - Israel played the harlot, but I love her and will yet bring her back into her homeland."

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF HOSEA

A. **Personal** - The prophet and his faithless wife, Gomer, chapters 1-3

12. Marriage of Hosea and Gomer, the Harlot, chapter 1
13. Gomer proves faithless; Israel proves faithless; God proves faithful, chapter 2
14. Hosea commanded to take Gomer again, chapter 3

B. **Prophetic** - The Lord and the Faithless Nation Israel, chapters 4-14

17. Israel plays the Harlot, chapters 4-5
18. Israel (Ephraim) will return in the last days; but presently to be judged for current sins, chapter 6
19. Israel (Ephraim) could escape judgment by turning to God

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF ISAIAH](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

EIGHT CENTURY PROPHETS IN JUDAH

During the chaotic period in the latter half of the eight century B.C. when Israel (the Northern Kingdom) was moving through her final days toward destruction by the Assyrians in 721 B.C., two prophets Isaiah and Micah were active in Judah (Southern Kingdom).

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

A. ISAIAH'S BACKGROUND

Isaiah Ben Amos possibly born about 760 B.C., was a younger contemporary of Amos and Hosea. Isaiah was very close to the royal house of Judah, especially in the reign of King Hezekiah. The Northern Kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam II of the dynasty of Jehu enjoyed prosperity, but it was rotten to the core (II Kings 14:23-29). The dominant world power in Isaiah's day was Assyria. During Isaiah's lifetime, the mighty Assyrian army swallowed up Israel and invaded Judah, seriously threatening it. At various times, Judah sought alliances either with Assyria or Egypt and Isaiah denounced these, calling on the nation to turn back to God.

Isaiah was married, and his wife was a prophetess (Isaiah 8:3). They had two sons with highly significant names. In fact, these names sum up Isaiah's ministry:

Shear-Jashub (meaning remnant shall return), Isaiah 7:3

Marar-shalal-hashbaz (meaning speed and plunder), Isaiah 8:1

Isaiah means "**Jehovah saves.**" Isaiah's prophecy was of the Syrian invasion of Damascus and Samaria and in fact, on Judah itself. This came to pass with speed and plunder. Furthermore, his prophecy was one of hope for Judah although they would reject his message and be in exile. A remnant would return. Then, of course, his prophecy was of Jesus, "Jehovah saves." **NOTE:** This prophecy was not remote, but related to the prevailing circumstances (Eze. 3:14-17). Isaiah lived through four kings. One was Uzziah, upon whose death he was commissioned (Isaiah 6), and the others were Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. Isaiah prophesied for some sixty years.

B. ISAIAH'S PROPHECY

Perhaps the easiest way to remember the content is to see it as two main divisions - The first thirty-nine chapters reveal the judgment of God. A marked change takes place in chapter 40, and then twenty-seven chapters reveal comfort.

In chapter one, God's indictment of the kingdom of Judah in Jerusalem is actually called Sodom (verses 10 and 21). **NOTE:** Even in the midst of this, God reasons (vs. 18). Jesus referred to this book in John 12:37-41, proving that in the midst of Isaiah's difficult rejection and faithful proclamation, he was like Jesus (Isaiah 6:10-11). Isaiah was a prophetic defender of his nation against encroachments of heathen nations. Chapter 39 - the visit of the king of Babylon (vs. 7 and 8). It seems that Isaiah went through such a prophetic barrenness, not as a result of false prophecy, but simply rejection, that he becomes more of a seer later on in the following ways:

Chapter 40 and 41 - He reveals the comforter (40:1-28; 41:9-10).

Chapter 44 and 45 - He sees Cyrus and names him by name before it even happened in Babylon.

Chapter 53 - He sees Jesus, His death and resurrection.

Chapter 54 - He sees needy souls such as the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:28)

Chapter 59 and 60 - He sees when all nations shall acknowledge Jesus. **NOTE:** We are yet in the first part of Isaiah 61 - the day of vengeance has not yet come (Luke 4:20).

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Isaiah is the prophet of "**the servant of the Lord.**" This theme permeates the book from chapter 41 onwards - "**The servant is Jesus Christ**" "**The servant is the church.**" The Hebrew meaning of servant is "a person at the disposal of another." Isaiah was this.

I. OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

A. JUDGMENT, CHAPTERS 1-35

Revelation of the Sovereign on the Throne (The Crown, chapter 6. The Government of God)

15. Solemn Call to the Universe to Come into the Court Room to hear God's **Charge** Against the Nation Israel, Chapter 1
16. **Preview of the Future** for Judah and Jerusalem, Chapter 2
17. **Present View** of Judah and Jerusalem, Chapter 3
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20. Isaiah's **Personal Call** and Commission, Chapter 6
21. Prediction of Local and Far Events, Chapters 7-10 (Hope of Future in Coming Child)
22. **Millennial Kingdom**, Chapters 11,12
23. **Burdens** of Surrounding Nations (largely fulfilled), Chapters 13-2
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 3. Burden of Damascus, chapter 17
 4. Burden of the Land Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia, Chapter 18
 5. Burden of Egypt, chapters 19,20
 6. Burden of Babylon, Edom, Arabia, chapter 21
 7. Burden of the Valley of Vision, chapter 22
 8. Burden of Tyre, chapter 23
24. **Kingdom, Process and Program** by which the Throne is Established on Earth, Chapters 24-34
25. **Kingdom**, Blessings of the Millennium, Chapter 35

B. HISTORICAL INTERLUDE, CHAPTERS 36-39

These Historical narratives are practically a verbatim transcript of II Kings 18:13-20:19, except for Hezekiah's song of thanksgiving in Isaiah 38:9-20. This section is probably a prophetic **picture** of how God will deliver His people in the Great Tribulation.

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21. **King Hezekiah's Prayer** and the Destruction of the Assyrian Hosts, chapter 37
22. **King Hezekiah's Sickness**, Prayer and Healing, chapter 38
23. **King Hezekiah Plays the Fool**, chapter 39

C. SALVATION, CHAPTERS 40-66

Revelation of the Savior in the Place of Suffering - The Cross, chapter 53, the Grace of God. (There is a threefold division marked by the concluding though in each division, "There is no peace to the wicked.")

15. **Comfort of Jehovah** - Which comes through the **Servant, chapters 40-48** (Polemic against Idolatry - Help and Hope come only through the Servant)
16. **Salvation of Jehovah** - Which comes through the **Suffering Servant, chapters 49-57**
 1. Redeemer of the Whole World, who is God's Servant, chapters 49-52:12
 2. Redemption Wrought by the Suffering Servant, Who is God's Sheep (Lamb), chapters 52:13-53
 3. Results of Redemption Wrought by the Redeemer, Who is God'S only Savior, chapters 54-57
17. **Glory of Jehovah** - Which comes through the **Suffering Servant, chapters 58-66.**
 1. Sin Hinders the Manifestation of the Glory of God, chapters 55,59
 2. Redeemer is coming to Zion, chapters 60-66 (Nothing can hinder God's progress - He will Judge Sin)

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF MICAH](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

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[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF MICAH](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

BOOKS OF THE PROPHETS DURING THE DECLINE AND FALL OF JUDAH, 934-586 B.C.

(THE FALL OF THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE, AND BABYLONIAN SUPREMACY, 612 TO 538 B.C.)

INTRODUCTION

The first period of the prophets, THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM, closed with the ministries of Isaiah and Micah. It is generally supposed that they completed their prophetic careers early in the long and evil reign of Manasseh, who may very well have been the direct cause of the death of one or both of them. After their death, there was prophetic silence in Jerusalem and Judah for more than fifty years.

The wicked Manasseh was on the throne from 697 until about 642 B.C., and his son Amon, who followed in his father's evil footsteps, reigned for another two years, or to about 640 B.C. All the evils of Baalism and idolatry and imported heathen institutions, which both Israel and Judah had known in the past, were revived and allowed full sway in the nation during these years.

Young Zephaniah was the first to break the long prophetic silence, but his young contemporary, Jeremiah, was soon to follow him.

These young prophets came directly from the Lord, with a message of utmost urgency, a prophecy of judgment and doom upon the wicked nation. Like all true prophets, however, they aimed to arouse the moral and religious

conscience of the people, and thus to render unnecessary the fulfillment of their grim predictions of Captivity and Exile.

Both Zephaniah and Jeremiah lived with the constant reminder that God's judgment had already been visited upon the Northern Kingdom, who were now in Exile, and that this judgment could be repeated for Judah.

Although the prophets Nahum and Habakkuk are not so well known as some of the others, their messages were important both spiritually and historically for then and for succeeding generation.

THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH

The young prophet Zephaniah was a person of quality. He was a member of the the royal family, and a poet. He was a great-great grandson of King Hezekiah, and a distant cousin of the present king Josiah, and a relative of the prophet Isaiah.

According to his opening sentence, the prophecies of Zephaniah were given "in the days of Josiah." Josiah came to the throne of Judah about 639 B.C., when he was eight years old, and ruled Judah until his sudden death in battle, in 608 B.C. He was the best King Judah ever had. It is likely that Zephaniah was living in Jerusalem at the time, and had an important influence on the religious education and reforms of the young king.

Whether Zephaniah preached before or after Josiah's reforms cannot be decided with certainty. The book does portray the kind and depth of religious decline which immediately preceded Josiah's reforms. In an age which had lapsed into syncretism, Zephaniah attacked the adoption of foreign customs (1:4-9), including in his denunciation the Canaanite Baal, the Ammonite Milcom, and Assyrian astral worship. With vehemence he decried violence, fraud, idolatry, pride. Judah was completely and thoroughly corrupt (3:3-4).

Probably, therefore, the time is fairly early in the reign of Josiah before the reforms of 621 B.C.

ZEPHANIAH'S PROPHECY - THE CONTENT

The Lord has placed upon the prophet Zephaniah the burden of declaring His judgment and doom upon the guilty Jerusalem and Judah. It is more than an arraignment or indictment of the nation; it is a warning that time is up, and that doom is imminent. "**For the day of the Lord is at hand.. The great day of the Lord is near" (1:7; 14).**

Zephaniah saw the Day of the Lord in which judgment would fall upon "**those who do not seek the Lord or inquire of Him**" (1:6). The Lord's "**jealous wrath**" would erupt against Judah in a day of distress and anguish, ruin and devastation, darkness and gloom, clouds and thick darkness (1:14-18). God's own people stand under the threat of a great cult day when they themselves will be the sacrifice (1:7).

The nations too stand under the sovereign judgment of the Lord, who will hold them responsible (2:4-15). The purpose of judgment, however, is not destruction of either Judah or the nations, but rather, the redemption of both. Both Judah and the nations are to be judged so that the Lord may gather a remnant of the "**humble and lowly**" who will "**call on the name of the Lord and serve him with one accord**" (3:9).

Zephaniah closes his book with an Eschatological Hymn of Salvation (3:14-20). The hymn is a song of rejoicing by Zion and all the redeemed of the earth, in praise of the Lord, who has taken away the judgment against them.

In the book of Zephaniah we have a complete cycle of Divine prophecy:

- The judgment against a wicked and disobedient people;
- Their purification and redemption;
- The restoration of the faithful remnant, and their glorious future.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH

- I. Introduction, 1:1
- II. The Day of the Lord against Judah, 1:2-2:3 and 3:1-7
- III. Judgment against the Nations, 2,4-15

THE BOOK OF NAHUM

INTRODUCTION

The book of Nahum is a sequel to the book of Jonah. Both have to do with the great city of Nineveh, the famous capital of the Assyrian Empire.

