

BIBLE OVERVIEW 2.

Joshua to Split

1 Corinthians 10:11-12

These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

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BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

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BIBLE OVERVIEW

10. JOSHUA	5-9
Joshua: Conquest	8-9
11. SAMUEL	10-15
Judges: Defeat & Deliverance	12-13
Ruth: Kinsman-Redeemer	14-15
12. SAUL	16-19
1 Samuel: Look Inside	18-19
13. DAVID	20-26
2 Samuel: Effects of Sin	23-24
Psalms: Worship	25-26
14. SOLOMON	27-36
1 Kings: Idolatry	29-30
Song of Solomon: Married Love	31-32
Proverbs: Wisdom	33-34
Ecclesiastes: Empty	35-36
15. SPLIT	37-42
2 Kings: Judgment	39-40
1 & 2 Chronicles: Faithfulness	41-42
End of Book Reflection Questions	43

BIBLE OVERVIEW

10. JOSHUA

MAIN EVENTS: Conquest of the Promised Land

MAIN PEOPLE: Joshua, Twelve Tribes

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE: Joshua

BIBLE VERSE: *Joshua 1:2-3 "You and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them-to the Israelites. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses."*

TIME: 1,400 BC

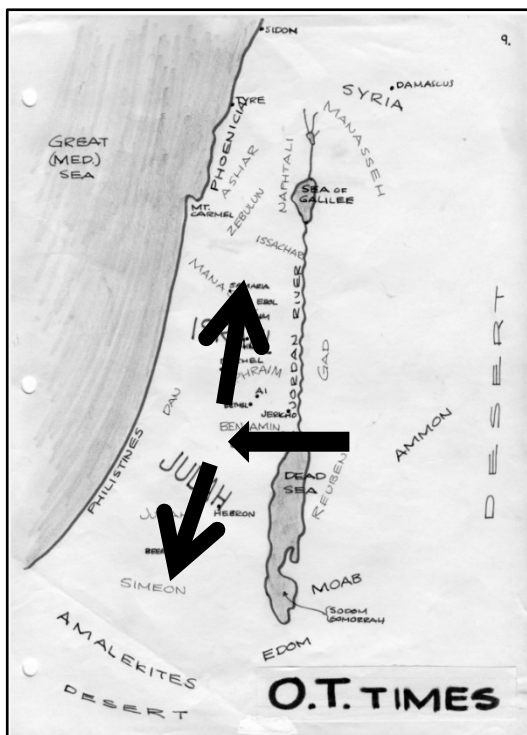
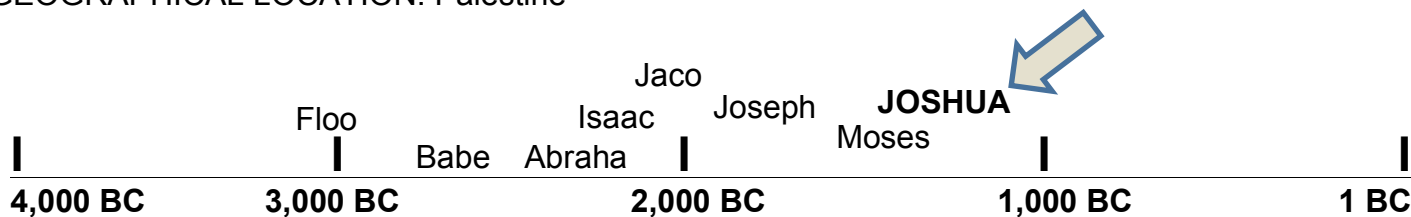
WORLD EVENTS AT THIS TIME:

India invaded by Aryans who settle in Indus and Ganges Valleys

Vedas written in India

Late Harappan Culture in India

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: Palestine



When Moses died, God chose Joshua to lead the people into the land. Joshua did not have the special education or the great gifts and skills that Moses had, but he had been faithful to God his whole life and was willing to be used by God. God used Joshua to lead the Jews into the land and defeat the Canaanites living there.

This time period was one of warfare – God’s people taking possession of that which God had given them in their Promised Land. In the same way, we are in a spiritual battle as well. The battle started in Eden (Genesis 3:15) will continue until Jesus returns and sets up His Kingdom on earth. That is a foundational truth we must be aware of for the battle is seen on every page in the Bible.

God’s power brought victory in these battles when His people faithfully served Him and followed His leading. The same is true for us today.

