

## Genesis

As we begin our study of going through the Bible, we must first begin in Genesis and begin to form the foundation of the storyline of the Bible as well as the smaller narratives that flow into the larger narrative. In this article, we will cover the first five books of the Bible, Genesis through Deuteronomy. Let's begin "in the beginning".

Genesis chapter 1 starts with the creation of the universe. The "heavens and the earth" as referenced in the Bible is where the story begins. The story of the Bible begins with the creation of the cosmic universe, displaying right from the beginning that God is in control and He is the all-powerful being in the universe. God creates the stars, sun, moon, and the earth. Most of the first chapter of Genesis is God creating and filling the earth. The end of the first chapter closes with the creation of the most precious of creations...humans. God creates humans and they are given a divine purpose and role. The purpose and role is to rule the earth and multiply on it. God gives humans the authority to rule on His behalf, and it is a role that will soon be tainted and disturbed.

In Genesis 2, the narrative focuses around these two humans, Adam and Eve, in a garden. This garden, known as the garden of Eden, will now become the centerpiece of the rest of the narrative until Jesus. As we will see, so many hyperlinks will be found in the Old Testament that point back to the garden and what happened there. Let's go to chapter 3 to find out what happens in the garden.

The garden of Eden was a heavenly garden with two trees in the middle of it. The tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and bad. These two humans could eat from any tree in the garden including the tree of life. However, they were not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and bad and for good reason. The created humans were to receive divine guidance and wisdom from God himself, and if they took from the tree, they were defining good and for themselves. Well, as the story goes, these humans were deceived by a smart serpent and they took of the tree they were commanded not to. This resulted in banishment from the garden and exile. Sin had now entered the human realm and the beautiful garden is lost.

As God was speaking to each character in this story because of what they had done, God says something that will spark the journey of the Bible. In Genesis 3:15, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." Here, God is talking to the serpent and He says that an offspring will come from the woman who will crush the serpent's head and that the serpent would strike his heel. The crushing blow is to the head of the serpent who is now the villain in the story. So as readers of the Hebrew Bible as we journey through the narrative, we are on the lookout for this seed of the woman. We are awaiting this human who can crush the head of the villain so we can have the victory.

With the foundation of the story now in place, we can start to see patterns in Genesis. Characters like Noah, Abraham, and Joseph are all depicted as the seed of the woman who

should be the one to save the people but ultimately fail. This story-line is the main one in the Scriptures. The story line that points to Jesus is the main theme. When we get to Abraham, we see a promise from God that starts a smaller yet widely focused theme. In Genesis 17, we see a covenant that God makes with Abraham (or Abram at that time) and God tells him that he will become a father of many nations. Through one nation, God will bring salvation to the whole world. Through one man, God will call a nation to Him to be different from all the other nations. This nation will be a light to the other nations to follow God and what followers of Yahweh are to act like. This nation is Israel.

After Abraham comes Isaac and Jacob whose name was also Israel. Then in Genesis, the story of Joseph takes over who is depicted as the rejected seed of the woman but who seems to save everyone in the end. Still, even he is not the one we are looking for.

## **Exodus**

The next book is Exodus which is God's redemptive story of Israel. The Hebrews are in slavery to the most powerful empire in the world at this time, Egypt. God sends plagues on Egypt that destroys land, crops, livestock, and even the firstborn. These plagues acted as judgments upon Egypt's gods and wickedness of the people. Then God uses Moses to part the Red Sea and let Israel cross on dry land. The people are out of the land of slavery and into the harsh wilderness. At this, the people complain about the conditions in the wilderness and wish they were back in slavery. Time and time again, God shows Israel that He is more than capable of taking care of them and continues to promise to them a land "flowing with milk and honey" known as the promised land. Exodus 20 through Deuteronomy seems like the most boring part of the Bible but it is vital to understanding the narrative. We have now arrived at the Laws.

The rest of the Torah is taken up by the rest of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The rest of Exodus goes through civil laws that Israel is to follow. It also lays the blueprints for building the tabernacle, a dwelling place for Yahweh and for the priests to offer sacrifices on behalf of the people.

## **Leviticus**

Leviticus is known for the priestly laws and sacrifices. Being what seems more of a guidebook for ancient priests and ritual sacrifices, it can seem repetitive and boring. These laws contain sacrifices, purification rules and rites, and other rules and regulations for living a life that is different from the people around them that point to a God in charge. Jobs for the priests and feast days are also mentioned in this book. In the center of the book, is the process for the day of atonement. A day in which Israel's sins are symbolically put on the backs of goats, one sent into the wilderness symbolizing the atoning of sins and the other sacrificed symbolizing the guilt of sin being covered by a sin offering. By looking at what God established as law, we can see how set apart God wanted Israel to be and how Jesus fulfills for us, what we could never do for ourselves.

## **Numbers**

Numbers is also filled with some laws but it also pushes the narrative forward. It still paints this picture of this grumbling nation and a God who seems to put up with a lot from his chosen people. Numbers starts with a census of the tribes, then moves into purity laws, and then a series of testing stories that bring out a nation rebelling against their God in the wilderness. Balaam, a prophet, gives blessings upon Israel letting us know God is still with them despite their rebellion. Numbers ends with a set of commands for a generation that is getting ready to go into the promised land. Moses' sin had led to a new leader getting ready to be put in charge. This leads us to Deuteronomy.

## **Deuteronomy**

Then we get to Deuteronomy which is the most powerful, in my opinion, of the Torah besides Genesis. Throughout Deuteronomy, the message is simple. Stick to the law of God and have it in your heart. The people, as they enter the new land, are not supposed to forget the law of God and what He has done for them. God is not leaving them, but the narrative is going to change rapidly and it will be very easy for them to forget God as they cross the Jordan River to get to their promised land. Their new leader is Joshua and he will have a hefty job leading rebellious people to a land that God has promised them. Moses gives them one last speech that contains several laws that he reviews and their history up to this point. The most important part of this speech are the blessings and curses for following and not following God's instructions that Moses declares. Blessings come with obedience but curses or consequences come to those who do not. Joshua becomes the new leader of this nation and he is the focus of the next book.

The law was set in place not as a comprehensive law code for the people of Israel to follow. Rather, it was a set of moral and ritual practices to which they were held too. The law was about loving God and loving your neighbor and by following the law, the people of Israel would act, speak, and think differently than all the other nations. The law is not the same as our Constitution or State Constitutions are here in the United States. Not every single law that forbid and allows action is in the 611 commands of the Torah. Only the standards that provide a basis for moral uprightness and ritual purity and blueprints for buildings are given. The law was not made to condemn. It was given to show the people how to make right with God, until Jesus came.

This is where we will leave off for next time. So far, we are still looking for that seed of the woman who will crush the villain. The story of Israel has taken over the narrative but for a very specific purpose. The nation of Israel and our individual characters like Abraham and Moses, repeat the same mistake that Adam and Eve did in the garden. Continuing to take from the tree and give in to the serpent is repeated over and over again. We can see ourselves in the people of Israel as well. We all complain, we all make mistakes, and we believe in a God that continues to want us back with Him. The story of Israel is a redemption story and our story is a redemption story as well.

## Joshua

The book of Joshua starts with God's call of Joshua to not be afraid and to be Israel's new leader. Joshua leads the people across the Jordan and into the promised land where they have much success against other nations in battle. Joshua and the Israelites with God's help defeat mighty kings and nations. There is still land to conquer towards the end of the book and the tribes of Israel are allotted lands for their people. The book ends with the death of Joshua and the promise of the people to serve the Lord. So the book ends on a high note, with the people promising to serve the Lord and each person is in their allotted land that God blessed them with. I think the whole story of Joshua can be summed up with one phrase that comes out of Joshua 24:21, "But the people said to Joshua, 'No! We will serve the Lord.'" Joshua is a story of rich blessings that come from dedication and devotion to Yahweh. If we stay faithful to the Lord, we will be richly blessed by Him.

## Judges

With this we smoothly transition into the book of Judges which takes a turn for the worst at the first page. Some of the tribes drive out the people in that land, but others do not because they did not fully listen to God. Then something interesting happens. In Judges 2, we see a generation come up after the one that Joshua had been with that did not know God and so they did evil. The Lord sends judges to rule the people and yet they still do not listen. God then says that the nations will not be driven out before them, rather, they will know be used to test Israel if they will remain faithful. The plot is starting to twist here but let's pause. We can get so wrapped up in the narrative of the people of Israel but we must also remember the promise of Genesis 3. We must continue to look for a seed of the woman who will crush the head of the serpent. Even though we haven't had a direct mention of the snake, he is everywhere in this narrative. When the Israelites do evil in the eyes of God and do not obey His word, it is a direct link back to the tree that the humans ate of. Sin continues to rule the people instead of the people ruling in God's wisdom.

There are many famous rulers in Judges like Deborah, Gideon, and Samson. Yet even these do not bring what Israel needs. In Judges 20, a civil war breaks out between the Israelites and the tribe of Benjamin and everything seems to spiral downward. Judges ends with the somber statement in Judges 21:25, "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit." Everyone was defining good in their own terms instead of the terms God had set for them. It is a complete disaster for God's chosen people, one that needs a savior to rescue them.

## Ruth

Ruth is a small yet important book in the narrative of the Israelites and the story leading to Jesus. The story of Ruth is a story of a woman named Ruth who is wholly dedicated to Naomi and her God, Yahweh. Ruth meets this guy by the name of Boaz who takes particular notice of Ruth in the grain fields. An interesting note about Ruth is that she is a Moabite, not a Hebrew. Ruth and Boaz eventually get married and have a son that continues the genealogy that leads

to David and eventually Jesus. So Boaz and Ruth play an important role in the Jesus narrative but also the grand narrative of the Bible. Boaz is called Naomi and Ruth's "guardian-redeemer", which in this time was someone close to the family they could count on in a time of need. Boaz was this to their family and ultimately he was to the family line of Jesus. This gives yet another hyperlink back to the garden narrative of the seed of the woman and looking for one who would crush the head of the snake. He's a good choice, but as we will see later, sin still rages on in the world.

## 1 Samuel

We then move on into 1 & 2 Samuel. 1 Samuel starts out with the story of Samuel being called to service of the Lord. Samuel was a child born to Hannah who earnestly pleaded with God for a son. He was dedicated to the Lord and entered under the service of Eli to the Lord. Samuel helps bring the people back to the Lord for a time and Israel asks for a king like all the other nations. Even though God was supposed to be their king, they wanted a man to rule them. So again, we see them taking from the tree of knowledge of good and bad instead of from God's wisdom. Well, as it turns out, the people do get a king named Saul. Now Saul was not the most humble man and his arrogance leads to his downfall. Even with the people not understanding that they don't need a king, God still gives them another chance. If the king follows the commands of Yahweh, then God will still be on their side but if he is not, then God will not fight for them. Saul, at the end of his reign, does not obey God's commands and it eventually leads to his downfall. So we have another ruler who falls short of the mark. While this main story is going on, God is working to bring about the new king who will take Saul's place, David. David is this different man who seems to be the most unlikely man for the job. His story takes place in 2 Samuel.

## 2 Samuel

2 Samuel is all about David and his reign as king over Israel. It starts out with war and death, still not a good sign. However, when David becomes king and all the people recognize him as such, he united the people as one kingdom. He conquers Jerusalem and makes it the center of the people for religious and political reasons. With all of this good stuff happening, it again takes a turn for the worse. David, for all this time, has been put on this pedestal as a man of God who does everything he can to stay faithful to God and he makes a tragic mistake. He does some not so good things with another man's wife and tries to cover it all up and it spirals out of control.

## 1 Kings

The books of 1 & 2 Kings go together into one big story. It starts out with Solomon, David's son, taking over as king over Israel. He starts by asking God for wisdom to rule and this is absolutely crucial to the story of the Bible. For the first time, we see a human asking for the wisdom of God instead of taking for themselves from the tree. This is a link back to the garden story. A man who rules on the wisdom of God is how it was intended to be in the beginning. So it seems like this human is willing to rule how God intended people to rule, with and by God's wisdom. The story

gets even better when the Queen of Sheba comes and visits King Solomon and they discuss wisdom and praise God together. It is a direct link back to the garden of Eden with Adam and Eve ruling together with God's wisdom. However, all of this beauty takes a terrible turn when he breaks laws of the Torah worships other gods and leaves Yahweh by the wayside.

## 2 Kings

Solomon dies and his son Rehoboam and a man named Jeroboam split the kingdom of Israel into two. The southern kingdom, Judah and the northern kingdom, Israel are now separate entities. The rest of the first part of Kings and second Kings is a continuous rollercoaster story of kings who do good and then not so good and it's just all over the place. Each kingdom has about 20 kings each and they are mostly not good rulers. Israel has no good kings in the eyes of God out of their 20 and Judah has 8 out of 20 good kings. While this story is unfolding, prophets come into the picture. In Kings it is Elijah and Elisha who take over the story line. However, even they do not reform Israel and eventually Israel and Judah are taken into exile. This is the tragic end that all of Israel's sin has led them to. Exile was the worst possible choice for Israel because they were not faithful to the covenant and they lost their blessings of Yahweh. This story is meant to make you wonder what God will do next. Is he just completely done with these people, will there be another exodus like there was way back in the ancient days? Is all hope lost? These are the questions we have to wait and find out the answers to but let's reflect for a moment.