Jonah was sent to Nineveh, about 785 B.C., on a divine mission of mercy and repentance. He preached to the Ninevites in the heyday of their prosperity and power. They repented at his preaching, and restrained themselves, for a time at least, from their wars of conquest and cruelty to other nations.

The book of Nahum, on the contrary, was written in the period of decline and approaching fall of Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire. The prophets Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, all had prophesied the fall of Assyria. Nahum came with a prophecy of retribution and doom. His message, shortly before the capital's fall, came like a funeral dirge, as if Nineveh's destruction was already an accomplished fact.

Little is known about Nahum the author. According to the opening statement of the book, his birthplace was Elkosh. But efforts to locate such a place have been unsuccessful. However, there is one bit of interesting etymology: Nahum's name is contained in the latter half of the word Capernaum, which is the Greek spelling for Nahum, and means "village of Nahum." Could it be that Nahum was a resident or founder of Capernaum, which Jesus used as headquarters for most of His ministry?

It is easier to determine the approximate date of the book. Nineveh was captured and destroyed in 612 B.C. In chapter 3:8-10, Nahum describes the destruction of the Egyptian city of Thebes in 663 B.C.. The book of Nahum therefore was written between these two dates. Some say it was most likely written between 621 B.C., the beginning of Josiah's reformation, and 612 B.C., the date of Nineveh's fall.

THE BOOK OF NAHUM - THE CONTENTS

Unlike the books of Isaiah, Micah, and Zephaniah, whose prophecies were devoted largely to Jerusalem and Judah, Nahum's message was directed entirely to a foreign foe, NINEVEH, Judah's arch-enemy for generations. This same enemy destroyed Israel and carried its inhabitants into captivity. Moreover, in the lifetime of Isaiah the Assyrians captured a number of the cities of Judah carrying away more than 200,000 inhabitants. Divine intervention only saved the destruction of Jerusalem itself.

Nahum sounds the death knell of Nineveh, and pronounces judgment, by total destruction, on Assyria. God was just in doing this. Jonah, more than a century before, had brought a message from God, and Nineveh had repented. However the repentance was transitory, and God patiently gave this new generation opportunity to repent (1:3). Assyria had served God's purpose (Isaiah 10:5), and would be destroyed. The destruction of Nineveh according to the details which are given in this written prophecy is almost breathtaking.

This is a message of comfort to a people who live in fear of a powerful and godless nation. God will destroy any godless nation.

Nineveh will fall - this vast city with walls one hundred feet high and wide enough for three chariots to ride abreast, having 1,500 towers of defense - sixty miles around. This impregnable city was destroyed.

Note: (Especially 2:6) - For two years the city resisted the Babylonian and Medes attack, then the river overflowed its banks undermining the foundation of the great wall. Archeologists have proven this precisely.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF NAHUM

I. Justice and Goodness of God, 1:1-8

II. Justice and Goodness of God Demonstrated in Decision to Destroy Nineveh and to Give the Gospel, 1.9-15

III. Justice and Goodness of God Exhibited in Execution of His decision to Destroy Nineveh, Chapters 2,3

1. Annihilation of Assyria, chapter 2
2. Avenging Action of God Justified, Chapter 3

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK

INTRODUCTION

Habakkuk means love's embrace. Martin Luther gave a very striking definition of his name, which cannot be improved upon. "Habakkuk signifies an embracer, or one who embraces another, takes him into his arms. He embraces his people, and takes them to his arms, he comforts them and holds them up, as one embraces a weeping child, to quiet him with the assurance that if God wills it shall soon be better."

This is all that is known of the writer, except that he was the doubting Thomas of the Old Testament. He had a question mark for a brain.

The book of Habakkuk was probably written during the reign of Josiah, about the time of the destruction of Nineveh and the rise of Babylon to power. Habakkuk appeared in the twilight, just before the darkness of captivity.

The form and the composition of the book is revealed in the closing statement, "**To the chief singer on my stringed instrument.**" The last chapter is a psalm. The entire prophecy is a gem of beauty. It has been translated into a metric version - the language is classical, full of rare and select turns and words - it is distinguished for its magnificent poetry.

THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK - THE CONTENT

The book opens in gloom and closes in glory. It begins with an interrogation point and closes with an exclamation mark. Habakkuk is a big **WHY?** Why God permits evil is a question that every thoughtful mind has faced. This book is the answer to the question. Will God straighten out the injustice of the world? This book answers the question. Is God doing anything about the wrongs of the world? This book says that He is. The book is the personal experience of the prophet told in poetry, as Jonah's was told in prose.

Habakkuk is known as the "prophet of faith." The great statement of 2.4, "**The just shall live by faith,**" has been quoted 3 times in the New Testament: Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK

I. **PERPLEXITY** of the prophet, chapter 1

37. First **Problem** of the Prophet, 1,1-4 Why does God permit evil?
38. God's **Answer**, 1:5-11.
God was raising up Chaldeans to punish Judah (v. 6)
39. Second **Problem** of the Prophet (greater than first), 1:12-17
Why would God permit His people to be punished by a nation more wicked than they? Why did He not destroy the Chaldeans?

II. **PERSPICUITY** (understanding) of the Prophet, chapter 2

28. **Practice** of the Prophet, 2:1
He took the problem to God
29. **Patience** of the Prophet, 2:2,3
He waited for the vision
30. **Pageant** for the Prophet, 2:4
The great divide in humanity: One group, which is crooked, is flowing toward destruction; the other group, by faith, is moving toward God. This is inevitable.

31. **Parable** to the Prophet, 2:5-20

The application is self-evident from the vision. The Chaldeans, in turn, would be destroyed. God was moving among the nations.

III. **PLEASURE** of the Prophet, chapter 3

21. **Prayer** of the Prophet, 3:1,2

The prophet, who thought God was doing nothing about evil, now asks Him to remember to be merciful. Was he afraid that God was doing too much?

22. **Program** of God, 3:3-15

God rides majestically in His own chariot of salvation, (v.8)

23. **Position** of the Prophet, 3:16-19

He will rejoice (v.18). He has come from pain to pleasure.

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

INTRODUCTION

Jeremiah was born during the closing days of the reign of King Manasseh (son of good King Hezekiah). He was the son of the priest Hilkiah, he came from a village about four miles from Jerusalem in the southern kingdom of Judah. The nation of Judah had sunk to an all-time low in wickedness. However, about the time of Jeremiah's birth, King Manasseh had experienced a change of heart. It had little effect upon the nation, though. Amon came to the throne while Jeremiah was still a boy and was murdered after reigning for just two years. Then Josiah came to the throne. He was just a boy of eight years of age. Jeremiah was also about eight years old. Josiah grew up to be one of Judah's godly rulers, and reformation and revival took place (2 Chron. 34,35).

Jeremiah, while still very young is called by God to be a prophet. Let us notice three aspects of Jeremiah's call:

His election before his birth (vs. 5)

His consciousness of his youth (vs. 6)

The nature of his commission (vs. 10)

NOTE: He knew from the first that his ministry would demand devotion as well as unction (I John 2:19-20). Furthermore, five years after his call, a very important thing happened in Judah - the finding of the Book of the Law in the temple in Jerusalem (2 Kings 22,23). **NOTE:**

The involvement of his father, Hilkiah, also confirmed Jeremiah's call (2 Tim. 1:5).

The message of Jeremiah was the most unwelcome ever delivered to a people. He was called a traitor because he said that they were to yield to Babylon (38:17-23). Isaiah, almost a century before had said to resist. Why this change? In Jeremiah's day there was only one thing left to do - surrender. In the economy of God, the nation was through, and (15:1) the "Times of the Gentiles" had already begun with Babylon, the head of gold (Daniel 2).

Jeremiah predicted the 70 years captivity in Babylon (25:9-12). However, he saw beyond the darkness to the light, and no prophet spoke so glowing of the future as did he (23:3-8; 30; 31; 33:15-22).

The message of Jeremiah was not only unwelcome, but it was rejected by the nation (26:8-16).

Jeremiah is know as the prophet of doom, yet even though his message was one of gloom and doom for the nation and it's people, he did not appear to be harsh. He was one of the most sensitive souls who ever lived. He prophesied doom with tears and a broken heart. He was a man of intense love, and he revealed the redeeming love of God. His disposition and very demeanor was a striking reflection of the heart of God at that time. God - rejected, spurned, suffering, proclaiming, yet yearning for Israel with an everlasting love(I Cor.9:19-22).

NOTE: God's purpose is not always our preference. Jeremiah's commission from God was of such a nature that he was involved in great misunderstanding, persecution and loneliness in the following ways:

His own neighbors and relatives conspired to kill him (11:21 and 12:6).

He was denied the comfort of wife and children (16:1,2).

He was beaten and put in the stocks (20:1-4).

His writings were spurned and burned by King Jehoiakim (36:1, 21,23).

He was charged with treason and imprisoned falsely (37:11-15).

He was again cast into a dungeon and sunk into the dung to be later rescued by King Zedekiah (chapter 31), but remained in prison.

Finally, he was set free when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem (39:11-12).

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

I. Call of Prophet during reign of Josiah, chapter 1

II. Prophecies to Judah and Jerusalem prior to Zedekiah's reign, chapters 2-20

40. Twofold Condemnation of Judah, chapters 2 - 3:5

1. Rejected Jehovah
2. Reared their own Gods

41. Charge of Backsliding during reign of Josiah, chapters 3:6-6

42. Warning delivered in Gate of the Lord's House, chapters 7-10

43. Israel disobeyed God's Covenant made in the Wilderness chapters 11-12

44. Parable in Action - the Linen Girdle, chapter 13

45. Backsliding Nation Judged by drought and famine, chapters 14,15

46. Jeremiah Forbidden to Marry, chapters 16-17:18

47. Message to King in Gate, chapter 17:19-27

48. Sign at Potter's House, chapters 18,19

49. Jeremiah's Persecution. chapters 20

III. Prophecies During the Reign of Zedekiah, Chapters 21-29

32. Answer to Zedekiah re: Nebuchadnezzar, chapters 21,22

33. Bright Light in a Very Dark Day, chapter 23

34. Parable of 2 baskets of figs, chapter 24

35. God spells out 70-Year Captivity, chapter 25

36. Message in Temple Court during reign Jehoiakim, chapter 26

37. Parable of Yokes, chapters 27,28

38. Message of HOPE to 1st delegation of captives, chapter 29

IV. Prophecies re:Future of 12 Tribes and Judah's Near Captivity, Chapters, 30-39

24. Coming Great Tribulation, chapter 30

25. The 'I will' Chapter, chapter 31

26. Jeremiah Imprisoned, buys Real Estate, chapter 32

27. Coming Kingdom as promised to David, chapter 33

28. Zedekiah's Captivity Foretold, chapter 34

29. Rechabites obey God, chapter 35

30. Jehoiakim destroys Word of God, chapter 36
31. Jeremiah Imprisoned, chapter 37,38
32. Judah goes into Captivity, Jeremiah released from prison, chapter 39

V. Prophecies to Remnant left in land after destruction of Jerusalem, Chapters 40-42

VI. Prophecies During Jeremiah's Last Days in Egypt, Chapters 43-51

2. To Remnant in Egypt, chapters 43-44
3. To Baruch, chapter 45
4. To Egypt, chapter 46
5. To Philistia, chapter 47
6. To Moab, chapter 48
7. To Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, Hazor, Elam, chapter 49
8. To Babylon, chapters 50,51

VII. Fulfillment of Propheesied Destruction of Jerusalem, Chapter 52

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

UNIT V

BOOKS BY THE PROPHETS IN EXILE THE PERIOD OF THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY, 606 B.C. - 536 B.C.