MEET JOSHUA

Living the Christian life is a battle. It always has been. We see this in the life of Joshua as well. He was involved in much warfare in his time. All who desire to live for God are. In his day it was the Egyptians and the Canaanites they fought. In our day we are still battling God's enemies, but they are different. We battle Satan and his forces, the flesh (our sin nature, that natural tendency to be selfish, prideful and self-centered) and the world system with its ungodly system of priorities and values. The weapons that were used against him were swords, spears and arrows. Weapons used against us are greed, selfishness, fear, lust, anger and pride. What he went through physically is a picture of what we go through spiritually (1 Corinthians 10;11; Romans 15:4).

This battle we fight is really between God and Satan. It just spilled over to this planet and is carried out here on earth. It started in Eden when Satan started attacking God's people because He couldn't defeat God Himself. He started with Adam and Eve, then attacked Cain. He hit everyone until God wiped out all but Noah in the flood, then Satan went after the people after the flood. He got them to build Babel. God then chose one man to make into a special nation to reveal Himself to the world. That man, Abraham, then was bruised. Isaac, Jacob and Joseph were all attacked by Satan. Eventually the new nation ended up captive in Egypt (a picture of the world) helpless slaves of Pharaoh (a picture of Satan). God intervened and delivered them by the innocent blood of the Passover Lamb (a picture of Jesus' work on the cross). He defeated their enemies at the Red Sea (a picture of His resurrection power). All believers are in this battle. In Egypt the Jews weren't in any battle, they were helpless victims with no power to fight back. After they left Egypt to follow God the battles start. The same is true with us.

Joshua was born a slave in Egypt. He remembered the Passover and deliverance through the Red Sea. He saw all the miracles of God's deliverance. His name means "Jehovah is salvation," the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek word "Jesus." He was a soldier in Pharaoh's army. That's why Moses chose him to lead the Jews in their battle with Amalek (a picture of the flesh) soon after they crossed the Red Sea.

God's enemies are our enemies when we are on His side, and they can seem formidable! The giants in the land caused most of the other spies as well as the people to run in fear, so the Jews had to wander in the desert for 40 years. Then, when the older generation had died, God chose Joshua to lead the new generation into the land (Joshua 1:1). Following such a well-known, successful leader like Moses was not easy. He himself couldn't do it. It was only God's power that enabled him to lead the people to victory. He had to totally rely on God's promises in order to have victory. God promised He would give them the land (Joshua 1:2), but they had to move out in faith and fight the battles to take it. "I will give you every place where you set your foot" (Joshua 1:3,4; Deuteronomy 11;24; Genesis 12:1-7). The land was theirs – but they had to set their foot there. The Canaanites who were living there did their best to prevent that!

Fortunately God promised He would fight their battles through them. He guaranteed victory for them (Joshua 1:5). God promises us that we will never be alone, either (Genesis 28;15; Romans 8:38-39; Exodus 33:14). Because of this we don't have to fear (Joshua 1:6; Psalm 118:6; 23:4; Isaiah 41:10; Deuteronomy 31:6; Matthew 14:27). Of course God expects us to obey Him in everything (Joshua 1:7-8), for disobedience cuts us off from His power and protection.

God told Joshua "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9). That was what he rested his hope on. God has promised us, too, that He will meet all our needs (Psalm 84:11; 23:1-3; Philippians 4:19; Hebrews 13:5), that He will guide us (Psalm 48:14; 32:8; Proverbs 3:5-6) and that He will be our strength for whatever comes (Philippians 4:13; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Deuteronomy 33:25; Isaiah 40:29). He promises us victory in our battles, too (1 Corinthians 10:13). We need only to trust His word and lean on His strength.

So when we have battles, and we will have them, learn from Joshua's battles. His were physical, ours are spiritual (Ephesians 6:12). Fight in God's strength, wear His armor (Ephesians 6:10-17) and then, and only then, will we be able to have victory as Joshua had victory. The book of Joshua is a book of warfare and victory, but it starts with God's promises.

Victory doesn't come quickly. It takes a lifetime of fighting. God taught Joshua that lesson in his life, too. He had to learn to persevere, to not quit but to keep faithfully serving God no matter what happened. It's not an easy lesson to learn, for patience doesn't come naturally to human beings. Is God trying to teach you patience and perseverance? How are you coming with your progress? Maybe Joshua's story will help you.