We have had flashbacks that reflect the garden imagery that point back to the perfect humanity but all of it is not real. So this leads us to consider that it seems like the garden is a thing of the past, never to be attained again. However, remember the promise in 1 Samuel about the hope for a Messiah, that is the hope we are looking for. We are still looking for a seed of the woman to come and crush sin at its core, never to reign again. God is still in control and God still has a plan.

## 1 Chronicles

1 & 2 Chronicles may seem like a repeat of 1 & 2 Kings and much of it is the same stories but Chronicles goes much deeper and there is more to it than just the stories. For example, much of 1 Chronicles is about David. However, David in Chronicles is portrayed in a positive light. None of the negative stories about David is in the reading, only the positive ones. This is for a very good reason. The author is trying to portray David as this future Messianic King who will rule and be the seed we are looking for. Then we move into 2 Chronicles which focuses on the kings who ruled in Jerusalem after David. There is no focus on the northern rulers of Israel just on the kings of Judah who are of the line of David. All of these stories together tell a story as an example for the Israelites and us to learn from. Staying faithful to God and His commands leads to life and freedom.

## 2 Chronicles

Then we get to the end of the book of 2 Chronicles which is a very odd ending. It ends with the king of Persia letting the people go back to their land and rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the temple. However, it ends incomplete and it seems rather strange. There is room for different interpretations on why such a strange ending but it seems to be that the author is looking for the Messianic hope that will restore God's people to their glory. This is the end of the narrative part of Israel's history before their exile and there are many lessons we can learn.

The story that leads to Jesus seems to be getting clearer and the narrative of Israel seems to be coming to an end. Adam and Eve broke the divine command once and now another group of people, the Israelites, have also broken several of the commands of God and nobody seems to be able to make the mark. The hope is that the seed of the woman will come and restore God's people, just as He promised.

## Ezra

The book of Ezra happens in two main parts. The first part describes the first group of exiles to return to Jerusalem and then the second part describes the second group returning from captivity. Ezra was a scribe and priest and he led this second group of exiles back to their own land. Ezra is not only significant because of the historical context that it gives but also its spiritual links to the rest of the Bible. The prophets foretold of a remnant being brought back home after the exile, and Ezra, along with Nehemiah, are these exact stories. They tell the story of a people who rededicated themselves to God and to His commands. It teaches us that when we follow God, blessings follow.

## Nehemiah

Nehemiah is very similar in history and spiritual significance. Nehemiah led the third and final return of exiles back to Israel. Nehemiah was a cupbearer to King Artaxerxes in Persia. The book focuses on the rebuilding of the city walls and Nehemiah's character and leadership overflow in this book. We are to learn that even though we may not be able to serve God directly, like Ezra could, we can use whatever position He has given us, to serve for His purposes. Nehemiah is a book that teaches us to look for ways in our lives that we can serve God, even if it may seem impossible.

## Esther

The last book, Esther, is one of my personal favorites and seems like it doesn't belong in our Bibles. So much so, in fact, that God's name is not even mentioned in the book at all, but God's work can be seen all over this beautiful story. The story is focused around Queen Esther, Mordecai (Esther's cousin), Haman, and King Xerxes. Like any good story, there is a villain and a hero. Haman is the villain, wanting to annihilate all of the Jews and Queen Esther becomes our hero. The story takes all kinds of twists and turns, flashbacks, and intense moments, all meant for the reader to see God working behind the scenes. It turns out that Esther ends up telling the king about Haman's horrible plan, and Haman is killed and the Jews win. Although

God is never mentioned, it is done almost intentionally. The reader is meant to look for God's hand in the story and take it to heart. We may not understand what God is doing in our life right now, but someday we may understand it completely. Esther was put in the right moment at the right time and God does the same for us.

Although these books seem to be out of the storyline of the Bible, they actually fit right in. Ezra and Nehemiah point to the hope of the future Messianic kingdom with the rebuilding of the temple. Esther points to the Messiah as our hero who saves us from evil. These books may not have direct correlation expressed in them, but when we look at the overall storyline of the Bible, they are there for a reason. To point us to the future hope of the Messiah.

## Proverbs

We first come to Proverbs in our wisdom series. Proverbs is a book that is directly linked to Solomon. This whole book is dominated by mostly ancient proverbs about living a good moral life that came from Solomon. However, it is the beginning and end of the book that really plays a role in the narrative, and as we will see, it all points back to the garden narrative and forward to Jesus. The main theme of Proverbs is the pursuit of wisdom and wisdom is personified as a woman all throughout the book. This Lady Wisdom is the figure that humanity is supposed to desire. In the Eden narrative, we were meant to live and rule by God's wisdom but we ultimately failed in giving in to the tree of knowledge of good and bad and defining evil for ourselves. The book of Proverbs is like a refresher to point us back to our original source of wisdom, God. We see in Proverbs 9:10 that, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom". If we want to attain this wisdom, we must fear Yahweh and then we will begin to understand His wisdom. Lady Wisdom is personified as a woman possibly for many reasons. If this is to be connected to Solomon, then this is a link to Solomon saying how he should have pursued Lady Wisdom figuratively instead of all the foreign women which led to his downfall. It can be universally applied to a man in pursuit of a woman. We should all be in pursuit and going after God's wisdom instead of giving in to our own desires and wants. So Proverbs leads us to the fact that we need God's wisdom to live and rule like He intended us to, and we can also see why Jesus had to come. With sin ruling our lives, Lady Wisdom has no pull on us. With Jesus forgiving our sins and blotting them out, there is room for a new humanity and it allows us to rule with God's wisdom.

## Song of Songs

The book of Song of Songs is an interesting book and one that most Christians avoid because of its semi-erotic love poetry that seems uncomfortable to most readers. When we actually dig into this book and put it in its historical Jewish context, however, we discover how it fits into the storyline of the Bible. It is most connected to Solomon but it can be argued either way. When compared to the book of Proverbs, there are striking similarities between Proverbs and Song of Songs. Even though the theme that sticks out the most is love between a man and a woman, we can compare this relationship to Lady Wisdom and humanity. In Proverbs, humanity was the one in pursuit of God's wisdom and it was dominantly a male's voice coming from Solomon. In



the Song of Songs, the woman is in pursuit of her lover for most of the book and the voice is dominantly the female voice in the poetry. When we look at the woman as the female personification as God's wisdom, we get a complete role change from Proverbs. In Proverbs, humanity was on a quest for wisdom and now in Song of Songs, wisdom is on the quest for humanity. Both of these books work hand-in-hand to describe both sides of the relationship between humanity and God's quest for wisdom. It is another link back to the garden narrative. In the garden, Eve was the "deceived deceiver". Now in Song of Songs, the woman is expressed as the perfect Eve who desires for lover (humanity) to be hers and to abide with her.

## Ecclesiastes

We then reach a book called Ecclesiastes which is full of depressed realizations about life and death and how unfair life is. It is certainly not a book that is meant to cheer you up but it has very important lessons for us to learn and there is a very good reason it is in the Hebrew Bible. The voice of the character in the story is most commonly associated with Solomon but there are other reasons to assume it may have been a bunch of people referred to as one. The most common word found in this book is the word "meaningless" in some translations and this translation only adds to the confusion. The Hebrew word used here for "meaningless" is the word "hevel" which is meant to mean a vapor or a vanishing wind that is here and gone. This is to show how fleeting life and we are in the world. Ecclesiastes goes on a little journey to develop an idea of all the facets of wealth and honor one can gain in life. Possessions, honor, money, advancement in work, all good things in life the Teacher says is "hevel" and fleeting. This is to show how rooted the tree of knowledge of good and bad is in the world. All of these things we strive for in life, honor and wealth and etc, it is an example of a grab at the tree. When we strive for these things we are taking from the tree and thus defining what is good for ourselves by trying to meet our own desires. We instead, as we have learned through the Hebrew Scriptures, must allow God to define what is good and bad by His wisdom. This life is full of heartache, injustice, and ultimately death and Ecclesiastes reflects on all of this. This is to show us that there is blessing, honor, and life in God's wisdom. When we take from the tree, it leads to death. When we rule by God's wisdom, it leads to life. Ecclesiastes ends by saying the conclusion of all of that the Teacher has studied and experienced is to "fear Yahweh and keep his commands" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). When we look back at Proverbs, we should recall that fearing Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom. It is the beginning of the wisdom that leads to life in this hevel world.

## Job

The book of Job is often very confusing and raises so many questions when we read it. It starts out by Job being set up as this righteous man who has been so richly blessed by God. Then the satan comes and asks to mess with Job in a sense to test him to see if he will remain faithful to God or not. Then God allows the satan to do this and Job suffers horrifically. Then for almost the rest of the book, there is constant dialogue between Job and friends who are trying to comfort him but they don't really succeed in that role. Finally, Job prays for the friends and his wealth and health are restored and the book ends. There are so many questions we can dive into but we are going to try and stick to our purpose for this article. So we have a man who is pictured as

a wonderful man who suffers almost unfairly. He never curses God as the Satan was trying to get him to do. He passes the test, which is something we haven't seen too often. A human who doesn't give in to the tree. So finally we have this person who does this and yet sin is not done away with completely and so he cannot be the seed we have been looking for. He is described as a reflection of the seed of the woman but he is not the one. The story of Job does so much for the storyline but the main thing it does is show that someone must suffer like Job did, and somehow crush the head of the snake. The snake must strike the heel of the seed and the seed will crush the snake's head. This means that Job points back to the garden and points us forward in the narrative to when Jesus comes and restores the relationship between God and His people and rescues us all. It is a beautiful reflection of what has happened and what is to come.

## Psalms

The Psalms are an interesting collection of songs, poetry, and prayers with common themes running through them. They are not all written by the same author which adds to the variety of the poetry. There are some common themes that run through the Psalms. Many reflect on the praise of Yahweh and the lament of people. However, many themes like the law of God, Messiah, faith, and hope all run through this amazing collection. These poems are made to have the readers reflect on these different themes. In exile, these were highly helpful to help them meditate and have hope for a bright future. They are made to help the people reflect on their present trouble as the kingdom of Israel has fallen and hope for a future Messianic kingdom that will save them. Although the Psalms do not directly forward the storyline of the narrative, this book has a specific purpose in letting the people reflect on their failures and have a hope for a future in the coming Messiah.

## Lamentations

The next book is Lamentations. It is a book that is not often talked or preached about but it is just as important. It is written by an unknown author as a lament over Jerusalem being taken. There are five different poems that each have a different theme. The main theme is that although God will judge evil in the world, He is faithful and shows mercy to His people. So this is a set of poems about the fall of Jerusalem and how upset the people are. The ending, however, is that God's judgment on the people will actually allow hope to start to grow in the people. And if we've been following along in the Scripture, we know that the hope is the Messianic hope. Lamentations show us that even through pain and suffering, there can still be hope if we remain faithful to God. This, like the Psalms, points us to the Messiah.

## Isaiah

With the conclusion of the Chronicles narrative, it seems to be that the story of Israel has ended and these prophets are going to bring a new narrative into place. These prophets actually take place during the times of the split kingdom of Israel before the exile and some during the exile. The first book we are going to discuss is the prophet Isaiah.

The prophet Isaiah brings two themes into focus throughout the poetry. Judgment for the nation of Israel for its unfaithfulness is a huge theme for Isaiah. The first half of Isaiah is about the judgment for Israel's sins and the hope they still have for their repentance of their ways. There are also links that point directly to the Messianic promise we have been hoping for. In Isaiah, this Messianic figure is this seed of the woman we have been looking for all along. He is the one promised to restore Israel and be literally "God with us". Now all we have to do is wait for this figure to come. Isaiah knows this figure will come but he also knows that exile is awaiting the Israelites if they don't repent. They don't repent and the Israelites are carried into exile by Babylon. They conquer the great city of Jerusalem and God's people are carried into exile. It is a situation nobody wanted, but it is what their sins deserved.

Chapter 40 and following describe the hope the Israelites have after they go into exile. Now it's interesting here because this poetry is supposed to take place after the exile but Isaiah died long before the exile. So the question we have is who is the one speaking if it's not Isaiah? This question can be debated but it is certain that whoever it is has in mind the prophecies of Isaiah and the hope God has for His people. In these chapters, God makes it clear that He has a plan and a hope for His people through the Messianic promise. At the end of the book, there is this beautiful vision of hope for all of the nations for a restored creation that all who come to Him will inherit this new creation in the end. It is a wonderful hope for those after the exile and the fulfillment of all God's promises of His covenant.

## Jeremiah

After Isaiah, comes the prophet Jeremiah who is mostly known for his gloomy warnings of judgment and exile to Israel. His main theme is accusing Israel that they have broken the covenant and that Babylon is coming to carry them to exile. The rest of the book is divided between the judgment and hope for Israel and for the other nations as well. The book ends with the announcement of the Messiah and judgment for Babylon for their ways. Babylon is depicted in these books as the archetype of rebellion from God. They are depicted as the rebellious snake in Genesis 3 and the city of Babel in Genesis 11. Babylon has cosmic significance as the rebellious creature that lured the humans into exile of the garden in the beginning. So we can see them in the narrative as the one bringing the people to exile but they are also the rebellious snake that has cosmic significance for sin and God's people. Babylon is depicted as the one who the seed of the woman will crush. So here we can see the smaller and bigger story lines of the Biblical narratives.