INTRODUCTION

The defeat of Jehoiakim and Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar 5 army in 606 B.C.,

II Kings chapter 24, marked the beginning of the final conquest and captivity of the Southern Kingdom. At this time the first installment of the population of Judah was carried away as captivities to Babylon. Included in the number was a youth, Daniel by name, who was to become famous in the court of the king in Babylon. Daniel was relocated in the city of Babylon.

The most famous of the captives was the prophet Ezekiel, just eight years after the deportation of Daniel. Whereas Daniel was placed in the city of Babylon; Ezekiel was located in the country, on the river Chebar, a great canal southwest of Babylon.

The other prophets who wrote during this period: Daniel, Jeremiah (Lamentations), and Obadiah.

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

Ezekiel, a young priest (1:3), although he never served in that office, and son of Buzi was carried away to Babylon with King Jehoiachin and his household, and with large numbers of others. With these Jewish exiles, he was settled by the river Chebar.

In the fifth year of his exile (1:2), Ezekiel had a vision of God and received a call to become a prophet among his people. His prophetic ministry thus begun, it was carried on for the next twenty-three at least, perhaps longer. The latest date in the book is the twenty-seventh year of the Captivity, 570 B.C. Thus, the book of Ezekiel was written in exile, by an exile, almost a thousand miles away from his native land.

Ezekiel was contemporary with Jeremiah and Daniel. Jeremiah was an old man who spoke to the remnant that remained in Judah; Daniel spoke to the court of the king of Babylon; Ezekiel spoke to the captives who had been brought to the rivers of Babylon. While the others were weeping when they remembered Zion, Ezekiel was exulting in the greatest visions ever given to any prophet.

Ezekiel began his ministry 5 years after his captivity when he was about 30 years old.

Ezekiel's message was the most spiritual of the prophets as he dealt more with the person of God. Someone has said, "**Ezekiel is the prophet of the Spirit, as Isaiah is the prophet of the Son, and Jeremiah the prophet of the Father.**"

During the first years of the captivity the false prophets said that the people would be returned to Jerusalem, and that the city would not be destroyed. It was not until the final deportation, during Zedekiah's reign, that the city was destroyed - some twelve years after Ezekiel was taken captive.

Jeremiah had sent a message to Babylon (Jeremiah 29) saying that the city would be destroyed. Ezekiel confirmed this message, and warned the people that they must turn to God before they could return to Jerusalem.

In many ways he spoke in the darkest days of the nation. He stood at the bottom of the valley in the darkest corner. He had to meet the false hope given by the false prophets and the indifference and the despondency begotten in the days of sin and disaster. The people would not listen to him or to his message. Therefore, he resorted to a new method. Instead of speaking in parables, he acted them out (24:24). We have had "flagpole sitters" and "walkathons" and "sit-ins" in our day which attracted the attention of the public. This sort of thing was the method of Ezekiel and is indicative of a day of decay.

Ezekiel is the prophet of the glory of the Lord. Three prophets spoke when they were out of the land: Ezekiel, Daniel, and John. Each has written an apocalypse. Although they used highly symbolic language, they saw the brightest light and held the highest hope. Ezekiel saw the Shekinah glory of the Lord leave Solomon's Temple, and he saw the return of the glory of the Lord which was projected into the future during the Kingdom.

The meaning of Ezekiel is seen in the coming glory during the Kingdom. Ezekiel looked beyond the sufferings of Christ to "the glory that should follow" (I Peter 1:11).

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

I. Glory of the Lord; Commission of the Prophet, Chapters 1-7

50. Display of the Glory, chapter 1
51. Prophet's Call and Enduement with Power for the Office, chapter 2
52. Prophet's Preparation; Office as Watchman, chapter 3
53. Judgment of Jerusalem, chapter 4
54. Sign of Prophet Shaving Hair, chapter 5
55. Sword to Fall upon Jerusalem; Remnant to be Saved, chapter 6
56. Prophecy of Final Destruction of Jerusalem, chapter 7

II. Glory of the Lord; Complete Captivity of Jerusalem and Israel; Departure of the Glory, Chapters 8-24

39. Vision of the Glory; Temple Defilement by Idolatry Explains its Destruction, chapter 8
40. Shekinah Glory Prepares to Leave Temple, chapter 9
41. Shekinah Glory Fills Holy Place; Leaves the Temple, chapter 10
42. Prophecy against Rulers of Jerusalem, chapter 11
43. Ezekiel Enacts Destruction of Jerusalem, chapter 12
44. Prophecy against Pseudo-Prophets and Prophetesses, chapter 13
45. Prophecy against Idolatry of Elders; Certain Destruction of Jerusalem, chapter 14

- 46. Vision of the Vine. chapter 15
 - 47. Jerusalem Likened to Abandoned Baby Adopted by God, chapter 16
 - 48. Riddle of 2 Eagles, chapter 17
 - 49. Wages of Sin is Death, chapter 18
 - 50. Elegy of Jehovah over Princes of Israel, chapter 19
 - 51. Review of Sins of Nation; Future Judgment and Restoration, chapter 20
 - 52. King of Babylon to Remove Last King of Davidic Line Until Messiah Comes, chapter 21
 - 53. Review of Abomination of Jerusalem, chapter 22
 - 54. Parable of 2 sisters (Samaria and Jerusalem, chapter 23
 - 55. Parable of Boiling Pot, chapter 24
- III. Glory of the Lord; Judgment of Nations, Chapters 25-32
- 33. Against Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, chapter 25
 - 34. Against Tyre, chapters 26-28
 - 35. Against Egypt, chapters 29-32
- IV. Glory of the Lord and Coming Kingdom, Chapters 33-48
- 9. Recommission of the Prophet, chapters 33-34
 - 10. Restoration of Israel, chapters 35-36
 - 11. Resurrection of Israel, chapter 37
 - 12. Repudiation of Gog and Magog, chapters 38,39
 - 13. Rebuilt Temple, chapters 40-42
 - 14. Return of Glory of the Lord, chapters 43-48

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF DANIEL](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

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[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF DANIEL](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS

The prophet Jeremiah's second book, Lamentations, is the only complete elegy in the Hebrew Scriptures. An elegy is usually written on the death of some person or persons. However in the case of Jeremiah the poem was written shortly after the destruction and passing of a great city, Jerusalem (586 B.C.), which to the prophet represented a personal, as well as a national loss.

Although in the original Hebrew the author of the book is anonymous, well established early tradition ascribed the authorship to Jeremiah. This tradition first appears in the title of the Septuagint version of Lamentations. The tradition of Jeremiah's authorship was continued by Jerome in The Vulgate, and others, until modern times.

The best conservative opinion is that the poem was very likely written during the three months or so between the burning of Jerusalem, July, 586 B.C., and Jeremiah's exile in Egypt.

The composition of the poem is that of a elegy or dirge in five parts, each part corresponding exactly to each of the five chapter divisions of the poem.

Also, each of the five elegies contain twenty-two verses, except that the third, and middle elegy contains three times as many verses as each of the others, or sixty-six verses.

In turn, each of the verses has three parts, or are in the form of triplets, except in elegies three-to-five many of the verses are in two parts, or are in the form of couplets.

As you begin your to read the poem, you see a picture of the old prophet sitting on the ruins of a great city, himself overcome with sorrow and grief. After a long silence, he slowly begins his elegy . . .

How lonely sits the city
that was full of people!
How like a widow has she become,
she that was great among the nations!

The poet then reviews step by step the cause of Zion's sorrows, the people's disobedience and sin and the Lord's anger, until finally he comes to the great passage, the central theme of the poem, which is the hope of God's everlasting love and mercy:

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
His mercies never come to an end...
The Lord is good to those who wait for Him,
To the soul that seeks Him...

THE OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS

The book of Lamentations may be grouped under the five chapter divisions corresponding to the five poems, as follows:

1. The fires of Nebuchadnezzar dispelled the last enchantment of the Holy City. Hence the prophet Jeremiah, disconsolate and sorrowful, sits on the ruins of Jerusalem and writes this national elegy of the people - himself no less lonely than the empty city, the loss of which he mourns.
2. Zion's sorrows, described in this death-in-life elegy, are due to the Lord's anger, whose doings have humiliated and punished his people.
3. Zion's hope is in God's love and mercy, verses 22-36
4. Zion's former glory is contrasted with her present misery and humiliation, especially during the last stages of the Babylonian siege.
5. For a concluding theme, Jeremiah leads Zion's earnest prayer for deliverance, from their present miseries, and for renewal of their place with the Lord, as in the days of old, verses 2-21.

In this chain of elegies, Jeremiah is much more than a mourner for a lost city. He becomes the spokesman for the sorrowful, and for the disconsolate of all time and ages, and points to the love and mercy of God as the only hope of any people.

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[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF OBDIAH](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

UNIT VI

BOOKS OF THE RETURN AND RESTORATION

INTRODUCTION

We come now to the last of the historical books of the Old Testament: Ezra, Esther, and Nehemiah. They tell of the **Return and Restoration** at Jerusalem after the 70 years of Exile in Assria, Babylonia, and Persia, but principally in Babylonia. Ezra and Nehemiah, are especially important, because they give us nearly all the direct information we have of the Return and Restoration: who came and went, and what they did after their return.

THE BOOK OF EZRA

Ezra is one of the characters who has not received proper recognition. He was a descendent of Hilkiah, the high priest (Ezra 7:1) who found a copy of the law during the reign of Josiah (II Chron. 34:14).

Ezra, as a priest, was unable to serve during the captivity, but he gave his time to a study of the Word of God - he was "a ready scribe in the law of Moses" (Ezra 7:6). He came from exile in Babylon to Jerusalem with the second company of those who returned in about 457 B.C.

Ezra, also, was a great revivalist and reformer. The revival began with the reading of the Word of God by Ezra (Nehemiah 8). Also, he probably was the writer of I and II Chronicles, Nehemiah and of Psalm 119 (which exalts the Word of God), as well as the book that bears his name.

The book of Ezra and the book of Nehemiah in the original Hebrew Scriptures were one book. They were retained as one book in the Septuagint Version by the Greek translators of the original Hebrew Scriptures, and were not divided into two separate books until Jerome's Vulgate Version of 390-405 A.D.

Because the opening verses of Ezra repeat the concluding verses of II Chronicles the general opinion among scholars is that the three works, I and II Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, form one consecutive history, of which I and II Chronicles is the first half.

The book of Ezra is important because it reveals God's purpose and plan for His people. Indeed, the first sentence introduces that purpose: The Hebrews have been in exile for "seventy years" and now they are about to be released. God has raised up a new king, Cyrus king of Persia, "that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplish. The prophet Jeremiah had warned that Judah would be punished for her disobedience and wickedness by the Babylonians, and that Babylon in turn, because of her cruelty and wickedness, would then be destroyed (Jeremiah 25:11-12).