Joshua grew up in Egypt. For the first forty years of his life he was a slave patiently awaiting God's deliverance. Then when deliverance did come he ended up having to wait another 40 years to enter the land – more patience was required. Finally, five years after they crossed the Jordan River and began their conquest of the land, he got his chance to fight for his land.

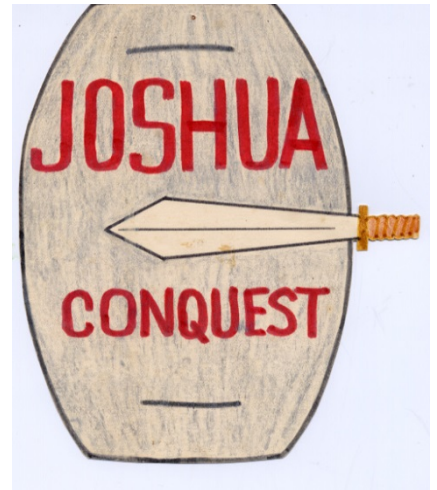
It took them years to defeat the confederations of tribes in Canaan. God was teaching them patience and perseverance. He was letting them have victory in one area, settle and hold it, and then move on to another area, just like He does in our lives today. To give it all to them at once would have been too hard for them. If all the Canaanites were destroyed before they could move in and replace them, wild animals would take over and make the places unsafe (Exodus 23:20-30). Thus God's way has always been little by little, conquer and grow in one area and then move on to the next area to be conquered.

Even so, despite the fact that the major Canaanite armies had all been defeated, there were still pockets of resistance and a few cities of giants left. It took ongoing mop-up operations to remove them all, a lifelong task. Other new areas of defiance would raise up as well and had to be put down. Isn't that the way it is in your life, too? After salvation (Passover lamb and Red Sea deliverance) you must decide who you will live for: yourself or God. If you choose yourself, you wander for years in aimlessness (as the Jews wandered for 40 years in the desert). If you choose God and follow Him into the place of His perfect will for you, then you will find battles and opposition. The world, the flesh and the devil will fight you every step of the way to keep you from making that commitment to put Him before yourself. God will give you victory if you faithfully persevere and stay true to Him. The first major battles between the flesh and the spirit will have been won, but living in His will (in the land) will mean a lifetime of continual skirmishes, mop-up operations, taking new territory, and fighting giants that remain.

The problem was that the Jews didn't go ahead and keep battling. They got weary of it and decided that 90% victory was good enough when it wasn't! The tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh were willing to settle for land on the east of the Jordan. It was right next to God's perfect land (will) for them, but not in it. It was close enough to have some of the benefits, but stopped short of being where the battles and conflicts were. In future years they were the first to get attacked and defeated, though, because they weren't in God's perfect place for them.

What a great God we serve! He had promised that every place they put their foot would be theirs if they faithfully obeyed and followed Him (Joshua 1:3-5), and that is what happened (Joshua 21:43-45). The same is true for us, too, if you follow your "Joshua" ("Jesus" in Greek is the same as "Joshua" in Hebrew). Are you following? Persevere, patiently obey Him. You won't regret it! It's the only way to have victory in your daily battles. He never promised to remove the battles, but He does promise to be with you and fight for you through them.

JOSHUA: CONQUEST



TITLE: Named after author, main character

AUTHOR: Joshua

DATE of WRITING: About 1375 BC

PLACE of WRITING: Canaan (Palestine)

TIME COVERED: About 30 years

RECIPIENTS: Jews, second generation of those who left Egypt

KEY VERSE: *Joshua 1:2-3 "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them-- to the Israelites. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses."*

KEY WORDS: Possess/Possessions (22 times); Inherit/Inheritance (63 times)

PURPOSE: To show how God's promises were fulfilled in giving Canaan to Israel (23:14) but how Israel failed to fully possess the land (18:3), setting groundwork for future troubles.

THEME: Conquest and division of Canaan.

Have you ever been in a position where you had to replace someone who did an outstanding job? Maybe it was at work, or even at church. You didn't seem to have the skills and natural ability your predecessor did, but now it was your responsibility. With God's help it all worked out fine. That is the position Joshua finds himself in. He was only average in ability, but above average in availability. He wasn't the gifted, natural leader Moses was, but he trusted God and God used him to lead the Jews into their Promised Land.