## Ezekiel

Then we get to the wonderful prophet of Ezekiel. Ezekiel was actually one of the exiles that was carried off in the first wave of people Babylon took into exile. The book starts out with a grand vision of God's throne chariot that Ezekiel sees while in exile. Then there are accusations Ezekiel gives to Israel because of their sin. Ezekiel also performs sign acts about the sin of Israel and its leaders. Then there are a series of judgments on Israel, Jerusalem, and the

nations by using poetry and parables and allegories. Then there are a series of hopeful visions and poetry about Israel, the nations, and all of creation.

With this, Ezekiel brings visions of a restored Israel through the Messianic promise and the new Adam. God brings visions through Ezekiel like the valley of dry bones as a sign of the restoration of life God will bring to Israel. These are all pointers back to the garden. It includes humanity, dust and the breath of God. God says that He will defeat evil in the world and end the rebellion in the nations. This is followed by the visions of the new creation with a grand temple which is a symbol of God's presence in the new creation. Ezekiel ends with a vision of an Eden type area which points back to the garden as a cosmic reference to restoration God will bring to those who are faithful to Him. So even though Israel is in exile, there is hope for restoration. Even with the big story line of the Bible, these visions point back to the garden which points to Jesus and to the future restoration of creation. It is a beautiful book regarding all of these things.

## Daniel

The book of Daniel is a narrative that takes place during the exile in Babylon. Daniel is of royal lineage in Israel and is chosen for the king of Babylon's service. Daniel is certainly a man of God and even interprets a dream for King Nebuchadnezzar. There's a strange story of a fiery furnace and God saving three men who don't bow down to an idol and Daniel is saved from a den of lions. Daniel then has visions and dreams of kingdoms rising and falling and then a "son of man" figure that represents the Messiah that will be exalted forever and reign victoriously. Daniel is a narrative about having faith even during hard times. Daniel was a man who was fully devoted to Yahweh and had an immense amount of faith to withstand the forces of evil and see hope for a future Messianic king.

As we can see, these prophets and Daniel not only point to Israel but also to Jesus and the future of God's people. It is very interesting to look and see how these books relate to the garden in the beginning, to Jesus, and to the future restoration. They truly are an amazing part of the story of the Bible.

## Amos

There are actually three different groups the prophets fall into. Prophets that addressed the north (that is, Israel), the south (that is, Judah), and foreign nations other than Israel or Judah. The prophets address these different nations to pronounce God's judgment and hope to the nations. We will start with the northern tribes' prophets first.

For northern Israel, they have not had a single king who did what was right in the eyes of God. All of them have dug Israel deeper and deeper into sin which eventually led to their exile by the Assyrians. These prophets write and teach prior to this exile, warning them of the fate that lies ahead. The first prophet we will look at, Amos, is an interesting prophet. He is warning the nations and Israel of the coming fate of exile and the people and the leaders of Israel as well. Then Amos ends with visions that Amos has. The whole point of this prophet is that God is

letting his people know that punishment is inevitable but there is hope. God's true hope is that His people will be reunited together again and He will be their God again. All pointers back to how the garden was and what it will be like when Jesus comes again.

## Hosea

The other prophet that was for Israel was Hosea. Hosea is much like Amos in that punishment is coming for the tribes of Israel but there is hope. Hosea is a major pointer to the Messiah. In Hosea 13:14 which is quoted again in 1 Corinthians. God is pointing His people to a time of restoration when death will have no power over them. This is a direct link to Jesus who conquered death through his resurrection. Hosea promises a time of restoration for the people of Israel.

## Joel, Micah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk

For the southern tribes, Joel, Micah, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk and the major prophets were their prophets. These prophets call for repentance of Judah and God will once again bless them and Jerusalem will be their stronghold. The prophet Joel calls for repentance and only after repentance will blessing come to them. Micah has similar themes but directly points to a Messiah that will come and be the "shepherd" of his flock. Zephaniah is a prophet who prophecies the coming judgment of Yahweh. However, Yahweh will leave a remnant in Israel as the hope for a future. Zephaniah also prophecies against other nations as well. Habakkuk is a prophet who calls to God in chapter 1 and God responds. God gives the promise that Babylon is coming but that the "righteous will live by faith". This is a glorious promise that a remnant will be left who will live by faith.

## Jonah, Nahum, Obadiah

The foreign nation prophets are Jonah, Nahum, and Obadiah. Jonah is an interesting prophet who is instructed to go to the enemy city of Nineveh and preach repentance. Instead, Jonah runs away from God and despises going there. Jonah is then swallowed by a giant fish that God sent to save Jonah. Jonah eventually goes to Nineveh and they repent and Jonah is so angry about this. God then sends a plant that Jonah likes and then it withers and this makes Jonah even more angry but God is making a point. Jonah is the anti prophet image. He runs away from God, which prophets aren't supposed to do and doesn't want to do what God tells him. You see, we are just like Jonah sometimes, running from God and so was Israel. It is a great little story of how we should listen to God that leads to life instead of listening to the voice of the serpent that leads to death. It is all garden imagery and pointers to the Messiah.

Nahum and Obadiah may not have the interesting storyline that Jonah has but they are still important. Nahum actually, in a way, is a continuation of the story of Jonah. The whole point is that the fall of Nineveh is an example of how God will bring justice to the nations who do evil and how the faithful remnant will endure. Obadiah is a prophet who prophecies to the nation of Edom. This is all about the bigger picture in the world. Edom's pride and unjustness is a symbol

of all the evil in the world. All of these nations who do not follow God is like a seed of the snake all the way back in Genesis 1. We then have to look for that seed of the woman to crush the snake. Edom can be used as this example of the human brokenness in the world and their downfall is an example of God's kingdom being established and ruling forever.

The next three prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi are all based post-exile. These books have a different theme to them as we will explore. Let's look at Haggai first.

## Haggai

The prophet Haggai is one of passion and conviction. Haggai's whole message is that true repentance and faith will lead to the bright future that the Israelites hope for. The whole point is that God's kingdom is coming, but whose side will they be on? It is a question even we have to answer today.

## Zechariah

Zechariah is another prophet who can be bewildering at times. The book is full of visions, dreams, and imagery all leading up to the Messianic kingdom. The whole point is that the rejection of God by the people and leaders will not last forever. God's kingdom coming is inevitable and so is His judgment. The people must choose to obey God and participate in His kingdom.

## Malachi

Malachi is the last prophet we read of in the Old Testament and it is the last book of the Old Testament. Malachi is a book that points out the sins of the people of Israel but also gives hope of the Messiah that is coming. John the Baptist is foreshadowed here as the "messenger who will prepare the way". It's a prophecy that causes us to look at our hearts and find where our true love resides.

All of these prophets have main themes in common. They point out Israel's flaws in the people, priests, and leaders of Israel. They talk about the punishment and judgment that is coming on the nation and other nations. They also give hope to the future of the Messiah who will restore all things. So even though they don't directly advance the storyline of the Bible, the prophets are a good summary of what has happened so far in the Biblical narrative, why things are happening, and what is to come. They are so important for understanding what is happening in the Bible.

## New Testament

### Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

So far in the story of the Bible, we have covered the entire Old Testament. We have discussed Genesis to Malachi and have fit each book into their respective places in the history of the Bible

and literary type. The big main storyline is this character who will crush the head of the serpent. The prophets predicted a Messianic character who would be this long-desired character. Now we have come to the gospels and are going to be introduced to this snake crusher character.

When you turn the page between the old and new testaments, you will come to the book of Matthew. Matthew starts out by saying, "This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham" (1:1) and then proceeds to give the genealogy of this Jesus character. Mark comes right out and connects Jesus with a prophecy from Isaiah that foretells of the Messiah. Luke's version is a little more formal and gives some background details that we don't get in Matthew or Mark. Then there is the gospel of John that has been separated from the rest of the gospels because of its design and literary styles. John starts out by going all the way back to the "beginning", like in Genesis 1. All four gospels, no matter which one you read, gives a sense of hope. Jesus, who is called the Messiah, has now arrived and is now coming onto the scene. All of the prophecies and storylines up to this point have been pointing to the moment when the Messiah shows up and reigns victorious. That moment, has now come.

Let's break down the gospels a little more to get a better understanding of what happens in each one. A general breakdown of all four would be as follows: Jesus grows up and starts his ministry. He calls 12 men together to be his 12 disciples. Jesus teaches and performs many miracles to the people. As with any good story, there is a villain. In this case, the villain is portrayed by the Pharisees and religious leaders of Jerusalem that want to kill Jesus. Well the moment finally comes where Jesus is betrayed and falls into the hands of the enemy. He is put on trial, but is innocent, and sentenced to death. Jesus is crucified and dies. Once again, this seems to be another failure by a human. This was the prophesied one who was going to crush the head of the snake and reign victorious over evil, but He is now dead and hope is lost, or is it? Three days later, Jesus rose from the dead and is alive! Jesus the Messiah did conquer death. He did crush the head of the serpent by conquering death and He is the Savior. A horrible ending turned into the perfect beginning. As the story goes, Jesus commands his followers to go and spread the news about him that he is alive and salvation can be found through him. And that is where the gospels end.

Each gospel is written by a different person and so there are differences between them. Some have stories that others don't. Jesus says things in one that weren't mentioned in another. This does not prove that they are invalid but rather it shows their individuality while still staying consistent to the truth. The gospels contain the story of how one man, Jesus who was both God and human, who fulfilled all that was written about him. He conquered death and crushed the head of the serpent.

Not only is the main storyline fulfilled but also the smaller one of the nation of Israel who was lost and exiled but the remnant was allowed to return. Jesus, who was a descendant of David, was looked at as the one who was going to restore the kingdom of Israel. Some thought he came to rule as king and take the kingdom out from under the oppression of Rome. However, Jesus had a different plan in mind. Instead of building and ruling the earthly kingdom, Jesus rules the heavenly kingdom of God where those who are saved in Him get to be with Him in the

kingdom after this life. Jesus didn't restore the earthly relationships of politics between Israel and Rome but he does restore our relationship with God through his sacrifice.

So as you can see, Jesus is the climax of the story. He didn't come too early or too late. He came at just the right time. He was the perfect sacrifice for us messed up humans and He was the one who finally overcame the serpent and through Him, we can finally overcome the serpent too.

## Acts

We have now covered the story of Jesus and his life here on earth. We have discovered that Jesus is the Messiah figure we have been waiting for all this time. He was the "snake-crusher" we have been waiting for to finally conquer evil and restore the people to their original state of being one with each other and God. It would seem that this is the end of the story but if you would look at your Bible, you would notice that there is still a chunk left to cover. The next book after the four gospels is a book called Acts. The book of Acts is not the end of the Jesus story, it is just the beginning.

When we look at Acts there are some big movements to notice as a whole. The whole point of Acts is to show how the Holy Spirit is moving throughout the world to bring the gospel message to every human on the face of the earth. The first movement is to start with the Jews, to give them the chance of knowing the truth and accepting Jesus as their Savior and then they move on to the Gentiles (or the rest of the world). Acts begins with the ascension of Jesus back to heaven and the command to be his "witnesses" to Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and the ends of the earth. These are the movements that are going to occur in this narrative of Acts. Jesus promises the apostles that they will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them (Acts 8). Then the Holy Spirit comes at the day of Pentecost and this day becomes a pivotal moment for humanity.

The Holy Spirit coming to dwell in humans is a sign of redemption and restoration for the world. In the beginning, God walked in the garden with humanity and then the humans were exiled outside of the garden and were outside of God's presence. Then the tabernacle was built in the wilderness where God would dwell, and where the High Priest could enter into the presence of God. Then a grander temple was built in Jerusalem where God would dwell. However, it didn't last long as the kingdom of Israel split and Jerusalem was destroyed along with the temple and the people were taken into exile. This was again, another time that God's people were exiled from their land and exiled from God, but God also had a plan. A plan that would restore all of humanity back to Him, and this is where Jesus appears. Jesus comes on the scene as God in the flesh, and sacrifices his own life to bring humanity back to Him. Jesus was literally God dwelling among His people. But God doesn't stop there. He then sends the Holy Spirit to His people to dwell in them. The Holy Spirit dwelling in His people is now a micro spectrum of the full circle of the restoration of humanity. God not only dwells among us, but in us. Acts brings this narrative to life.



With the Spirit comes on the disciples, they began preaching to the Jews and then moved on to those in Samaria and to the rest of the world. There are some main characters who take center stage at different points in the narrative so let's discuss some of them.

One of the first prominent figures we come across is Peter. Peter was one of the original disciples who walked with Jesus his entire ministry. He gives a great speech at Pentecost and performs some miracles and experiences a miracle from God while in prison. Peter takes the stage for almost the first half and then fades out as the next main character takes the stage, Paul. Paul is going to be the main character throughout the rest of the book of Acts and almost the entire rest of the Bible. Paul goes on a series of missionary journeys that allows him to bring the gospel message to the Gentile world. Paul, through many hardships, learns that Jesus is worth dying for. The book ends with Paul being on house arrest and ends rather abruptly and leaves the reader wondering what happens next.

The book of Acts is, on a basic level, a collection of stories of how the world heard the gospel and there are some pretty amazing stories to think about but there is so much more to this narrative than just spreading the gospel. This book shows each one of us how the Holy Spirit can live in us and dwell in us while also seeing that Jesus never left his disciples and never leaves us. Acts is all about the Spirit and it expressively shows how the power of the Spirit can work in us and through us to inspire the world. The apostles certainly accomplished their mission in spreading the gospel, but it's the power of the Spirit that we can underestimate.