Isaiah, more than a hundred years before the event, prophesied the capture and exile of Judah by Babylon and the subsequent destruction of that cruel and wicked nation (Isaiah 13:19-20).

And of Cyrus, not as yet born, Isaiah said, "Thus says the Lord . . . concerning Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and he shall fulfill all my purpose." (Isaiah 44:28).

Thus, the book of Ezra is the story of the fulfillment of the promise to all Israel. Further, it shows in clear and unmistakable terms how God presides over the destinies of men and nations.

The Seventy Years, which Jeremiah prophesied, extends from the first stage of Judah's captivity (606 B.C.) to Cyrus' proclamation granting all Jews their freedom to return to Jerusalem (536 B.C.).

SUMMARY OF THE BOOK OF EZRA

The first six chapters tell the story of the historic return to Jerusalem by the Jews from their exile in Babylon, under the leadership of Zerubbabel, the first governor appointed by Cyrus king of Persia, and Zerubbabel's chief aid Joshua the priest, in 536 B.C.

Two items stand out in the narrative:

- the restoration of Divine service, and
- the building of the second Temple, the main purpose for which they returned.

Another feature of the book is the genealogy:

- the persons who came with Zerubbabel,
 - their quality and standing among the Jews,
 - as well as their respective numbers.
- He mentions the heads of fathers' houses,
- the priests and Levites, and
 - other important persons, with the numbers in each group.

Items of interest:

- There were only 341 Levites who returned, whereas of the priests there were as many as 4,289.
- Here is evidence of a reluctance on the part of the Levites to return to Jerusalem from their positions of prominence in Babylon.
- There was a total of 42,360 Jewish citizens who returned, besides 7,337 servants, and 200 singers.
- The grand total of those in the first return is approximately 50,000.
- A small number in comparison to the total number of the Jews in exile.
- Ezra also enumerates the livestock which they brought with them to start their new life in Judah. Included were 736 horses, 245 mules, 435 camels, and 6,720 asses.
- Cyrus further demonstrated his generosity by permitting the Jews to take back large quantities of gold and silver vessels, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the Temple and from the people of Jerusalem at the time of the cities total destruction.

In the last four chapters, Ezra, the priest and scribe, tells of his own return to Jerusalem and Judah with the second body of exiles who returned in about 458 B.C.

The primary purpose of Zerubbabel's mission, as we have seen, was to build the new Temple. **Ezra's chief mission, on the other hand, was to investigate the religious laxity of the people of Jerusalem, and to introduce reforms.**

Ezra was to teach the people, so that every one would know the Law of Moses. In addition, the Persian king, who although a non-Jew was a follower of Jehovah, expressly gave his authority to Ezra to enforce the observance of the Law, and by means of penalties, if need be.

Ezra had another purpose in coming to Jerusalem. Artaxerxes, now king of Persia, and his counselors had generously donated large sums of silver and gold for the Lord's work in Israel. To this was added a generous offering by the Jewish people and priests of Babylonia. His mission was to convey all these gifts to Jerusalem.

When Ezra arrived in Judah after four months of travel, he was embarrassed to find that his fellow countrymen in large numbers were marrying non-Jewish or "foreign women," and that the worst offenders were the officials and chief men of the colony!

Ezra undertook to correct this situation by enforcing extreme but successful measures to stop Jewish marriages with foreign women. A covenant was made in which the Jews pledged themselves to give up their non-Jewish wives and families.

In the book of Nehemiah, we learn more of the work of Ezra, and how he and his assistants read, and interpreted publicly the Bible to all the people.

We might also notice that there is a gap of 58 years between the two parts of Ezra. The first half extends from 536 B.C. to 516 B.C., the building of the Temple; and the second from about 458 B.C. to 445 B.C., the beginning of Nehemiah.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF EZRA

I. Return from Babylon Led by Zerubbabel, Chapters 1-6 (About 50,000 returned)

- 64. Restoration of Temple by Decree of Cyrus, chapter 1
- 65. Return under Zerubbabel, chapter 2
- 66. Rebuilding of Temple, chapter 3
- 67. Retardation of Rebuilding by Decree of Artaxerxes, chapter 4
- 68. Renewal of Rebuilding of Temple by Decree of Darius, chapters 5,6

II. Return from Babylon Led by Ezra, Chapters 7-10 (About 2,000 returned)

- 73. Return under Ezra, chapters 7,8
- 74. Reformation under Ezra, chapters 9,10

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF ESTHER](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF ESTHER

The book of Esther is in the form of a short story, like the short stories of Ruth and Jonah.

The setting of the story is in the palace at Shushan, or Susa, one of the three capitals of the Persian Empire. The date of the opening of the story is 453 B.C. and the close of the story is 470 B.C., the date to which the book of Esther brings us.

The Ahasuerus of the story is King Xerxes of Persia (485-465 B.C.), the same Xerxes the Great whose vast army and navy fought the Greeks at the famous battles of Thermopylae and Salamis, 480 B.C. The feast and assembly of all the leading men of the empire at Susa, described in the opening chapter of the book, was held in the third year of his reign (483 B.C.) to plan the expedition against Greece.

It appears that the king deposed Queen Vasti about 482, before he left, and married the Jewess, Esther, about 478 B.C., after the return from his disastrous war against the Greeks.

The book of Esther gives a vivid picture of the Jews in exile, and their treatment by their non-Jewish enemies in Persia and in the provinces of the Persian Empire.

Many regard the book as a historical romance, written to glorify the Jews at a time when they were hated and threatened with wholesale massacre, and even extinction.

However, the primary purpose is the deliverance of Israel from annihilation by the overruling power of the providence of God.

And yet this may seem strange in view of the fact that in the original Hebrew of the book not a single reference is made to the God of Israel. God's name is not mentioned; no divine title or pronoun refers to Him. Where the heathen king's name is mentioned 192 times. (It is true also that God's name does not occur in the Song of Songs, but every pronoun - with a possible exception of 8:6 - refers to Him.) Neither is there a single prayer nor is there supplication made to their God, in the time of their greatest need. **Deuteronomy 31:18 explains the reason God's name does not appear. They have forgotten God, there is no dependency upon Him, who created them, in the day of trouble.**

The book of Esther is the record of Israel in a self-chosen pathway. Opportunity had been given for the Jews to return under Cyrus (536 B.C.), but only a very small remnant had returned. Ezra and Nehemiah give the story of those who did return. Esther gives the story of those who did not return. The story of those who chose the prosperity and luxury of Persia instead of returning to Judah and Jerusalem.

Esther is the story, then, of the Jews who were out of God's will, but who nevertheless were not out of or beyond His providential care.

The book of Esther thus teaches the PROVIDENCE of God. Providence comes from the same root work as provide, and it means simple that God will provide.

Theologically, providence is the direction God gives to every thing, animate and inanimate, good and evil. **It is the sovereign rule of God in the determination of history.**

Practically, providence is **the hand of God in the glove of history** and that glove will never move until He moves. God is at the steering wheel of this universe. Providence means that God is behind the scenes, shifting and directing them. Providence is the way God coaches the man on second base. It is the way God leads the man who will **NOT** be led. As recorded in the book of Esther, the entire Jewish nation would have been slain had it not been for the providence of God. **God stands in the shadows, keeping watch over His own.**

ESTHER AND NEHEMIAH

Esther's marriage to King Xerxes and Mordecai being set over the house of Haman, which made him prime minister and second only to the king, must have given Jews great prestige and influence at the Persian court. An example of this influence is seen, for instance, when Xerxes died in 465 B.C., his son Artaxerxes, and Esther's step-son, succeeded him, 465-425 B.C. This Artaxerxes was the king at Susa for whom Nehemiah was cupbearer in '445 B.C., when he was given permission to come to Jerusalem to re-build the Wall of Jerusalem.

Who knows but that the influence of Esther at the Persian Court greatly aided Nehemiah in his mission to Jerusalem? And thirteen years earlier, in 458 B.C. may she not have had a hand in fitting out Ezra's expedition from Babylon to Jerusalem?

Here again we see the providence of God at work to accomplish His purposes in the life and direction of Israel.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF ESTHER

1. The Wife Who Refused to Obey Her Husband, chapter 1
2. The Beauty Contest to Choose a Real Queen, chapter 2
3. Haman and Anti-Semitism, chapter 3
4. For Such a Time as This, chapter 4
5. The Scepter of Grace and the Nobility of Esther, chapter 5
6. When a King Could Not Sleep at Night, chapter 6
7. The Man Who Came to Dinner but Died on the Gallows, chapter 7
8. The Message of Hope that Went Out from the King, chapter 8
9. The Institution of the Feast of Purim, chapters 9-10

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

The book of Nehemiah is a sequel to the book of Ezra, just as Ezra is a sequel of I and II Chronicles. All three works were probably written by the same author (Who according to a Jewish tradition is the priest and scribe Ezra, a noted writer and student of the Law of Moses, and the most outstanding teacher and preacher of the providence of his time.), and for one consecutive history.

The purpose of the book is to record the story and heroic fortunes of Nehemiah and the third body of exiles to return from captivity to Jerusalem, 445 B.C., thirteen years after the arrival of Ezra and his second company of exiles.

Nehemiah, who was the cupbearer to Artaxerxes king of Persia, was appointed by the king as the new governor of Judah. He and his exiles come from Susa, the Persian capital; whereas Zerubbabel and Ezra and their returning exiles came from Babylon.

Nehemiah's main mission was to re-build the Wall of Jerusalem, and to restore Jerusalem as a fortified city. He came with authority from the king of Persia to build the fortifications at government expense, and to withstand the hostility of their powerful neighbors who formerly had caused the building of the wall to be postponed.

After governing the province of Judah for twelve years, Nehemiah in 432 B.C. returned to Susa, the capital of Persia, to talk with Artaxerxes about the problems of the province, and to secure a further leave of absence for his work at Jerusalem. He returned within a few months.

Chronologically, this is the last of the historical book. We have come to the end of the line as far as time is concerned. The Old Testament goes no further. As we have seen the book of Ezra picks up the thread of the story about 70 years after II Chronicles. The 70 years captivity is over and a remnant returns to the land of Israel. The return of Ezra took place about from 75 to 80 years after Zerubbabel. Nehemiah return about 13 years after Ezra.

We realize that these figures are approximate and are given to show the stages in the history of Israel after the captivity. This enables one to see how **the "70 weeks" of Daniel begin with the book of Nehemiah rather than with Ezra**, "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks..." As seen the background of the events of Nehemiah is "...the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times" (Daniel 9:25).

The following dates seem to be a satisfactory solution to the problem of the "70 weeks" of Daniel:

Decree of Cyrus, 536 B.C. - Ezra 1:1-4

Decree of Artaxerxes, 445 B.C. (20th year of his reign) - Nehemiah 2:1-8

"70 weeks" BEGIN

The first "7 weeks" end, 397 B.C. - Malachi.