Joshua was born a slave in Egypt. He assisted Moses and was trained by Moses since the Jews left Egypt. He was the general who led the soldiers against the Amalekites while Moses prayed (Exodus 17). Joshua and Caleb were the only spies who trusted that God could defeat the giants and give them the land. Now he is a man of about 80 or 90, full of wisdom and confidence in God. Naturally he was a fearful man, but when he trusted in God he had courage and strength for his tasks (Joshua 1:6-9). Joshua in many ways is a picture (type) of Jesus. His name (Hebrew) and Jesus (Greek) both mean "the LORD is salvation" (Acts 7:45; Hebrews 4:8). In the Old Testament Joshua leads the Jews to victory over physical enemies (Canaanites). In the New Testament it is Jesus who leads his people to victory over spiritual enemies (sin, Satan, the flesh and the world, 1 Corinthians 3:21-23) (Ephesians 6:12). Victory isn't given, it must be won. However behind Joshua/Jesus it CAN be won! If people follow Joshua/Jesus, God gives victory (John 6:37-39; 10:14-16, 27-30)!

I. INTO THE LAND The first half of the book talks about the Jews claiming (chap. 1-5) and conquering (chap. 6-12) the land God had long ago promised them to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. After Joshua is commissioned (chap. 1), Jericho is canvassed (chap. 2). While Joshua knows to trust in God, he also knows his part is to use common sense and plan ahead. He trusted completely and planned completely, a good example to us today.

Jericho was the key city in entering the land, for it was virtually impregnable. The outer walls were 30 by 6 foot. After a 15 foot space the inner wall was 30 by 12 foot. They were joined at the top and surrounded by a deep moat with a smooth, vertical surface. Arrows and swords could never conquer such a place. Without God's help it would be impossible. The spies sent were saved by a prostitute named Rahab, who gave her heart to God. She was a fine woman of faith (Heb 11:31; James 2:25) who was the great-great-grandmother of David (mother of Boaz), an ancestor of Jesus.

After crossing the Jordan (chap 3-4) by stepping into the water before it parted (unlike the Red Sea crossing where it separated first -- God expects more from our faith as we grow and mature in

Him), they recommitted themselves by circumcision (chap 5) which they neglected while wandering. God expects His people to be holy and 100% obedient to Him.

After defeating Jericho by a crazy, far-out battle plan from God (which actually worked - the large walls fell into the moat so it was smooth walking into town) (chap. 6), the Jews are defeated at Ai (chap 7) because of Achan's sin. The sin of one can affect a whole family, church or nation! God hates sin and judges it wherever it is. The Canaanites were being removed because of their awful sin, but the Jews, too, had to keep from all sin. How awful sin is can be seen by Jesus' crucifixion!

Joshua's campaign was to 'divide and conquer,' separate the various tribes before they could unite. Moshe Dyan, in 1967, studied and followed Joshua's strategy in defeating the Arabs in 6 days despite being outnumbered 60 to 1!

The closest to recorded sin by Joshua is his omission of prayer about a treaty he signed with the Gibeonites (chap. 9-10). Assuming they were from far away, he promised to help them and soon found himself fighting other tribes defending them! God gave the victory by yet another miracle in the life of Joshua -- the sun stood still so darkness wouldn't aid the enemy.

After defeating the other Canaanite tribes, peace came. However the Jews didn't remove every Canaanite, and they would be a thorn in their side from then on, leading them into intermarriage and idolatry until that caused the Jews to again be removed from Palestine. It is so very important to obey God 100% and remove every sin, no matter how 'small.'

II. IN THE LAND The second half of the book deals with the colonizing of the land (chap. 13-21) and consecrating of the land (chap. 22-24). The land is divided among the 12 tribes. The highlight of this section is Caleb's faith in taking on the giants with just his family and defeating them! Despite his age and wasting 40 years of his life because of someone else's sin, and despite being passed over for leadership when Joshua was chosen, he always stayed faithful to God, even raising a faithful family who also served God (Judges 1:12-15).

