

# An Overview of the Bible

Introduction: It is a very frustrating thing to open the word of God with virtually no knowledge of what you are about to read. The frustration is compounded when you read a passage and you have no idea who is speaking or who is being spoken to. Again, the frustration is intensified when you know nothing of the historical or geographical context. I know that frustration from personal experience, and that is one of the reasons I have determined to offer some material that will make Bible study less frustrating for others.

This material is very general in nature, very basic, and is in no way intended to replace personal study of other materials which cover passages in more detail. As a wise preacher says, "The greatest commentary on the Bible, IS THE BIBLE!" Too many Christians are ignorant concerning the word of God because they are simply too lazy to study. You should never allow any other material to take precedence over the word of God.

Before beginning our study of each book of the Bible, I would like to look at a couple of passages which lay the foundation of any study:

**2 Tim. 3:16-17** says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Before you are ever going to really understand the Bible, you must approach the Bible with confidence that it is the word of God! God not only wrote a perfect book, he preserved that book! Today, we have the word of God, the perfect word of God, preserved for us in the King James Bible. It is not just the best translation; it is THE WORD OF GOD!

**2 Tim 2:15** says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." In this verse, there are three things you must do for your Bible study to be approved of God:

(1) STUDY - See Isa.28:9-10; God will show you a little here, a little there, and as you study, you'll understand more and more. It doesn't all come at once.

(2) WORK (workman) - Notice the word "labour" in 1Tim.5:17. We would like to pray, open our Bible, and have complete understanding. It just does not work that way. Reading the Bible can be very tiring, and real study can wear you out (see Ecc.12:12).

(3) RIGHTLY DIVIDE - This subject is very controversial in some circles. Nevertheless, you are told by the Lord, through Paul, to rightly divide the word of God. Rightly dividing the Bible is much easier than some make it.

The Bible is already divided for you in one way, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The OT is primarily God's dealings with Israel, while the New Testament is primarily God's dealings with the church. However, there are other divisions that must be considered.

**I - Dispensational Division** - As you read 1Cor.9:17 and Gal.2:7-8, you realize there

are different dispensations. To “dispense” is to distribute or hand out in portions. God has taken man through different periods of time and has worked in different ways during those different dispensations. People like to quote “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” (He.13:8), and say God works the same way with all people. That is twisting the text we just quoted. Jesus is the same in his character. But he doesn’t deal with all people the same way. A brief review of His miracles proves the point. By Dispensational Division, we are simply saying, God works in different ways in different dispensations. The O.T. Jews had to do things “under the law” that I do not have to do! See Gal.3:22-26. (For a more thorough study of this subject, see our booklet on “Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth.”)

**II - Divine Division** - The title to the book of Revelation has the postscript, “of John the divine.” The word “divine” has to do with the future or prophecy, so our point here is that you must rightly divide the word according to the correct prophetic context. For example, Matthew 24 is not the rapture, but is the Lord coming back at the end of the Tribulation. The rapture takes place before the Tribulation and is described in 1Thess.4:13-18. Another example is The Great White Throne Judgment in Rev.20:11-15, which is for lost people and Tribulation saints. Christians are judged at a different judgment, called the Judgment Seat of Christ, described in 1Cor.3:11-15. So, you must study a text and try to discern the prophetic context in order to understand the passage.

**III - Doctrinal Division** - We know the Bible is profitable for doctrine, but we must not try to apply all doctrine to all ages. Every passage in the Bible has 3 APPLICATIONS:

- \* Historical
- \* Doctrinal
- \* Spiritual (or Devotional)

For example, Rev 3:20 says, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” The HISTORICAL application is John on the isle of Patmos in the 1st Century. The DOCTRINAL application is Jesus dealing with Jews in the Tribulation. And the SPIRITUAL application is Jesus knocking at your heart’s door.

A classic example of DOCTRINAL DIVISION is found in Acts 2:38. Many people use this verse to teach water baptism as a requirement for salvation. They have to almost ignore Acts 10:44-48, Acts 16:31, Romans 10:13, John 1:12, etc.... in order to teach their mistaken doctrine. Acts 2:38 is Peter, dealing with the nation of Israel, and Peter is still teaching O.T. doctrine. Peter will get his doctrine straight after his vision in Acts 10, and in Acts 15:11 he tells you how to be saved with no mention of baptism!

**IV - Detailed Division** - We could call this Deliberate Division. The point here has to do with chapter and verse division, book divisions, and even commas and periods. We believe God is behind the number system in the King James Bible. For example, Job is a picture of the Tribulation saint, and his book has 42 chapters, matching the 42

months of the last half of the Great Tribulation. For another example, the number of the AntiChrist is revealed in Revelation chapter 13 (the # of rebellion), verse 18 (which is 6+6+6!). The Lord's betrayer is revealed in John chapter 13, verse 26 (13 +13). (It's no accident that Judas Iscariot has 13 letters in his name!) Now some would make light of these facts, but we believe God is so precise, so perfect, that none of these things are accidental nor coincidental. So, when you read your Bible, PAY ATTENTION TO DETAILS!

Once again, we are being very general and basic. I would again encourage you to get our booklet (It's free!) on "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth."

We now come to the real purpose of this material, an overview of each book of the Bible. May the Lord bless you as you study His word. A wise man said, "Stand by the word of God, and the God of the word will stand by you."

# GENESIS

Most every subject of the Bible can be found in Genesis. Someone suggested you could sum up this first book of the Bible with eight words: CREATION, FALL, FLOOD, BABEL, ABRAHAM, ISAAC, JACOB, JOSEPH.

We offer a simple outline of the book of Genesis:

## I - **The Beginning of the Human Race** - Chpts.1-11

- (A) - The Creation – Man's Start
- (B) - The Corruption – Man's Sin
- - The Condemnation – Man's Suffering
- (D) - The Confusion – Man's Separation

## II - **The Beginning of the Hebrew Race** - Chpts.12-50

- (A) - Abraham - The Father
- (B) - Isaac - The Son
- (C) - Jacob - The Nation
- (D) - Joseph - The Servant (Holy Spirit)

\*\*\* Another possibility here is to consider Isaac as a picture of Jesus Christ at His first coming (See Gen.22) and Joseph as a picture of Jesus Christ at His second coming.

Following are some things for you to consider in this great opening book of the Bible.

I - The Great Gap - Gen.1:1-2 - Some call this a theory; I call it a fact. God created the heaven and the earth (vs.1) and "formed" it (Isa.45:18). But vs.2 says it is without form. Thus, something happened between vs.1 and vs.2! What happened is described in Ez.28 and Isa.14; Lucifer's rebellion. Thus, when you get to Gen.1:2, you are actually reading about a Recreation. Before you conclude anything about this teaching, see Gen.1:28 and the command to Replenish!!!

II - The Great Deep - Gen.1:2-8 - Again, this is not theory, but fact. Above our heads, above where the birds fly (the first heaven) and above the solar system (the second heaven), is a body of water larger than any ocean on this earth! It is called the deep, and above it is the throne of God (the third heaven). Study Job 26:7-10; 38:8-11, 41:31; Rev.4:6 with Ps.148:1-4 and Gen.7:11.

From God's perspective, we are under water! Therefore, Jesus' death is called a baptism of death, we are fishing for men, men who go to "outer space" are called astroNAUTS, and they go in space SHIPS!

III - The Great Theory - O.K. we finally offer a THEORY. This theory is based on the FACT that 2Pe.3:8 says, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

When you look at Gen.1:5,8,13,19,23, and 31, you find the phrase, "and the evening and the morning were the first day," "...the second day..." "...the third day..." and so on. But it never says that about the seventh day, as if the 7th day has no end! Now, most Bible students agree that Adam and Eve can be dated to 4,000 B.C. Thus, we use 2Pe.3:8 to theorize:

4000 BC	-----	Day 1	
3000 BC	-----	Day 2	
2000 BC	-----	Day 3	
1000 BC	-----	Day 4	
CHRIST	-----	Day 5	You might find it interesting, the first time the word "life"
1000 AD	-----	Day 6	appears in the Bible is in Gen.1:20, on the FIFTH DAY!
2000 AD	-----	Day 7	

Now, if you think this is far-fetched, consider this. In Matt.17 and Luke 9, you see a picture of the Second Coming of Christ at the Mount of Transfiguration. If you study the passages together, you'll discover it took place on the SEVENTH DAY!!!

We realize the calendars are off a few years, and this is only theory, but if there's anything at all to the theory, it sure could get real exciting, real soon!!! (By the way, don't accuse me of date setting, I admit it's only a theory. Also, don't quote scripture about nobody knowing the day or hour, I only theorized about the YEAR!!!)

IV - The Great Accuser - Gen.3:1 - You learn immediately about Satan, one of his primary tactics is to CAST DOUBT ON THE WORD OF GOD.

V - The Great Mistake - Gen.3:2-3 - Yes, the sin was eating the forbidden fruit, but the mistake started when they altered the word of God (see 2:16 and 3:2, they left out the word "freely.")

If you compare Gen.1:26 to Gen.5:3, you see the result of sin was losing the image of God. We are now born into this world in the image of our earthly Father and must be born again (John 3) to regain the image of our heavenly Father. (See 2Cor.4:4 and He.1:3). In other words, we are now born after the image of the first Adam and are born again after the image of the last Adam (1Cor.15:45).

VI - The Great Prophecy - Gen.3:15 - Here is the first prophecy concerning Jesus Christ.

VII - The Great Punishment - Gen.6-8 - The Flood

VIII - The Great Generations - Gen.9-10

- (A) Shem - People of the east - line of the Jews
- (B) Ham - Egyptian, African, Canaan, etc...
- (C) Japheth - Caucasian Race, Europeans, etc...

IX - The Great Characters

- (A) Abraham - Gen.12:1-21 (See esp.12:1-3)
- (B) Isaac - Gen.22-27 - Type of Christ in chpt.22 and 24 in particular
- (C) Jacob - Gen.28-36 - (See esp.32:24-32)
- (D) Joseph - Gen.37-50 - Joseph is a type of Christ in more than 200 ways!

\* It is Jacob's 12 sons who make up the 12 Tribes of Israel.

\* God's view on sodomy can be clearly seen in Gen.19

\* Genesis literally means "the beginning." If you look at Gen.50:22-26, you discover about man:

We begin the book in Eden, and end the book in Egypt.

We start out in a glorious garden and end up in a cold coffin.

We start with man walking with God, and end up with man separated from God.

Thus, the rest of the Bible is a six thousand year detour to get man back to Eden, back to a perfect relationship with a perfect God in a perfect environment!

# EXODUS

A good place to begin a study of Exodus would actually be 1Cor.10:1-12. There, you are reminded God gave us the Old Testament that we might learn from the lives of the OT Saints.

Genesis - Deuteronomy is called the Pentateuch and originally was looked upon as one book.

“Exodus” means Exit or the way out. Genesis ends up with Jacob and his children in Egypt (a type of the world) and Exodus tells you how God gets them out. Remember from Genesis, Joseph is a great type of Jesus Christ. With that in mind, consider Exodus 1:8, “Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.” Do you see the picture? God doesn’t want his people serving under a leader that doesn’t know His son! (See Prov.29:2)

We learn from Gen.15:13-16 that there will be 400 years from the Promise of Canaan to the Possession of Canaan. So, God’s promises are not always fulfilled overnight! A lot can happen in 400 years; we see the nation of Israel grow to no less than two million strong according to many Bible students. (Consider Ex.12:37)

As we begin our study of Exodus, keep in mind:

- \* Egypt pictures the world and the world system.
- \* The Wilderness pictures the carnal life.
- \* Canaan pictures the victorious Christian life.

\*\*\* We will use this simple outline for Exodus:

- I - Ex.1-12 - God’s people are **Saved**
- II - Ex.13-18 – God’s people are **Separated**
- III - Ex.19-40 – God’s people are **Sanctified**

The CENTRAL FIGURE of this book is Moses. The name “Moses” is in the Bible 848 times. See Deut.18:15,18 with Acts 3:20-22 to learn how Jesus was called a prophet like unto Moses. Consider these examples of how they are the same:

- \* As a baby, his life is spared from a murdering king
- \* He was reared in obscurity
- \* He came to “his own” and was rejected
- \* He was called out of Egypt
- \* He took a Gentile Bride!!
- \* He reappears in Israel’s Darkest Hour - Rev.11

Many debate exactly who the two witnesses of Rev.11 are, but there is little doubt that one of them must be Moses. Moses and Elijah are both mentioned in connection with the second coming in Mal.4; both appear at the Mount of Transfiguration which is a picture of the second coming, and both of them clearly fit the description of Rev.11.

\*\*\* A few notes on Moses:

- (1) His CALL - 3:1-6
- (2) His CARELESSNESS - 4:21-26
- (3) His COMPASSION - 32:30-35
- (4) His CATASTROPHE - 17:5-6; Numbers 20:7-12  
That Rock was Jesus Christ (1Cor.10:1-4) and He is only smitten ONCE!
- (5) His COMMANDMENTS - 24:15-18
- (6) His CLIMAX - 33:11, 17-23; 34:28-35
- (7) His COMING AGAIN - Rev.11:3-6

THE OUTLINE:

## I – **God’s people are SAVED** - Ex.1-12

Much of this material has to do with the plagues God sent in order to get the children of Israel out of Egypt. You will find parallels in Revelation where God again deals with the nation of Israel. The plagues are:

- \* The river turned to blood
- \* Frogs
- \* Lice
- \* Flies
- \* Pestilence - killing the animals
- \* Boils/blains on man/beast
- \* Hail
- \* Locusts
- \* Darkness
- \* Killing of the Firstborn

Exodus 12 is a great picture of Jesus Christ as the Passover Lamb.

Vs.1 - Life begins when the blood is applied

Vs.2-4 - It has to be a lamb without blemish (no sin), and “a lamb” should be “the lamb” which becomes “your lamb.” Also, you are to share the lamb!

Vs.7 - You have a picture of the three crosses

Vs.8 - Unleavened bread - see 1Cor.8:5

Vs.9 - Jesus said, “I thirst.”

Vs.11 – Don’t put off salvation

Vs.12-13 - The BLOOD is the only way to escape the wrath of God!

Just as Israel had to have a Deliverer, so do we. (Rom.11:26)

## II - God's people are **SEPARATED** - Ex.13-18

See Ex.12:42 – “out from” - God calls his children out of this world, we are to be different, holy, and peculiar. Pharaoh is a picture of the devil in the passage, and his plan (as seen in 8:25-28) is for the children of God to be half-hearted, holding hands with God and this world at the same time. But the Lord says, no man can serve two masters!

Ex.15 reveals the first song of scripture; SALVATION LEADS TO SINGING! Unfortunately, these chapters are also filled with murmuring and complaining, which God hates! (See 1Cor.10:10)

## III – God's people are **SANCTIFIED** - Ex.19-40

Most of this material has to do with the Laws for Israel and plans for the Tabernacle. Read Ex.20-21 for a sampling of the Law and then THANK GOD WE'RE UNDER GRACE!

### \* SOME NOTABLE PASSAGES:

(1) Ex.32 - The First ROCK CONCERT, marked by NAKEDNESS and NOISE along with IGNORANCE and IDOLATRY.

(2) Ex.32:14 - GOD REPENTS - This gives us insight into the word “repent” which primarily means a change of mind. PRAYER can change the mind of God!

(3) Ex.35 - The Free Will of man - see vss.5, 21, 22, 29

John 1:17 is a good passage to consider at this point. “For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” Exodus and the Law point to the frustration and futility of trying to earn salvation. Praise God, Jesus Christ came and made it possible to get to heaven by His grace, and offers eternal salvation as a FREE gift to any and all who will trust Him for their salvation (Rom.10:9-13).

Gen. - Deut. - These books show man trying to live by the Law

Joshua - Joshua pictures Jesus Christ showing up to give us the Victory!

# LEVITICUS

A good summation of the book of Leviticus would be “the way to Holy Living.” Someone put it this way, “Exodus shows us how God gets Israel out of Egypt and Leviticus shows us how to get Egypt out of Israel.” Thus, we offer a two point outline on the book:

- I - THE WAY TO GOD - Chpts.1-20
- II - THE WORK FOR GOD - Chpts.21-27

## I - The Way to God - Chpts.1-20

The way to God is a blood atonement (1:2-4). A good way to define atonement is to break down the word, “AT ONE MENT. “ Sin separates us from God, and an atonement is to bring us together. It is crucial to understand, God requires a BLOOD atonement. See 17:11 with He.9:22

\* There are five major offerings, with the others complimenting these:

- (1) The BURNT offering
- (2) The MEAL offering
- (3) The PEACE offering
- (4) The SIN offering
- (5) The TRESPASS offering

Many people will tell you the Jews gave their offerings “looking forward to the cross.” It is simply NOT likely the average Jew had any idea of the typology, rather, they accepted these offerings as the practical provision made for sin. They did know God demanded a sacrifice for sin.

\* In Chapter 8, Aaron becomes Israel’s first official priest. Leviticus gives elaborate instructions for the priests. Aaron is from the tribe of LEVI, which becomes the priestly tribe, though only Aaron’s sons and descendants could properly be priests. The other Levites had various duties surrounding the Tabernacle and its responsibilities.