The book of Acts shows us that the Spirit works and continues to work in us and through us. The narrative Luke writes is one that invites us to join the mission of Jesus to spread the gospel and show the power of the Spirit.

## Paul's Letters

As we continue our series in the story of the Bible, it may seem like the story is just about over. The seed of the woman finally came, Jesus, and He overcame the power of the snake by defeating death and reigning victoriously. We then saw the Holy Spirit dwells in believers as well showing us that we really can become united with God once again and start to bring restoration to the world through Jesus. The key word there is "start". As you can see, full restoration of the earth has not come yet as sin still has a mighty hand in the relationships we all live with. Jesus brought the idea of crushing sin into reality because he did crush sin, but it hasn't become a full reality yet where all creation is sin free.

The idea of full restoration has been the other storyline throughout the Bible that has hidden in the background. That storyline is reuniting heaven and earth as it was in the beginning. The garden of Eden was a place where God's space and human space co-existed in a beautiful, harmonious relationship. Once sin entered the picture, however, the humans were exiled from perfect garden and lived in the world we know today. Ever since then, the narrative of the Bible has been pointing us back to this idea of existing in a heaven and earth overlap and Jesus is the one who sparked that restoration and he will finish it. We were looking for the seed to crush the

serpent's head to be free from sin and restore humanity back to God fully once again and we received that gift in Jesus.

So now we come to a place in the Bible known traditionally as the Pauline letters. In other words, letters written by the apostle Paul to churches, groups of people, or individual people. His letters include, Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. As can be seen, many times Paul wrote more than one letter to the same group or person indicating that Paul kept up with certain groups or people giving real significance and credibility to the Scriptures. We are going to go through each of these letters briefly to show how they all fit together in unity.

## Romans

These letters are all written after Jesus ascended so all of these are post-Jesus letters. The first letter we come to is the letter to the Romans. The letter to the Romans really covers the entire human condition from the beginning and ties it all together in the gospel. Paul describes the sin that separates us from God and the sinfulness of all humanity. He then talks about the grace of God and the salvation offered through Jesus Christ and the gospel. Paul takes the entire storyline of the Bible and sums it up by talking about sin and its effect on humanity. He then uses the gospel to talk about how Jesus broke the bondage of sin and provides salvation for all of humanity. The text and theology of the letter can become quite dense at times but it all has a simple theme. Jesus came and died to provide salvation for a sin-ridden world.

## 1 / 2 Corinthians

The next two letters go together as they were both written to the same group of people. 1 & 2 Corinthians were written by Paul to the church at Corinth to address problems that were occurring at this church. The church is also a new theme in the New Testament. The word "church" as used in the New Testament has a couple of different meanings. It could be used to refer to a specific gathering of a group of believers as it does in this letter. It can also refer to the larger, universal group of believers that just refers to all believers (Ephesians 1:22). The church became a unity of believers of which Christ is the head (Ephesians 5:23). These two letters to the Corinthians address some major issues that were going on in their lives and in the body of the assembly. 1 Corinthians deals with the immoral acts that the Corinthians were taking part in and addresses some issues in worship when they came together. 2 Corinthians is like the booster letter that came after the first letter. The second letter encourages and provides confidence for these people that they are God's people and warns against false teaching. These two letters combined create a beautiful yet real portrait of the Christian life. They describe the pain and temptation and sin we deal with everyday and yet we should still have the confidence that Christ has won the victory and we will share in that victory one day.

## Galatians

The next letter is the letter written to the churches in Galatia. Paul starts out this letter by addressing the issue head on, they have fallen away from the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul then spends a good chunk of text defending this very gospel he preached to them. Paul then gets to the heart of the issue which was heavily influenced by Jewish teaching. There was confusion about the Law of Moses and if they were to still follow it. Paul goes all the way back the Abraham promise and then connects the dots leading to Christ. Paul explains that because of Jesus it is no longer works of the law but life by the Spirit that should be the focus. Paul takes the entire biblical story into account here when discussing how Jesus came to be and how he has set us free from the law. It is not the law that we live by, it is now the Spirit which came through Jesus. This is a beautiful letter that clears confusion about “the old way of doing things” and makes clear the purpose of Jesus.

### Ephesians

The next letter of Paul we will discuss is the letter to the people in Ephesus. This letter has a unifying theme throughout the letter, that is that everyone is unified in one faith through the Lord Jesus. The letter to the Ephesians talks about the death of Jesus as a gift to us who receive it. It is the love, grace, and mercy of God that we are able to receive such a gift of eternal life through the sacrifice of our Savior. This letter brings into focus what the death of Christ means to all believers and how we are unified through Jesus Christ despite our differences and how we all work toward a unified life in Jesus.

### Philippians

The letter to the Philippians is all about imitating the example of Christ and following his example. There is a beautiful Messianic poem in Chapter 2 that is referred to the rest of the letter. It points back to the Hebrew Scriptures and reviews the gospel story. Jesus is an example that should be followed even amidst persecution. This letter is about love, perseverance, and the example of Jesus that Paul follows and should be followed by all believers.

### Colossians

The letter to the people of Colossae was written by Paul to encourage the people and to help them remember who their main focus should be in Jesus. Jesus should be the foundation in which we build our lives and dwell on earth. Paul discusses the new life we live in when we give our life to Christ and allow Him to change us. This letter was an encouragement not only to those in Colossae but also to those in Laodicea. This gives us the view that these letters were meant to be shared with the churches all around. This then, gives us the view of the effects of the Messianic movement. Everyone shares the knowledge and encouragement with each other and everyone benefits from it. It's a small glimpse of what the new creation is meant to be. A place where everyone benefits and no one is lacking because Christ is the head and the giver of all.

### 1 / 2 Thessalonians

The letters of 1 and 2 Thessalonians are the next letters we come to in our journey through Paul's letters. The first letter spends much time praising the church for their faith and love and devotion to Christ and how Paul has heard wonderful things about them even from Timothy who will appear in the next set of letters. The letter encourages the people to live and grow in purity in conduct and in their lives. Paul encourages them with the talk of Jesus' return and how one day we will all be back together. It's a beautiful description of how what seems like the end, will be just the beginning. We must remember that this life is not the end. There is hardship, there is suffering and persecution, but it is not the end. The second letter is a boost to this very idea about persecution and the return of Jesus. Apparently there were some false teachings spreading and so Paul clarifies these in this letter. These people were suffering hardships and persecution and how the man of lawlessness is still yet to be revealed. Paul calls them to stand firm until the return of Jesus and to not let go of what they love so dearly, faith in Jesus Christ. Paul challenges them to imitate Christ and stay true to the truth they were taught. In light of all this, these letters give us the hope of what is coming, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the new creation.

## 1 / 2 Timothy

The next two letters of 1 and 2 Timothy give us some insight on how groups of believers were to organize themselves in churches and fixes some major problems. Paul writes to his beloved companion, Timothy in his first letter to discuss the church at Ephesus. False teachings plagued this church and Paul encouraged Timothy to end these teachings and teach the truth. Paul then establishes guidelines for Timothy to follow for authority in the church and proper conduct. Paul then tells Timothy some good teachings about situations with widows, elders, and slaves. Paul then tells Timothy to flee from love of money and selfishness and to keep on the right path. The second letter is likely Paul's last that we have. It is another personal letter to Timothy where Paul reminds him of the gospel for which Paul is suffering for as he writes the letter. Paul warns Timothy of corrupt teachers and encourages Timothy to establish right and true teachers. Paul then discusses his suffering and the present reality of Jesus who will take him home to the heavenly kingdom. These two letters bring into focus how real suffering is but also how real our reward is for staying faithful. Jesus is with us and his coming, and we all wait for that glorious day.

## Titus

The letter to Titus is an encouragement and commission to Titus to flip an entire culture upside down in the best way possible. Written to Titus, who was in Crete, Paul wants Titus to help the churches there to restore leadership that has gone corrupt and appoint leaders everywhere. The Cretan culture was soaked in sin and Titus' message of Jesus and the gospel would be a new and transformed way of living. Paul wants Titus to teach that the ungodliness and evil in the world is not what those called to Jesus are to be about. Being transformed by Jesus means living a new and transformed life which creates this new life Paul is always talking about.

## Philemon

The last of Paul's letters, in canonical order, is written to a man named Philemon and displays the love of Jesus in action. Philemon had a runaway slave, Onesimus who came to Paul and who Paul was sending back. Paul demonstrates that love is necessary for reconciliation as Christ has done for us. Paul then urges Philemon to accept him not as a slave but as a brother, as equal. This demonstrates the enormous equalizing gift that the death of Jesus results in. We are all made equal because of Jesus and we are all one under Christ.

As Paul's letters demonstrate, Jesus is the center and should be the center of our lives. Jesus' death and resurrection was a launching pad for the restoration of all creation. We should act, think, and speak like Jesus as we await the coming of his return to fully restore all creation. The Holy Spirit dwells in us to help us along in our journey and to renew us of our sinful nature. Paul's letters give us real advice, trustworthy application, and a hope that Jesus is coming back and we wait for that day as we live in the new life we are called to live in.

## Hebrews

The first letter we come to after Paul's letter to Philemon is Hebrews. The author of the letter remains a mystery but we know from the title it was written to the Hebrews which were Jewish converts. I like to call this letter the "Old Testament Showdown" because of its deep roots in the Hebrew Scriptures. This captivating letter reiterates the fact that Jesus was the fulfillment of the law. The writer describes the superiority of Jesus over Moses, the great heroes of faith in the Hebrew Bible, and even over the angels. Through the sacrifice of Jesus, he became the ultimate sacrifice once and for all, and became the great high priest. Jesus is the fulfillment of the law. The letter to the Hebrews is full of warnings against falling away and of unbelief. The writer knew there would be persecution and so he puts stern warnings in to pay attention and not drift away from the truth. The letter ends with listing some great examples of faith we read about in the Hebrew Bible as an example we should all follow. Jesus is the fulfillment of the law and through his grace and mercy we should stay devoted followers of him. It connects the law with Jesus and it is a powerful letter for those who grew up with the law to show how Jesus fits in and fulfills it all. For those of us who did not grow up with the law and are looking at this 2,000+ years later, we can see that this letter provides reassurance that Jesus is Lord and he is the Promised One.

## James

The next letter of James is one of convictions, self-reflection, and devotion. It was written by the brother of Jesus, James, and is written to the twelve tribes that scattered. In other words, this letter was written to all the descendants of Jacob, Jewish Christians. This is a unique letter that combines many of Jesus' teachings from the sermon on the mount and the age old wisdom of Proverbs. In this way, James provides wisdom for the followers of Jesus that is practical, yet difficult to apply. James discusses the temptations and trials that we face and encourages us to endure the hardship and not give in to sin. He spends much time discussing the faith without

works, and how deadly the tongue can be. He discusses the two kinds of wisdom, our obedience to God and His faithfulness, our patience in awaiting the Lord's return, and how powerful prayer can be. James infuses the wisdom of Proverbs with Jesus' teachings to encourage and motivate us to be the most faithful and dedicated followers of the Messiah.

## 1 Peter

The letters of 1 and 2 Peter are both written by the apostle Peter. 1 Peter was written to the scattered Jewish and Gentile Christians throughout Asia Minor. The first letter of Peter is one that gives hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Although these people may be suffering, Peter wants them to be reminded of the hope they have in the risen Jesus. This letter offers instructions on living a life dedicated to Christ even in the midst of suffering. Throughout the letter, Peter uses Old Testament imagery to show the Gentiles that they are now part of the redemptive story. This letter gives us application of how God's chosen people should act today. More than that, however, this letter offers a reason behind the suffering. Even though they are suffering persecution because of their faith, they should rejoice because this means that by imitating the love of Jesus, they are bringing God's kingdom into action. This leads to a hope that though they are suffering, one day Jesus will return and we will all share in the victory of Jesus.

## 2 Peter

2 Peter is a much more intense and powerful letter. This letter calls out the false teaching that is taking place and calls to make their "calling and election sure." Peter wants them to be aware that they are grounded in the truth and that refreshing their memory is never a bad thing. The day of the Lord is a huge theme in this book. Peter encourages them to look forward to the day when Jesus comes and destroys evil once and for all and the new heaven and earth is established. Because they are looking forward to this day, Peter calls them to be found "blameless" and "at peace with him". A call to stay devoted and rooted in the truth. These letters of Peter encourage us to look forward to Jesus return, and all the while keeping faithful to God as we await that glorious return.

## 1 John

The next 3 letters are the letters of John. In the Bible, they are named 1 John, 2 John, and 3 John. To see the whole picture more clearly, we are going to break down these letters to see the overall picture they paint together.

These three letters are written by John the elder to believers in Christ. 1 John has messages of light, love, and watchfulness of false teachers who corrupt the truth about Jesus. The message of stopping false teachers is evident so only the truth is told about Jesus. John then talks about how God is light and since he is light, we must also be a light to the world by following Jesus. Jesus taught that we are to be a light in Matthew 5. John then talks about love. When we love others, we share in the gospel message and share in the love of Jesus. Jesus loved so we

should love, and this is the message John is trying to give. So within 1 John, the ideas of light, love, and truth are expressed. It's a letter of encouragement to make us realize that we get to share in the kingdom of God right now, as we await the full kingdom when Christ returns.