OUTLINE OF JOSHUA

I. INTO THE LAND (Subduing the Land) 1-12

A. Claiming the Land 1-5

1. Joshua Commissioned 1
2. Jericho Canvassed 2
3. Jordan Crossed 3-4
4. Jews Circumcised 5

B. Conquering the Land 6-12

1. Central Campaign 6-8
2. Southern Campaign 9-10
3. Northern Campaign 11a
4. Summary 11b-12

II. IN THE LAND (Subdividing the Land) 13-24

A. Colonizing the Land 13-21

1. 2 ½ Tribes East of Jordan 13
2. Caleb 14
3. 9 ½ Tribes West of Jordan 15-19
4. Levi 20-21

B. Consecrating the Land 22-24

1. Sanctification 22
2. Separation 23
3. Service 24

BIBLE OVERVIEW

11. SAMUEL

MAIN EVENTS: Time of the Judges

MAIN PEOPLE: Gideon, Deborah, Samson, Samuel, Ruth

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE: Judges, Ruth

BIBLE VERSE: *Judges 2:11 Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD. ... They provoked the LORD to anger. ... Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of these raiders. ... for the LORD had compassion on them.*

TIME: 1,350-1,050 BC (time of the Judges)

WORLD EVENTS AT THIS TIME:

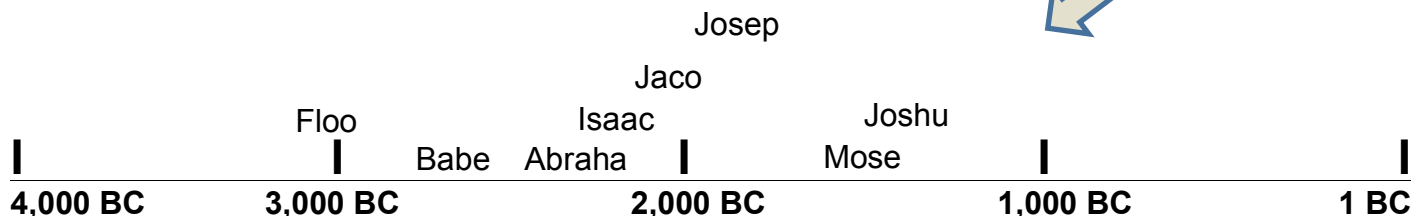
Trojan War in Greece

China Chou dynasty ruling

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: Palestine



JUDGE



Following the time of Joshua we come to the period of the Judges in our Bible Overview. Since Samuel was a man used by God to lead the people and anoint the first two kings, I have named this section after him. Other well known judges include people such as Gideon, Deborah and Samson. Ruth also lived during this time, but she wasn't a judge.

This was a very dark period in Israel's history because of the sin and disobedience so common among the people during these 400 years. When the people repented and turned to God, He delivered them. However they only turned to Him when things were very bad, then when God helped them recover they again turned from Him and the cycle repeated itself again.

MEET SAMUEL Samuel's birth was miraculous, for his mother, Hannah, wasn't able to have children until God blessed her with a son (1 Samuel 1:7-20). She consecrated him to God even before he was born (1 Samuel 1:11, 22, 24-28). When he was weaned he was taken to the Tabernacle and left for Eli to raise and train in God's service (1 Samuel 2:11, 18-19). God's blessing was on young Samuel (1 Samuel 2:21; 3:19).

When Samuel was still a young boy, God revealed to him that Eli's family would no longer be ruling as High Priests (1 Samuel 3:1-18). Samuel grew to be a special prophet (1 Samuel 3:20-21; 4:1) and judge of Israel (1 Samuel 7:15-17). Samuel organized the Tabernacle service (1 Chronicles 9:22; 26:28; 2 Chronicles 35:18). His teaching and admonitions brought repentance to the people (1 Samuel 7:4-6). His intercession and sacrifices led to victory over the Philistines (1 Samuel 7:7-14). However, he made his corrupt sons judges in Israel (1 Samuel 8:1-3).

When the people wanted a king like the other nations he protested (1 Samuel 8:4-22) but eventually anointed Saul (1 Samuel 9; 10) and later David (1 Samuel 16) as kings over Israel. He warned Saul about God's coming judgment on him (1 Samuel 13:11-15; 15) and sheltered David when he was escaping from Saul (1 Samuel 19:18). When he died the people grieved his loss (1 Samuel 25:1). He was a great man of integrity and served well as a judge and ruler (1 Samuel 12:1-5; Psalm 99:6; Jeremiah 15:1; Hebrews 11:32).