\* Chapter 11 gives some of the dietary laws. There is something you need to understand about the Old Testament. While it is true, we are no longer “under the law,” the OT gives us God’s attitude about certain things. For example, in Deut.22:5, we find that God wants men to dress like men and women to dress like women. We learn from chapter 11 of Leviticus, God does care what you eat. But, since we are not “under the law,” we’d say God is more concerned about your heart than your belly! (1Tim.4:4).

\* The purification laws are in chpts.12-15 and various laws of holiness are found in chpts.16-20.

\*\*\* Here are a few passages with great relevance to our day:

- > 17:11 - The need for a BLOOD atonement
- > 18:22-24 - A national, cultural subject!
- > 19:13 - The Bible speaks to Employers
- > 19:28 - What about TATTOOS!?
- > 19:32 – “Respect your elders”!
- > 20:13 - The Bible’s attitude toward sodomy.

## II - The Work for God - Chpts. 21-27

The “Feasts” of the Jews (or Festivals) with the purpose:

- (1) Public acknowledgment of God in their lives
- (2) Public reminder of great events of the past
- (3) Method of teaching the children about God

Following is a list of SEVEN Annual Feasts. There were four at the beginning of the year (all of which were fulfilled at Christ’s first coming) and then three in the seventh month (to be fulfilled at His second coming).

- (1) The Passover - Commemorated Israel’s deliverance from Egypt. (1Cor.5:7-8)
- (2) Unleavened Bread - Connected to Passover (1Cor.5:8) - Leaven is symbolic of sin and false doctrine.

The Passover - pictures Redemption

Unleavened Bread - Separation

- (3) Firstfruits - This was a consecration of the harvest to God. It marked the beginning of the grain harvest (picturing the resurrection) and a sheaf of barley was taken from the field and waved before the Lord. (1Cor.15:23)
- (4) Pentecost - 50 days after the “wave offering.”
- (5) Trumpets - There was a long interval between Pentecost and Trumpets. This festival was to REGATHER Israel for the next two feasts.
- (6) Atonement - This was the most solemn occasion on the Jewish calendar.

\* The nation’s sins were called to remembrance

\* Only on this ONE day of the yr. could the High Priest enter the Holy of Holies, and it was ONLY the High Priest and NOT WITHOUT BLOOD!

(7) Tabernacles - Celebration feast; time of rejoicing and looking forward to future peace, joy, etc...

\*\*\* It is also significant to study the Sabbaths and Year of Jubilee in Leviticus. The failure to obey these laws is why Israel was in Babylonian captivity for 70 years! (2Chron.36:20-21).

## NUMBERS

A good New Testament passage to keep in mind when reading Numbers would be He.3:7-19. God was grieved with the children of Israel, and because of their unbelief, they died in the wilderness.

Consider the following outline for the first four books of the Bible:

- Genesis - Creation, the WORKS of God
- Exodus - Commandments, the WILL of God
- Leviticus - Consecration, the WORSHIP of God
- Numbers - Counting, WANDERING from God

The name of this book obviously speaks for itself. We read in Numbers about God numbering the children of Israel. A good theme for numbers would be 1Cor.14:40, "Let all things be done decently and in order." There were over TWO MILLION people in the wilderness, but they were not a scattered, unorganized mob. There are two primary "numberings" in the book:

- (1) The generation of the Wanderers (Beginning of the book)
- (2) The generation of the Warriors (end of book)

Thus, we have a simple two point outline for Numbers:

- I - The Old Generation - Chpts.1-19
- II - The New Generation - Chpts.20-36

Had the Lord wanted another title for this book, it might well have been called the "**BOOK OF MURMURINGS.**" Speaking of this group in the wilderness, Paul warned the church at Corinth, "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer." Following is a list of some of the obvious murmurings:

- 11:1-3 - They murmur about the way, or their **PATH**
- 11:4-6 - They murmur about their food, or **PROVISIONS**
- 13:33-14:2 - Murmuring about the giants, or **PROBLEMS**
- 16:3 - They murmur about their leaders, or **“Pastor”**
- 16:41 - Murmuring about God’s judgment, or their **PUNISHMENT**
- 20:2-5 - Murmuring about the desert, their **PLACE**

Philippians 2:14 says, “Do all things without murmurings and disputings.” This would have been a great verse to preach in the wilderness, but is needed in most churches today as well!

There are three very distinct **TYPES OF CHRIST** in Numbers:

- (1) The Smitten Rock - 20:7-11 with 1Cor.10:1-4
- (2) The Brazen Serpent - 21:6-9 with John 3:14
- (3) Cities of Refuge - Ch. 35 with Hebrews 6:18

For a brief look at the two primary numberings, consider:

- (1) Numbers 1:2-3, 1:46, and 14:29 to see there were 603,550 “fighting men” numbered, and 603,548 of them died in the wilderness! (With Joshua and Caleb the exceptions.)
- (2) Numbers 26 records a counting 38 years later in Moab.

The remainder of this material on Numbers will offer you some of the highlights of the book.

\* Numbers 6 - You have the Nazarite vow which Samson had from birth - (Jud.13)

\* Numbers 11:4-6 - A murmuring multitude. 11:10-15 - A provoked pastor  
11:31-34 - A deadly diet. 12:1-15 - A suffering sister

\* Numbers 13 - They spy out the land of Canaan and the majority say it’s impossible to defeat the enemy, while the minority say “GOD IS ABLE”!

\* 16:28-32 - The wrath of God - see also 16:47-49

\* 20:7-12 - Even though Moses was the meekest man on the earth (12:3), he evidently loses his temper, and smites the rock twice, and is therefore told he can not go into the Promised Land. (Remember, this rock is a type of Christ, and he is smitten only once (He.10:12).

\* 21:6-9 – God’s remedy for sin. A serpent, which is what the devil is, would certainly be the epitome of sin. Christ became sin on the cross (2Cor.5:21) and it is when we look to him at Calvary, we find our cure for our “snake bite.”

\* Chpt.22 - A perverted prophet, Balaam. This prophet is mentioned three times in the New Testament, in a “warning” context.

His way - 2Pe.2:15

His error - Jude 1:11

His doctrine - Rev.2:14, This is connected to “race mixing” and the result is seen in Numbers 25:7-9.

You should notice in 22:41, a picture of the “**Unholy Trinity**” of Rev.16:13.

\* Baal - The Dragon, imitating God the Father

\* Balak - The Beast, imitating God the Son

\* Balaam - The False Prophet, imitating God the Holy Spirit

\* 32:23 - A very familiar verse, quoted a lot by preachers. However, you should read the context and see the particular sin is that of NOT FIGHTING! The sin is very rampant today as so many of God’s children want to stay on the safe side of the river and never get in the battle.

We’ll close our study of Numbers, with a look at 35:28. Here is a man in bondage, and he must stay there until the death of the high priest. The great picture is that of the sinner (all of us) in bondage, with no hope, until the death of our HIGH PRIEST, the Lord Jesus Christ.

## DEUTERONOMY

The word “Deuteronomy” actually means “**second law**.” As one generation dies in the wilderness, Moses gives the law a second time to the new generation.

Deuteronomy is often called a “Book of Remembrance.” Throughout the book, as Moses preaches to the children of Israel, he reminds them to “remember” some things. You would do well to look at any form of the word “remember” in Deuteronomy, as well as the word “forget.”

Consider this outline for the book of Deuteronomy:

I - A Look at **HISTORY** - chpts.1-3 - The PAST of Israel

II - A Look at **HOLINESS** - chpts.4-11 - The PURITY of Israel

III - A Look at **HERITAGE** - chpts.12-30 - The PLACE of Israel

IV - A Look at the **HERO** - chpts.31-34 - The PERSON of Israel

For me, the book of Deuteronomy creates mixed emotions. You have the excitement of the children of Israel finally preparing to enter the Promised Land. Moses, the great servant of God, stands on the banks of the Jordan and preaches to them about the way it is going to be, and what God expects of them. He is shown the Promised Land, but is not allowed to enter in.

Before looking at some of the HIGHLIGHTS of the book, let’s consider some of the things Israel was told to remember:

\* 5:15 - Their bondage to Egypt (also 15:15) - They are reminded of their bondage over and over again. When people talk about “the good ole days,” they forget the bad things. Egypt offered no rest, no rewards, no hope.

\* 7:18 - What God did to Pharaoh and Egypt

- \* 8:2 - God's leading during the 40 yrs. of wilderness
- \* 8:18 - That it is God Who gives you power to get wealth - Be very careful about developing the worldly mindset, "I've worked hard for all this." You couldn't have lifted your little finger without the grace of God!
- \* 9:7 - How they provoked the Lord with their rebellion
- \* 16:3 - The day they came out of Egypt (salvation!)
- \* 24:9 - What the Lord did to Miriam (Numbers 12)
- \* 25:17 - What Amalek did to them (Num.14)
- \* 32:7 - Remember the days of old

Now we will list some passages for consideration as some of the highlights of the book of Deuteronomy.

- \* 1:9-13 - God's "Administration"
- \* 1:39 - The concept we call "the age of accountability" (Rom.4:15; 5:13)
- \* 4:2 - Don't mess with the word of God! (Prov.30:6; Rev.22:18-19)
- \* 6:4-9 - God permeates the godly home
- \* 8:4 - GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU! (If you are faithful to God, a cheap pair of shoes may last longer than the name brands! A tank of gas will go farther, a meal will last longer, a broken down car just keeps going, and the list goes on!)
- \* 9:18 - A true burden means more than food and water!
- \* 11:12 - When you are in the will of God, He "can't take his eyes off of you"!
- \* 15:6 - God has a problem with "borrowing"! (Prov.22:7; Rom.13:8)
- \* 16:16 - Matching the three "raptures" of the 1st Resurrection
- \* 18:10-11 - I wonder how God feels about the Smurfs, Horoscopes, Dungeons and Dragons, COPPERFIELD, Power Rangers, etc.....
- \* 18:18 - The Lord Jesus Christ
- \* 18:22 - There go all your modern "prophets"
- \* 22:25 - God's plan for rapists!
- \* 23:17-18 - God's view on whores and sodomites.
- \* Chpts.27-30, esp.chpt.28 - God pronounces blessings on obedience, cursings on disobedience. It is clearly seen from this material, DISEASES are often the judgment of God on a disobedient nation! See especially 28:27, the Egyptian diseases!

(NOTE: In Deut.27, the word "curse" or "cursed" shows up for the first time in the chapter in vs.13, and is found THIRTEEN times in the chapter; that's counting the word "curse" in vs.13. Of course, we will not mention the fact that this chapter has 26 verses, which is 13 + 13!)

- \* 30:11-14 - The word of God is AVAILABLE
- \* 30:19-20 - YOU make the choice.

- \* 32:14 - The Bible connection to blood, grapes, and wine
- \* 32:22 - Degrees of hell
- \* 32:28-29 - Something every person on earth should consider!
- \* Chpt.34 - A great chapter on a great man and a great ministry

>>> Deut.34:5-6 shows us that it was God who buried Moses. According to Jude 9, there was a dispute over the body of Moses, the devil perhaps knowing God had plans for Moses. Moses will be one of the two witnesses of Rev.11, Elijah being the other. It is easy to see Moses' connection with the Second Advent in Mal.4:4-6, Matt.17:1-; and Rev.11:6.

## JOSHUA

This great book gives us the account of Israel's entrance into the promised land. When looking at the word "Joshua", we must consider Joshua the man, before looking at Joshua, the book!

Joshua is a clear type of Jesus Christ and in particular, a type of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. He is first mentioned in Ex.17:9 as Moses' assistant in battle. He is one of the 12 spies in Numbers 13, and along with Caleb, he goes against the majority to say they can enter the land. Deuteronomy 31:23 tells us God gave Joshua a "charge" as he prepared him to take the children of Israel into the Promised Land. Thus, Joshua takes the place of Moses as Israel's leader.

Before looking at the book of Joshua, you would do well to look at Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8. Here, the Bible rejecting "scholars" go haywire. They want to correct the Bible and say this is a mistake in the King James Bible. Well, let God be true and every man a liar! These passages show us that Jesus Christ was clearly active in the lives of O.T. Saints. This is especially true as they enter the Promised Land.

We offer this simple outline for the book of Joshua:

- I - Entering the Land - **CLAIMING** - Chpts.1-5
- II - Conquering the Land - **CONQUERING** - Chpts.6-11
- III - Dividing the Land - **CONTROLLING** - Chpts.12-24

A study of Joshua offers insight into the Christian life. Entering the Promised

Land and claiming what God gave them is a picture of the VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIFE. Too many Christians are satisfied living on the wrong side of Jordan. They prefer a life of comfort and convenience over conflict and conquest. However, you'll NEVER enjoy the Christian life to its fullest, until you cross the Jordan and do battle with the enemy!

I chose the word "controlling" with the third point of the outline for a reason. In the Christian life, you never arrive! You do not reach a place where you can just sit back and enjoy the victory. The Christian life is a battle, and will be a battle until the Lord takes us home. Paul said, "I die daily." Too many professing Christians never get beyond salvation. They act as though salvation was the end, when it is actually the beginning! You must strive daily to please the Lord, which normally involves defeating the flesh, mortifying the deeds of the body, then CONTROLLING those "enemies" to the Christian life.

We will now look at some of the many highlights of the book of Joshua:

\* 1:1-9 - The Lord hands the mantle to Joshua. At vs.8, you find the KEY TO SUCCESS! This is the only place the word "success" is found in the Bible. Success comes from reading and obeying the word of God!! It involves:

MEDITATION - think on it

OBSERVATION - watch it work

VOCALIZATION - speak it

MOBILIZATION- DO IT!

\* 1:14-15 - In the Christian life, it is normally the BATTLE before the BLESSINGS and it is the CROSS before the CROWN!

\* Chpt.2 - Rahab is a great picture of the Grace of God in action.

\* 3:7 - There's nothing wrong with following a man who is following God!

\* 4:7 - Everything has its source in the word of God. Here, you have a "memorial garden" filled with stones.

\* 3:15-17 with 4:9-13 - Crossing the Red Sea after the "blood atonement" pictures salvation. Crossing the Jordan pictures the victorious Christian. The Jordan ends up in the Dead Sea. We're reminded of the way to victory - DEATH! You must die to self, sin, society, etc... Paul said, "I die daily" and that is the key to victory!

\* 5:13-15 - Jesus Christ in the O.T.

\* 6:1-5 - Even though God GIVES you something, you may have to do something to get it! (We do this with our children. We want to give them things, but we expect obedience before we bestow the gift. (For insight as to why God would destroy Jericho, consider 1Kings 14:24.)

- \* Chpt.7 - Nations suffer when they ignore sin. See 22:20 and Ecc.8:11.
- \* 9:3, 6 - The first “league of nations” or “united nations” which God does not favor! This type of “mixing” is not of God and is the reason he sent confusion to the tower of Babel in Gen.11.
- \* 13:14,33 - Throughout the O.T., God took care of the Levites. They were the priestly tribe and God gave them cities to live in throughout the tribes and supported them with tithes. The modern equivalent to this would be the parsonage provided for the pastor of a church and supporting him with the tithes of the people which was the case of the Levites.
- \* 14:6-12 - This is the proper attitude of the elder saints! STAY IN THE BATTLE!
- \* 17:13 - (23:13) - Flirt with the world and it will become a thorn in your side!
- \* 24:14-15 – Joshua’s famous declaration. Notice, he does speak for his family!

## JUDGES

The theme for Judges could easily be “The Folly of Forsaking God”. One of the great truths of this book is “Human Collapse apart from the power of God.” Throughout the book we see “Ups and Downs” of man’s “commitment” which also shows us the LOOOOOONGsuffering of God!

If you look at the last verse of the book, you’ll have a pretty good view of the theme of Judges. “In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” (21:25) Along with this verse, look at 2:11; 3:7, 12; 6:1; 10:6; and 13:1 to see the recurring theme of the book.

Considering the theme of “human collapse” we offer an outline which gives you the layout of the book, and the general condition of humanity.

- I - **REBELLION**
- II - **RETRIBUTION**
- III - **REPENTANCE**
- IV - **RESTORATION**

The root of the problem in Judges is seen in 2:12. The people they were suppose to drive from the land are still there, and Israel forsakes God, being conformed by the crowd. By the way, the worship of wooden statues, as well as gold and stone, is SATANIC! Technically, IDOLATRY in any form is inspired by devils. See Lev.17:7;

Deut.32:17; and 1Cor.10:19-22.

Chapter five of Judges is a picture of the Second Advent. You have a woman ruling (4:4) which is prophesied in Isa.3:12. In Judges 4:2, 21 and 5:26 you see a type of the AntiChrist (5 is the # death and 26 is 13 + 13). With this second advent picture and the apostasy of Judges, consider the next book of the Bible is Ruth. In Ruth we have a picture of the church (Ruth) marrying Jesus Christ (typified by Boaz, the kinsman Redeemer). WHAT A BOOK!

For the rest of our time we will look at some of the more notable passages in the book of Judges.

\* 3:12-22 - Children love this story as they do many stories of the Bible. The picture here is how the Bible (two edged sword) cleans you up and gets sin out (the dirt which came from Eglon).