NEHEMIAH AND EZRA

Nehemiah was a layman; Ezra was a priest. In the book of Ezra the emphasis is upon the rebuilding of the Temple; in the book of Nehemiah the emphasis is upon the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem. In Ezra we have the religious aspect of the return; in Nehemiah we have the political aspect of the return. Ezra is a fine representative of the priest and scribe; Nehemiah is noble representative of the business man. Nehemiah has an important office at the court of the powerful Persian king, but his heart was with God's people and God's program in Jerusalem.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

I. Rebuilding the Walls, Chapters 1-7

69. Nehemiah's **PRAYER** for the Remnant at Jerusalem, chapter 1

70. Nehemiah's **REQUEST** of the king; RETURN to Jerusalem; REVIEW of the Ruins of Jerusalem, chapter 2:1-16

71. Nehemiah's **ENCOURAGEMENT** to Rebuild the Walls, chapter 2:17-20

72. **REBUILDING** the Walls and the Gates, chapter 3

73. Nehemiah's **RESPONSE** to Opposition, chapters 4-6 (Wall completed, 6:16)

74. Nehemiah's **REGISTER** of People, chapter 7 - (Only 42,360 people, 7,337 servants and 245 singers returned.)

II. Revival and Reforms, chapters 8-13

75. Great Bible **READING** Led by Ezra, chapter 8

76. **REVIVAL** - the Results, chapters 9-10

77. **REFORM** - Another Result, chapter 11-13

THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY - RESULTS

God's chosen people were called to witness against idolatry, but too often they themselves succumbed and became idolators. God sent them to Babylon the fountainhead of idolatry, to take the gold cure. They returned repudiating idolatry. However their restoration was incomplete. Leviticus 26:18 says, "**And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.**" Because they did not listen to the Lord, they are still to this day under the punishment and judgment of God. In Ezekiel 4 we are told that their time of punishment was to be 430 years. When you subtract the 70 years already served in captivity in Babylon from 430 years we see that there is yet 370 years of punishment left. Now, when you multiply 370 by the 7 times more of Leviticus 26:18, you come up with a total punishment period of 2,530 years. This punishment period would begin in 516 B.C. which would be the end of the 70 year captivity dating from 586 B.C., the destruction of Jerusalem and the taking of the last captives to exile in Babylon. This means that their punishment would be complete in 2004 A.D. The earliest time Israel can be completely restored and all the Jews can return home.

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF HAGGAI](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

UNIT VII

BOOKS BY THE PROPHETS

OF THE RETURN AND RESTORATION, 536-397 B.C.

THE BOOK OF HAGGAI

The prophet Haggai was the first of the prophets of the period known as the RETURN FROM EXILE AND THE RESTORATION.

We recall that Jerusalem and Judah were captured by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in three main installments - the captivities of 606 B.C., 598 B.C., and 586 B.C., when Jerusalem was captured, looted and burned. The land was stripped of nearly all its inhabitants, who were taken into Babylonian exile.

In 536 B.C., Cyrus, king of Persia, with the aid of the Medes, captured the city of Babylon and took possession of the Babylonian Empire. Almost immediately afterward, Cyrus issued a decree granting the Jews in the Babylonian captivity permission to return to Jerusalem and re-build the Temple and the city.

Some 50,000 Jewish exiles took advantage of the decree of Cyrus and returned to their homeland, arriving their within the next year or two for the work of re-building.

Haggai, and his contemporary and colleague, the prophet Zechariah, belong to the period of this first return of exiles from Babylon under the leadership of Zerubbabel, the first governor of Judah, and Joshua his high priest.

The little we know about Haggai is gathered from the messages he delivered and recorded in this short book. He exalted the Lord, not himself; he was God's messenger - "Thus saith the Lord"; he not only rebuked, he cheered and encouraged; he not only preached, he practiced.

"The second year of Darius" enables us to pinpoint the year in which this prophecy was given. (Hystaspis - the Darius mentioned here) began to reign in 521 B.C. In the second year of his reign then would be 520 B.C. And since Haggai gives us the exact month and day of each discourse, it is possible to date his messages with the greatest accuracy, something most unusual in books of Scripture, or in most other ancient books.

The first message was delivered on September 1, 520 B.C.;

The second, September 24;

The third, October 21;

The fourth and fifth, December 24.

Haggai's five discourses were delivered within the short space of four months.

Getting back to a finishing the reconstruction and refurbishing of the Temple were the supreme passion of this prophet. Work had begun on the Temple shortly after the exiles had arrived at Jerusalem sixteen years earlier, but for various reasons the work was stopped.

The prophet in these discourses reprimands the Jews for spending all their time on their private homes and businesses, and thus delaying for sixteen years the building the Lord's house. He exhorts them to begin on the Temple NOW!

The prophet as spokesman for the Lord, addresses Zerubbabel the governor, Joshua the high priest, and the people, as follows: Do not belittle your Temple and its prospects, because it does not compare in your eyes with the glories of Solomon's Temple. For "my Spirit abides with you" says the Lord, "and in a little while, with the treasures of all nations, I will fill this house with splendor" (2:1-9).

Then speaking to the priests through a parable on cleanness and uncleanness, teaches Judah a lesson on the seriousness of neglecting the Lord's work. He explains why their crops and businesses have failed and promises renewed blessings for their obedience (2:10-19).

In his last message, the prophet addresses the governor on the future of Israel, when it will have freedom and an opportunity to realize its spiritual hopes.

The book of Haggai is a book of encouragement and hope. Haggai may not have added much to the sum total of prophecy in an era when so many voices had spoken, but the little that he contributed was of great value. Israel was at a critical moment in its history; and what the prophet said, and did, was both timely and vigorous. The message of Haggai was practical. It was simple and factual as $2+2=4$. This prophecy has much in common with the epistle of James. Both put the emphasis upon the daily grind. Action is spiritual. A "do-nothing" attitude is wicked. Both place this yardstick down upon life. Work is the measure of life.

Haggai's contemporary, Zechariah, was visionary, and had his head in the clouds, but pragmatic Haggai had both feet on the ground. **The man of action and the dreamer need to walk together.** I Corinthians 15:58 can appropriately be written over this book.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF HAGGAI

I. September 1, 520 B.C., A CHALLENGE To the People, Chapter 1:1-11

75. A Charge of Conflict of Interest, 1:1-4

76. A Call to Consider Their Ways, 1:5-7

77. A Command to Construct the Temple, 1:8-11

II. September 24, 520 B.C., The RESPONSE to the Challenge, Chapter 1:12-15

78. Construction of the Temple; People Obeyed, 1:12

79. Confirmation from God, 1:13,15

III. October 21, 520 B.C., The DISCOURAGEMENT of the People; The **ENCOURAGEMENT** of the Lord, Chapter 2:1-9 - (The inferiority of the 2nd Temple to the 1st Temple became a cause of discouragement, but God responded.)

IV. December 24, 520 B.C., An APPEAL to the Law; The **EXPLANATION** of the Principle, Chapter 2:10-19

V. December 24, 520 B.C., A REVELATION of God's Program; An **EXPECTATION** for the Future

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH

The prophet Zechariah was a contemporary and colleague of the prophet Haggai and like Haggai belongs to the period of the first return of exiles from Babylon and the building of the second Temple, 536-516 B.C. (Ezra 5:1, 6:14). But unlike Haggai, who was a layman, Zechariah was a priest of the tribe of Levi, the grandson of Iddo, a famous priest and head of one of the priestly families that returned with the exiles under Zerubbabel. Moreover, Zechariah, the grandson, must have been a young man, and born in the Babylonian exile (2:4). Thus like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Zechariah was a priest as well as a prophet.

Zechariah, whose name means whom Jehovah remembers, is identified (1:1) as the son of Berechiah, which means Jehovah blesses, and his father was the son Iddo, which means the appointed time. Certainly this cluster of names with such rich meanings is suggestive of the encouragement given to the remnant - **GOD REMEMBERS AND BLESSES IN THE APPOINTED TIME.**

The Jewish Targum states that Zechariah was slain in the sanctuary, and Josephus states that Zechariah, the son of Baruchus, was slain in the Temple. There are those who identify Zechariah as the one mentioned by our Lord as having been martyred (Matthew 23:35).

The time of Zechariah's prophesying is specifically stated in his book. We recall that one of the first things the returned exiles did was to begin to lay the foundation of the Temple. But because of their feuds with the Samaritians and other surrounding enemies, and because they were more interested in building and re-establishing their own homes and businesses, they neglected and postponed the building of the house of the Lord, until the latter half of 520 B.C.

Uniting his efforts with Haggai's in exhorting the leaders of the Jewish colony to resume work on the house of God, Zechariah delivered the messages which are recorded in his book.

Zechariah's first discourse was delivered to the people in **November, 520 B.C.**, about two months after Haggai delivered his first two prophecies. (1:1).

Following this opening address, Zechariah, three months later, **on February 24, 519 B.C.**, delivered his first series of Visions (1:7).

The final series was delivered on **December 4, 518 B.C.** (7:1).

Although the purpose of the book of Zechariah is essentially the same as that of the book of Haggai, namely, to encourage the people to go forward without further delay and re-build the Temple, the methods of the two prophets are strikingly different.

They both agreed that the Temple was the center and symbol of their Return and Restoration from exile, and of God's over-ruling and protecting presence. They both agreed also on the necessity of re-building the Temple **NOW**. But here the similarity ends.

Haggai, apparently an old man, wrote a plain, simple though vigorous message. It was direct and brief, and with no poetic flights of fancy such as is common among the Hebrew prophets.

Zechariah, on the contrary, was a young man, and composed a poetic prophecy, patterned somewhat after the manner of the great poet and prophet Isaiah.

However, the prophet Zechariah went far beyond Isaiah in his use of figures and symbols to present his prophecies. His book definitely belongs to the **apocalyptic** type literature, such as we found in our study of the books of Ezekiel and Daniel, and as we may see illustrated also in the New Testament by the Apostle John's book of Revelation.

The body of Zechariah's book consists of two series of Visions.

The Visions recorded in chapters 1 to 6 are concerned primarily with **contemporary** events, especially with the re-building of the Temple.

The visions of the second half of the book deal chiefly with the **Future**, with special emphasis upon the coming of the Messiah and the glory of His reign.

These two series of visions were separated roughly by a period of two years.

A vision is something seen. An apocalyptic vision is a revelation or unveiling of something hitherto unknown. The veil between heaven and earth is lifted, so to speak, and God's prophetic servant is permitted to see what is not commonly seen by ordinary men.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH

I. APOCALYPTIC Visions (Messianic and Millennial), Chapters 1-6

78. Introduction and message of WARNING, 1:1-6
79. TEN VISIONS (all in one night), 1:7-6:15
 1. Riders Under Myrtle Trees, 1:7-17
 2. Four Horns, 1:18,19
 3. Four Smiths, 1:20,21
 4. Man with Measuring Line, chapter 2
 5. Joshua and Satan, 3:1-7
 6. The Branch, 3:8-10
 7. Lampstand and two Olive Trees, chapter 4
 8. Flying Roll, 5:5-11
 9. Woman in the Ephah, 5:5-11
 10. Four Chariots, chapter 6

II. HISTORIC Interlude, chapters 7,8

80. QUESTION Concerning a Religious Ritual (Fasting), 7:1-3
81. Threefold ANSWER, 7:4-8:23
 1. When Heart is Right, the Ritual is Right, 7:4-7
 2. When Heart is Wrong, the Ritual is wrong, 7:8-14
 3. God's Purpose Concerning Jerusalem Unchanged by Any Ritual, chapter 8

III. PROPHETIC Burdens, Chapters 9-14

39. First Burden: Prophetic Aspects Connected with 1st Coming of Christ, chapters 9-11
40. Second Burden: Prophetic Aspects Connected with 2nd Coming of Christ, chapters 12-14.