MEET GIDEON Gideon was called to serve God (while taking care of his harvest, Judges 6:11, 14). At first quite hesitant (Judges 6:15), he promises to serve the Lord (Judges 6:16-24). God provides a miracle to confirm his call (Judges 6:21-24). Gideon then destroys the altar to Baal and builds one to the Lord (Judges 6:25-27). Struggling with obeying God, he puts out a 'fleece' to make sure he knows God's will (Judges 6:36-40). Then he leads a small army against the Midianites and defeats them with God's help (Judges 6:33-35; 7; 8:4-12). As a result Israel wants to make him king but he refuses (Judges 8:22-23). He was known as a man of faith (Hebrews 11:32).

MEET DEBORAH Deborah was a prophetess in Israel. People came to her for help in settling matters of disagreement. God led her to send a message to Barak asking him to assemble ten thousand men to fight Sisera (Jabin's general). God assured them of victory. Barak said he would only do it if Deborah accompanied him. Because of his lack of faith, the honor of the victory was given to a woman, Jael. The victory brought rest to Israel for forty years.

MEET SAMSON Samson was a Danite, a son of Manoah, miraculously born to his wife although she was unable to conceive. God set him apart as a Nazirite from before he was born (Judges 13:2-7, 24-25). Instead of trusting God to provide a godly, Jewish wife he wanted a Philistine woman for a wife. On the way to her home he killed a lion with his hands and later touched the dead body gathering honey, thus breaking the part of the Nazirite vow about touching a dead body.

At his marriage feast he asked a riddle, the answer of which his new wife gave to the others there (Judges 14:8-19). To pay the debt he killed thirty Philistines to use their clothing as payment (Judges 14:19). Then he left his new wife (Judges 14:20; 15:1-2). It is highly likely that at a pagan marriage feast alcohol was served, and if Samson drank any of it he would have broken a second part of his Nazirite vow. When Samson eventually returned to his wife and found out her father had married her to another man, he caught 300 foxes, tied their tails together and set them on fire and scattered them throughout the Philistine fields, doing great damage to their crops. To get back on him they burned the house his wife was in and killed her and her father (Judges 15:3-8).

Samson was known for his great strength (Judges 15:7-14; Hebrews 11:32). He killed a thousand Philistines with just the jawbone of a donkey (Judges 15:13-17). His downfall came when he started spending time with Delilah, a prostitute, who eventually discovered the secret of his strength and used it to have him weakened and taken prisoner (Judges 16:1-20). Having his hair cut for the first time in his life broke the third and final part of his Nazirite vow. In humbleness he repented and turned back to God, who gave him strength one final time. With it Samson pulled down the Philistine temple he was in and thereby killed thousands of them while losing his own life (Judges 16:21-31; Hebrews 11:32). Samson is a picture of a man with physical strength but no moral strength. Allowing his lusts to control him defeated him and then brought about his premature death.

JUDGES:

DEFEAT & DELIVERANCE

TITLE: People God used to deliver Israel

AUTHOR: Unknown (possibly Samuel)

DATE of WRITING: About 1045 BC

PLACE of WRITING: Canaan

TIME COVERED: 1375 - 1049 BC

RECIPIENTS: Jews

KEY VERSE: *Judges 2:11-19 They provoked the LORD to anger because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths. ... The LORD handed them over to raiders who plundered them. ... They were in great distress. Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of these raiders. Yet they would not listen to their judges but prostituted themselves to other gods and worshiped them. ... Whenever the LORD raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for the LORD had compassion on them as they groaned under those who oppressed and afflicted them. ... But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their fathers, following other gods and serving and worshipping them. They refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways.*

KEY WORDS: "did evil" (14 times); "judges" (22 times)

PURPOSE: To show the history of Israel from Joshua to Samuel and to show the sinfulness of man and what happens when people turn from God.

THEME: Failure Through Compromise



We all know the story of the prodigal son and how he was forgiven and restored when he returned. It is a heart-warming story with a good ending. What we don't know is what happened after he returned. Suppose we found out that a little later he again took what his father would give him and left, only to again fail and return. Then he did it again, and again, and again -- for the rest of his life! That would certainly change your opinion of the story and the son. That is exactly what the book of Judges is about. God is the father, and the nation Israel is the prodigal son.

DOOM AND GLOOM While Joshua was a book of joy and victory, Judges is full of gloom and defeat. Joshua teaches that faithfulness brings freedom, but Judges shows that faithlessness brings servitude. The appendix at the end of the book (chapters 17-21) give two examples of how spiritually perverted and morally polluted God's people can get when they aren't living close to Him! Its a great book to read on a cold, rainy night when you are down and depressed -- the book will fit your mood perfectly!