In 1Cor.1:27, we're told that God uses "weak things" and Judges is a great picture of that truth. In this book, God will use the left hand, an oxgoad, a woman, a nail, piece of millstone, a picther and trumpet, and the jawbone of an ass.

\* 6:22-23 - Here we have another pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. Often in the O.T., Jesus appears as "The Angel of the Lord." We should remember that Jesus is Eternal and his first appearance was not at Bethlehem's manger. Remember also, nobody has seen the face of God according to John 1:18, so the appearances of Christ are not as God the Father, but as an angel.

\* 7:1-3 - Here, we learn the "danger of numbers" and how men can place more faith in numbers than in God! This is the problem David discovered in 1Chronicles 21. Many churches focus more on numbers than on God. Numbers have their place and growth is important, but all too often, numbers become the "god" instead of the "goal."

\* 8:16 – "Whippings" are part of the teaching process! The book of Proverbs offers clear teaching on the importance of the "rod" as a form of discipline and teaching.

\* 13:3,6,8,9,16,21 - In the Bible, all appearances of angels are as MEN. You may have seen an angel and just didn't know it! (Hebrews 13:2)

\* Chpt.13-16 - The great story of Samson. Study in connection with Numbers 6:3-8. Without looking at the entire story here, you can see from 14:1,2, and 8 that Samson had "eye trouble"! Then, in 16:21 he paid the price.

From 16:21, we see:

SIN is Blinding - 2Cor.4:4

Sin is Binding - Rom.6:17-18

Sin is Grinding - Prov.13:15

\* 16:23 - Dagon is the “fish-god.” Thus, some have tried unknowingly to portray the fish symbol as a symbol of Christianity. BE CAREFUL WITH THOSE SYMBOLS!

\* 16:30 - In spite of his unusual death, Samson ends up in Faith’s Hall of Fame in Hebrews 11:32.

\* 17:1-13 - Study with 18:16-20 to see the Roman Religion. (Also, 18:7 with 1Kings11:5, and 33.)

\* 19:22-30 - And they say the Bible is boring!

## RUTH

Proverbs 31:10 says, “Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies.” The book of Ruth gives us at least one example of a virtuous woman (see Ruth 3:11).

We offer the following simple outline for the book of Ruth:

- Chpt.1 - The **Sinner**
- Chpt.2 - The **Searcher**
- Chpt.3 - The **Saviour**
- Chpt.4 - The **Salvation**

The historical context of the book of Ruth is the time of the Judges (1:1), which we studied in our last book. With that in mind, you can learn a valuable lesson in the book of Ruth: No matter how bad the apostasy:

- \* God always has a remnant
- \* He is never left without witness
- \* YOU can do right

CONSIDER: In the day of APOSTASY (book of Judges), the Lord takes a Gentile Bride

(Ruth). Next, King David shows up (1&2 Samuel) and Saul (type of AntiChrist) is dethroned.

As you study this book, keep in mind, Ruth is a type of the Church (a sinner saved by grace) and Boaz is a type of Jesus Christ. Ruth is a Moabite (see Deut.23:1-3), and yet God, in His marvelous grace, works behind the scenes to bring her into the fold. Ruth is SOUGHT, then TAUGHT, and finally BOUGHT! And so are we!!!

Over and over again in the word of God, we see the Lord use every day occurrences and circumstances to accomplish His will. In this book, God uses:

- \* A famine - of bread - 1:1
- \* A family - backslidden at that - 1:2 (they were told to avoid Moab)
- \* A funeral - of bereavement - 1:5
- \* A field - of barley (blessings) - 2:15-17

Without commenting on each verse, we'll offer some food for thought on some of the passages in Ruth:

1:1-5 - Elimelech, looking through eyes of flesh instead of eyes of faith, leaves Bethlehem-judah. (Bethlehem is "the house of bread" and Judah means "praise".) So, you see what happens when people leave the church. They plan to sojourn (vs.1) but end up dwelling for ten years (vs.4) in the wrong place!

1:16-17 - Ruth, unlike Orpah (1:10) means what she says, and desires to know Naomi's God.

1:19-22 - When you leave the will of God, He may bring you to your end, in order to show you how "full" you are IN HIM!

2:7 - Ruth, as a type of the church, is busy in the field!

2:9-10 - The humble sinner realizes we don't deserve to drink of the Living Water, but is thankful for the privilege by the grace of God!

2:12 - What we do for Christ will one day be rewarded.

3:1 - Marriage is likened to a rest. Thus, the Millennium, pictured by the 7th day, is a day of REST. Also, even here and now, you're home ought to be a place of rest, not a war zone!

3:3 - It takes water (a picture of the word of God; Eph.5:26) and anointing (the Holy Spirit), working together to bring about redemption.

4:1-6 - A picture of the LAW - willing to do what is possible to redeem the Jew, but not

the Gentile. So, the great "I AM" (John 8:58) comes after the Law, to redeem both Jew and Gentile.

4:17-22 - Ruth is the great grandmother of David, and she is mentioned in the line of Jesus Christ in Matthew 1:5. Thus, God takes a Moabite sinner and gives her an inheritance among the children of God!! TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

# 1 SAMUEL

The book of 1 Samuel centers around four men in particular. They are Eli, Samuel, Saul and David. Or, we could say the book centers around three offices, and the four men mentioned above:

The PRIESTLY office: Eli  
The PROPHETIC office: Samuel  
The PRINCELY office: Saul and David

With this in mind, a most basic outline of the book would be as follows:

- I - Eli and Samuel - Chpts.1-7
- II - Samuel and Saul - Chpts.7-15
- III - Saul and David - Chpts.16-31

Often, you will hear about Israel when she was a "United Kingdom". Later, for she was a split, or divided kingdom. Israel, for the most part, was united during the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon with each one reigning forty years.

It was also during this time that much of Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon were written. Reading of David's troubles with Saul and other events

in his life in 1 and 2 Samuel will help you appreciate the Psalms even more.

We will take a very brief look at these four men.

I - ELI - The Priest - Among the greatest lessons we can learn from Eli actually comes from his failures. We read about the sins of his sons in 2:12-25 and then Eli's failure in 3:11-14. It is the job of a parent to "restrain" their children.

Perhaps many good things could be said of Eli. However, when a man fails as a father, all accomplishments are diminished.

II - SAMUEL - Samuel closes out the period of judges (7:15) and is also considered a prophet (3:20). There are many great qualities in the life of Samuel. In discussing the great men of the Bible, Samuel is often left out, but a study of his life reveals much to be admired. We'll have more on Samuel forthcoming.

III - SAUL - Saul was "the People's Choice" for king. Even though Samuel told them it was wrong and God was not in favor of it, they insisted on having Saul as king. There are at least two lessons to learn from this mistake.

(1) If you want the WRONG thing bad enough, God will let you have it! God will allow the Holy Spirit to prick your heart. God will sometimes even put obstacles in your way to help you avoid disaster (as with Balaam), and he'll put people in your way to warn you. However, if you are determined to do wrong, he will let you.

(2) If most of the world is for something, there's a good chance it is wrong!!! We are not of this world. This world hated Jesus Christ. As a general rule, when something is popular with the majority, it may very well be unpopular with God!!!

(Chapter 13:6-14 is a great picture of how Saul is obviously a type of the Antichrist.)

IV - DAVID - The life of David is a major study in itself. For now, consider the following roles of David's life:

\* Shepherd - 1Sam.16:1-13

\* Soloist - 1Sam.16:14-23

\* Soldier - 1Sam.17

\* Sovereign - 2Sam.1-10

\* Sinner - 2Sam.11

\* Statesman - 2Sam.21

\* Spender - 1Chron.29

\* Statistician - 1Chron.21

\* Scribe - wrote over 1000 the Psalms

We'll now take a brief look at some of the highlight of 1Samuel.

\* Chpt.1-2 - Though the book centers on four men, it would be a serious mistake to overlook the life of Hannah, one of the godliest women in the Bible. As a very dedicated mother, she was:

\* Barren - 1:5

\* Believing - 1:7

- \* Bold - 1:11 - Have you ever vowed such a vow?
- \* Blessed - 1:19-20

\* 1:27-28 - Reform begins in the high chair, not the electric chair!!! You can train you CHILDREN to worship God at a very young age!

\* 3:1,7 – You’re children should be active for the Lord before they are actually saved!

\* 3:7 and 3:21 - God reveals himself through His word. If you want to get to know God, you must get to know His book!!

\* 9:27 and 12:7 - This is why most Americans will not get to know the word of God. They will not sit still long enough! (Check any church in America at around 12 noon.)

\* 15:1 - People say, “I’d love to hear the voice of God.” Well, if that’s true, all they have to do is READ THE BIBLE - The word of God!

\* 28:5-8 - The 1st Halloween! This witch had no power to raise the dead! God did this, and the witch was the most surprised of all!

We obviously did not cover near all the material in this great book. Most of chapters 18-31 tell of Saul’s pursuit of David, a man of great character, God’s choice for king, a type of Jesus Christ, and a man after God’s own heart (13:14).

## 2 SAMUEL

The book of 2 Samuel deals primarily with the life of David, in particular, his reign as the king of Israel. Keep in mind, David is a type of Jesus Christ. After the rapture and after the Tribulation, the Lord is going to return to this earth and take His throne in Jerusalem (Zech.14). Right now, Satan is called the “god of this world,” but it is only a matter of time until the Lord reclaims His kingdom on this earth! In this sense, He is the “king to be.”

David was anointed King in 1Sam.16, but it was some time later that he actually became reigning king. If you look at 1Sam.22:1-2, 2Sam.8:15-18, and 2Sam.23:8-12, you’ll see a picture of the church and their king. You see those who followed David and were loyal to him even before he actually took the throne. They became the core of his army and government. Right now, we are to serve the Lord and be loyal to Him. He will one day form His “government” (Isa.9:6-7). Thus, there is a valuable lesson for us to learn in 1 and 2 Samuel. **What you do for Christ BEFORE He takes the throne will determine what you do AFTER he takes the throne!**

We now offer this outline for the book of 2Samuel, concerning David's life and reign as king:

- I - The **PATIENT** Years - Chpts.1-4
- II - The **PROSPEROUS** Years - Chpts.5-10
- III- The **PERILOUS** Years - Chpts.11-24

David was a very popular king and a great king. Unfortunately, there was a terrible tragedy in the life of this man "after God's own heart." It is recorded in chpt.11 and is perhaps, other than his battle with Goliath, the most well known fact about this great man of God. David committed adultery with Bathsheba, and then added sin upon sin. We'll look at the chapter later, but for now, we can list some valuable lessons from this event in the life of David:

- \* There is none righteous, no, not one! (All flesh is grass...)
- \* Your sin will find you out!
- \* One sin can torment you for the rest of your life! (Ps.51:3)
- \* People remember the bad you do, more than the good.
- \* Sin, even adultery, doesn't mean God will quit using you! David confessed and sought forgiveness, and God still used and blessed him.
- \* At the same time, we should remember, forgiveness of sin does not mean there are no consequences. David's adulterous mistake will produce some very rebellious sons.

There are many great lessons and great stories in this book. We will now list a few of those passages with brief comments:

**1:1-20** - An Amalekite assumes David will be happy to hear of Saul and Jonathan's death. However, David understood the truth of Prov.24:17, "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth." The Amalekite gets the last thing he expected, DEATH!

**3:9-10** - This is the first use of the word "translate" in the Bible. It has to do with a kingdom (see Col.1:13). One of these days, we'll be "translated" into another kingdom!

**6:1-7** - This "NEW Idea" on how to carry the ark came from the Philistines; it was not God's way. The threshingfloor (vs.6) is almost always connected to judgment in the Bible. As far as we know, there is only one time in the Bible when God told them not to touch the ark (see Num.4:15). Among the various lessons to learn from this fascinating story is this: When God tells us something, He should not have to tell us but once!

**6:20-23** - Here we find another popular story of the Bible. Without elaboration, we offer two important truths: (1)Don't let others keep you from praising the Lord and (2)Bitter Christians often become unfruitful.

**Chpt.9** - Here, we see a beautiful picture of the Grace of our Lord. David wanted to bless someone of Saul's house for Jonathan's sake. God blesses us, for Jesus' sake!

\* Vs.3 - Grace is "undeserved favor shown to the helpless sinner."

\* Vs.5 - With Grace, God takes the first step. 1Jn.4:19.

\* Vs.6 - Grace brings conviction

\* Vs.7 - Grace takes away fear! 2Tim.1:7 and leads to a wedding feast! (Rev.19)

\* Vs.10 - Grace makes us fruitful

\* Vs.11 - By God's grace, we are made children of the King!

**11:1- 5** – God's servants are not always perfect! There is no justification whatsoever for what David did. He should have been on the battlefield, but he chose to stay home on this day. When you are in the wrong place, you are prone to do the wrong thing!

**12:13-23** - A great passage which teaches, among other things, when Babies die before the so-called "age of accountability," they do go to heaven!

**Chpt.13** - A chapter on REBELLION. Chapter 13, with 39 verses (13+13+13)!

**Chpt.15:1-6** - Absalom - type of the Antichrist; as in 18:18 (6+6+6)!

**21:1-2** - Natural disasters are sometimes DIVINE JUDGMENT. Also, a nation will suffer for the sins of its leaders!

**24:21-25** - We see again, something of the heart of David. He's willing to "pay the price" to serve God. What does it cost you to serve God? Will you pay the price?

## I & II Kings

A large part of these two books deal with the reign of Solomon as king of Israel. For the most part, the twelve tribes of Israel had been united under a single throne for 120 years, with Saul, David, and Solomon each reigning for forty years.

With the death of Solomon, things changed. Solomon's son, Rehoboam, brought to a head the resentment of the other tribes against Judah. The kingdom was split into two parts:

**Northern Kingdom - Israel** - kings ruled from Samaria

**Southern Kingdom - Judah and Benjamin** - ruled from Jerusalem

Every king of the Northern Kingdom was bad. The kings of the Southern kingdom were successors of David and there were a few good ones. One of the difficulties in reading I and II Kings is that the material alternates between the two

kingdoms. Many of the prophets fall under the period of I and II Kings.

A helpful outline of these books would be lengthy and detailed. As an alternative, we'll offer a very basic outline and then offer some supplementary material.

**I - The United Kingdom - 1K.1-12**

**II - The Divided Kingdom - 1K.12 - 2K.17**

**III - The Remaining Kingdom - 2K.18-25**

Any study of 1 and 2Kings must include a look at the life of Solomon. His reign as king was one of peace and prosperity. In that sense, his early years as king are often a type of Jesus Christ and the millennial reign (see 1Kings 1:31,33,35,37,41, and 46).

Most every Bible student knows Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived. Among his greatest achievements was the building of the temple in Jerusalem. His fame went literally around the world (1K.10:24). He rose to unbelievable heights in wealth, wisdom, and works. Unfortunately, his wisdom makes his life even more difficult to understand, as he also sank to unbelievable depths in sin, sorrow, and self-gratification. His early reign is compared to Jesus Christ while his latter reign is often compared to the Anti-Christ.

You will see a clear picture of his mistake in 1Kings11:1-8. Evil communications corrupt good manners (1Cor.15:33) and this was Solomon's downfall, even though he had clear warning in 1Kings 9:6-7 and Deut.17:14-17.

Solomon's wealth and wisdom was so great, it could not even be put into words. Consider the queen's words in 1Kings10:6-7. For a small sample of his wealth, he owned 40,000 horses, 1,400 chariots, commanded 12,000 cavalymen, and owned a fleet of ships. His wealth would make the richest man in the world today look like a pauper.

WE must remember, we are looking at the book of Kings, not just a king. We will list some of the more significant kings in each kingdom:

NORTHERN KINGDOM (Israel): Jeroboam (931-910 BC). He was Known as "the son of Nebat who made Israel to sin." How would you like to go down in history as the one who made your nation, your community, your church or your home to sin?

Ahab, the most wicked king reigned from 874 - 853 BC and established Baal worship in Israel. Jehu ruled from 841-814 BC and Jeroboam II from 793-753 BC. Jeroboam II restored Israel to political greatness, but was also immoral and unjust.

SOUTHERN KINGDOM (Judah w/ Benjamin) - Rehoboam, Solomon's son reigned from 931-913 BC. Asa ruled from 911-870 BC and was basically a good king. Jehoshaphat (873-848 BC) was another decent king, but made a bad alliance with Ahab. (Whether a nation, state, or individual, "BAD COMPANY" is warned against throughout the word of

God. See what God told Israel in Deut.7:1-4.) Other kings of significance are Jehoash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Ahaz, Hezekiah (One of Judah's greatest kings), Manasseh, and Josiah.

Around 605 BC, Babylon came to power, and since that time, the world has been under Gentile rule. It is called the "time of the Gentiles" and will come to an end only when the Lord Jesus returns to this earth and takes over the throne of His father David (see Lk.21:24 and Rev.11:2). This "times of the Gentiles" should not be confused with the "fulness of the Gentiles" which refers to the time when the church is raptured and God is through dealing with the Gentiles and turns His attention once again on the nation of Israel (see Rom.11:25).