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF MALACHI](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF MALACHI

The book of Malachi is the last of the books of prophecy on the Return and Restoration of Israel at Jerusalem, and also the last book of Old Testament Scripture.

All we know of the prophet Malachi is what we gather from reading his book. Malachi means "my messenger." The Septuagint gives its meaning as angel. An angel was a messenger, and could be either human or spiritual. There are some who conclude, therefore, that Malachi is only a title, and the name of this prophet is not known. Others have

suggested that he was a spiritual angel, but there are no grounds for this. The message, not the messenger, is the important issue.

We recall that one of the first acts of King Cyrus of Persia was to issue a edict (536 B.C.) granting permission to Jewish exiles in Babylon to return to Jerusalem, to re-build their Temple and to establish their homes in Judah.

There was great enthusiasm on the part of the remnant 50,000 or so who returned. However, after building the foundation of the Temple, work on the house of the Lord stopped for various reasons. Moreover, as time passed their initial enthusiasm waned, as their high hopes of the early days were not fulfilled. They suffered from drought and bad crops and famine, as Haggai in his book tells us. And it was not until 520-516 B.C., under the leadership of Haggai and Zechariah, that they had re-built the Temple.

Now by the time of Malachi (397 B.C.), about one hundred and forty years after the first arrival of exiles under Zerubbabel, the people and their leaders had not only lost much of their initial enthusiasm for re-building Jerusalem and Judah, but they had become lukewarm in their faith. They began to question the love of God and the justice of His rule. They saw evil-doers prospering in the sight of the Lord. So there seemed to be no profit in trying to keep His commandments. Even the priests were lax in the performance of their duties, and permitted the people to corrupt the Lord's worship.

A custom and tradition of great sanctity regarding marriage was often violated. Jewish men divorced the wives of their youth in order to marry foreign and pagan wives; and even officials of high rank were equally guilty of this practice along with the common people. It is such a time as this that the prophet Malachi, God's messenger, was sent to Israel with as bold Message.

Malachi, who was the messenger of the Lord, delighted in using his own name when referring to other messengers. He made 3 such references.

He referred to Levi as the messenger of the Lord (2:7). This suggest that every witness of God is an **angel** of the Lord.

He announced the coming of John the Baptist as "my Messenger" (3:1). John the Baptist was the Malachi of the New Testament and began where Malachi of the old Testament left off. Malachi was the first radio announcer who said, "The next voice you will hear will be that of the Lord's messenger."

He also made the definite reference to Christ as the "messenger of the covenant" (3:1). The angel of the Lord of the Old Testament is the pre-incarnate Christ.

The method adopted by Malachi is to quote a declaration or interrogation God makes to Israel. Then he gives Israel's answer, which is sarcasm. Finally, he gives God's telling reply, which is equally biting sarcasm.

Malachi's prophecy reveals an age deadened to sin. They were drugged to an unconsciousness of sin. They were in a spiritual stupor with no conviction, which is the lowest state of sin. They mouthed surprise that God would find fault. They were peevish petulant children who affected ignorance. They pretended to know everything but were lacking in a knowledge of essentials.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF MALACHI

1. The LOVE OF GOD for Israel, 1:1-5
2. The PRIESTS REPROVED for Profanity, 1:6-2:9
3. The PEOPLE REBUKED for Social Sins, 2:10-17
4. The PREDICTION of the TWO MESSENGERS, 3:1-6
5. The PEOPLE REBUKED for Religious Sins, 3:7-18
6. The PREDICTION of the DAY OF THE LORD and the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS who Ushers it in, chapter 4

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF PSALMS](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

UNIT VIII

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

The book of Psalms has often been called the best loved book in the Old Testament. Why? Each Psalm is remarkably personal and comes directly from the heart of the one who wrote it - the Psalms are like the mirror of man's soul. All the sorrows, troubles, fears, doubts, hopes, pains, perplexities and ecstasies that man has ever experienced are here expressed to God. Thus the reader can identify with that which is expressed in the Psalms and find in them comfort, peace and hope.

And secondly, the feeling of Divine worship is so universal that these Psalms speak the language of devotion for every heart. Because of this, the Psalter not only was the hymn book of the Hebrews but became the hymn book for the Church as well. From the earliest time the Christian church has treasured the Psalms: of 287 quotations from the Old Testament appearing in the New Testament, 116 are taken from the Psalms. A casual examination of our present day church hymnals and prayer books will reveal how great has been the influence of the book of Psalms.

The **DIVINE INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY** of the Psalms was stressed by our Lord, in His final appearance to His disciples after the Resurrection, in these memorable words

"These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." (Luke 24:44).

The book of Psalms is a collection of one hundred and fifty Psalms under the Hebrew name Tehillim, which means "Songs of Praise." As it comes down to us, the collection represents the hymns of perhaps a thousand years. In fact, our book of Psalms is a collection of collections. As one writer put it, the book of Psalms was not made. It grew.

Although individual Psalms come from across the whole range of Israel's history, their final collection and arrangement belongs to the post exile period. These were Israel's prayers and songs of praise used for worship in the second Temple, built under Zerubbabel. Through these poems Israel gave expression to every facet of her faith. In the study of the Psalms, therefore, one enters the worship life of Judaism at its best.

The editors who compiled and arranged the Psalms were conscious of the long history back of them when they divided the whole into five books, with a doxology to close each book. According to tradition these five major divisions or books correspond to the Pentateuch, the Five Books of Moses. The five fold division of the Psalms are:

80. Book One, Psalms 1-41
81. Book Two, Psalms 42-72
82. Book Three, Psalms 73-89
83. Book Four, Psalms 90-106
84. Book Five, Psalms 107-150

Certain of the Psalms are repeated in slightly different forms, indicating that Psalms in earlier collections appeared also in later collections or books, and that the final editors did not eliminate these duplications. For example, compare Psalm 14 with 53; Psalm 40:13-17 with 70; and Psalm 108 with 57:7-11 and 60:5-12.

We might also note that there are a number of ancient Psalms, reference to which is made in the earlier books of the Old Testament, which do not appear in our present collection of 150. One of the most famous is the song Moses wrote and the people of Israel sang to celebrate their victory over the Egyptians, when they had crossed the Red Sea (Exodus 15).

Two other songs of Moses, the Farewell Song and the Song of Blessing in which he blessed all the congregation of Israel, are recorded in Deuteronomy 32 and 33. And one of the best of the early songs is the Song of Deborah, in the form of a ballad, which celebrates a famous victory over Sisera and Jabin, the king of Canaan. The appearance

of these and other Psalms outside of the book of Psalms indicates that psalmody was widespread in Israel and that the Psalter collection is only a selective collection.

The FIRST and SECOND PSALM may be taken as a fitting introduction to the collection as a whole.

Psalm 1 divides all people according to their covenant relationship to God - the godly and the ungodly. Those who have had a personal encounter with God, and those who have not; those whose "delight is in the Law of the Lord," and those who take no such delight.

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As Psalms 1 and 2 are a fitting preface to the Psalms, so PSALM 150 is a fitting Doxology to the book of Psalms; bringing this collection of Psalms to a close with a note of triumphant PRAISE.

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Many writers contributed one or more psalms.

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All the Hebrew prophets after David remembered him for his brave and heroic loyalty to the Lord and said so in their histories and prophecies.

The writer of II Samuel described David as "the sweet Psalmist of Israel." Indeed, he was. And with great reputation during his lifetime, it was easy for those coming after him to build up a tradition, and ascribe to him the authorship of the book of Psalms. In fact, the earlier books were called the "Psalms of David."

Since the subject matter of the Psalms covers many centuries, especially after the time of David, he could not historically speaking have written all of them. or perhaps even most of them. That he did write many of them, however is certain.

Thus, at least seven-three of our one hundred-and-fifty collection are considered to be Psalms of David and are assigned to his authorship. Some of what are know as "Orphanic Psalms" may also have been written by David.

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More than a third of the total collection have praise and thanksgiving as their central theme, and many more have praise as a secondary motive. This list includes the main ones: Psalm 8, 9, 18, 19, 21, 30, 32, 33, 36, 40, 47, 48, 65-68, 75, 76, 84, 92, 93, 95-100, 106, 107, 113-118, 136, 138, 144-150.

Of the Psalms of praise, here are seven that have won special favor with readers generally: Psalms 5, 19, 68, 84, 96, 100, and 107.

II. The Cry of the righteous in the presence of Trouble

Another common theme in the Psalms is that cry for help in time of trouble. As in the first group, the occasion for these Psalms varies as widely as the needs of human beings. Here are the main Psalms which feature this theme: Psalms 3, 4, 6, 7, 13, 17, 22, 25, 26, 31, 35, 38, 39, 57, 74, 79, 83, 86, 88, 94, 102, 109, 120, 130, 140-143. Many of the Psalms in this group appear to have been written by David. Although he led a many-sided life, and was one of the most successful of men, David's personal life was never far from trouble.

Eight of these Psalms should be read with this background of David's story in view: Psalms 7, 34, 35, 54, 56, 57, and 142.

III. Trust and Steadfastness in the Lord

Still another frequent theme in the Psalms is that quiet, confident trust in the Lord. In this group are some of the best loved Psalms in the entire collection. Any list should include the following: Psalms 3-5, 11, 16, 23, 27, 28, 46, 56, 62, 63, 91, 108, 121-123, 125, 131.

The special favorites include Psalms 16, 23, 27, 46, 91, 121, 122, 125. Psalm 23 is the best loved Psalm in the collection. If David had written nothing else, this Psalm would have entitled him to everlasting fame.

IV. The Greatness and Majesty of the Lord

Faithful Hebrews held in awe the greatness and majesty of their God, and their beloved psalmist delighted in portraying Him in all His exalted glory. The following are the main ones in this group: 8, 19, 24, 29, 33, 46, 68, 90, 93, 96, 97, 103, 104.

Psalm 90 is ascribed to Moses, who lived some 400 years before David. It is one of the most comprehensive and mature, as well as one of the most beautiful, in the collection. It is easily one of the greatest.

V. National and Historical Psalms

The psalmists frequently reminded the people of how the Lord had led them to victory on many occasions also reminded them of how often they were willful and disobedient, causing the Lord to punish them, even at the hands of their enemies. These feeling and attitudes are reflected in the following: Psalms 74, 78, 79, 80, 81, 83, 94, 105, 106, 107, 114, 132, 135, 136, 137. Some of the favorites are: Psalms 105, 107, 132, 135.

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From the days of Job on, ancient Hebrews wrestled with the problem of the prosperity of the wicked. It perplexed them to know that God permitted the wicked, as well as the righteous, to prosper in this life.

The answers the psalmists gave are developed in Psalms 10, 12, 14, 37, 53, 73, 93, 94. The question of the prosperity of the wicked is well answered in Psalms 37, 73, 94.

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Several of the Psalms are known for their wisdom. Psalms in this group are: I, 19:7-14, 37, 49, 73, 78, 90, 111, 112, 127, 128.