## 2 John

2 John is written to the "lady" who is unknown. He writes to her to discuss how one particular church should not receive or welcome these false teachers and deceivers. John starts out by saying that we should love one another and that means obeying his commands. His command is to walk in love (2 John 6). So by loving one another we follow his command and by following his command we are loving each other. It's a harmonious relationship between obeying and loving. John then gives warnings

## 3 John

3 John wrote to his friend Gaius. John praises him for his faithfulness and encourages him to continue his support for the fellow believers. Then he talks about this character Diotrephes who seems to be causing chaos in the local church. He then encourages Gaius to do what is good and hopes to see him soon. It's a personal letter of encouragement and of a local church problems to get rid of the wickedness in the church and to promote obedience and faithfulness to Jesus.

## Jude

The next letter is the letter of Jude. Judah, one of Jesus' brothers, wrote a strong warning to Jewish believers about those who teach falsely about Jesus. These deceivers lead other people down a path that is corrupt and untrue. Judah uses examples from the Hebrew Scriptures like the deliverance of Egypt, the angelic rebellion, and Sodom and Gomorrah to warn the audience about these deceivers. He encourages them to stay strong to the faith. The warning Jude gives provides believers with the faith and courage to confront this evil and rebellion and to look to the hope of Jesus' return when all evil and corruption is destroyed.

As you can see, all of these letters wrap around the idea of living in the present to get to a future hope. Jesus came, restoring our broken relationship with God and now we await the full arrival of His kingdom when Jesus returns. For now, these letters give us encouragement and instruction on what to do until that time comes.

## Revelation

We have come to the conclusion of our Story of the Bible series. It has been an amazing journey. We started in Genesis and have worked our way through the entire Bible, pointing out the big and small storylines and how it all connects to Jesus. As we have worked our way through the New Testament, we see that the story is not over. There is a second coming of Christ that all of creation awaits. It is the time when creation is restored to the Eden like state

and evil is destroyed forever. Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have this future hope to look forward to, as we await our Messiah. We have now come to the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation. This will not be a complete answer guide to this book, but it will show how this book points us to our future hope in Jesus.

The book of Revelation is actually titled, The Revelation of Jesus Christ. It starts out with the words of Jesus talking to certain churches in Asia about being strong and things they can improve on. The book then quickly moves into visions that John has while on the island of Patmos. Let's break this down to get a better understanding of all the time frames in this book. The first 19 chapters takes place around 70-90 A.D. depending on who you ask. Starting in chapter 4, John starts to see all these strange visions of heaven and of the spiritual world and they can be quite disturbing and down right confusing to a modern reader like me and you. There are angels, dragons, and beasts that pop up all over this book and none of it seems to make any sense. Revelation is full of figurative language. In other words, these images of beasts and dragons and all these different characters are often symbols that represent something we know of. In Revelation, the dragon often represents Satan and Babylon represents Rome during the time this was written. Jesus is described as a Lamb and the throne of God is just as beautifully described as one could imagine. The first 19 chapters have already come and gone in history but it is the last 3 chapters (20, 21, and 22) that I want to focus on the most. These chapters have not yet happened and are awaiting their fulfillment.

Chapter 20 is the day of judgment. It is the day when all evil and sin is destroyed and God's people win. It is the day when all of the wrongdoing in the world is finally justified and justice reigns. The next two chapters describe heaven. Chapter 21 describes "a new heaven and a new earth" and the city of Jerusalem comes out of heaven in this vision with all its splendor. John describes that God is now in His temple which is a sign that God reigns with His creation completely.

Chapter 22 is a vision of getting back to how the garden of Eden was like in Genesis. There's the river of life and the tree of life and we will reign forever with God, just as it was supposed to be all along. We win in the end and the book ends with the warning that Jesus is coming and that we should be anticipating his arrival.

Creation has never been the same since Adam and Eve ate of the tree. Jesus finally came onto the scene to allow us to be restored back to God and to share heaven with the people we encounter. God is in us now through the Holy Spirit to guide us and lead us. We are now awaiting the time when Christ comes to fully restore creation as described here in Revelation. We are awaiting the time when heaven and earth are reunited completely once again and that love and peace will reign forever. When Christ comes, we will be restored to our position as co-rulers with God and we will reign with Him forever.

The book of Revelation points us forward to Christ's return and the fulfillment of all restoration. It points us to the fulfillment of the entire storyline of the Bible when all creation is restored. This concludes our series of the Storyline of the Bible.





## Genesis

Themes: **God's Spirit, Testing & Trees, Blessings and Curse, Exile**

1. **God's Spirit:** Genesis 1-11
    - a. Genesis 1-5 – Creation
      - Days 3 and 6
      - Days 2 and 5
      - Days 1 and 4
      - Stars rule heavens
      - Humans rule earth on day 6
        - Humans made in image of God
    - Eden
      - Tree of Life
      - Tree of Knowledge of good and bad
      - Fall
        - Serpent lies to humans
        - “Cool of the day”
    - Cain and Abel
      - God favors Abel over Cain-firstborn
  - b. Genesis 6-10 – Noah- can't live with humans but save a remnant
    - “Sons of God” - spiritual fall
    - Flood
      - Noah and his family
      - God makes covenant with Noah
  - c. Genesis 11
    - Babel
      - Languages
      - Start of theme of Babylon
2. Abraham - **Testing with Trees:** Genesis 12-23
  - a. New Adam
  - b. Trees**
    - i. Oaks of Moreh
    - ii. Mamre
    - iii. Mamre
  - c. Sodom and Gomorrah
    - God's judgment on rebellious nations
  - d. Testing**
    - i. Abraham listens to voice of wife- fail
    - ii. Test at the well- pass
    - iii. Sacrifice of Isaac- pass
  - e. Melchizedek
    - Priest-king
    - Messiah hyperlink

3. Isaac and Jacob- **Blessings and Curse:** Genesis 24-37
  - a. Jacob/Esau
    - i. Womb
    - ii. Birthright
    - iii. Inheritance/Blessing
      - Listened to voice of his mother
    - iv. Jacob blessed over firstborn
  - b. Jacob wrestles with God
  - c. Jacob meets Esau
4. Joseph- **Exile:** Genesis 38-50
  - a. Dreams
  - b. Exile- in the pit
  - c. Egypt- Rise-fall-rise again to power
  - d. Manasseh blessed over Ephraim

Joseph is like a New Adam, with God's blessings, who overcomes exile, giving Eden blessings in a foreign land.

Seeing and Taking theme in Genesis examples

- Genesis 3:6, Genesis 6, Genesis 12:14, Genesis 16:3, Genesis 22:13, Genesis 34:2, Genesis 34:2, Genesis 37:24-32

## Exodus

Themes: God's Name, Testing, Temple

1. **God's Name:** Exodus 1-13:16
  - a. People in Exile/Moses Born- Exodus 1-2
  - b. Burning Bush- Exodus 3-6
    - i. **YAHWEH means "I am/I will be"**
    - ii. Moses called to deliver people
  - c. **10 Plagues- Exodus 7-13- Acts of de-creation**
    - i. **Blood, Frogs, Gnats**
    - ii. **Flies, Disease, Boils**
    - iii. **Hail, Locusts, Darkness**  
**Death of firstborn**

Passover  
These are so Pharaoh knows God's name (Exodus 7:17)
2. **Testing:** Exodus 13:17-24
  - Part 1- Exodus 13:17- ch.18
    - a. **Crossing of Red Sea-** Exodus 13-15
      - i. First test caught between water and army
      - ii. Song of the Sea

3 tests in wilderness

    - b. **Tree thrown in water-** Exodus 15
    - c. **Bread from heaven-** Exodus 16
    - d. **Israel tests Yahweh-** Exodus 17
  - e. Israel defeats Amalek and Jethro visits- Exodus 17-18

Part 2- Exodus 19-24

  - a. Instructions for Mt. Sinai- Exodus 19
  - b. Ten Commandments- Exodus 20
    - a. Exodus 20:1-17- Ten Commandments
    - b. Exodus 20:18-21- Flashback to ch.19
  - c. 42 Laws- Exodus 21-23
  - d. Covenant is made- Exodus 24
3. **Temple/Tabernacle:** Exodus 25-40
  - a. **Blueprints for the Tabernacle** – Eden space- Exodus 25-31
    - i. 7 speeches from God
  - b. **Rebellion/Renewal of Covenant-** Exodus 32-34
  - c. Setting up Tabernacle- Exodus 35-40

## Leviticus

Themes: Sacrifice/Atonement, Holiness, Sabbath

1. **Sacrifice/Atonement:** Leviticus 1-7
  - a. Distinction between common and holy
  - b. Dwelling with God in their midst- How were they to do it?
  - c. 5 Sacrifices
    - i. Ascension (Burnt)
    - ii. Gift
    - iii. Peace
    - iv. Purification
    - v. Guilt
  - d. Atonement- means "at-one-ment" or unified. It means to repay a debt and to purify.
  
2. **Holiness:** Leviticus 8-16
  - a. Inauguration of priesthood and tabernacle
  - b. This section is the center of Leviticus and the Torah
  - c. Consecration of the priests- Leviticus 8
    - i. Rebellion of the priests- Leviticus 10
  - d. Holiness/commonness- Leviticus 11-15
    - i. If something is holy it is brought to or dedicated to Yahweh
  - e. Purity/Impurity- Leviticus 11-15
    - i. Jesus can make impure things or more so people pure
  - f. Day of Atonement- Leviticus 16 (**Center of Leviticus and Torah**)
    - i. One goat is sacrificed, one goat is sent into wilderness
    - ii. Jesus is both goats who was sacrificed and suffered outside Jerusalem just as the goat was sent outside the camp.
  
3. **Sabbath rest:** Leviticus 17-27
  - a. Leviticus 17-20- Laws for honoring people
    - i. No eating blood- Leviticus 17
    - ii. Leviticus 18- 14 laws
    - iii. Leviticus 19- 21 laws
    - iv. Leviticus 20- 14 laws
  - b. Priests' regulations- Leviticus 21-22
  - c. Leviticus 23-27
    - i. Leviticus 23- Feast/Festival Days
    - ii. Leviticus 24:1-9- Menorah Lamp (God's light shines on Israel)
    - iii. Leviticus 24:10-23- Blasphemer
      1. Dishonor the name of Yahweh
    - iv. Leviticus 25- Year of Jubilee- liberation of people and animals (Eden)
    - v. Leviticus 26-27- Blessings and Curses

## Numbers- In the Wilderness

Themes: Temple, Testing, New Adam and Eve

1. **Temple:** Numbers 1-12
  - a. Census- Numbers 1-4
  - b. Levites chosen as a Genesis theme of first born chosen
  - c. Confess sins instead of blame- Numbers 5- Genesis 3 theme
    - i. 5:11-31 this compares to Genesis 6-8 of wickedness
  - d. Nazarite Vow- Numbers 6
    - i. To be set apart like Noah in Genesis 8-9
    - ii. Numbers 6:22-8:4- Eden blessings
  - e. Lights in the tabernacle- Numbers 8
    - i. Tabernacle mirrors Eden
  - f. Listening to God's voice- Numbers 9-12

2. **Testing:** Numbers 13-25
  - a. Numbers 13-15
    - i. Spies in the land echoes Genesis 3
    - ii. Fear of land compares to Exodus 32
  - b. Numbers 16 Rebellion of Korah
  - c. Numbers 20 Moses' Rebellion
  - d. Numbers 21-25 Blessings for Israel
    - i. Victory in War
    - ii. Balaam blessings

Despite 3 failed tests, God still intends to bless them

3. **New Adam & Eve:** Numbers 26-35
  - a. Numbers 26- Census which summarizes the rebellions
  - b. Numbers 27
    - i. Zelophehad's daughters
    - ii. Joshua as new Moses or New Adam
  - c. Numbers 28-30
    - i. Genesis 1-9 is replayed in review of feast days and vows
    - ii. Israel is a new Adam and Eve going into Eden
    - iii. Numbers 32- Outside the garden of Eden- 1 and ½ tribes stay on the other side of Jordan River
    - iv. Numbers 35- Cities of refuge and inheritance

Numbers ends with them outside Eden, on the other side of the river across from promised land.