We will look at various passages in our next lesson, but for now, let's close our study with the death of Israel's greatest king, David. If you look at 1K.2:1-2, David is about to die. He is giving "last instructions" to Solomon. There is a great lesson for us in this material. Look at 2Sam.16:5-12 and 2Sam.19:16-23. David seemed to always "show grace" to his enemy. This was especially true of his dealings with Saul. Here, his men wanted to kill Shimei, but David says, "let it be." David was a man after God's own heart, and ON THE SURFACE, it appears his handling of this situation was a prime example. However, go back to 1Kings 2:8-9. David had not forgotten Shimei. He tells Solomon to bring him down to the grave. What's the lesson for us:

- \* Great men of God are not perfect
- \* Words are cheap
- \* Appearances can be very deceiving
- \* DON'T HARBOR bad feelings (jealousy, bitterness, resentment, etc...); They will tarnish your testimony, hinder your happiness, and cause you to affect others in a negative way.

Since we are trying to limit ourselves to an OVERVIEW of the Bible, we simply can not look at all the highlights of 1 & 2 Kings. We will list some of the passages with very brief comments.

- \* 1K.3:5-7 - Solomon practiced good "self-judgment." See 1Cor.11:31. Perhaps the worst form of deception is "Self-deception." (See also 2Tim.3:13)
- \* 1K.5-8 - The Temple
- \* 1K.10:6-7 - If this was true of Solomon, how much more so of Jesus & Heaven!! The half has not been told? How about the fourth, fifth, tenth.....?
- \* 1K.12:6-8 - Be careful who you listen to!
- \* 1K.18:21-40 – Elijah's contest with Baal. One of the AWESOME stories of the O.T. (Notice, Elijah is not struck with lightning or punished in any other way for making fun of or "mocking" another religion.)
- \* 1K.21:20 – Don't blame all your problems on the world, the flesh, or the devil. You "sell yourself" out to whoever you choose to serve! When you "sell out" to the world, the

flesh, or the devil, you are “sell yourself short.” Every Christian is “sold out” to someone or some thing. Sell yourself out to the Lord Jesus Christ.

\* 2K.2 - Elijah is taken up to heaven on a chariot of fire and Elisha gets a double portion of Elijah’s spirit.

\* 2K.4:18-20 - Moms can do things for the children which Dads simply can’t do. And Dad can do some things for the children mom can’t do.

\* 2K.5 - Great story of Naaman the leper and a good place to see the importance of the quiet servants of God who get little attention here, but great rewards later! There are many “unnamed” heroes in the Bible.

\* 2K.6 – Elisha’s servant has his eyes open to the spirit world. If you could see the spirit world, you’d be overwhelmed by the enemy, but encouraged by your allies!

\* 2K.9 - Now you know why, to this day, “mean-spirited” women are called Jezebel and you also see the ORIGIN of immodest make-up. (Jer.4:30 & Ezek.23:40)

\* 2K.13:20-21 – Elisha’s death and unusual power!

\* 2K.18:4 - When a good thing becomes bad. God may use something in your life and that “something” may be a good thing (or person). However, don’t worship the thing, worship the One who gave it to you! Worship the Giver, not the gift. Worship the “Blessor” not the blessing.

\* 2K.19:35 - One Angel kills 185,000 Assyrians! We’re in good hands!!!

\* 2K.20:5 - Prayer influenced God; especially tearful prayers.

## I & II CHRONICLES

When people talk about books of the Bible which they “dread” reading, 1 and 2 Chronicles is often mentioned. Obviously, part of the reason is due to the “genealogical tables” or all the “begats.” However, at least part of the problem is a failure to understand the reason for all the genealogy. You might be a bit more interested in all the names if you were looking for your name among the list! If those genealogical tables revealed your family tree, whether or not you were in the line of the Messiah, and ultimately your inheritance, would you be a little more interested? (1Chron.9:1 along with Ezra 2:1, 59 give a small taste of the importance of these records.)

1 and 2 Chronicles made up the last book of the Jewish Bible. Thus, the last thing a Jew would read in his Bible was a command to go up to Jerusalem (2Chron.36:23) with the purpose of rebuilding the Temple!

There is another very interesting note concerning the Chronicles. Take a close look at Matthew 23:35. Jesus Christ mentions the death of prophets, from Abel (Gen.) to Zacharias (2Chron.24), the beginning and ending of the Hebrew Bible. This statement virtually nullifies the Apocryphal books. **The thirty-nine books found in the Old Testament of your King James Bible are endorsed by the Lord Jesus Christ!**

It is easy to assume that the Chronicles are just more of the same material found in Samuel and Kings. However, that is like ignoring the Gospel of John since you have Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Consider:

- >>> Samuel and Kings is from a Prophet's Viewpoint.  
Chronicles is from the Priest's Viewpoint.
- >>> Samuel and Kings is written **BEFORE** the Babylonian exile.  
Chronicles is compiled **AFTER** the Babylonian exile.
- >>> Samuel and Kings focuses on the throne.  
Chronicles focuses on the temple.
- >>> Samuel and Kings deals with both Kingdoms (Northern and Southern).  
Chronicles focuses on the Kingdom of Judah and its city, Jerusalem.

We offer this very brief outline of Chronicles:

- I - Judah's HERITAGE - 1Chr.1-9**
- II - Judah's HEAD - 1Chr.10 - 2Chr.9**
- III - Judah's HISTORY - 2Chr.10-36**

The unifying emphasis of the Chronicles is THE TEMPLE and matters connected to the temple. For example, 1Chr.11-29 are nineteen chapters occupied with the reign of David. But rather than "rehash" all of the material found in Samuel and Kings, these chapters deal with David's preparation of materials for the temple, his organization of Levites and priests, and his arrangement of the singers and players of instruments, all in anticipation of the temple.

2 Kings closed with the city of Jerusalem sacked, the temple burnt, and the Nation of Israel deported. God stirs the heart of Cyrus, king of Persia (Ezra 1:1-4), to send the remnant back to JUDAH, to rebuild the temple. Before Nehemiah is sent to rebuild the city, Ezra and Zerubbabel are sent to rebuild the temple!

The temple was, among other things:

- (1) A **symbol** of the unity of Israel
- (2) A **reminder** of the Nation's high calling
- (3) A **sign** that God was still with His people.
- (4) A **focus** of the true emphasis in the life of the nation

We should see the parallel in the importance of the local church in this age. We

are living in the Laodicean church age and far too many professing Christians have UNDERESTIMATED the importance of the local church!

We learn from Israel a great truth for all nations. **A nation's response to God and His word is THE decisive factor in that nation's history and destiny.**

The "Davidic Covenant" of 2Sam.7:12-16 determined the seed of David would (1) Inhereit a kingdom, (2) Build a Temple, and (3) Be subject to discipline. This covenant found fulfillment in Solomon. He inherited the kingdom, built the temple, and yet, due to sin, he died at the age of 59! (See 1K.3:14)

American Christians have swallowed the lie of "separation of church and state." It is not in the Bible, nor is it in the Constitution of the United States! Look at the nation of Israel. God established the throne, and God established the temple. They were meant to uphold one another. When apostacy developed, the throne became the enemy of the temple. (Sound familiar???) The political became the enemy of the spiritual, and destruction was inevitable.

We repeat, **A nation's response to God and His word is THE determining factor in that nation's history and destiny.** Never forget, one of the ways God punishes a nation is to give that nation a wicked king! A king who ignores God and His word will bring much grief to the nation. (See Prov.29:2)

Consider a quote from 1960: "Moral principles and spiritual convictions are the 1st important things as regards national progress or decline, not politics and economics - as seems to be the fashionable thought in government today. The place we give to God is that which determines our prosperity or adversity, our history and our destiny."

The same author wrote, "God is not mocked. He rules, he chooses, he forbears, but he will not spare the persistent EXPLOITING OF PRIVILEGE. The abuse of high calling by low living always brings ruinous ending."

If you'd like to know how God rebuilds a nation, read 2Chron.29-31. There is an emphasis on worship, praise, singing and separation. Idolatry is forbidden and tithes and offerings are given. The central activity centers around God and worship. Once the nation is established, Assyria attacks and God sends one angel to defend Israel!

We repeat once more, "**A nation's response to God and His word is THE decisive factor in that nation's history and destiny.**" Such are the lessons of the Chronicles.

## EZRA

**Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther** complete the seventeen "historical books" of the Bible. All three deal with the Jews after their Babylonian captivity. Ezra and Nehemiah pertain to the remnant that returned to Jerusalem and Judea while Esther pertains to those who stayed in the land of captivity. (You would benefit from reading along with these three books, the last three of the prophetic books, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, who were raised up after the exile.)

Ezra 1:1 tells us the prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled through Cyrus, king of Persia. (For the prophecy concerning the captivity, see Jer.29:10-11; 25:11-12.) While studying the return of the Jews, keep in mind we are looking at about 50,000 people (2:64-65). At one time, there were 600,000 fighting men alone (Num.1:46) which means a possibility of TWO MILLION people counting women and children!

During the 70 years of captivity, many parents and grandparents died outside of their homeland. This new generation would not be as eager to return as their parents would have been. Also, under Cyrus, the Jews were treated better than they had been under Babylonian rule, so there wasn't a great concern to be back in Judea. There is a spiritual lesson in this for us. **As you drift from God's place and His will, and as you "buddy up" to this world, your children will not know the JOY of being in the will of God, and even worse, they'll have no desire for it!** Furthermore, any Christian who gets "too comfortable" in this world, may have a very difficult time committing to the often uncomfortable will of God!

The captivity took place in three phases, and so did the return:  
(1) Zerubbabel leads a group back around 538 BC to rebuild the temple.  
(2) Ezra leads a 2nd group back around 458 BC.  
(3) Nehemiah leads the 3rd group around 445 BC to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

#### **OUTLINE:**

I - **Rebuilding the Temple Walls** (chpts.1-6) under Zerubbabel

A - Restoration - chpts.1-3

B - Resistance - chpts.4-5

C - Revival - chpt.6

II - **Restoring Temple Worship** (chpts.7-10) under Ezra

Take a look at Ezra 6:13-14. The work was slowed by opposition, so God raises up Haggai and Zechariah to prophecy and the work then prospers. LESSON: God uses PREACHING to challenge you, encourage you, and give you victory over the enemy! (It's noteworthy here that the people PROSPERED through the preaching! We don't need the "prosperity preachers," we need preaching that prospers!)

Zerubbabel was most likely born in captivity, having never seen Jerusalem. God can raise up **whoever** he wants, **whenever** he wants him, from **wherever** he needs him, to do **whatever** he wants accomplished!

While Zerubbabel led in the construction of the temple, Ezra led in the "separation" of the people. See 7:6 and 9:1-13 concerning Ezra. A man who labors in the word of God KNOWS God called his people "out of this world" to be a holy, separated, peculiar people! (1Pe.2:9).

The backdrop for this part of Israel's history involves 3 WORLD EMPIRES: Assyria, Babylon, and Media-Persia. In light of Ps.75:6-7, Dan.2:20-21, and Romans13:1-6, it is good to remember, God not only directs His people, He uses his enemy!

Since Ezra could well be called a "Book of Restoration," there are some great spiritual lessons for us to learn:

(1) RESTORATION IS POSSIBLE!!! You've backslidden and wandered into the world and you doubt if you can ever be restored? Our God is able, and willing!!! He can restore you just as He restored Israel.

(2) RETURN to the right place! Generally speaking, return from the world and to God, His word, and His people. **There are some places you must avoid if you want the blessings of God!**

(3) REBUILD your altar - your prayer life. (See 3:1-6; this was before the Temple was rebuilt!) You must prepare your heart, as Ezra did (7:10).

(4) REMEMBER the temple - 3:11-13. Of course, for us this is the local church, the place where Jesus Christ receives the glory (Eph.3:21). You cannot serve God apart from the local church!

(5) RESIST the enemy - see 4:1-4.

(6) RECEIVE the word of God - 6:13-14. Christians must never underestimate the value of fellowship with God in prayer and fellowship with God in His word.

(7) REMAIN faithful - 6:21-22; In other words, don't make the same mistakes again!

## NEHEMIAH

Nehemiah arrived back in Jerusalem about twelve years after Ezra. Even though the altar had been rebuilt, the temple rebuilt, and worship restored, the **moral and spiritual conditions were far from pleasing to God.** We should realize, all the buildings, steeples, stained glass, pews, mouners' benches, altars, baptistries, and

sanctuaries in the world CAN NOT make a nation nor a community spiritual!!!

When Nehemiah returned, princes, rulers, and priests had intermarried with the surrounding idolatrous people. Just as Ezra was heartbroken at what he saw (Ezra 9:1-4), Nehemiah was heart-wrenched at what he saw (1:1-11).

We find in Ezra, RESTORATION; in Nehemiah, RECONSTRUCTION; in Esther, PRESERVATION. Thus, we offer the following simple outline for Nehemiah:

- I - Construction** - Chpts.1-7
- II - Consecration** - Chpts.8-10
- III - Consolidation** - Chpts.11-13

There are some great spiritual lessons in the book of Nehemiah. As Nehemiah sets out to build a work to the glory of God, he faces compromise, laxity, and mockery. Throughout the Bible, we see a consistent principle:

- \* **No Winning, without Working and Warring.**
- \* **No Opportunity without Opposition**
- \* **No Triumph without Trouble**
- \* **No Throne without Thorns**
- \* **No Crown without the Cross**

One of my professors said one time, "There is always a THORNroom on the way to the THRONEroom". Paul said in 1Cor.16:9 "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries". When the Lord opens the windows of heaven to BLESS you, expect the devil to open the gates of hell to BLAST you! Nehemiah comes shining forth from the conflict as a man of prayer, faith, courage, and ACTION! A man prayed one time, "Lord, make us intensely spiritual, but keep us perfectly natural and thoroughly practical." That's Nehemiah, intensely spiritual while thoroughly practical.

In the life of Nehemiah, we learn among other things:

- (1) The perils and problems of the task bring out the best in a real man!
- (2) We owe much of what we are to our difficulties, setbacks, oppositions, etc... which God uses to try us and purify us.
- (3) The things we think are "BREAKING US" may actually be the tools of God in "MAKING US"!!!

You will get a pretty good grip on this book by looking at the various roles Nehemiah played. You find him as the **CUPBEARER, WALLBUILDER, AND GOVERNOR.**

I - Nehemiah the Cupbearer - 1:11 - This may sound like a very Unimportant position, but that's not the case at all. The royal cupbearer was a very trusted and prestigious

position. (History suggests the cupbearer was often responsible for “testing” the wine for the king, in case it had been poisoned. This went on for hundreds of years until the King of kings showed up. The cupbearer had always drank from the poisonous cup that the king might live. In Christ, the King drank from the poisonous cup that we might live!!!)

We might also mention one other lesson from Nehemiah’s position as cupbearer. Godliness is NOT incompatible with earthly success. People say you can’t be a serious Christian and do well in the business world. That simply is untrue!!!

II - Nehemiah the Wallbuilder - 2:11-6:19 - Nehemiah gets approval and authority from the King, heads off to the work, and immediately faces opposition (2:9-10). When we set out to do something for the Lord, we had better have authority from our King, and we had better not think that means “smooth sailing ahead”!

(We learn from Tobiah and Sanballat: Men who want to CONTROL the masses do not want anyone around who desires to liberate the masses! Thus, socialism hates individualism, scholars hate Bible believers, and Popish Preachers hate teaching preachers!)

Chpts.3-4 reveal the great order and planning of Nehemiah; a perfect blend of the practical with the spiritual! (See 4:9) - As Cromwell said to the soldiers, “Trust God and keep your powder dry!” In many churches there is too much ORGANIZING without any AGONIZING, and in others, there is too much MOTION without any UNCTION!

Nehemiah faces opposition from WITHOUT - **Sarcasm** (4:1-6), **Strife** (4:7-8), and finally **Subtilty** (6:1-14). The subtil attacks came in the form of pretense (6:1-4), bluffs (6:5-9), and treachery (6:10-14). Some people let social and family ties override moral and spiritual duty!

Next, Nehemiah faces opposition from WITHIN - **Stuff** (rubbish) (4:10), **Shuddering** or fear (4:11-14), and **Selfishness** or greed (chpt.5). We must get rid of things that hinder our walk (He.12:1-2), trust God, and crucify the flesh.

III - Nehemiah the Governor - Study chpt.13 and see some old-fashioned Bible based INTOLERANCE for certain things.

## ESTHER

Esther is one of two books in the Bible named after a woman, [Ruth] being the other. The events of Esther took place between those of Ezra and Nehemiah. While Ezra and Nehemiah deal with the Jews who returned from Captivity, Esther deals with

Jews who chose to stay in the land of captivity, under Persian rule. Thus, we have in Esther, the last of the 17 “History books”, before getting to Job and the 5 “Wisdom books.”

In the book of Esther, we have a plot to exterminate the Jewish race, and the story of how they were spared. God is not mentioned at all in this book, and yet he is “at work” throughout the book. So, in Esther, we have the unseen hand of God. We offer this simple outline:

- I - The **EVIL DESIRE** of Haman
- II - The **EXCITING DETERMINATION** of Esther
- III - The **EVENTUAL DELIVERANCE** of Israel

Due to the brevity of this book, rather than highlights and comments, we will present a brief summary of the book, with a few personal thoughts along the way.