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In a few of the Psalms the psalmists cry out in anguish and deep penitence. These include Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130. Nearly all of them appear to refer to David's personal experiences.

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Three of the Psalms fall in this group. Psalms 1 and 19, 119. Psalm 119 is a continuation and an enlargement of the ideas in 1 and 19. It is the longest chapter in the Bible.

X. Psalms Relating to the Exile and Return

Psalms 137 is a lament of an exile "by the waters of Babylon" not long after deportation. Psalm 126 appears to have been written shortly after the proclamation of Cyrus, king of Persia, permitting the Jews to return to Jerusalem. Also, most of the Psalms of Book Five, Psalms 107-150 appear to belong to this group.

XI. Messianic Psalms - Psalms Which Foretell the Coming of the Messiah

Some of the most significant Psalms in the collection are those which foretell the coming of the Christ, The Savior and Hope of the world. Of these Messianic Psalms at least fourteen are quoted in the New Testament and refer to Christ's coming and mission.

Psalms 2:6-9 is the first to speak of the Messianic Age: "You are my son, today I have begotten you." (Acts 13:3)

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Psalm 22 gives a realistic picture of incidents and details foretold of the crucifixion (Matthew 27:43, 46; John 19:23-24, 20:25).

Psalms 40:6-8 refers to the willingness of the Son to obey the Father in the sacrificial death (Hebrews 10:5-10).

Psalms 41:9 is quoted by Jesus after He washed His disciples' feet on the night of the Last Supper (John 13:18).

Psalm 45:6-7 refers to the Messiah as the ideal King (Hebrews 1:8-9).

Psalm 69:4,9,21,25 quoted in John 15:25, John 2:17; Romans 15:3; Matthew 27:34; Acts 1:20 referring to Jesus.

Psalm 72 presents the eternal reign of the righteous King (Luke 2:14; Ephesians 1:21; Hebrews 11:16).

Psalm 89 repeats God's covenant with David - the promise of an everlasting throne (Hebrews 1:5-13; Colossians 1:16).

Psalm 91:11-12 is quoted by Satan at the time of the Temptation in the Wilderness (Matthew 4:6).

Psalm 109:8 is quoted by Peter concerning Judas (Acts 1:20).

Psalm 110:1 was quoted by Jesus as evidence of His Sonship (Matthew 22:43-45; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42; Acts 2:34; Hebrews 1:13).

Psalm 110:4 (Hebrews 5:6,7:17)

Psalm 118:22, "The Stone which builders rejected..." (Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:7).

Verse 26 contains the shouts of the crowds as Jesus enters Jerusalem (Matthew 21:9)

Psalm 132:17 infers that the Messiah would be the Eternal Inheritor of David's throne (Luke 1:69).

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The Hallel Psalms, Psalms 113-118, have always been associated in the Jewish Church with the three great pilgrim festivals of the Jewish year, the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. The Passover hymns were sung in Jewish families on the night of the Passover.

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Another group of Psalms is the Songs of Ascent. They are the fifteen Psalms 120-134. These songs were often sung by pilgrims on their annual journeys to keep the various feasts at Jerusalem.

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The final group is called "The Great Hallel," or Hallelujah Songs. They are Psalms 146-150. These Psalms are praise-hymns in an extraordinary sense. In the earlier groups of hymns other motives and elements besides praise were present. But in the Hallelujah Psalms there is singleness of purpose, and that purpose is the adoration of Jehovah.

Each of the five Psalms opens with a prologue of Hallelujah, and closes with an epilogue Hallelujah, which translated into English means "Praise the Lord." Indeed, as someone has observed, these last Psalms form an elaborate and comprehensive doxology to the whole collection, just as each division of the book has its individual doxology (see last stanza of Psalms 41, 72, 89, 106).

[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF JOB](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

UNIT VIII

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

The book of Psalms has often been called the best loved book in the Old Testament. Why? Each Psalm is remarkably personal and comes directly from the heart of the one who wrote it - the Psalms are like the mirror of man's soul. All the sorrows, troubles, fears, doubts, hopes, pains, perplexities and ecstasies that man has ever experienced are here expressed to God. Thus the reader can identify with that which is expressed in the Psalms and find in them comfort, peace and hope.

And secondly, the feeling of Divine worship is so universal that these Psalms speak the language of devotion for every heart. Because of this, the Psalter not only was the hymn book of the Hebrews but became the hymn book for the Church as well. From the earliest time the Christian church has treasured the Psalms: of 287 quotations from the Old Testament appearing in the New Testament, 116 are taken from the Psalms. A casual examination of our present day church hymnals and prayer books will reveal how great has been the influence of the book of Psalms.

The **DIVINE INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY** of the Psalms was stressed by our Lord, in His final appearance to His disciples after the Resurrection, in these memorable words

"These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." (Luke 24:44).

The book of Psalms is a collection of one hundred and fifty Psalms under the Hebrew name Tehillim, which means "Songs of Praise." As it comes down to us, the collection represents the hymns of perhaps a thousand years. In fact, our book of Psalms is a collection of collections. As one writer put it, the book of Psalms was not made. It grew.

Although individual Psalms come from across the whole range of Israel's history, their final collection and arrangement belongs to the post-exile period. These were Israel's prayers and songs of praise used for worship in the second Temple, built under Zerubbabel. Through these poems Israel gave expression to every facet of her faith. In the study of the Psalms, therefore, one enters the worship life of Judaism at its best.

The editors who compiled and arranged the Psalms were conscious of the long history back of them when they divided the whole into five books, with a doxology to close each book. According to tradition these five major divisions or books correspond to the Pentateuch, the Five Books of Moses. The five-fold division of the Psalms are:

85. Book One, Psalms 1-41
86. Book Two, Psalms 42-72
87. Book Three, Psalms 73-89
88. Book Four, Psalms 90-106
89. Book Five, Psalms 107-150

Certain of the Psalms are repeated in slightly different forms, indicating that Psalms in earlier collections appeared also in later collections or books, and that the final editors did not eliminate these duplications. For example, compare Psalm 14 with 53; Psalm 40:13-17 with 70; and Psalm 108 with 57:7-11 and 60:5-12.

We might also note that there are a number of ancient Psalms, reference to which is made in the earlier books of the Old Testament, which do not appear in our present collection of 150. One of the most famous is the song Moses wrote and the people of Israel sang to celebrate their victory over the Egyptians, when they had crossed the Red Sea (Exodus 15).

Two other songs of Moses, the Farewell Song and the Song of Blessing in which he blessed all the congregation of Israel, are recorded in Deuteronomy 32 and 33. And one of the best of the early songs is the Song of Deborah, in the form of a ballad, which celebrates a famous victory over Sisera and Jabin, the king of Canaan. The appearance of these and other Psalms outside of the book of Psalms indicates that psalmody was widespread in Israel and that the Psalter collection is only a selective collection.

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[INDEX](#) - [PREVIOUS](#) - [THE BOOK OF JOB](#) - [HOME PAGE](#)

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

The book of Proverbs, like the book of Psalms, is a collection of collections. Evidently Solomon gathered together many of the proverbs from other sources. He was the editor of all the proverbs, and the author of many of them.

A proverb is a saying that conveys a specific truth in as pointed, pithy (meaningful) way. Proverbs are short sentences, drawn from long experience. A truth couched in a form that is easy to remember, a philosophy based on experience, and a rule for conduct. A proverb is a sententious sentence, a maxim, and old saying, and old saw, a bromide, and an epigram.

There is a difference between the book of Proverbs and proverbs in other writings (the Greeks were great at making proverbs, especially the gnostic poets):

Proverbs bear no unscientific statement nor inaccurate observation, e.g. "Out of the heart proceed the issues of life"(Proverbs 4:23). About 2700 years later it was discovered that the blood circulates. In contrast, in an apocryphal book, the Epistle of Barnabas, mention is made of the mythical phoenix, a bird that consumes itself by fire and rises in resurrection. Fables such as this do not appear in the book of Proverbs, nor anywhere in the Bible.

The Proverbs are on a high moral plane. The immoral sayings which occur in other writings are not present. Justin Martyr said that Socrates was a Christian before Christ. Although he portrays a high conception of morals, according to his admirers, Socrates also gives instructions to harlots on how to conduct themselves. The best that can be said of him is that he is amoral.

The Proverbs do not contradict, while man's proverbs are often in opposition to each other, e.g. "Look before you leap" vs. "He who hesitates is lost." "A man gets no more than he pays for" vs. "The best things in life are free." "Leave well enough alone" vs. "Progress never stands still." "A rolling stone gathers no moss" vs. "A setting hen does not get fat."

Although the Book of Proverbs seem to be a collection of sayings without and particular regard for orderly arrangement, the contrary is true. **The book tells a story. it is a picture of a young man starting out in life.**

The young man's first lesson is given in 1:7. Two schools bid for him and both send their literature. One is the school of Wisdom, the other the school of fools.

In chapter 8 the young man goes to the academy of Wisdom where he is taught in proverbs. From chapters 10 through 24 the young man is in the classroom of Wisdom.

This book is especially helpful to young men. The advice herein transcends all dispensation. The One who is Wisdom in none other than the Lord Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 1:30). The book of proverbs is not a hodgepodge of unrelated statements, nor is it a discourse of cabbages and kings (Ecclesiastes 12:9).

There is a proverb that is a thumbnail sketch of every character in the Bible. Likewise there is a proverb that will fit all your friends and acquaintances, which adds interest to the reading of the book (but may not increase your popularity if you identify them publicly).

Solomon wrote 3000 proverbs (I Kings 4:32). We have less than 1000 in this book.

STRUCTURE OF THE PROVERBS

The literary form of these Proverbs is mostly in the form of couplets. The two clauses of the couplets are generally related to each other by what has been termed parallelism, according to Hebrew poetry. Three kinds of parallelism are used in the Proverbs:

1. Synonymous Parallelism. Here the second clause restates what is given in the first clause.

**"Judgments are prepared for scorners,
And stripes for the back of fools" (Proverbs 19:29)**

2. Antithetic (contrast) Parallelism. Here a truth, which is stated in the first clause, is made stronger in the second clause by contrast with an opposite truth.

**"The light of the righteous rejoiceth,
But the lamp of the wicked shall be put out" (Proverbs 13:9)**

3. Synthetic Parallelism. The second clause develops the thought of the first.

**"The terror of a king is as the roaring of a lion;
He that provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own will. (Proverbs 20:2)**

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- I. Wisdom and Folly Contrasted, chapters 1-9
- II. Proverbs of Solomon, Written and Set in Order by Himself, chapters 10-24
- III. Proverbs of Solomon, Set in Order by Men of Hezekiah, chapters 25-29
- IV. Oracle of Agur., Unknown Sage, chapter 30
- V. Proverbs of a Mother to Lemuel, chapter 31

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

The book of Ecclesiastes is a dramatic autobiography of Solomon's life when he got away from God. The title of the book means preacher or philosopher.

As in any book of the Bible correct understanding of its purpose is important to a correct understanding of the book itself - this truth is no more evident than in the book of Ecclesiastes. **The purpose of this book is to show that human philosophy, apart from God, must inevitably reach the conclusions reached in this book (1:2,3).**

We need this understanding because there are many statements in the book which seem to contradict the remainder of the Scriptures. It is almost frightening to know that this book has been the favorite of atheists, and they (e.g. Volney and Voltaire) have quoted from it profusely. Man has tried to be happy without God, and this book shows the absurdity of the attempt. Solomon, the wisest of men, tried every field of endeavor and pleasure known to men; his conclusion is, "All is vanity."