## Deuteronomy- “second law”

Themes: Love & Listening, Law, Blessings and Curse

### 1. **Listen & Love:** Deuteronomy 1-11

Sermons of Moses- Deuteronomy 1-11

- a. Summary of Israel history -3 sections of speeches
- b. Explanation or commentary of laws
- c. Listen to God's voice and loving God
  - i. Listen occurs 91 times, love occurs 12
- d. Entering Canaan land
  - i. Eden imagery- the people are outside Eden land (Canaan) waiting to enter
- e. Giants- Deuteronomy 1:20- Genesis 6

### 2. **Law:** Deuteronomy 12-26

Deuteronomy 12-18- Relationship between Israel and Yahweh

- a. Devotion to Yahweh
- b. Year of Jubilee

Deuteronomy 19-25- Relationship between Israelites

- a. “Law”- terms of covenant with Yahweh
- b. These laws could be adapted, but they could not go outside covenant boundaries
- c. **Judgment/justice**- same word meaning “accountability within relationships”
- d. **Righteousness**- “right relationship”
- e. Warning against allegiance to other spiritual powers Torah is for gaining wisdom

### 3. **Blessing and Curse-** Deuteronomy 26:16-34

- a. Deuteronomy 27- People on two mountains on either side. One would pronounce blessings, the other would pronounce curse.  
-The mountains are near the Oaks of Moreh. Connects this with promise to Abraham and the garden of Eden.
- b. **Blessing and Curses- Deuteronomy 28**  
28:1-14- Blessings of abundance and multiplication  
28:15-68- Curses resemble plagues and are consequences of choices
- c. Deuteronomy 29- Predicts Israel's failure
- d. Joshua takes over and rebellion predicted- Deuteronomy 31
- e. **Moses- Song and blessing- Deuteronomy 32-33- Anyone who obeys the law are his children. This is Eden imagery for those who remain faithful.**
- f. **Moses dies and we look for a new Adam in Joshua**

## Genesis

### Adam to Noah Genesis 1-11

- Chaos-Eden-Exile 1-5
- Flood Narrative 6-9
- Scattering the World 9-11

### Abraham 11:27-25:18

- Abraham's Journey of Trust 11-19
- Testing 20-22
- Preparing Descendants 22-25

### Isaac and Jacob 25:19-36

- Jacob's birth-Exile 25-28
- Jacob in Exile 29-31
- Return from exile 32-37

### Jacob's Sons 37-50

- Joseph's journey and Judah's Failure 37-41
- Joseph Tests Brothers 42-45
- Joseph and Eden 45-50

## Exodus

### The Exodus from Egypt 1-13:16

- Moses is called to deliver Israel 1-6:27
- Ten Plagues 6:28-11:10
- Passover and Exodus 12-13:16

### Israel at Mt Sinai 13:17-24:18

- Journey and Testing in Wilderness 13:17-17:16
- Moses and Jethro 18
- Israel is Tested 19-24:18

### The Tabernacle 25-40

- Blueprints 25-31
- Golden Calf 32-34
- Building of Tabernacle 35-40



## Leviticus

### Repairing the Relationship 1-7

- Ascension, Grain and Peace Offerings 1-3
- Purification and Repair Offerings 4-6:7
- Priest's Portion 6:8-7

### Restore Holy Space 8-16

- Inauguration and Abuse of Tabernacle 8-10
- Rituals for Purity 11-15
- Day of Atonement 16

### Reforming the People 17-27

- Israel called to Holiness 17-20
- Priests called to Holiness 21-22
- Festivals and Sabbath 23-27

## Numbers

### Preparing for Travel 1-12

- Israel counted and purified 1-6
- Israel blessed 6-10:10
- Rebellion 10:11-12

### Refusal to Enter Promised Land 13-25

- Leaders rebel 13-15
- Levites rebel 16-19
- Success and Failure/Balaam 20-25

### Preparing to Enter Promised Land 26-36

- Next generation counted 26-32
- Egypt to Moab 33
- Next generation prepared to enter 33-36

## Deuteronomy

### Agreement 1-11

- Israel's story retold 1-3
- Call to faithfulness but foretells failure 4
- Call to covenant loyalty 5-11

### Instruction 12-26

- Worship, Purity, Leadership 12-18
- Community, Sexuality, Family 19-25
- Worship/Sabbath rest 26

### Choice 26-34

- Blessings and Curses of Covenant 26-29
- Call to choose life and blessing 29-30
- Song of warning and blessing 31-34

## Joshua

### 1. Conquest Joshua 1-12

#### a. Crossing the Jordan 1-5:12

- i. Prepare to cross (1-2)
  1. Be strong and courageous (3 times)
- ii. Cross the Jordan (3-4)
  1. Hyperlink to Red Sea in Exodus 14

#### iii. Into the promised land (Eden) (5)

1. Eating fruit and grain. Manna stopped

#### b. Victory in War 5:13-8

##### i. Testing (Listen to Yahweh's voice) 5:13-8

1. Pass the test at Jericho, but fail at Ai.
  - a. Did not listen to voice of Yahweh
2. God gives them victory at Ai- because they listened
3. Covenant is renewed because of their unfaithfulness
  - a. Blessings and Curses
  - b. Torah read aloud

#### c. Conquest 9-12

- i. Southern Victories (9-10)
- ii. Northern Victories (11)

#### iii. Canaan Conquered (12)

1. The promised land (Eden) is being restored with evil kings defeated.

## 2. Land Joshua 13-21

### a. Inheritance 13-14

- i. Inheritance - acquire or possess or divide
  1. The land of Canaan, (Eden) is what the people received from the Lord.
- ii. There is still more land to be taken (13)

### b. Allotment 15-19

- i. Allotment- to cast lots or used the same as an inheritance
  1. The territory is divided between Judah, Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, Dan and Joshua.
- ii. God gave them the land as part of their possession. It is a link back to when humans were to rule the earth and have possession over the land (Gen 3)

#### c. Refuge/Towns for Levites

- i. Cities of Refuge (20)
  1. Designated cities Moses commanded in Numbers 35.
- ii. Levitical inheritance (21)
  1. Levites received towns and pastures.

#### iii. The Israelites had their land, rest, Lord's promise fulfilled. A sign of Eden.

- 3. Witness Joshua 22-24
  - a. Altar Problem (22)
    - i. Tribes on the other side of the Jordan wanted it to be a “witness” not for sacrifices.
  - b. Joshua’s Final Speech (23)
    - i. Blessings and curses for breaking covenant
  - c. Serving Yahweh (24)
    - i. Review from Abraham to Joshua (24:1-13)
    - ii. Repeated Covenant Cycle
      - 1. Israel agrees to serve Yahweh
      - 2. Joshua tells them they will fail (just like Moses)
      - 3. Israel again agrees to serve Yahweh
    - iii. People or objects could be witnesses to the covenant
      - 1. Israel against Israel
      - 2. Stone against Israel
      - 3. Law - Oak - Holy Place (v.26)
    - iv. 3 burials- Joseph, Joshua, and Eleazar

## Judges

1. **Testing Judges 1-3:6**
  - a. Fighting Canaanites
    - i. Israel failed to drive them all out. This led to idolatrous worship and intermarriage
  - b. Test the Israelites
    - i. The Lord purposely left nations to test the inexperienced generation about war.
    - ii. Would they obey the Lord's commands (3:4) or fail?
      1. Verse 7 tells us they failed (they did evil in the eyes of the Lord).
2. Deliverance - God's Spirit Judges 3:7-16
  - a. 3 men are mentioned as saving Israel
    - i. Othniel - "Spirit of the Lord"
    - ii. Ehud
    - iii. Shamgar
  - b. 4 main characters follow in movements
    - i. **Deborah**
      1. Deborah - "bee"
      2. Held court under a tree, administering justice
      3. Prophetess and a judge
      4. Defeated Jabin (Canaanites) - 40 years rest
    - ii. **Gideon**
      1. Meets with angel under oak tree
      2. Wants 3 signs from God
        - a. Staying put
        - b. Wet fleece/dry ground
        - c. Dry fleece/wet ground
      3. Rid the land of Baal worship/defeated Midianites- 40 years rest
      4. Failure: Idol Worship
    - iii. **Jephthah**
      1. Defeated Ammonites
      2. Outcast in society
        - a. Failure: Murdered
    - iv. **Samson**
      1. Story of Samson is a cycle
        - a. Philistine woman- bad things
          - i. Samson betrayed
          - ii. God rescues Samson
          - iii. Samson caught
          - iv. Samson escapes Gaza
        - b. Philistine woman-bad things- death
      2. Story of Samson -> Story of Israel
        - a. Powerful (Conquest of Canaan)

b. Led astray (Baal and other gods)

c. Destruction (Slavery/Exile)

3. Failure Judges 17-21

a. 17-18 Worship Corruption

- i. Micah had idols and his own place of worship
- ii. The tribe of Dan rejects their inheritance (reversal of Joshua narrative)

b. 19-21 Moral Corruption

- i. Rape/Murder (19)
- ii. War between tribes (20)
- iii. Taking of wives to spare the Benjamite clan (21)
  - 1. Eden repeat of seeing and taking
  - 2. "No king, everyone did as he saw fit" - chaos but hope for a king

## Samuel

### 1. Faithfulness Samuel 1-7

#### a. Samuel's birth

- i. Samuel was born to Hannah, a barren wife of Elkanah
  1. Hannah prayed to God and named him Samuel (asked of God)
  2. Dedicated him to the Lord
- ii. Hannah's Prayer
  1. vv1-5 Hannah prays for her horn (strength) has been lifted
  2. vv6-10 God's anointed will be lifted and exalted

#### iii. Eli's sons disobey the Lord

#### b. Samuel became a prophet to Israel

- i. Philistines capture the Ark of the Covenant
  1. God causes plagues on 3 towns
- ii. Ark is returned
- iii. Samuel defeats Philistines

### 2. Kingship Failure Samuel 8-16

#### a. Saul becomes King 8-12

#### i. Israel asks for a king (8)

1. This was a rejection of Yahweh as king
2. The Lord gives them a king and anoints Saul

#### ii. Samuel's final speech (12)

1. Fear the Lord
2. Do not do evil

#### b. Saul's Failure 13-15

- i. Samuel rebukes Saul for not keeping command (13)
- ii. Saul fight Amalekites (15)
  1. Samuel says Saul disobeyed
  2. Saul claims he obeyed
  3. Samuel prophecies against Saul
  4. Saul confesses
- iii. Kingdom torn from Saul and will be given to David

### 3. Exaltation/Humbleness Samuel 16-31

#### a. David Anointed

- i. Spirit left Saul and evil spirit tormented him

#### b. David and Goliath

#### c. Conflict between David and Saul 17-30

#### i. Saul pursuing David 17-24

1. David and Jonathan
  - a. Covenant and Oath
  - b. Love for each other

#### ii. David pursuing Saul 24-30 (Testing) in the desert

1. David spares Saul
  2. David and Abigail
  3. David spares Saul
- iii. Daid passes the tests and Saul takes his own life

## Kingship Failure 2 Samuel

1. David's Success 1-10
  - a. David is Anointed King (2)
  - b. War between house of Saul and David (a sign of failure) (3-4)
  - c. Jerusalem is established- Unity of Israel
    - i. Ark is brought back to Jerusalem (5-6)
    - ii. National and Religious capital (Zion)
  - d. God's promise of covenant and royal line 7-10
    - i. Here Jesus' reign is foreshadowed
      1. Eternal Kingdom
      2. Messianic King
      3. Promise to Abraham
    - ii. David's prayer of thanks
    - iii. David has more victories over Philistines and Ammonites
2. David's Failure 11-20
  - a. Bathsheba
    - i. "Saw...get" Genesis 3 imagery of seeing and taking
      1. This led to adultery
    - ii. Uriah, her husband, is killed (displeased the Lord ) v.11:27
    - iii. David's son dies because of his sin
  - b. Absalom
    - i. Absalom kills his brother
    - ii. David flees from his son Absalom
    - iii. Absalom dies
3. Conclusion 21-24
  - 21- Failure of Saul
    - 22a David's mighty men
    - 22-23a Poetic Remembrance of God's covenant
      - Connect to Hannah's Prayer
    - 23b David's mighty men
  - 24- Failure of David
    - i. Census
      1. "How many there are"
      2. The sin was pride or hope in numbers and human power instead of divine power
      3. 3 options given to David for judgment
        - a. 3 Years- Famine
        - b. 3 Months- Fleeing



c. 3 Days- Plague

i. God shows David mercy because God chose the option that lasted the shortest amount of time, the plague

## Kings

### 1. Temple Kings 1-12

#### a. Solomon asks for wisdom (1-4)

##### i. Reversal of Garden of Eden narrative

#### b. Temple is built

##### i. Bronze Basin

##### ii. Ark of Covenant

##### iii. Lampstand

##### iv. Incense Altar

##### v. Table for Bread

#### c. Yahweh's warning to Solomon AND his sons

##### i. Listen and Obey-throne established (Blessings)

##### ii. Fail to listen-Israel cut off (Curses)

### 2. Covenant Failure Kings 12-2 Kings 17:6

#### a. Kingdom split

##### i. Jeroboam-Israel

##### ii. Rehoboam-Judah & Benjamin

1. Wanted to fight rest of Israel but they listened to Yahweh (12:24)

#### b. Kings

##### i. "Did what was right in the eyes of the Lord"

##### ii. "Did evil in the eyes of the Lord"

<u>Israel's Kings</u>	<u>Judah's Kings</u>
Jeroboam	Rehoboam
Nadab	Abijah
Baasha	Asa
Elah	Jehoshaphat
Zimri	Jehoram
Tibni	Ahaziah
Omri	Athaliah
Ahab	Joash
Ahaziah	Amaziah
Joram	Azariah
Jehu	Jotham
Jehoahaz	Ahaz
Jehoash	
Jeroboam II	

Zechariah	
Shallum	
Menahem	
Pekahiah	
Pekah	
Hoshea	

c. Prophets

i. Elijah- a new Moses figure

1. Elijah and the widow
  - a. Provides food for her
  - b. Raises son from dead
2. Showdown: Yahweh vs Baal
  - a. God wins in epic showdown of fire
  - b. Point was to turn their hearts back (18:36)
3. Elijah runs faster than a chariot
  - a. Symbol of the Lord's power over Baal and human power (Ahab)
4. Lord appears to Elijah just as he did Moses (19:11)
  - a. Wind
  - b. Earthquake
  - c. Fire
  - d. Whisper
    - i. There is a remnant - 7,000
5. Taken up to heaven

ii. Elisha

1. Healed Water
2. Widow's Oil
3. Elisha raises son
4. Bad Stew
5. Feeding 100
6. Healing of Naaman
7. Ax floats on water
  - a. All of these acts are done to show the people that God is still with them and shows them mercy. Also showing what the coming Messiah would do

3. Exile 2 Kings 17:7-25

a. The people were exiled 2 Kings 17:7-23

- i. Worshiped other gods
- ii. Burned incense
- iii. Sacred stones

- iv. High places
- v. Prophets warned them of coming judgment and to turn back. They did not listen. This led to Exile in Assyria for Israel.