The book of Esther begins with a feast or celebration which ends up lasting six months! Ahasuerus, king of Persia, invites the princes and nobles from his 127 provinces. It seems from 1:4, the purpose of this event was simply to “show off.” There was no doubt music, dancing, & entertainment. Eventually, Ahasuerus becomes drunk on “legalized liquor” (1:7-8) and with his senses dulled with drink, he calls for his wife, Vashti, to come and parade her beauty.

Vashti says, “NO!” (We must learn to say “NO” to some things if we are going to please the Lord!!) Vashti is banished from the kingdom. (Sometimes it costs to do right!) The king then holds a “beauty pageant” (2:3) to find a wife.

We are introduced to a Jew named Mordecai (2:5-7) who held a position in the palace (2:19,21). Mordecai gets Esther in the “beauty pageant” and tells her not to mention her Jewish ancestry. Esther becomes Queen and Mordecai remains in the background (2:21-23). (It takes a man of humility and character to do right and not seek personal glory!)

We are next introduced to Haman, the “Prime Minister” of Ahasuerus. He typifies the wicked politician who is after power, money, and glory. He also typifies the Devil who wants us to worship Him (Matt.4:8-9), and will not be satisfied until we bow to him (3:5). In wrath, Haman plots to destroy Mordecai and is willing to kill all the Jews to do it (see 3:13 - look at for the 13s!).

Mordecai says Esther should talk to the king about the decree (4:8) and she says it would be “against the law” to do so (4:11) and would therefore be suicidal. Mordecai then points out that God (implied in the context) may have made her queen for this very purpose, “for such a time as this” in 4:14. **(Don’t ever forget the unseen hand of God and don’t forget you are WHERE you are, at this time, FOR A PURPOSE!)**

Mordecai's great statement in vs.14, is followed by Esther's great statement in 4:16. After prayer and fasting (tried that lately?), she says she'll go to the king, and "...if I perish, I perish." (That's the kind of burden we need to have for lost people!)

We now see a great type of the church or the Christian in Esther. She is allowed into the King's court (!) on the third day (!! ) because she realized she couldn't get there "by the law" and simply trusted the King's mercy (!!!). By the way, she is granted entrance when the King sees her in "royal apparel." (Our righteousness is as filthy rags; we enter heaven clothed in His righteousness!)

Ahasuerus offers her whatever she wants up to half the kingdom. She says she'll tell him at a special banquet prepared just for her, the King, and Haman. The banquet is put off another night and while waiting, Haman has a gallows made to hang Mordecai. Haman is very excited about being the only guest at this banquet and no doubt expects everything but what he ends up getting. (Chapters 5-7 are somewhat humorous and very enjoyable reading.)

The night before the banquet, Ahasuerus can't sleep. He has records read to him and discovers how Mordecai had saved the king's life (6:3 with 2:21-23). Ahasuerus wants to reward Mordecai and asks Haman what he thinks should be done. Haman was about to approach the king about hanging Mordecai, but now is asked how to reward "the man whom the king delighteth to honour." Haman thinks he himself is the man the king has in mind and answers accordingly. Thus, Mordecai ends up ROYALLY REWARDED (6:11) while Haman ends up HANGING from the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai!(7:10).

We close with two great lessons to consider from this book:

(1) God is always moving "behind the scenes" on behalf of his people. This is sometimes seen in the smallest of things, such as Ahasuerus' inability to sleep, the particular record being read about Mordecai, or Haman in the hall when the king was ready for answers.

(2) God has a plan for every life. Esther, "a nobody" in the kingdom, ends up queen and was used at a special time for a special purpose. The same is true of every child of God!

## JOB

After completing the 17 Historical Books, we now come to the 5 “Poetical” or “Wisdom” books, beginning with the book of Job. While the 17 historical books deal primarily with a Nation (Israel), the 5 poetical books deal with individuals. Someone suggested the following for consideration:

**Job** - The death of the “self-life”

**Psalms** - The new life in God

**Proverbs** – God’s school for the new life

**Ecclesiastes** - The vanity of things under the sun

**Solomon’s Song** - Intimacy of Communion with Christ

>>> Whether or not the above thoughts are the theme of those books or not, one thing is certain, most any spiritual growth is going to begin with the crucifixion of the “self-life” as seen in Job, Gal.2:20, Rom.6:11, Gal.5:24, and Rom.6:6 among others.

Job is no doubt one of the greatest men of the Bible. In Ezek.14:14,20, God categorizes him with Noah and Daniel. We offer the following simple outline for the book of Job:

I - **The Disasters** - chpts.1-2

II - **The Debates** - chpts.3-41

III - **The Deliverance** - chpt.42

Job is clearly a picture or type of the Tribulation Saint. There are 42 chapters to match the last half of the Tribulation. The 7 days of grief (2:13) match the 7 years of Tribulation. Job has sores all over his body as in Rev.16:2. He pictures God’s judgment on the nation of Israel and ends up with more than he started out with, possibly even the resurrection of his own children!

Job also gives us insight into the “mystery of human suffering.” It is obvious from the book of Job, we are not meant to understand and know the explanation of all things; to do so would eliminate faith. Someone said, “Scriptures are as wise in their RESERVATIONS as they are in their REVELATIONS! Enough is revealed to make faith intelligent; enough is reserved to give faith room for development.”

After losing his family, his flocks, his fields, and his fortunes, Job fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, “Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” (1:21) Job would later say, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.” (13:15). He said on one occasion, “But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.” (23:10) Most of us want the faith and patience of Job, but we do not want to go through God’s “refining process.”

The first two chapters of Job offer enough material for a lifetime of study. Here are just a few of the many truths from those chapters:

(1) Satan is accountable to God!

- (2) Even the dark mind of Satan is an open book to our God!
- (3) Satan is behind much of the evil that curses the earth.
- (4) Satan is neither omnipresent nor omniscient (all knowing). He was wrong about Job! It is a mistake to “under-rate” the devil and it is a mistake to “over-rate” him. Satan is not our only enemy!
- (5) God’s eyes are always watching over his children!

Job is a book of great questions. Consider 9:1-2; 4:17; 7:17; 8:3; 11:7; 14:10,14; 15:14; 22:3; and 25:4 for a sampling. Asking questions is a great way to learn, especially if you know Who to go to for the answers. Of course, it also helps to PAY ATTENTION to the answers!

There are simply too many “highlights” in Job to look at them all in this study. We’ll close our study by making brief reference to just a few of the many great passages in Job:

- \* 5:17 - How to handle correction
- \* 6:25 - The importance of “words”
- \* 7:6-7 - The brevity of life - see also 7:1-2; 8:9; 9:25-26, and 14:2.
- \* 9:32-33 - We have what (Who) Job needed!!! 1Tim.2:5
- \* 12:7-10 - God teaches us through his creation
- \* 14:10, 14 - Question of the Ages
- \* 19:25-27 - Answer of the Ages!
- \* 23:12 - Can you say that?
- \* 31:1 - The danger of “wandering eyes”
- \* 32:21 - The danger of titles; especially religious titles! Matt.23:7-10
- \* 41 - Great chapter on Leviathan or Satan (Isa.27:1)

Like all the “wisdom books,” Job is a lifetime of study. Men who need help in their daily lives often find themselves drawn to Job, Psalms, and Proverbs. There, we learn from the **Servant, the Soldier, and the Sovereign** the greatest lessons of life.

# PSALMS

Perhaps no other book of the Bible has been more widely read than the book of Psalms. It has been called a “river of consolation,” “a lake which reflects every mood of man’s changeful sky.” It is a combination of praise and prayer, triumph and trouble, gladness and sadness, hope and fear, all united by that one common event called the “human experience.”

The Psalms were not only meant to be read and studied, but also sung (Col.3:16 and James 5:13). Thus, it has been called the **“Hebrew Hymnbook”** as well as the **“Book of Praises.”** Fifty-five of the Psalms are addressed to the “Chief Musician.” Since the meaning of the word “Psalm” can be linked to “prayers” or “praises,” we might do well to suggest the theme of the book as “Praise through Prayer.”

Seventy-three of the Psalms are ascribed to David and twelve to Asaph, one of the heads of David’s choir. (Keep in mind, David had a 4,000 member orchestra! His love for music is unquestionable.) In the Psalms alone, we find the word “rejoice” 55 times and the word “sing” 70 times.

While the “headings” or “titles” of the Psalms may be debatable concerning inspiration, they can certainly be helpful. For example:

Psalm 1 – “A psalm of David”

Psalm 3 – “A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son”. So we’re given the historical context of this Psalm, which is recorded in 2Sam.15. Thus, after reading David’s experience in 2Sam.15, it will help you to appreciate his words in Psalm 3.

The book of Psalms is actually the compilation of five “books.” Some believe they correspond with the first five books of the Bible. There may be some truth to this, but the parallels are not as strong as some suggest. We’ll list the five sections and the supposed parallel:

Ps.1-41 - Reflecting the Book of Genesis

Ps.42-72 - The key thought being Israel; thus, reflecting Exodus

Ps.73-89 - The Sanctuary (reflecting Leviticus)

Ps.90-106 - Corresponding with Numbers

Ps.107-150 - Linked with Deuteronomy

In Luke 24:44, Jesus said, “These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.” It is therefore obvious that the Psalms are not mere history, but also prophecy, and in particular, messianic prophecy. For a few examples:

(1) Ps.16:8-10 - see vs.10 with Acts 2:27

(2) Psalm 22:1 - see Matt.27:46. In Ps.22, notice also vs.7-8, 15-16, and 18.

Most all of the chapter is related to the crucifixion. Verse 16 describes the crucifixion hundreds of years before there was such a thing! In Psalm 22, you see **Christ our Substitute**. In Psalm 23, we have **Christ our Shepherd**, and in Ps.24, we have **Christ our Sovereign**.

(3) Psalm 118:22 - see Matthew 21:42.

These are only three of many messianic passages the Psalms. The primary messianic Psalms are 2, 8, 16, 22, 23, 24, 40, 41, 45, 48, 49, 72, 87, 89, 102, 110, and 118.

There are 15 Psalms called “The Songs of Degrees” (120-134). There are various explanations for this title, and a possible explanation has to do with the “degrees” on the sundial of Hezekiah. Study 2K.20:8-11 and Isa.38:5-8, 9, and 20. It may be that Hezekiah helped compile some of the Psalms and since ten of these fifteen are anonymous, some assume they are Hezekiah’s, one for each of the ten degrees on the sundial. (Another explanation for the title is that the “degrees” refer to the “elevated voice” in which these Psalms were sung.)

Not all of the Psalms have to do with the glory and majesty of God. We also have the wrath of God. For those who refuse this side of God’s character, study Ps.35, 58, 69, 83, 109, and 137. J. Sidlow Baxter wrote, “There are many people who seem incapable of distinguishing between forgiving and condoning. It is Christian and beautiful to forgive acts of wrong against oneself, but when forgiveness is taken advantage of and wrong-doing impenitently persisted in, continual forgiving degenerates into the condoning of that which calls for condemnation. There are certain crimes which by their very extremeness call forth the intense indignation of all right-thinking men and women.”

Since we are trying to give an overview of each book of the Bible, IN ONE LESSON, we simply can’t look at the “highlights” of Psalms. However, with our emphasis on “the word of God,” we would suggest a good look at Psalm 119, a great Psalm dealing with the word of God, mentioned one way or another in all but four of the 176 verses. We will close by suggesting a look at some of the Psalms written during “Hebrew history.”

Ps.3 - 2Sam.15-18

Ps.56 - 1Sam.21:10; 27:4; 29:2-11

Ps.30 - 2Sam.5:11-12

Ps.57 - 1Sam.22

Ps.34 - 1Sam.21:10-22:1

Ps.59 - 1Sam.19

Ps.51 - 2Sam.11-12

Ps.60 - 2Sam.8:13-14

Ps.52 - 1Sam.21-22

Ps.63 - 1Sam.22:5; 23:14-16

Ps.54 - 1Sam.23:19; 26:1

Ps.142 - 1Sam.22:1 or 24:3

We certainly would not insist on all of these being exact. It is impossible to be 100% sure of each date of the Psalm, but the above are “educated guesses” as to the most likely historical context. If they are correct, they may offer more insight into that

particular Psalm.

# PROVERBS

The Bible is a book (or should we say THE book?), but more than a book, it is a LIBRARY. Though seemingly small compared to the books which cover numerous shelves of a large library, with this one Book, we can truthfully say that all the thousands of books in a large library can not teach us more about the realities of the universe and life than we learn in this one Book, the word of God!

Someone has said, "What Psalms is to our DEVOTIONAL life, Proverbs is to our PRACTICAL life." Another said, "The Proverbs are 'laws from heaven for life on earth.'" 1 Kings 4:29-34 offers an interesting picture of the life of Solomon and tells us he spoke 3,000 proverbs! However, not every one of these proverbs are attributed to Solomon (see Prov.30:1 and 31:1).

Solomon authored Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. Some believe he wrote:

<u>Song of Solomon</u>	- when he was young and in love
<u>Proverbs</u>	- at middle age and at intellectual peak
<u>Ecclesiastes</u>	- at old age, disappointed, and disillusioned.

A "proverb" is basically a brief saying instead of many words. The purpose of a proverb is NOT to explain a matter, but to give pointed expression to it. You should consider at least three types of proverbs:

(1) A "**contrasting**" proverb - For one good example, 15:13 says, "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: BUT by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken." You will find most of these using the word "but."

(2) Another type of proverb we'll call **the "completive" type**, where the second part of the proverb "completes" or amplifies the first part. See 16:3 for example and notice the use of the word "and."

(3) A third type of proverb is **the "comparative" proverb**. See 16:8 for example and notice the use of the word "than."

Proverbs is an especially helpful book for the family; offering great advice for parents and children alike. For a couple of examples, consider Prov 13:24; "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." And Prov 1:8 says, "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:" (See also 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15; 4:1-3; 5:18; 10:1; 20:11).

Any family or individual would be wise to read one chapter of Proverbs every day and with a few adjustments (during months with less than 31 days), read through

Proverbs once every month, twelve times per year! This would help you to exercise the truth of Prov 15:23 “A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!”

Due to the structure of Proverbs, it is a difficult book to outline. We offer this “breakdown” of the book for your study:

- I - **Learning WISDOM** - Prov.1-9
- II - **Living WISDOM** - Prov.10-31

A study of Proverbs may take many different approaches. One approach would be to study Proverbs searching for the following:

- (1) The Attributes of a WISE Man
- (2) The Attributes of a SIMPLE Man
- (3) The Attributes of a FOOLISH Man
- (4) The Attributes of a GODLY Woman
- (5) The Attributes of an UNGODLY Woman

(We’ll get you started by looking at the first two of these.)

#### I - **The attributes of a WISE MAN:**

- (1) Prov.1:5 - He will HEAR! He will hear the word of God and the words of his parents. Secondly, he will INCREASE LEARNING! (He never arrives - see also 9:9)
- (2) Prov.9:8 - He will LOVE YOU for rebuking him.
- (3) Prov.10:5 - He will WORK, and not procrastinate.
- (4) Prov.10:19 - He will REFRAIN his lips.
- (5) Prov.11:30 - He will WIN SOULS.
- (6) Prov.13:20 - He ASSOCIATES with other wise men.
- (7) Prov.14:16 - He FEARS EVIL and DEPARTS from it!
- (8) Prov.15:7 - The wise SHARES KNOWLEDGE.
- (9) Prov.23:24 - He BRINGS JOY to his father.

II - **The attributes of the SIMPLE** - (“Simple” can be positive as in Rom.16:19; but we are talking about the negative definition, given in Webster’s dictionary as “weak in intellect, not wise”)

- (1) Prov.14:15 - They tend to believe everything they hear. Thus, they are loved by the liberal news media, liberal politicians, and even false preachers who twist scripture and claim special gifts in order to win the “simpleton’s” heart and wallet!
- (2) Prov.7:7-11 - They easily get into trouble. You’ll find them in the wrong place, at the wrong time, doing the wrong thing, and with someone they should have known was trouble!
- (3) Prov.22:3 - They are ignorant of the evil and its consequences.
- (4) Prov.1:22 - They love being simple. It allows them to blame others (those who misled them). It allows them to feel special (because of how the strange woman

treated them - for their money!). It allows them to be negligent in duty (by claiming ignorance of the duties).

Proverbs - a deep well of knowledge and wisdom. Read it, study it, memorize it, and live it to the glory of God.

## ECCLESIASTES

Ecclesiastes is one of the more debated books of the Old Testament. One reason for this is the failure of many to recognize that the book was written from a human perspective. Yes, God inspired Solomon to write, but what did he write? He wrote his conclusions concerning life without God, life without an eternal perspective, LIFE UNDER THE SUN! Ecclesiastes is the inspired confession of failure and pessimism, when man lives under the sun and forgets the One over the sun! (The phrase “under the sun” is found 29 times in 27 verses throughout the book.)

As to why God would put such a book in the canon of Scripture, only He knows. However, one reason seems obvious. In Ecclesiastes, we find the frustration of living life to its fullest human potential, and discovering at the end, it is all vanity! (The word “vanity” or one of its forms is found in this little book 37 times in 29 verses.)