God showed Job, a righteous man, that there was sin in his life in God's sight. In Ecclesiastes God showed Solomon, the wisest man, that he was a fool in God's sight.

Solomon in this book will pursue every avenue, experience, and interest of man in this life to find satisfaction and fulfillment. Solomon as the King of Israel had full freedom to carry on this experiment, and he was not hindered by financial or power limitations. He could go the limit in every direction.

The result is "vanity" - emptiness. Frustration and dissatisfaction met him in every experiment. The conclusions are human, apart from the divine, made by man under the sun. This is the ultimate end of man's efforts apart from God.

As we read and study this book we must keep in mind what is meant by "inspiration" when we say that the Bible is inspired by God. **Inspiration guarantees the accuracy of the words of Scripture, not always the thought expressed. The context should be considered and attention paid to the person who made the statement, and under what circumstances the statement is made** (e.g., in the betrayal of Christ by Judas, the record of the event is inspired, but the act of Judas was not God inspired, but was satanic).

Keep in mind that the conclusions in each experiment are human, not God's truth. This is man under the sun, entirely separated from the "Sun of righteousness" who is the Son of God.

Thus we learn in the book of Ecclesiastes that without Christ we cannot be satisfied, even if we possess the whole world.

Another word of caution - There is a danger in pressing the words in the Bible into a positive announcement of scientific fact, even though **there** are some marvelous statements. But it is certainly a curious fact that Solomon should use language entirely consistent with discoveries as evaporation and storm currents (1:6,7). Some have boldly said that Redfield's theory of storms is here explicitly stated. Without taking such a stand, we ask, who taught Solomon to use terms that readily accommodate facts? Who taught him that the movement of the winds which seem to be so lawless and uncertain, are ruled by the laws as positive as those which rule the growth of the plant. And that by evaporation, the waters that fall on the earth are continually rising again, so that the sea never overflows? Ecclesiastes 12:6 is a poetic description of death.

The "silver cord" describes the spinal marrow, the "golden bowl" the basin which holds the brain. the "pitcher" the lungs, and the "wheel" the heart.

Without claiming that Solomon was inspired to foretell the circulation of the blood, 26 centuries before Harvey announced it, is it not remarkable that the language he uses exactly suits the facts - a wheel pumping up through one pipe to discharge through another?

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

I. Problem Stated. "All is Vanity," Chapter 1:1-3

II. Experiments Made, Chapters 1:4-12:2 - Seeking satisfaction in the following:

90. Study of Science or the Laws of Nature, 1:4-11 - A computer brain and electronic nervous system can bring no man deep and abiding satisfaction. Man cannot exhaust the exploration of the universe. The more he learns reveals there is still more to learn. This is frustration. The physical world is too big for little man.
91. Wisdom and Philosophy, 1:12-18 - Philosophy and psychology cannot change human nature, not can they even correct the old nature of Adam. Joy and satisfaction do not increase in ratio to the increase of knowledge.
92. In Pleasure, 2:1-11 - This is the philosophy of hedonism, teaching that pleasure is the chief goal of life and that gratification of all the appetites of the body is the fulfillment of moral obligation.
93. In Materialism, 2:12-26 - Living for now. The best thing to do is to eat and drink, concentrate on the here and now, and get all he can out of this life. Live for the now and forget tomorrow. However, even this does not satisfy, although it is better than LSD.
94. In Fatalism, 3:1-15 - Too often men attempt to draw some Christian truth from these verses. However, this is the rawest kind of pagan fatalism. If this were true, man would be no better than a robot, zombie, computer, machine, or any other push-button gadget. This kind of thinking allows no room for the free will of man and the operation of the grace and mercy of God. Even the time of death can be changed (see Exodus 32:10 and Isa.38).
95. In Egoism, 3:16-4:16 - Excessive love of self. Individual self-interest is the summum bonum (sum total) of life. The only thing worthwhile is for man to identify himself with his own works. This is the ancient version of the hippy and yippy philosophy. This philosophy leads to a meaningless existence.
96. In Religion, 5:1-8 - Religion has damned the world more than any other thing. Look what the pagan religions did for peoples in the past. Look at India, China, and the Moslem world. Look at the Roman Catholic world. Look at liberal Protestantism. Multitudes have joined churches since World War II to get away from God and from establishing a personal relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ.
97. In the Pusuit and Enjoyment of Wealth, 5:9-6:12 - Wealth is not wrong in itself. It is the love of money that is the root of all evil (I Tim.6:10). To accumulate wealth just for the sake of wealth is wrong. The miser thinks dollars are flat so they can be stacked; the spendthrift thinks they are round so they can be rolled.
98. In Morality - the Good Life, 7:1-12-12:12 - A good reputation and a long eulogy at the funeral is the summum bonum of life. Take it easy; walk softly; don't rock the boat; don't be extreme (a fanatic); avoid the left and the right; go down the middle; compromise; don't fight - switch. The do-gooder, going down the middle of the road on the freeway of life.

III. Results of Experiments, Chapters 12:13,14

All things under the sun are vanity.

A right relationship with God, in any age, through the way He has made, brings abiding satisfaction.

for Cain it meant bring a lamb;

for Abraham it meant believing God's promises;

for the people of Israel it meant approaching God through sacrifice in the Tabernacle and Temple;

for us it is to "believe on Him (the Lord Jesus Christ) whom He hath sent" (John 6:29).

What a difference between the man "under the sun" and the man "in Christ" seated in the heavenlies far above all suns!

SONG OF SOLOMON

The book of the Song of Solomon is a beautiful love story of an Oriental bridegroom and his bride. Solomon was the author of 1,005 songs (I Kings 4:32), but we have only one (The Song of Songs). As the name would indicate, it is the most beautiful of all the songs. It is the only book in the Scriptures which has love for its sole theme.

The two main characters are King Solomon and the country maiden of Shulam (Shunem), who becomes his bride.

The Song of Solomon is a parabolic poem (a simple short story which has moral or religious truth).

The story is presented by means of a series of seven scenes or lyric idyls, each connected with and related to the whole. Each closes with a refrain.

The story progresses by means of dramatic dialogue from scene to scene, in which the king and his bride are assisted by a Chorus of palace ladies called the "Daughters of Jerusalem," which echoes from the background, after the manner of the chorus in an ancient Greek play. The brides' brothers, and a court crier, are also in the background.

Originally an idyl dealt with shepherd and pastoral life, in a rustic setting, and treated themes of love and domestic relations. Frequently the shepherd or shepherdess was related in some way to the court life, as in the Song of Solomon.

In the Old Testament, we have other narrative and romantic idyls such as the Wooing of Rebekah, Samson and Delilah, and the story of Ruth, the latter being an excellent type of the narrative idyl.

The Song of Solomon (Song of Songs) is a poetic masterpiece in the lyric mood of spring and love. It takes the reader out into the open air, to the hills and mountains of Lebanon, the gardens and orchards as well as the wilderness, as it to contrast with the Court the pleasures of nature. The poem, too, is noted for its rich, oriental imagery and symbolism. In the words of one reader, "It would be a dull eye that missed the beauty of the poem."

THE MEANING OF THE SONG OF SOLOMON

The interpretation not the inspiration causes the difficulty with this book - although there are some who actually feel it should not be in the Bible. Since, however, it is in the canon of Scripture, it is the great neglected book of the Bible. Often young preacher are counseled not to use it until they become old men. The Jews called it the Holy of Holies of Scripture. Origen and Jerome tell us that the Jews would not permit their young men to read it until they were thirty years old. Surely any fragile flower requires delicate handling.

There have been four different and important meanings found in this book:

Taking the Song of Solomon at face value (literally), it is a beautiful romantic story of a bride and bridegroom in the days of their courtship and marriage. It sets forth the "glory of wedded love"; declaring the sacredness of marital relationship, and that marriage is a divine institution. The Jews taught that it sets forth the heart of a satisfied husband and a devoted wife.

Devout Jews almost from the time of its first appearance saw the Song of Solomon as portraying the relationship of Jehovah and Israel. It was read at the Passover as referring to the Exodus from Egypt, where God espoused Israel as His Bride. Thus it sets forth the love of Jehovah for Israel, His earthly wife.

These two interpretations have been set forth by the scribes and rabbis of Israel, and have been accepted by the church. However there are two other interpretations.

It is a picture of Christ and the Church. The Church being the bride of Christ, a familiar figure of Scripture (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:27; Revelation 21).

It depicts the communion of Christ and the individual believer. The soul's communion with Christ is here set forth.

STORY OUTLINE

Since the book is a series of scenes, in a drama that is not told in chronological sequence, we shall make no attempt to outline the book.

THE PLOT: The story is of a fair maiden named Shulam of a poor family of Ephraim, who is sort of Cinderella. The poverty of the family forces her into the vineyards which belong to King Solomon (8:11).

King Solomon visiting his royal vineyards upon Mount Lebanon on the northwest boundary of Palestine, suddenly by surprise comes upon the fair maiden Shulam. Startled, she runs away from the royal company, but not before her rustic charms have won the favor of the king. So, at a later date, Solomon returns and visits her in the disguise of a shepherd, and woos and wins her love. Then he leaves her with the promise that he will return.

He is absent for a long time, and she despairs of his return. One day the electrifying word is shouted along the way that King Solomon is coming by. She is not interested, and takes no further notice until word is brought her that King Solomon wants to see her. She is puzzled until she is brought into his presence where she recognizes him as her shepherd lover. Solomon takes her to his palace in Jerusalem where most of the song takes place.

Scene 1. The Wedding Day, Chapters 1-2:7

The bridal procession approaches the Palace: Solomon leads the bride, the court ladies following. The bride is speaking; verse 4 refers to the ancient ceremony of lifting the bride across the threshold.

Scene 2. The Bride's Reininiscences of the Courtship, Chapters 2:8-3:5

The bride delights to remember how in the springtime her lover (Solomon disguised as a shepherd) came to her mountain home to woo her. (In point of time, this scene takes us back to events earlier than the events in scene 1.)

Scene 3. The Day of the Betrothal, Chapters 3:6-5:1

This scene is a sequel to scene 2, in which Solomon is disguise as a shepherd, wooed and won the mountain maid. In this scene we see Solomon in all his glory coming across the wilderness to the mountain home of his love, prepared to bring her to his palace in Jerusalem.

Scene 4. The Bride's Troubled Dream, Chapters 5:2-6:3

Scene 5. The Kings Soliloquy on the Beauty of His Bride, Chapters 6:4-7:10

Scene 6. The Bride's wish to Visit Her Home on Mount Lebanon Chapters 7:11-8:4

This scene follows in sequence the events of scene 1 and 5, and may be said to mark the end of the first honeymoon. However, in her plea that they visit together, she promises to renew her love there.

Scene 7. The Renewal of Love in the Vineyard of Lebanon, Chapter 8:5-14

This scene carries out the purpose wished for in scene 6. That is, that the lovers may go together to the bride's home on Mount Lebanon.

The play closes with a human touch, the bride having the last word, and urging her husband to hurry, "Make haste, my beloved..."