**b. Further Kings of Judah**

- i. Hezekiah in Jerusalem
  - 1. Assyria threatens
  - 2. Assyria falls
- ii. Manasseh- bad
- iii. Amon- bad
- iv. Josiah
  - 1. Finds book of law
  - 2. Renews Covenant
- v. Jehoahaz-bad
- vi. Jehoiakim- bad
  - 1. Babylon comes
- vii. Jehoiachin- bad
- viii. Zedekiah- bad

**c. Fall of Jerusalem**

- i. Complete exile of Judah
- ii. 37th year- Jehoiachin released
  - 1. This gives hope of a remnant and a future Messiah King

## Isaiah

1. Judgment and Hope 1-12
  - a. Judgment on Jerusalem from Assyria will create a new Jerusalem
  - b. Vision of the Temple
    - i. Heavenly throne room
    - ii. Isaiah is purified from vision
  - c. Messiah Prophecy
    - i. Stump of Jesse
    - ii. Branch of Jesse
    - iii. Immanuel- God with Us
2. Judgment on Nations 13-27
  - a. 13-23
    - i. Assyria
    - ii. Philistia
    - iii. Moab
    - iv. Aram/Israel
    - v. Egypt
    - vi. Cush
    - vii. Babylon
    - viii. Edom
    - ix. Arabia
    - x. Jerusalem
    - xi. Tyre
  - b. 24-27
    - i. The fall is described as the end of the world, the destruction of the earth
    - ii. But God will save his people and they will praise him on the mountain.
      1. The old Jerusalem will be a ruin
      2. But the new Jerusalem will be a strong city
        - a. All people from all nations will worship in Jerusalem
        3. Jerusalem is described with Eden imagery
          - a. "Mountain"
          - b. Rivers
          - c. Vineyards
3. Rise and Fall of Jerusalem 28-39
  - a. 28-35
    - i. Leaders are accused
      1. This is what Jesus was doing when he entered to Jerusalem
  - b. 36-39
    - i. A new leader Hezekiah reigns
      1. Reads Torah
      2. Renews covenant
    - ii. Jerusalem Falls

EXILE

- 4. Hope 40-48
  - a. There is hope. God's kingdom is coming
  - b. Israel will be redeemed
    - i. Yahweh is Lord of all and God of all gods
      - 1. This leads to the fall of Babylon. God's victory of Babylonian gods
  - c. Persia will save Israel from exile just as the servant will save all humanity

5. The Servant 49-55

- a. The servant- (Messiah) will save people from their sins
- b. The servant will be rejected and killed
- c. The servant will live again
  - i. Two Choices
    - 1. Salvation leads to covenant blessings
      - a. The servants serve
    - 2. Rebellion leads to covenant curses
      - a. The wicked rebel

6. God's Kingdom 56-66

- a. Poetic pattern to this section
  - i. All Nations Invited to Kingdom
    - 1. Contrast Between the Wicked and the Servants
      - a. Prayers of Repentance
        - i. The Servant Announces God's Kingdom
      - b. Prayers of Repentance
    - 2. Contrast Between the Wicked and the Servants
  - ii. All Nations Invited to Kingdom
- b. Blessing and Curse
  - i. Judgment for False worship
  - ii. Blessing for true worship

## Jeremiah

1. Warning to Israel 1-24
  - a. Jeremiah's call was to:
    - i. Uproot and tear down- judgment
    - ii. Plant and build up- hope
  - b. Broken Covenant
    - i. Worship other gods
  - c. Temple Sermon (7-10)
  - d. Accusation of Israel's leaders
    - i. Priests
    - ii. Prophets
    - iii. Kings
  - e. Potter Lessons (18-20)
    - i. Yahweh is full of mercy
      1. Israel has two choices: To repent or continue to rebel. If they rebel, disaster is coming
  - f. Messiah- righteous Branch will reign as king
2. Covenant 25-33
  - a. Exile in Babylon is coming (25)
    - i. Babylon- cup of wrath
  - b. Jeremiah is rejected by leaders (26-29)
    - i. Jesus would also be rejected
    - ii. Jeremiah's Letter
      1. Message of hope in the midst of exile
      2. Promise of restoration will be fulfilled after 70 years
  - c. New Covenant (30-33)
    - i. Messiah is coming
    - ii. Torah will be in hearts
    - iii. Promise of Restoration
      1. Yahweh will bring them back
      2. Heal them
      3. Rebuild
      4. Cleanse
      5. Forgive
3. Exile 34-45
  - a. Chapter 34
    - i. Warning to Zedekiah (vv1-7)
    - ii. Slaves weren't set free (vv8-22)
  - b. Lesson from Recabites to obey word of Yahweh
    - i. Recabites kept their ancestors command
    - ii. Israel has not obeyed Yahweh's commands

- c. Jeremiah is thrown in prison and in cistern (36-38)
- d. Jerusalem Falls
  - i. Gedaliah Murdered
  - ii. Fled to Egypt
  - iii. Disaster came because of Israel's idolatry

#### 4. 46-52 Judgment

- a. Egypt
- b. Philistia
- c. Moab
- d. Ammon
- e. Edom
- f. Damascus
- g. Kedar & Hazor
- h. Elam
- i. Babylon
- j. Recap
  - i. Jerusalem fell
    - 1. Temple is destroyed
  - ii. Jehoiachin gives hope for royal line



## Ezekiel

### 1. Judgment for Israel 1-24

- a. Visions
  - i. Storm Cloud
  - ii. Living Creatures
  - iii. Man of fire on throne
    - 1. Appearance of the glory of Yahweh
    - 2. God is seated on a throne, gives hope to exiles
- b. Ezekiel is called as a watchman to warn Israel. Israel can either:
  - i. Repent
  - ii. Not repent
- c. Ezekiel symbolizes fall (4)
- d. Temple (7-10)
  - i. The end is coming
  - ii. Idolatry has caused the glory of Yahweh to leave the temple (8,10)
- e. Ezekiel symbolizes exile (12)
- f. Israel is compared to:
  - i. Useless vine
  - ii. Adulterous wife
  - iii. Two eagles and a vine
    - 1. Messianic promise
      - a. "Shoot"- of a cedar
      - b. Bear fruit
  - iv. Cooking Pot
  - v. The Two Sisters
    - 1. Oholah- Samaria
    - 2. Oholibah- Jerusalem
- g. Judgment and Restoration
  - i. Wrath of God will be completed
  - ii. Peace will come on the holy mountain
- h. Babel will be the "sword" of judgment
- i. Ezekiel's wife dies, symbolizing reaction to fall (24)

### 2. Judgment for Nation 25-33

- a. Ammon
- b. Moab
- c. Edom
- d. Philistia
- e. Tyre
  - i. Prophecy
  - ii. Lament for Tyre
  - iii. Prophecy against king

- f. Sidon
  - g. Egypt
    - i. Lament for Egypt
    - ii. Pharaoh
      - 1. Cedar
        - a. Trees of Eden
      - 2. Lament for Pharaoh
3. Hope 34-39
  - a. Shepherd and Sheep
    - i. Israel's leaders have failed to be good shepherds
    - ii. God will be their Shepherd
  - b. Prophecy against Mt. Seir
  - c. Prophecy against mountains of Israel
  - d. Restoration possess (36:24-38)
    - i. Sprinkle clean water
    - ii. New heart
    - iii. New Spirit
    - iv. Eden blessings will follow
  - e. Visions of Unity
    - i. Valley of Dry Bones
    - ii. Two Sticks become one
      - 1. Vision followed by symbolic act to show God's plan of restoration
  - f. Eden (37:24-28)
    - i. Messiah
    - ii. Torah
    - iii. Land
    - iv. Covenant
    - v. Eden blessings (increase in number)
    - vi. Temple- (dwelling place)
  - g. Gog
    - i. 3 oracles against Gog
      - 1. Battle of world powers against Yahweh
      - 2. Yahweh will be victorious - "they will know I am the Lord their God"
    - ii. Israel was exiled, but they will be restored
4. Eden 40-48
  - a. Temple visions - "high mountain"
    - i. Gates
    - ii. Courts
    - iii. Rooms
    - iv. Furniture
  - b. Glory of Yahweh returns
  - c. Instructions
    - i. Levites and Priests
    - ii. Dividing the land

- iii. Offering and Feast Days
- d. River from temple (Eden imagery)
  - i. Fruit trees on bank of river
    - 1. Fruit- food
    - 2. Leaves- healing
- e. Boundaries and Division
- f. Gates of City
  - i. Name of city is "Lord is There"

## Hosea

1. Symbols 1-3
  - a. Hosea's life is a sign of Israel
    - i. Married - Covenant at Mt. Sinai
    - ii. Adultery - Covenant broken by idolatry
    - iii. Renewal - Messiah
2. Warnings of Unfaithfulness 4-11
  - a. Israel has broken commandments
  - b. Worshiped other gods
  - c. No "knowledge" of Yahweh
    - i. Relationship knowledge
      1. God- Father
      2. Israel - rebellious son
  - d. Judgment is coming because of these sins
3. History and Hope 12-14
  - a. Israel's history of rebellion
    - i. Jacob's lying
    - ii. Wandering in the wilderness
    - iii. King Saul
  - b. Eden blessings of restoration
    - i. "Trees"
      1. "Dwelling in the shade"
      2. "Flourishing"
    - ii. Ways of the Lord
      1. Righteous choose that path
      2. Rebellious stumble

## Joel

1. Day of the Lord 1-2a
  - a. Past day of the lord
    - i. Plagues on Egypt
      1. Locust swarm
  - b. Future day of the Lord
    - i. Fall of Jerusalem
      1. Locust swarm-Babylon
  - c. Call to repentance
2. Restoration 2b-3
  - a. God will defeat enemies
    - i. Along with THE future day of the Lord
  - b. Land will be restored
    - i. Eden blessings- renew all creation

- c. God's presence with his people
  - i. God's Spirit

Amos

### 1. Judgment on Nations 1-2

- a. Aram
- b. Philistia
- c. Phoenicia
- d. Edom
- e. Ammon
- f. Moab
- g. Judah
- h. Israel
  - i. Oppression of poor
  - ii. No justice
  - iii. Mistreatment of humanity

### 2. Judgment on Israel 3-6

- a. False Worship
    - i. Religion is hypocrisy
    - ii. Worship other gods
  - b. True Worship
    - i. Righteousness
    - ii. Justice
  - c. Day of the lord is coming
3. Amos' Visions 7-9
- a. 3 Visions
    - i. Locusts
    - ii. Fire
    - iii. Plumb Line
  - b. Basket of Ripe Fruit
    - i. Israel was to be harvested - destroyed
  - c. Restoration
    - i. David's tent
      - 1. Messiah
    - ii. Eden blessings
      - 1. Vineyards, gardens, "planted"

## Obadiah

1. Pride and Fall of Edom vv1-14
  - a. "Heights" "stars" - they put themselves above the rest
  - b. What they did to Israel will be done to them
2. Day of the Lord for all nations vv15-21
  - a. All nations will be destroyed
  - b. New Jerusalem
    - i. Deliverance for Israel

## Jonah

1. Chapter 1
  - a. Call to preach to Nineveh
  - b. Jonah runs to Tarshish (opposite direction)
  - c. Chaos Waters
    - i. Yahweh over sea and land
    - ii. Jonah jumps into chaos waters
2. Chapter 2
  - a. A sea creature swallows him
    - i. Act of mercy by God
  - b. Jonah prays a prayer
    - i. Thankfulness
3. Chapter 3
  - a. Jonah goes to Nineveh
    - i. "40 more days and Nineveh will be overturned"
      1. 40 a sign of completeness
      2. "Overturned"
        - a. Jonah meant destroyed
        - b. Nineveh repented instead, "turned around"
4. Chapter 4
  - a. Nineveh repents
    - i. God says Jonah's anger is not right
      1. Jonah wants to die
  - b. Shade tree given
    - i. Worm eats and it dies
      1. Jonah wants to die
  - c. All humans are valued

## Micah

### 1. Judgment on Jerusalem & Samaria 1-2

- a. Leaders and Prophets were not shepherds
  - b. God will shepherd his people
2. Israel's Leaders- Judgment is coming
- a. Leaders and Prophets
    - i. Leaders have broken Torah
    - ii. Prophets teach falsely
  - b. Restoration
    - i. God saves a remnant
    - ii. Messiah will deliver
      - 1. Peace

### 3. Rebellious People will be Restored

- a. Poor treatment of people/broken covenant
  - i. Do Justice
  - ii. Show mercy
  - iii. Be humble
- b. Restoration will come because:
  - i. God's Character
  - ii. God's Promises
- c. Micah's prayer
  - i. Micah prays 7:14
  - ii. God's answer 7:15
  - iii. Response 7:16