“Ecclesiastes” actually means “preacher,” thus, we have a sermon on life, consisting of 12 chapters, 222 verses, and 5,584 words. As to the debate over the preacher and author of this “sermon,” we accept no debate. From 1:1, 12, and 16, we see no reason to doubt Solomon’s authorship. We offer the following simple outline for the book of Ecclesiastes:

- I - **The Preacher’s Subject** - Vanity - 1:1-2:26
- II - **The Preacher’s Sermon** - Mortality - 3:1-10-20
- III - **The Preacher’s Summary** - Eternity - 11:1-12:14

Solomon speaks from PERSONAL EXPERIENCE in the first two chapters. He then speaks from PERSONAL OBSERVATION, and later closes the book with some PERSONAL CONCLUSIONS.

It would be very easy to read Ecclesiastes and call it PESSIMISM. Another consideration is to read the book and see realism, or as one author called it, “brave honesty.” Paul the Apostle doesn’t appear to be a pessimist, but he did say, “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” (1Cor.15:19) He also said in Romans 8, to mind the things of the flesh and to be carnally minded would result in death, and to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Paul and Solomon went different routes, but came to the same conclusion! Life without God is VANITY!

Consider two ways to look at Ecclesiastes. (1) This life does not satisfy. This life is empty and fruitless. This life is filled with disappointments, confusion, and heartache. Therefore, this life is not worth living. (2) This life does not satisfy. This life is empty and fruitless. This life is filled with disappointments, confusion, and heartache. Therefore, THERE MUST BE SOMETHING ELSE! OR SOMEONE ELSE!!

As with all the “wisdom books,” there is virtually no way to “hit the highlights.” We will make a few comments concerning a few passages in hopes that it will spark your interest in this fascinating book of “life under the sun.”

### **POINTS FROM THE PREACHER:**

(1) God has set certain things “in order.” There is no use fighting against God’s established order of things. Consider 7:13.

(2) Consider the VANITIES of human effort throughout the book. There is the vanity of human wisdom (2:15-16), human labor (2:19-21), human gain or success (2:26 & 4:4), human fame (4:16), human wealth (5:10), human coveting (6:9), human pleasure (7:6), and human morality (8:10,14) among others.

(3) We learn from Ecclesiastes some of the causes of personal frustration and disappointment in life:

- \* Living for self instead of others
- \* Living without God instead of with God. Thus the famous words of Lord Beaconsfield, once Prime Minister of Great Britain – “Youth is a mistake, manhood a struggle, and old age a regret.” And so it is ..... if lived without Christ!
- \* Living in view of death instead of in view of eternity!

(4) We learn that even “human wisdom” longs for something other than this life and its rewards. It seems God has placed a “void” in every human life which can be filled only by His Creator. Man will never be satisfied until he turns to God and allows Jesus Christ to “fill the void.”

(5) The sad fact of Ecclesiastes is that men refuse to learn from other men’s mistakes. Men continue to make the same mistakes because they refuse to take to heart the men who have already made those mistakes, especially the wisest man of all, Solomon.

(6) Solomon discovers that love and laughter, wine and women, music and madness, gardens and gold, silver and singing, castles and cattle, and fruits and folly all combined WILL NOT SATISFY. He concludes therefore in 12:13, the best thing man can do is FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS!

Solomon says to all, LEARN FROM MY MISTAKES and “THE WHOLE DUTY

OF MAN” is to serve God!

## The Song of Solomon

It has been said, “Going from Ecclesiastes to Song of Solomon is like stepping out of the wilderness into the Promised Land”! This book pictures Jesus Christ and his bride, the Church. (Some suggest a third party, Solomon, as a type of the prince of this world.) The picture of the Lord and His bride in this book is that of the fulfillment of love between a man and woman.

From 1:1, it is very clear the author of this book is Solomon. However, that is where most of the clarity begins..... and ends! It would probably be easier to teach and outline the book of Revelation with precision, clarity, and understanding than to do so with this book. Just as Jesus is the Lord of lords, and King of kings, this book is a Song of songs and thereby a lifetime of study.

There are varied interpretation to the book, of which which we’ll only consider one. The shepherd is a type of Christ, the Shunamite a type of the church, and Solomon is perhaps, a type of the world, or a worldly prince.

Some say the Bible has passages for public reading, and others for private reading. We might prefer saying there are passages for the mature saint and others for the immature saint?? If there is any truth to this at all, this book is the place to apply such an approach!

Rather than an outline, we’ll offer a few thought for consideration as you study this book.

Solomon has a vineyard (8:11) which is rented to a family of “sharecroppers.” One of the girls in the family is the Shulamite, the “Cinderella” girl (6:13). Her other family members made her work hard and therefore she was not allowed to take care of herself (1:6). Nonetheless, she is loved by the “Prince” or “Shepherd” (1:8-10). The groom is missing, and she goes out to look for him (3:2-4). He later returns and knocks at the door, and by the time she gets there, he is already gone (5:4-6). She’s mistreated and seeks help (5:7-8). Suddenly, she finds him (6:1-3) and his words to her are, “Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away”!!! (1Thess.4:13-18).

A few of the “highlights”:

\* 2:1 - Jesus is the ROSE of Sharon! And since “April showers bring May flowers” maybe our Rose will show up in May! (2:10-13).

\* 2:9 - There are literal doors and windows in heaven! Gen.7:11.

- \* 2:15 – It's the “little things” that get you in BIG trouble!
- \* 5:10-11 - This is the 1st Advent; Rev.1:14 is 2nd Advent, thus the difference.
- \* 5:16 - Your spouse should be your friend, and Jesus is the best friend you'll ever have (John 15:13)!
- \* 6:10 - The moon gets its light from the Sun, thus a type of the church which gets its light from the Son!
- \* 8:6-7 - Love and Jealousy - 2 Strong forces which must be “channeled” properly.

## THE BOOKS OF PROPHECY

In our study thus far, we have looked at:

(1) 17 books of **HISTORY** - Gen. - Esther

These books are grouped into 5 books (Gen.-Deut.) dealing with Israel's preparation for Canaan and 12 books (Josh. - Esther) dealing with Israel's occupation of Canaan.

(2) 5 books of **WISDOM** - Job - Song of Solomon. We now come to,

(3) 17 books of **PROPHECY** - Isaiah - Malachi

These also are grouped into 5 and 12. The 5 books of “Major Prophets” which are Isaiah - Daniel and the 12 “Minor Prophets” which are Hosea - Malachi.

We often teach that any text has three applications: Historical, Spiritual (which is devotional or practical), and Doctrinal. With that in mind, consider:

- (1) Gen.- Esther - Historical
- (2) Job - Song of Sol. - Spiritual
- (3) Isa. - Mal. - Doctrinal (prophetical)

It helps to read Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi (the last of the prophetical books) with Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther (the last of the Historical books) as they are post-exile, after the captivity.

To study the prophets or prophecy, keep in mind the job of a prophet. It can be:

(1) To “predict” or what is called “**FOREtelling.**” But it can also mean (2) Speaking for someone else or **FORTHtelling** as in Ex.6:28-7:2. Both begin with, “Thus saith the Lord.”

Generally speaking, the appearance of a prophet suggested there was apostasy and rebellion in Israel. The prophet's job was not simply to foretell the future, but also to call the nation back to God! The words of a prophet often had a double application and thus a double fulfillment: First the initial, partial fulfillment and second, the ultimate, complete fulfillment. The examples are numerous and seen in particular in the life of

Christ. He fulfilled part of the prophecies at His first advent and will completely fulfill the prophecies at his second advent! It is unlikely that any prophet was able to distinguish between the first and second advent.

Three prophets directed their message to Gentile Nations: Obadiah to Edom, Jonah to Ninevah, and Nahum to Ninevah. Needless to say, the prophets were often very UNPOPULAR with the people they were sent to. The prophets were the "moral conscience" of their day! You should keep in mind that there were numerous other prophets other than the "writing prophets" (Such as Elijah, Elisha, Enoch, Nathan, etc...)

It is helpful to know at least a little about the kingdoms and empires involved in prophecy. We'll briefly mention three in particular.

I - ASSYRIA - The capital city is Ninevah. The most well-know Assyrian leader was Sennacherib. Assyrians were extremely cruel to their victims.

II - BABYLON - On the world scene, Assyria was succeeded by Babylon. God used Nebuchednezzar over this empire. When Jerusalem fell, the Jews were deported and carried to Babylon. Babylon reigned supreme for about 70 years.

III - PERSIA - The Babylon empire was ended by the Medes and Persians with Persia emerging as the world power. Cyrus the Great was a humane ruler, ending the Babylonian captivity of the Jews, and bringing about the restoration of the Jews to their homeland. For a reference point, Daniel lived throughout the Babylonian captivity and into the Persian era.

# ISAIAH

Isaiah was born during the days of King Uzziah and called to service “in the year that king Uzziah died” (chpt. 6). He saw the day of Assyrian captivity, and Amos, Hosea, and Micah were his contemporaries.

While Ahaz, king of Judah, basically ignored Isaiah’s warnings, Ahaz’s son, Hezekiah, turned out to be one of the godliest kings of Judah. Hezekiah was strongly influenced by Isaiah and thereby saw Jerusalem supernaturally delivered from Assyrian attacks. Hezekiah’s mistake was “courting” Babylon and asking for the “extension” on his life which God granted to the length of fifteen years. (Chpt.38)

It was during that 15 years that Hezekiah had a son named Manasseh who later reigned longer than all other kings. Manasseh was a very wicked king and tradition says he had Isaiah placed in a hollow tree trunk and “sawn asunder” (as in He.11:37?).

We offer a simple outline for your consideration:

- I - Israel - Gods FAITHLESS servant (1-35) - The Nation’s Dilemma
- II - Hezekiah – God’s FRIGHTENED servant (36-39) - The Nation’s Defeat
- III - Jesus Christ – God’s FAITHFUL servant (vs.40-66) - The Nation’s Deliverer

Isaiah 14 is the crucial chapter on the fall of Satan and should be studied in connection with Ezekiel 28. (**BEWARE:** In the NIV, they make Satan out to be Jesus Christ in Isa.14:12! Hold on to your King James Bible!)

The “skeptics” like to talk about the “great change” which takes place after Isa. 39 and go into all kinds of “rantings and ravings” about two authors, different styles, etc... Some folks have more time to “critique” the Bible than they do to study it and live it! What you actually have in Isaiah is a “picture” of the entire Bible. Consider the following FACTS:

**THE BIBLE**

- \* has 66 books
- \* a clear break after 39 books
- \* 1st bk. (Gen) has “heaven and earth”
- \* Book 40 (Matt) has John the Baptist
- \* Book 66 has New heaven and earth
- \* 39 books of primarily the law
- \* 27 books of primarily grace

### **The Book of Isaiah**

- \* has 66 chapters
- \* a clear break after 39 chapters
- \* 1st. chpt. (1:2) has “heaven and earth”
- \* 40th chpt. (40:3) has John the Baptist
- \* Chpt.66 has New heaven and earth
- \* 39 chpts. of judgment
- \* 27 chpts. of primarily grace

Isaiah 61:1-2 is a great passage to look at. It is a prophecy of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. When Jesus shows up the first time, he preaches from this passage! Notice in Luke 4:18-20 what Jesus does. He quotes Isa. 61:1 and part of vs.2. But half-way thru vs. 2, he closes the book. Why??? Because at his first coming, he was not going to fulfill the second part of vs. 2, "...the day of vengeance for our God; to comfort all that mourn." There are at least two great lessons here: (1) This is a good example of the double application and fulfillment we discussed earlier and (2) In the word of God, a comma can separate as much as 2000 years! In other words, Jesus fulfilled the first part of Isa.61:2 at his first coming and will fulfill the last part at his second coming.

One of the obvious themes as you read through Isaiah will be "the day of the Lord." At least 45 times in the book, you'll find reference to "that day." See (2:10-17 for example.) Isaiah prophecies of the LAMB OF GOD (chpt.53) as well as the LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH (42:13).

For more of a "breakdown" than the previous outline, the following may help you in your study of Isaiah:

- 1-6 - "That day" and Judah
- 7-12 - "That day" and Israel
- 13-23 - The BURDENS on the nations
- 24-27 - "That day" and the world
- 28-33 - Six woes upon Jerusalem
- 34-35 - Final wrath - Zion restored
- 36-39 - Historical transition
- 40-48 - The Power of God - **Supreme**
- 49-57 - The Position of God - **Servant**
- 58-66 - The Proposal of God - **Salvation**

There are so many great passages in Isaiah that we couldn't possibly cover even the highlights in a document such as this. However, don't miss among the many highlights:

- \* Chpt. 3 - Great chpt. on WAYWARDNESS
- \* Chpt. 6 - Great chpt. on WORSHIP
- \* Chpt. 9 - Great chpt. on the Word Incarnate
- \* Chpt. 11 - Great chpt. on the World of the Millennium
- \* Chpt. 14 - Great chpt. on the Wicked One
- \* Chpt. 40 - Great chpt. on Waiting
- \* Chpt. 53 - Great chpt. on the Way to Heaven (Christ, our Sacrificial Lamb!)

(See also 3:4-12; 5:11-16,20; 7:14-16; 27:1; 40:8. Better yet, JUST READ THE WHOLE BOOK!!!)

# JEREMIAH

Jeremiah is known perhaps more than anything else as “The Weeping Prophet” (see Jer.9:1). You can’t really look at the book of Jeremiah without looking at the man Jeremiah. Perhaps the greatest compliment to Jeremiah is found in Matt.16:13-14. To be so identified with the Lord of Glory should be enough to cause anyone to desire to learn more about this prophet.

Jeremiah’s ministry was about 80-100 years after Isaiah’s death. Isaiah lived through the ASSYRIAN period while Jeremiah lived through the Babylonian period. In Isaiah, Israel is carried into captivity; in Jeremiah, Judah is overtaken. Isaiah dealt with “godly” Hezekiah while Jeremiah dealt with “godly” Josiah.

Jeremiah’s contemporaries are Zephaniah, Habakkuk, and possibly Obadiah. Jeremiah’s ministry continued for over 40 years, during the reign of Judah’s last 5 kings: Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. We read from J. Sidlow Baxter, “Jeremiah was the prophet of Judah’s midnight hour.”

One writer said, “No man reveals a truer heart-likeness to Jesus Christ than does Jeremiah.” His sympathy, concern, humility, and self-sacrifice, along with utter faithfulness to the point of severe persecution is more like that of our Lord perhaps more than any other prophet. Jeremiah is ignored, hunted, and lonely and God forbade him to marry. So, before looking at the book, let’s take a brief look at the man himself:

- \* A Special Purpose (1:4-10) with a special call (1:5) at a special time (1:10).
- \* A Sovereign Protection (1:17-19)
- \* A Solemn Persistence (20:9) - No favorable response in 40 years!
- \* A Spiritual Perspective (15:16)
- \* A Serious Persecution - Stocks (20:1-2), Dungeon (38:5-6), and Egypt (43:5-7)

Jeremiah saw the 1st Babylonian invasion in 605 B.C. and the more severe invasion in 597 B.C. Ultimately, Jerusalem fell to Babylon, and the horrors of this time is the backdrop of the book of Lamentations.

For an example of just how bad it was in Jeremiah’s day, read chapter 23, where you’ll find:

- \* False pastors - vs.1-2
- \* False prophets - vs.9
- \* False priests - vs.11

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The king burns scripture (26:27), the princes put Jeremiah in prison (38:4), and all the nation ignored the word of God (37:2).

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## OUTLINE:

### I - Chpt.1 - **The Prophet's Mission**

### II - Chpt. 2-51 - **The Prophet's Messages**

- \* Chpt.2-20 - general
- \* Chpt.21-39 - specific
- \* Chpt.40-44 - prophecies after the fall of Jerusalem
- \* Chpt.45-51 - prophecies on Gentile nations

### III - Chpt.52 - **The Prophet's Misery** (Jerusalem overthrown)

Someone suggested the "central thought" of Jeremiah could be summed up in two expressions: "I will punish..." and "I will restore." Thus, you find about God in this book, "WRATH TO THE FULL" ,but "LOVE TO THE END" - 26:12-13; 30:15-18.

A few great truths to consider:

(1) All NATIONAL DISASTER is due to disregarding God! 2:8,9,35

(2) "The wrong which is indulged in by those in authority soon becomes the fashion among the people at large." J. Sidlow Baxter

Corrupt leadership inoculates the whole nation with moral poison and inward, moral failure issues in outward, national ruin.

(3) Don't forget a valuable lesson concerning the ministry found in the life of Jeremiah; namely, God doesn't reckon the worth of ministries in terms of "success."

How far did Jeremiah's rejection reach? He is rejected by:

- \* neighbors 11:19-21
- \* family 12:6
- \* priests and prophets 20:1-2
- \* friends 20:10
- \* all the people 26:8
- \* the king 36:23

# LAMENTATIONS

The Book of Lamentations deals with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 587 B.C. The book has been called “A river of tears,” “A sea of sobs,” and as one man put it, “The Wailing Wall of the Bible.”

One of the difficulties in studying the book is determining who is actually speaking; Jehovah, Jerusalem, or Jeremiah.

You will notice there are five chapters with each chapter having 22 verses other than the third chapter which has 66 verses. In chapters 1,2,4, and 5, each verse begins with the corresponding letter of the 22 Hebrew alphabet. In the third chapter of 66 verses, vs. 1-3 begins with the first letter of the Hebrew, vs.4-6 begins with the second letter and so on.

## OUTLINE:

- I - **PROVOKING** of God – Jerusalem’s Sin - chpt.1
- II - **PUNISHMENT** of God – Jerusalem’s State - chpts.2&4
- III - **PROPHET** of God – Jeremiah’s Sorrow - Chpt.3
  - \* His conflict - 3:1-20
  - \* His comfort - 3:21-32
  - \* His counsel - 3:33-41 (esp.vss.40-41)
  - \* His confession/crying - 3:42-66
- IV - **PRAYING** to God – Jeremiah’s Seeking - Chpt.5
  - See esp.5:1,21

As you read through this book, the deep suffering is astounding. The Bible has severe words for “all nations that forget God” and even when that nation is comprised of “his chosen people,” the price to pay is great.

J. Sidlow Baxter says, “One very tender truth here is that God suffers with those whom he chastises.” Another great truth from this book is “High calling, flaunted by low living, inevitably issues in deep suffering.”

# EZEKIEL

Ezekiel was carried away to Babylon around 597 B.C. and prophecies during the Exile. Ezekiel is the younger contemporary to Jeremiah, beginning his ministry about the time Jeremiah is concluding his.

Notice in 5:13 and 6:10, "...they shall know...". This is throughout Ezekiel, as he set out to explain and justify God's dealings with his people. Another often occurring thing in Ezekiel is his claim to divine inspiration, such as, "...the hand of the Lord was upon me...", and "...the word of the Lord came unto me..."

We offer this broad outline for the Book of Ezekiel:

- I The Fall of Judah (1-24)
- II The Foes of Judah (25-32)
- III The Future of Judah (33-48)

To give an overview of Ezekiel in a short space is an almost impossible task. Rather than try to do so with any continuity, we'll present some "**MUST NOT MISS**" passages and encourage the student of the word of God to build around those, his own personal overview of the book.

\* Ezekiel is often called the "Prophet of Doom" - see 2:1-8; 3:4-11.

\* Ezekiel spoke in sign languages or symbolic acts such as lying on his left side, then his right side, shaving his head, clapping his hands, etc... For these twelve symbolic acts, see 4:1-17; 5:1-4; 6:11; 12:1-20; 21:9-22; 24:1-14 and finally in 24:15-18 where Ezekiel is not allowed to express outward sorrow for his dead wife.

\* You **MUST** study the cherubims in Ezek. 1, 10 and Rev.4:7. Knowing Satan was an anointed cherub, these passages offer some insight into his make-up.

Ezek.1:10 - man, lion, OX, eagle

Ezek.10:14 - CHERUB, man, lion, eagle

Rev. 4:7 - lion, CALF, man, eagle

\* Along with the above, Ezekiel 28 is a crucial chapter on Satan's origin, typified by the King of Tyrus in vss.12-19. It is in 28:13 that we discover Satan's "musical background" explaining his activity today in corrupting music.

\* Chapter 34 is a great chapter on shepherds exposing the false shepherds and explaining the good shepherd.

\* Chapter 37 is an exciting chapter on the Restoration of Israel, as you read the famous story of “The Valley of Dry Bones.”

\* The Book of Ezekiel ends (chapters 40-48) with lengthy information on the MILLENNIAL TEMPLE.

## DANIEL

Most everyone knows of Daniel and the Lion’s Den, as well as his three Hebrew friends and the Fiery Furnace. However, there is much more valuable information found in this relatively short book. Before looking at the book, we’ll remind the student of a few facts worthy of consideration:

Daniel was a contemporary of Ezekiel, as Ezekiel clearly knew of Daniel’s fame (Ez. 14:14, 20; 28:3). Daniel was deported from Judah into Babylonian Captivity around 605 B.C. and lived through the entire 70 year captivity. Jesus obviously regarded Daniel as a true historical figure and regarded his prophecies as inspired (Matt. 16:24, 26 and Mark 13:14).

Here are a couple of **OUTLINES**:

I - Daniel and Friends - Chpts.1-6

II - Daniel and Future - Chpts.7-12

Another approach:

I - The **Faithful Few** - Chpt.1, 3, 6, 9

II - The **Divine Dreams** - Chpt.2, 4, 7,8,10

III - The **Heavenly Handwriting** - Chpt.5

IV - The **Counterfeit Christ** - Chpt.11

V - The **Exciting End** - Chpt.12

It has been said that Daniel is to the O.T. what Revelation is to the N.T. The greatest proof for God and the Bible is prophecy and the greatest example of such prophecy is the Jew and the Nation of Israel. When studying prophecy, or any subject for that matter, it is important to remember that **all scripture has 3 applications** - Historical, Doctrinal, and Spiritual (Devotional). We will try to offer some very concise information to hopefully help with some of the most looked at material in this book.

\* Chapter Two is Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of “a great image.”

\* Head - gold - Neb/Babylon - 2:37-38

\* breast and arms - silver - Darius/Medo-Persian Empire - vs.39

\* belly and thigh - brass - Grecian Empire - vs.39

\* legs - iron - future Roman Empire - vs.40 w/ 7:23

\* 2:34 is fulfilled at the 2nd Advent (Matt.21:44)

\* Daniel's dream in chpt.7 is during the reign of Belshazzar (the last king of Babylon). In his dream of four beasts, he learns of four FUTURE ("which shall arise" - vs.17) kings. So, don't try to match Dan.2 and Dan.7. In this chapter, the four beasts represent kings (vs.17) and kingdoms (vs.23). There are many "guesses" as to the identity of these four nations. Many agree that the leopard would be a "melting pot" nation, the bear would be Russia, the Lion as England, and the 4th Beast as Rome. (?????)

\* An interesting note – "Leopard" is found 6 times in the Bible and "Assyrian" is found 13 times!

\* Chapter eight is more clearly defined as Daniel's vision of the Ram and He-goat is interpreted for us. In 8:2-3 we find a ram, and we're told in vs.20 who the ram represents (Medo/Persia). The he-goat of vs.5 is interpreted in vs.21 (Greece/Alex. the Great). In 8:9 and 7:8 we find the "little horn" who is the Antichrist.

\* Chapter nine reveals Daniel's great prayer, but 9:24-27 gets all the attention. Pertaining to the nation of Israel, there is one week of years or 7 Years left. (The idea of a day for a year is seen also in Num.14:34 and Ezek.4:6) That week has been put on hold for the present church age. When the church is raptured, that final week of years will take place. (To get a better understanding on dates, I recommend a book called "How Close are We" by Dave Hunt. )

\* Chapter 11 is the Antichrist's Reign and Ruin. It seems his policy resembles the platform of Communism: The confiscation of firearms, abolition of private property, and a graded income tax (sound familiar?). His message? Peace! (See 11:21, 24)

Study 7:25; 11:24, 32-35; 12:7, and Rev.12:14 together. "Time" equals one year, "times" equals two years, and "dividing of times" equals ½ year, for a total of 3 and ½ years.

\* Chapter 12 is the Great Climax and we see how it all ends up! The great thing about the Christian life is that no matter what we face, we know the Final Outcome!!! In 12:1 we find Michael. He is named several times in scripture and probably shows up "unnamed" on other occasions. An interesting study of Michael indicates he is a "fighter" while Gabriel is the talker (they call it "gabby").

# HOSEA

The name Hosea means “salvation” (Hoshea, Joshua, Jesus). Hosea has been called “the Jeremiah of the Northern Kingdom”. He was a prophet to the Northern Kingdom (10 tribes of Israel - often referred to as “Ephraim,” the first of the 12 tribes to backslide) as Jeremiah was to the S. Kingdom (Judah). Hosea’s contemporaries were Amos, Isaiah, and Micah. Of all the prophets with a book in the O.T., Hosea is the first, dating them chronologically. So you have in 1:2, “...The beginning of the word of the Lord...” The events here precede the fall of Israel and Samaria.

## OUTLINE:

- I - A **Picture** of Israel - Chpt.1-3 - Faithless - 2:1-5
- II - The **Problem** w/ Israel - Chpt.4-7 - Forgetful - 4:6
- III - The **Punishment** of Israel - 8-10 - Forsaken - 9:15-17
- IV - The **Pardon** of Israel - 11-14 - Forgiven - 14:4-7

Hosea is a very unusual book, seen immediately by the command of 1:2. We’ll offer three possible reasons for God to make such a command:

- (1) To give Hosea, like no other prophet, an understanding of God’s anguish over the nation of Israel. (As God the Son takes the church for his Bride, God the Father takes Israel for his bride - see Isa.62:5; Jer.3:6-8,14; Hos.2:19).
- (2) As a living illustration of Hoseah’s message to Israel.
- (3) As a prophetic message of Israel’s future punishment and restoration.

A small book, Hoseah is referred to approximately 30 times in the N.T. For a few examples: 2:23 with Rom.9:25; 6:6 w/ Matt.9:13; 10:8 w/ Luke 23:30; 11:1 w/ Matt.2:15; and 13:14 w/ 1Cor.15:55.

## Gomer has 3 children, each w/ prophetic significance:

- (1) Jezreel (boy) - 1:4 - meaning “God planteth” or “scattered by God” - 8:8
- (2) Loruhamah (girl) - 1:6 - meaning “not beloved,” “having no compassion,” or “not pitied.” (God does have mercy on JUDAH as they are not yet as wicked as Israel; see 1:7 and 11:12.
- (3) Loammi (boy) - 1:9 - meaning “not my people.” (We are not told for sure that Loruhamah or Loammi belong to Hosea???)

So, Israel (Ephraim) is **DESPISED** because of Ignorance (4:6), Idolatry (4:12,13, and 17), and Immorality (5:3; 4:1-2; 6:9; 7:1, 4, 5-7). Israel is **DESIRED** (14:4-5), **DISCIPLINED** (8:7; 10:5-6) and **DELIVERED** (2:19-20; 3:5; 6:1-3; 14:4-7)!

**DON'T MISS** - The Anguish OUR SIN brings to God and the almost unbelievable love of God that “suffers long and is kind.” J. Sidlow Baxter said it this way, “In its deepest aspect, sin does not merely break God’s law, it breaks His heart”!

## JOEL

The name “Joel” means “Jehovah is God.” His book is one of the more difficult to date and most commentaries voice clear disagreement. Joel seems to be aimed primarily at the Southern Kingdom - Judah (and Benjamin). He addresses Zion and Jerusalem, but not once the ten tribes of Israel (N.Kingdom). Chapter two usually gets most of the attention and it is certainly worthy, due to its subject - The Day of the Lord!

### OUTLINE:

- I - The **Affliction** - chpt.1 - the Plagues
- II - The **Army** - chpt.2 - the Prophecy
- III - The **Almighty** - chpt.3 - the Pardon

You will notice in 1:4 the word “hath” as though is past tense. However, see Isa.53:3-7 where the same word is also used, but the passage is clearly prophetic.

You should take note of 1:6-7, which is prophesied in Deut.28:49-52. This nation here has nothing to do with the army of chpt.2. At 1:14-16, the spiritual lesson is clear. When a nation, church, or individual as facing famine, destruction or tragedy, the thing to do is CALL A SERIOUS PRAYER MEETING, a solemn assembly, and CRY UNTO THE LORD! (See 2:12-13).

We will give most of our comments to chapter two as (1) It is a very exciting chapter, (2) It gets “butchered” by most commentaries and (3) It offers much insight into Acts 2, a crucial chapter in the New Testament.

Notice first, in 2:1, we are looking at “**the day of the Lord**” (as in 1:15). The primary application then, is to events from the Rapture through the Great White Throne Judgment, in particular, the Great Tribulation. The phrase “day of the Lord” is found 25 times in scripture, with five in Joel. See Isa.13:6,9; Jer.46:10; Amos 5:18-20; Zech.14:1-2; Mal.4:5 (this passage clarifies the context); Acts 2:20; and 2Pe.3:10.

Now, Acts 2;14-16 contains the words, “this is that...” Peter is speaking to Judea and Jerusalem (2:14) and is quoting Joel 2:28-32. If you compare Acts 2:21 with Joel

2:32, it is ABUNDANTLY CLEAR that Peter is dealing with the salvation or DELIVERANCE of a nation. (The word “save” or “saved” or “salvation” does NOT always refer to spiritual salvation! See 1 Tim.2:15 for a clear example; there, the woman is being saved from deception.)

Thus, Joel’s prophecy was partially fulfilled beginning in Acts 2:17, when the Spirit was poured out. But the rest of his prophecy is yet to be fulfilled. It is like Isa.61:1-2 and Luke 1:32-33 where a prophecy is fulfilled IN PARTS, this being due to Israel’s rejection of their king! (But all will be fulfilled - eventually!!!! In due time!)

2:1-11 describes an army. Consider:

- \* vs.3 w/ Mal.4:1;
- \* vs.4 w/ Rev.19:14 and Hab.3:8;
- \* vs.5 w/ 2K.2:11; 6:17; and
- \* vs.11 w/ 2:25.

Notice how 2:16-17 describes the church, which will be a major part of the army. Consider the following as possible references:

- \* the people - the church is “the people” - the called out
- \* the congregation - all local churches
- \* the elders - Pastors, Bishops (Acts 20:17; 1Pe.5:1)
- \* the children - Rom.8:16
- \* the Bride - Rev.21:9
- \* priests - 1Pe.2:5,9 (we are all priests)
- \* ministers - like Paul and others (1Cor.4:1)

Two of the more obvious references to the Tribulation context are found in Joel 2:30-31. See Rev.6:12 and 17.

One comment from chapter three: Verse 14 is often used to preach a spiritual application, which is fine. But, if you look at vs.13 and 15, the valley is probably Megiddo!

# AMOS

Amos means “to burden.” He probably prophesied around 783 - 753 B.C. Though from Judah, he is called to prophesy against the Ten Northern Tribes - Israel. Amos is a prophet who foretells what God reveals (see 3:7-8), and he does NOT bow to pressure (7:16-17).

## OUTLINE:

I - The **Verdict** - 1:1 - 2:3

II - The **Vengeance** - 2:4 - 6:14

III - The **Visions** - 7-8 (locusts, fire, plumbline, summer fruit, & smitten sanct.-chpt.9)

IV - The **Victory** - 9

We will refer to a few select passages and make some brief comments on this book.

\* Amos is quoted twice in the Bk. of Acts - 7:42-43; 15:16-17.

\* 1:1 – “The words of Amos...” Compare to Hosea and Joel – “...The word of the Lord.” So, possibly someone wrote for Amos as Amos spoke for the Lord (vs.2).

\* The earthquake of vs.1 could be in reference to the one of Rev.11:13, especially when you consider vs. 2, “the Lord shall ROAR...” pointing to the second advent! (Jer.25:30).

\* The places mentioned with chpt.1 match Zech.9.

\* Concerning the fire of vs.4, 7,10,12, and 14, see 2Thess.1:8.

\* At 1:3, you see a principle found often in the Bible. God, who works by “sevens” often divides it into four and three.

\* The most criticized passage by the scholars and Bible rejectors is 9:8-15, surely due to the fact that it deals with the restoration of Israel.

## **Some UP TO DATE material:**

\* 2:13 - We are pushing God “to the limit.”

\* 3:3 - Slaps the modern Ecumenical movement in the face!

\* 4:1-3 - God sometimes uses SARCASM! (Kine and cows refer to women??? Take a look at Jud.14:18.

\* 6:1 - American Christians are “at ease” all the time, described further in vs.4-6. With all our luxury, we “are not grieved” over the spiritual condition we are in.

\* 6:13 - A people who “rejoice in a thing of nought.” People go crazy over a ball game, a three pound fish, a worldly movie, etc... - a thing of nought, it has no eternal value. And then they yawn when you announce somebody got saved.

\* 8:13 - People don’t want to hear preaching - especially negative preaching!

The book of Amos closes with a great passage in 9:14-15. With all the promises of Israel’s restoration, it is difficult to understand how so many could reject the idea of a literal King on a literal throne in a literal country! But that day is coming when Jesus is finally reigning from Jerusalem as King of kings and Lord of lords! (Lk.1:32-33).

## OBADIAH

The name Obadiah means “servant of the Lord” or “worshiper of the Lord.” It is the shortest book of the Old Testament (Ill John is the shortest in the N.T.). This little book is a **GREAT WARNING** against anti-semitism or hatred for the Jewish people. Any nation which curses or persecutes the Jews will eventually reap what they sow (Gen.12:1-3).

Obadiah begins with the words, “The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord God concerning Edom;” So, as you read this book, it would be good to remember, Edom sprang from Esau (see Gen.36:1) and Israel sprang from Jacob. The history of the Edomites is one of cruel hatred for Israel.

Edom is characterized in the book as proud (vs.3), deceived (vs.3,7), and over confident (vs.3). (Edom is often used as a type of the flesh.)

### OUTLINE:

I - Edom’s DILEMMA - vs.1-16

II – Israel’s DELIVERANCE - vs.17-21

We’ll take a look at a few passages and offer what will hopefully help you understand the primary emphasis of this book.

\* vs.2 - Edom never becomes a significant power during the history of Israel.