## Nahum

1. Judgment of All Nations 1
- a. Will not leave evil unpunished
  - b. Nineveh not mentioned in ch.1
  - c. Gives hope to Israel- 1:15
    - i. Celebrate festivals
    - ii. Fulfill vows
2. Nineveh's Fall
- a. God confronts evil
3. Assyria's Fall Prophesied
- a. God is confronting world evil

## Habakkuk

1. Complaint and Response 1-2a
  - a. 1st Complaint
    - i. Will you save us?
      1. No law
      2. No justice
    - ii. God's response: Babylon is coming
  - b. 2 Complaint
    - i. Will you tolerate Babylon
    - ii. God's response
      1. Babylon will fall
2. 5 Woes 2b
  - a. 2 to unjust economy
  - b. Slave laborers
  - c. Bad leaders
  - d. Idolaters
3. Habakkuk's Prayer
  - a. Renew God's works of old
  - b. God's presence
  - c. Rejoice in Yahweh
  - d. Righteous live by faith

## Zephaniah

1. Judgment on Jerusalem 1
  - a. Day of the Lord
    - i. Fall of Jerusalem
      1. Idolatry
    - ii. Reversal of Genesis 1
  - b. Seek Righteousness & humbleness
2. Judgment on Nations 2-3:8
  - a. Philistia
  - b. Moab
  - c. Ammon
  - d. Cush
  - e. Assyria
  - f. Jerusalem
    - i. Mentioned again because she does not repent
3. Remnant Saved 3:9-20
  - a. Burning fire
    - i. Not for destruction but purification



- b. Fulfill Abrahamic promise
- c. Restoration of Jerusalem

## Haggai

1. Temple 1
  - a. Call to rebuild temple
    - i. People give excuses
  - b. Zerubbabel responds
    - i. In contrast to the people
2. God's Spirit 2:1-9
  - a. God's Spirit in Zerubbabel, not a temple
3. Impurity vs Purity 2:10-19
  - a. People are defiled
  - b. God will bless them
4. Judgment 20-23
  - a. Judgment on nations
  - b. Blessings for those who serve Yahweh

## Zechariah

1. Dream Visions 1-6:8
  - a. Visions 1 and 8
    - i. 4 Horseman on patrol
      1. Is the Messiah coming?
  - b. Visions 2 and 7
    - i. 4 Horns
      1. Assria
      2. Babylon
    - ii. 4 Blacksmiths
      1. Persia
    - iii. Woman in a basket
      1. Israel's sin and exile
  - c. Visions 3 and 6
    - i. Jerusalem is measured
    - ii. Flying Scroll
      1. New Jerusalem
        - a. Purified by Scripture
  - d. Visions 4 and 5
    - i. Joshua- High Priest
      1. Sin is removed
    - ii. Zerubbabel- King
      1. Messiah's kingdom will come if they are faithful

## 2. Messiah

- a. King on a donkey 9
- b. Rejected Shepherd 11
- c. Evil Nations destroyed
- d. New Jerusalem
  - i. River of Life
  - ii. God's Spirit 12:10

## Malachi

- 1. Israel's Sin 1-2
  - a. How has God shown love?
    - i. He chose Jacob's family
  - b. How do the people defile the temple?
    - i. Bad sacrifices
  - c. Turned against Yahweh
    - i. Idolatry
- 2. Sin and Day of the Lord 3
  - a. Where is God?
    - i. God will send messenger
    - ii. Purifying fire
  - b. How to turn back to God?
    - i. Offer temple tithe
  - c. Wicked people gain
    - i. Those who are faithful remember Lord's promises
- 3. Conclusion 4
  - a. Eden blessings to faithful remnant
  - b. Remember Torah and Prophets
    - i. New Moses and Elijah is coming

## Psalms- Law and Judgment

1. Psalms 1-41 Praise/Law
    - a. Psalm 1 connects to Torah
      - i. Human is a tree by water
        1. Eden Imagery
    - b. Psalm 2
      - i. Messiah King connects to Prophets
    - c. Triad
      - i. Psalm 15 Covenant
        1. 16-18 David's Deliverance
          - a. Torah 19
        2. 20-23 Future King
      - ii. Psalm 24 Covenant
    - d. May the Lord be blessed- Psalm 41**
2. Psalms 42-72 Messiah
  - a. 42-43 Future Temple- Mt. Zion
  - b. Psalm 72
    - i. Messianic King
    - ii. Abraham's Promise
  - c. May the Lord be blessed- Psalm 72**
3. Psalms 73-89 Faith/Hope
  - a. Psalm 89
    - i. Messianic Kingdom
    - ii. Exile and David's Kingdom
  - b. May the Lord be blessed- Psalm 89**
4. Psalms 90-106 Messiah
  - a. 90-99
    - i. Yahweh is King over creation
  - b. May the Lord be blessed- Psalm 106**
5. Psalms 107-150 Praise/Law
  - a. 107-110
    - i. Messianic Kingdom**
  - b. 113-118
    - i. Hallel
      - 1. Messianic Kingdom**
  - c. Psalm 119**
    - i. Torah**
  - d. 120-136
    - i. Song of Accents
      - 1. Messianic Kingdom**
  - e. 146-150
    - i. Begin and end with Hallelu-yah
      1. Praise Yahweh

## Proverbs

### 1. Proverbs 1-9 Wisdom

- a. Proverbs by Solomon
  - b. Proverbs are for "wisdom"
    - i. Wisdom - khokhmah
      - 1. Skill
  - c. Fear of the Lord
  - d. Ten Speeches
    - i. Wisdom and Fear
    - ii. Integrity & Generosity
    - iii. Success
    - iv. Folly
    - v. Pride
    - vi. Shame
  - e. Four Poems of Lady Wisdom
    - i. Ch. 1, 3, 8, and 9
2. Proverbs 10-29
- a. Ancient collection of Proverbs
  - b. Proverbs = probability
    - i. Wisdom leads to good life
    - ii. Folly leads to bad life
      - 1. This is not always what happens
3. Applied Wisdom
- a. Agur- 30
    - i. Applies proverbs as wisdom
  - b. Lemuel- 31
    - i. Wise woman
      - 1. Riff off lady wisdom from earlier

## Job

### 1. Job 1-37 Suffering and Justice

- a. Job is righteous and blameless
  - b. The satan comes to test Job
  - c. Job suffers
    - i. Death
    - ii. Disease
    - iii. Wealth gone
  - d. 3 Cycles of argument
    - i. Job's Argument
      1. He's innocent
      2. Suffering is not justice
      3. God is unjust
    - ii. The Friends
      1. God is just
      2. Job must have sinned
    - iii. Elihu
      1. God is just
      2. Suffering may be a warning
2. Job 38-41 God in Control
    - a. God responds to Job
      - i. God is creator of universe
        1. Two images of disorder
          - a. Behemoth
          - b. Leviathan
        - i. God has control of both
    - b. God's response is He is control but the world has suffering
      - i. Trust in the wisdom of God

### 3. Job 42 Restoration

- a. Job Repents
- b. God accuses the friends
- c. Restores wealth beyond what he had

## Song of Songs

### 1. Song of Solomon 1-6 Seek and Find - Eden imagery

- a. Two lovers seeking and finding each other
    - i. Marriage
    - ii. God and Israel
  - b. Physical Attraction
2. Song of Solomon 7-8 Love
    - a. Love is a gift from God
      - i. 8:6-7

## Ruth

1. Ruth 1 Loyalty
  - a. Naomi
  - b. Orpah
  - c. Ruth
    - i. All suffer death and tragedy
    - ii. Ruth is loyal to her mother-in-law
2. Ruth 2 Generosity
  - a. Ruth meets Boaz
  - b. Boaz
    - i. Gives food and job
    - ii. Redeemer - link to Jesus
    - iii. Saves and protects
3. Ruth 3 Redeemed
  - a. Woman of noble character- wisdom theme from Proverbs 31
  - b. Agree to marry
4. Ruth 4 Loyalty
  - a. Birth of Obed
    - i. Genealogy leads to David

## Lamentations

1. Lamentations 1 Grief 22 verses
  - a. Daughter of Zion
    - i. Death of a loved one
2. Lamentations 2 Wrath 22 verses
  - a. The fall is God's wrath
    - i. Justice
3. Lamentations 3-4 Suffering 66 verses
  - a. Suffering servant
    - i. Remnant has hope
  - b. Jerusalem was taken because of sin
4. Lamentations 5 Restoration 22 verses
  - a. Prayer for mercy
  - b. Question:
    - i. Rejected
    - ii. God is king

## Ecclesiastes

1. Ecclesiastes 1-11 Purpose
  - a. Time is the great equalizer
    - i. Praise/Mourn
    - ii. Dance/Cry
  - b. Everything is meaningless
    - i. Meaningless- "hevel"
      1. Pleasure
      2. Status
      3. Wealth
      4. Career
  - c. Enjoy life
    - i. Family
    - ii. Food
  - d. Death is another equalizer

## 2. Ecclesiastes 12 Fear of the Lord

- a. Conclusion
  - i. Fear God
  - ii. Keep Commands
    1. Judgment will come for all humans

## Esther

### 1. Esther 1-3 Justice

- a. Persia after exile
  - b. Vashti is taken from royal position
  - c. The Choosing
    - i. Esther is chosen as queen
      1. Jew
      2. Hadassah
    - ii. Mordecai- Esther's cousin
  - d. Mordecai's secret salvation of king
    - i. Doesn't get recognition he deserves
  - e. Mordecai does not bow to Haman
    - i. Haman plans to kill Jews
      1. Banquet to honor Haman
2. Esther 4-7 Courage
    - a. Plan to save the Jews
      - i. If Esther goes before the king not summoned
        1. She is executed
        2. Holds out scepter and accepted
      - ii. King Xerxes accepted her
    - b. 1st Banquet
      - i. Esther asks for a second banquet
    - c. Xerxes remembers Mordecai
      - i. Mordecai is exalted by Haman

- d. 2nd Banquet
  - i. Esther tells Xerxes about Haman's plan

### 3. Esther 8-10 Salvation

- a. Reversal of decree
- b. Haman hanged
- c. Purim
  - i. Celebrate salvation from destruction

## Daniel

### 1. Daniel 1-6 Worship & Pride

- a. Daniel and friends
  - i. Obey Torah by eating vegetables
    - 1. Exalted in Babylon
- b. **Nebuchadnezzar's Dream - Chapter 2**
  - i. Statue of king
  - ii. Represents all nations will be judged
- c. **Daniel's dream - Chapter 7**
  - i. Terrible beasts- kingdoms
  - ii. Son of Man
    - 1. Exalted to God's right hand
- d. **Fiery Furnace - 3**
  - i. Refusal to worship
  - ii. Shadrach, Meshach, Abendego
  - iii. "Appearance of man" in fire
  - iv. Exalted
- e. **Lion's Den - 6**
  - i. King Darius
  - ii. Refusal to worship
  - iii. Thrown in den
  - iv. Exalted
- f. **Nebuchadnezzar's Pride - 4**
  - i. Image of God ideal
    - 1. Tree
  - ii. Repents
  - iii. Restored
- g. **Belshazzar's Pride - 5**
  - i. Writing on the Wall
  - ii. Does not repent
  - iii. Killed

### 2. Daniel 7-12 Hope

- a. Daniel's Vision
  - i. Goat and Ram
  - ii. Future empires
    - 1. Fall of Jerusalem
- b. Daniel's Prayer
  - i. Israel's suffering will last 7 times longer



- c. 3rd Vision
  - i. Kings of North
    - 1. Exalt themselves
    - 2. Will be humbled
- d. Kingdoms are a pattern of evil
- e. God will rescue us from evil

## Ezra-Nehemiah

- 1. Ezra 1-6 Temple
  - a. Exiles return to Jerusalem
  - b. Zerubbabel leads to rebuild temple
    - i. Opposition to rebuild
- 2. Ezra 7-10 Law
  - a. Ezra reads Torah
  - b. Rebuild community
    - i. Divorce results
    - ii. Opposition
- 3. Nehemiah 1-7 Restoration
  - a. Repair Jerusalem's walls
    - i. Opposition
- 4. Nehemiah 8-13 Covenant Failure
  - a. Torah
    - i. 7 days
    - ii. Confession
    - iii. Covenant renewed
  - b. Covenant broken
    - i. Temple ignored
    - ii. Sabbath rejected
  - c. Need for Messiah

## Chronicles

1. 1 Chronicles 1-9 Priest-King
  - a. Genealogies- first word "adam"
    - i. Points to Genesis 1
  - b. Names key characters in the story so far
    - i. David's Line
      1. King
    - ii. Aaron
      1. Priests
2. 1 Chronicles 10-29 Covenant
  - a. No negative stories of David
  - b. Only positive stories of David
    - i. Reminder of God's covenant promise
    - ii. New David - Messiah
3. 2 Chronicles 1-36 Blessing and Curse
  - a. Jerusalem Kings
    - i. No northern kings mentioned
  - b. Faithful Kings
    - i. Blessings
  - c. Unfaithful Kings
    - i. Curses
  - d. "Let him go up"
    - i. Points to future hope
      1. Messiah
      2. New Jerusalem
  - e. Ends with return from exile