\* vs.10-16 - Here is God’s account of what took place in Jeremiah 52, information which Jeremiah did not record. In discussion are the events of 586 B.C. when the Edomites stood with Nebuchadnezzar. (This would be comparable to Paul standing with the Sanhedrin against Stephen - Acts 8:1)

\* vs.11 - Again, “the day” would be in 586 B.C. and “as one of them” would refer to the Babylonians.

\* vs.12 - They not only stood by and watched it happen, they “rejoiced” to see it.

\* vs.13 - And it gets even worse. They watched, rejoiced, and even “laid hands on their substance,” which we assume means they helped deliver Judah or took their belongings after they were gone?

\* vs.15 - The world says, “What goes around, comes around.” God says, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” (Gal.6:7)

\* vs.21 - The CLIMAX of Israel’s history - see Rev.11:15!

# JONAH

The name Jonah actually means “a dove.” We’ll see the importance of that in a moment. Jonah is one of the most “attacked” books in the Bible, with various “scholars” calling it an allegory, legend, myth, fable, etc... Bible students should not be surprised that Johah is so “spoken against” (see Lk.2:34).

We’ll ignore the scholars and trust the MASTER TEACHER who clearly believed the literal histroy of Jonah (Matt.12:38-41). So Jesus likens Jonah to himself! Therefore, it should be noted:

- \* Amittai - vs.1 - means “truth teller”.
- \* 2K.14:25 - Gathhepher is a village in Galilee! (So, you have a “truth telling dove” from Galilee!)
- \* Jonah preferred his own people (the Jews) but went to the Gentiles.

It is easy to see a prophetic tone to the book of Jonah:

- (1) As a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- (2) As an example of Jews being used to reach Gentiles.
- (3) As a spiritual lesson on “running from God.”
- (4) As a testimony of the grace of God on a wicked city.

We offer TWO OUTLINES to consider:

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| I - Jonah’s <b>PROTESTING</b> - chpt.1  | * A man running <u>FROM</u> God    |
| II - Jonah’s <b>PRAYING</b> - chpt.2    | * A man running <u>TO</u> God      |
| III – Jonah’s <b>PREACHING</b> - chpt.3 | * A man running <u>WITH</u> God    |
| IV – Jonah’s <b>POUTING</b> - chpt.4    | * A man running <u>AGAINST</u> God |

Notice at 1:2, like many of the prophets of old, he preaches a negative message. He preaches “against it.” A preacher should let you know what he’s for, but also what he’s against! Also, beginning with vs.2, notice some “great” things in Jonah; GREAT CITY (vs.2), GREAT WIND (1:4), GREAT FISH (1:17), and GREAT KINDNESS (4:2).

At 1:7, you should be familiar with Prov.16:33 concerning “lots.” At 1:17, it’s good to remember that this fish is especially prepared by the Lord and according to Matt.12:40, it is a whale.

Since most of Jonah is self explanatory, and since this is primarily an “overview,” we will limit the remainder of our comments to our understanding of chapter two.

Jonah said he was crying from “the belly of hell” (vs.2). Now, we know we are a triune being (in the image of God). We have a spirit, soul, and body (1Thess.5:23). On the cross, Jesus said, “...into thy hands I commend my SPIRIT” (Lk.23:46). His body was placed in the tomb. He said in Matt.12 he would be “in the heart of the earth” AS JONAH was in the whale’s belly. A close study of Acts 2:25-31 clearly teaches that the soul of Jesus “was not left in hell” (see Acts 2:31 and 13:36-37). So, it appears the spirit of Jesus went to heaven, and while his body was in the tomb, his soul “visited” hell! For more proof, consider:

\* He.10:4 - O.T. saints did not have there sins fully dealt with (see Ex.34:6-7).

\* Notice in 1Pe.2:21-24 (along with 2Cor.5:21, Jesus did “bare our sins in his own body” and yet, when He returns, he’ll appear WITHOUT SIN (He.9:28). Could he have delivered those sins in hell?! Yes!

\* Now look at Eph.4:8-10. Notice, before Jesus ascended up on high, he first descended into the lower parts of the earth (Hell and Abraham’s bosom!), got the O.T. saints and led captivity captive. (The O.T. saints were put in Abraham’s bosom until Jesus shed his blood and applied it during the three days and nights of his burial.)

\* Now see 1Pe.4:6 and 1Pe.3:18-19. Here, see that Jesus must have preached unto the dead and to the “spirits in prison.” Thus, the Bible tells us about keys of “hell and of death” (Rev.1:18). Jonah said in Jonah 2:6 there were “bars” about him. Sounds like a prison, huh?

We realize this teaching is not accepted by many and we would not “break fellowship” over such things, but it sure makes a lot of sense to this student.

# MICAH

The name "Micah" means "Who is like Jehovah?" It is Micah the Morashite (1:1). Jeremiah 26:18 makes clear the historical context of Micah's ministry. He preached long before the time of Jeremiah and during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. He would be the younger contemporary of Isaiah (Isa.1:1).

Micah pronounces judgment on Samaria (N.Kingdom) and Jerusalem (S.Kingdom), indicating the coming invasion will be from the North (Jer.1:14-15). The approximate dates of Micah's ministry would be 736-700 B.C.

## OUTLINE:

- I - **Prophecy of Retribution** (1-3)
- II - **Prophecy of Restoration** (4-5)
- III - **Prophecy of Repentance** (6-7)

It is obvious from 1:2 that Micah's prophecy is NOT limited to the land of Palestine. The "holy temple" must refer to Heaven based on the wording of vs.3 (see also Jonah 2:7 and Hab.2:20). So, by the time you get to vs.4, you can easily see how the material matches much of the material in Revelation concerning the second advent. This is another case where certain passages of scripture may have immediate fulfillment, but have ultimate fulfillment at the second advent.

Micah's preaching reveals great corruption in the land. He preaches against the

**people** (2:1-13), the **princes** (3:1-4), the **prophets** (3:5-10), and the **priests** (3:11-12).

We will look at a few passages with a few brief comments.

- \* 2:3,11 - God uses evil and even uses LIARS in the pulpit!
- \* 3:12 - Quoted by Jeremiah in Jer.26:18
- \* 4:3 - This is the famous passage, inscribed on the UN building in New York (what a joke!). To see the real context, which is in the millennium, see Isa.2:1-4.
- \* 5:2-3 - A “veiled” reference to Israel rejecting Christ and a later remnant being spared.
- \* 5:5 - THE ANTICHRIST - The Assyrian - Isa.14:25 and 30:30-31. Guess how many times the word “Assyrian” is in the Bible. THIRTEEN!
- \* 6:8 - What God expects of us is really quite simple
- \* 7:6 - Quoted by the Lord in Matt.10:35-36
- \* 7:9 - As the song says, WHAT A DAY THAT WILL BE!
- \* 7:18-20 - If this was the only passage in Micah, it would make the book worth reading. Even though Israel was corrupt and complacent, God is compassionate! Praise God for his mercy and grace!

## NAHUM

The name “Nahum” means “the comforter.” The dates we give for his ministry (740-700 B.C.), like many of the minor prophets, are a guess, and certainly vary depending on who you study. As the book unfolds, it is probable that the Assyrian Invasion is already under way.

Nahum is a VERY NEGATIVE BOOK. See 1:6, 10, 14; 2:1, 13; 3:4, 5, and 19. The most positive verses would probably be 1:7 and 15.

OUTLINE:

- I - **The Judge** - chpt.1
  - (A) - The Lord’s Patience - 1:1-3
  - (B) - The Lord’s Power - 1:4-13
  - (C) - The Lord’s Promise - 1:14-15
- II - **The Judgment** - chpt.2
- III - **The Justification** - chpt.3

As with Micah, it is clear the fulfillment of Nahum goes beyond any past events, pointing to the Second Advent (1:5-6).

Nahum seems to know nothing but the wrath and vengeance of God, after his patience (1:3) is pushed too far. While Nahum seems to rejoice in this wrath, it is good

to remember, the Assyrians were exceedingly cruel. History records some of their cruelty, such as tying people to stakes and literally skinning them alive.

We are reminded by Nahum, “The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small.” When God finally settles accounts, he settles them IN FULL!

It is important to remember the prophetic emphasis, but the historical context of Nahum is very interesting. Nahum speaks specifically of the destruction of Ninevah. This is after God had spared them in Jonah’s day (see 2:8 and 3:7). In Nahum’s day, Ninevah, the capital of Assyria, was at the peak of its prosperity and power. The city seemed indestructible with its wall towering 100 feet in the air, more than 1,200 towers, walls wide enough for three chariots to ride on side by side, and those walls enclosed 1,800 acres. (Nahum’s prophecy would have no doubt seemed very unlikely. We’d be wise to remember that in our own country!)

Some believe 2:4 refers to cars and planes. The Bible is certainly ahead of time and knows all about wars, past, present, and future. See Ps.66:12 (someone flying over head), Isa.9:5 (fuel of fire) and Isa.60:8 (flying like clouds and birds). Consider also Ps.104:24-6. Do not forget, the Lord is a “man of war” (Ex.15:3).

## HABAKKUK

The name “Habakkuk” means “embrace.” The approximate dates of his ministry would be 626-610 B.C. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah.

Habakkuk has been called the “Doubting Thomas” of the O.T. This might be an unfair comparison for both Habakkuk and Thomas! It should be remembered, both of them were honest enough and smart enough to go to God with their doubts and questions. Unlike the other prophets, Habakkuk does not address his country or a foreign country, his message is to God!

The focus of Habakkuk’s PROBLEM AND PROPHECY is the Chaldeans, or the country of Chaldea of which Babylon is the capital.

\*Obadiah’s prophecy sealed the fate of Edom

\*Nahum’s prophecy sealed the fate of Assyria

\*Habakkuk’s prophecy sealed the fate of Babylon

### OUTLINE:

I - Habakkuk’s **PROBLEM** - chpt.1

II - Habakkuk’s **PLAN** -chpt.2

III – Habakkuk’s **PRAYER** - chpt.3

Habakkuk's problem was much like ours today. How could God use the wicked Chaldeans to punish Judah? Judah was sinful, but the Babylonians were much worse. It is sometimes difficult to understand what appears to be the silence, inactivity, and lack of concern on the part of our Heavenly Father.

So, what is Habakkuk's plan? **WAIT ON GOD!** His prayer? See especially 3:2! Chapter three is clearly prophecy on the second advent.

- \* 1:1-6 - God uses the wicked for his own purposes.
- \* 1:12 – God's correction can be painful!
- \* 2:4 - We live by God's faith, which he gives us - Eph.2:8-9.
- \* 2:12 - What does this say about America's liquor industry, gambling, lottery, etc...?
- \* 2:15 - drunkenness and nakedness seem to go together
- \* Chpt.3 - a great chapter on the GLORY OF GOD

Habakkuk begins with GLOOM, ends with GLORY  
Habakkuk begins with DOUBTS, ends with SHOUTS  
Habakkuk begins with a SOB, ends with a SONG

## ZEPHANIAH

The name "Zephaniah" means "the Lord hides or protects." The dates would be around 634-625 B.C. Zephaniah was a contemporary of Jeremiah in the days of Josiah.

### OUTLINE:

- I - The **word** of the Lord - Judgment Spoken - chpt.1-2
- II - The **wrath** of the Lord - Judgment Spread - chpt.2-3
- III - The **work** of the Lord - Judgment Stopped - chpt.3:8-20

Zephaniah's day was marked by:

- \*religion without righteousness
- \*formalism without faith
- \*reformation without revival

There were some good and positive steps taken by King Josiah, but it seems there was more display than heart!

It is abundantly clear that Zephaniah speaks concerning a future time and event called the "Day of the Lord." See 1:14-18. This of course, speaks primarily of the Great Tribulation, a terrible time on the earth, AFTER the church is raptured. Be reminded at

2:9, GOD ALWAYS HAS A REMNANT!

For a spiritual application, we find in chpt.3, God's redemption of his people provides for them:

- \* a new language - vs.9
- \* a new unity - vs.9
- \* a new humility - vs.11
- \* a new trust - vs.12
- \* a new righteousness - vs.13
- \* a new security - vs.13
- \* a new song - vs.14

Zeph.3:17 is one of the many great verses tucked away in the minor prophets. "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing."

## HAGGAI

The name "Haggai" means "my feast." His dates would be around 520-504 B.C. Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi are known as the "postexilic" prophets as they prophesied to the returned remnant AFTER the Babylonian exile. Haggai and Zechariah are contemporaries while Malachi comes about a century later (see Ezra 5:1 and 6:14).

Haggai prophesied with the background of Ezra 5-6, and with the chief theme being the rebuilding of the temple.

OUTLINE:

- I - A **Word** from the Lord - 1:1-15 ("BUILD")
- II - A **Warning** from the Lord - 2:1-23 ("BEHAVE")
  - (A) Work - vs.1-5
  - (B) Watch - vs.6-23

Haggai appeared when the temple was incomplete and the people were building their own houses and he proceeds to "set things in order." The remnant was discouraged and part of the job of the prophet was to encourage them in the work.

We actually have reference to 3 Temples in Hagg. 2:

- (1) Solomon's - vs.3a
- (2) Zerubbabel's - vs.3b-5
- (3) The Lord's - vs.6-9

This book actually presents Haggai's 4 sermons: See 1:1-11; 2:1-9; 2:10-19, and 2:20-23.

- \* A building program is never without opposition! Read Ezra
- \* 1:5-11 - great passage on the danger of "materialism"
- \* 1:12 - Haggai's preaching got almost immediate results.
- \* 2:6-7 - That day is coming!
- \* 2:9 - Instead of living in the past, we should seek to have God work in the present!

## ZECHARIAH

The name "Zechariah" means "Jehovah remembers." Zechariah was a contemporary of Haggai (Ezra 5:1). Zechariah was a priest as well as a prophet. Looking at Zech. 1:1 with Neh.12:4, 12-16, we assume Zechariah was from the family of Aaron. While Haggai's prophecy concentrated on the need for finishing the temple, Zechariah's prophecy is much broader. The first eight chapters are written during the rebuilding of the temple and the last six are written after the temple is built.

OUTLINE:

- I - **Visions** of the **Prophet** -chpts.1-6
- II - **Vanities** of the **People** -chpts.7-8
- III - **Visitation** of the **Prince** -chpts.9-14

Prophecy is most always exciting to study, but some passages seem to excite us more than others. For example, Rev.11 describes the Lord and His army riding out of heaven on white horses - Gloooooory. There are many passages like that, and one of them is Zech.14. See especially vs.3-4, and REMEMBER, IT IS GOING TO TAKE

PLACE, LITERALLY!

- \* 4:6 - All Christians and especially preachers would do well to remember this truth!
- \* 4:10 - Connected to the seven spirits of Rev.5:6
- \* 4:14 - See 1K.17:1; Ex.33:20-21; Elijah and Moses - Matt.17:3.
- \* 8:2 - We serve a jealous God! Ex.34:14.
- \* 9:9 - John 12:15
- \* 11:12-17 - At vs.17, it is "idol" not "idle".
- \* 12:10-11 - Rev.1:7
- \* 13:3 - Because Christ is ON the earth! Evidently these false prophets are prophesying of his coming and He's already here - A millennial passage.
- \* 14:2 - All nations must include the USA? See also Jer.30:11.
- \* 14:16 - This would be in September!

What a day! The Lord Jesus Christ is finally going to get the praise and worship that only He is worthy of! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!!!

## MALACHI

The name "Malachi" means "messenger of Jehovah." You will find his dates varying with some dating him at 436 - 416 B.C. while I lean toward those who go with 420-397 B.C. Malachi is the last prophetic call before the famous "400 Years of Silence."

After Haggai and Zechariah, a sharp decline both spiritually and morally set in, and Malachi was the prophet to speak during this time of Moral Decay. As you read the material, much of it can have a double application; that is, some had an immediate fulfillment and an ultimate fulfillment at a later time.

OUTLINE:

- I - The Lord's **Rebuke** -chpts.1-2
- II - The Lord's **Return** -chpts.3-4
  - (A) The 1st Coming - 3:1
  - (B) The 2nd Coming - 4:4-5

We come to the last book of the Old Testament and discover the Old Testament ENDS WITH A CURSE (4:6). Jesus will show up to become “the curse” for us according to Gal.3:13. Notice Moses and Elijah both in Mal.4:4-5 mentioned in connection with the second advent (Rev.11).

From 1:6 thru 2:9, God himself addresses the priests and from 2:10, the Prophet speaks on God’s behalf - to the people in general. It appears the day of Malachi, with the Promised Return in view, was one of “nonchalant formalism.” Sound familiar?

- \* 2:4-7 - A good description of an ideal preacher!
- \* 2:15 - At least one of the primary reasons God made two people one flesh - that is, flesh joining flesh or marriage - to PRODUCE A GODLY SEED!
- \* 3:6 - Explains the burning bush - which was not consumed! If God is in it, it will last! See Acts 5:39.

Notice the continual use of “wherein” at 1:2, 6, 7; 2:17; 3:7, 8, and similar question at 3:13. The attitude of the people before the Lord returns is “professed innocence.” They will soon find out how guilty they are.

And so we close our “overview” of the O.T. with man hiding behind a false profession. It seems that’s how we found him in Genesis, hiding from God, hiding from the truth. In Matthew, The Truth shows up, and the only place to hide, IS ON A CROSS!