SEVEN CYCLES OF SIN The book of judges is structured around seven cycles of sin, summarized in 2:11-19. The people disobey God and turn to false gods and idolatry. God withdraws His blessing and they end up in bondage to an enemy. When they hit bottom they have no place else to turn so they call out to God who hears them and provides a judge to lead them to deliverance. These judges are not like we think of judges, but more like patriotic evangelists (Joan of Arc types) who lead the people in repentance and then war against their oppressors. After a period of peace and rest they stop depending on God and start to drift into sin again, and the cycle repeats itself. Actually these are downward spirals, for they don't reach as high but do sink lower each time. This happens seven times in the book of Judges, as shown on the outline (chapters 3 - 16).

You might also recognize this pattern in your own life or in the lives of those around you. We all have a tendency to be closer to God when things are tough, then drift on our own when everything seems to be all right. God allows pressure to stay on us to keep us close to Him.

SEX: SATAN'S BEST TRAP BAIT Living in a sex-saturated society isn't anything new to us. Satan has used that repeatedly through the ages, and why not -- it produces the results he wants! The Jews were gradually lured from God by sexual compromises. It started off with their not killing all the Canaanites when they conquered the land under Joshua. Although few and used as slaves, the Canaanites increased in number and the Jews started intermarrying with them. The Canaanites brought their old gods to their family and taught their worship to their children. Frankly, it was much more appealing to the flesh than serving and submitting to God. Baal and Ashtoreth were worshipped in immorality, for they were fertility gods. Ashtoreth, the female consort of Baal, was worshipped by religious prostitution (in Europe the "A" changed to "E" and she was Eshtoreth, then Esther, symbolized by rabbits, eggs and other symbols of fertility). The Jews didn't jump right into this sin, but gradually slid in. Like land eroding at a river bank or curtains fading in a living room, a gradual change is harder to notice than a quick change. Notice the programs and talk on TV now compared to 20 years ago and you'll see just how this works.

Although specially chosen and gifted by God, Samson was destroyed by his preoccupation with sex. He had great physical strength, but no moral strength, a common description of many people today. Sexual temptation ruled his life and destroyed him, as it has done and continues to do with so many others today. It's natural that Satan would bait his trap with something that was created to be so fine and beautiful. Watch for his trap in your life!

OUTLINE OF JUDGES

I. ISRAEL'S WARS (Causes of the Cycles) 1-2

- A. Political Background (Failure) 1
- B. Spiritual Background (Faithlessness) 2

II. ISRAEL'S WOES (Courses of the Cycles) 3-16

- A. Cycle 1: Othniel (Mesopotamia) 3a
- B. Cycle 2: Ehud, Shamgar (Moabites) 3b
- C. Cycle 3: Deborah, Barak (Canaanites) 4-5
- D. Cycle 4: Gideon (Midianites) 6-8
- E. Cycle 5: Tola, Jair (Civil War) 9
- F. Cycle 6: Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon (Ammonites) 10-12
- G. Cycle 7: Samson (Philistines) 13-16

III. ISRAEL'S WAYS (Conditions in the Cycles) 17-21

- A. Spiritual Perversion (Dan) 17-18
- B. Moral Pollution (Benjamin) 19-21

RUTH:

KINSMAN-REDEEMER



TITLE: Named after the heroine, Ruth

AUTHOR: Possibly Samuel

DATE of WRITING: During reign of David

PLACE of WRITING: Canaan

TIME COVERED: About 10 years during time of Judges. Ruth & Boaz married about 1120 BC

RECIPIENTS: Jews

KEY VERSE: *Ruth 1:15-16 "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her." But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God."*

KEY WORDS: "Kinsman" (14 times); "Redeemer" (9 times)

PURPOSE: To show there is a faithful remnant during times of apostasy (Judges) as well as how a Moabite woman became the great-grandmother of David and an ancestor of Jesus

THEME: Redemption illustrated by the example of the kinsman-redeemer.

Many great novels have a story within a story. Dr. Zhivago, for example, has a tender love story within a setting of violence and brutality. The same is true of the story of Ruth. Set in the time of the judges (actually the last four chapters in the book of Judges in the Hebrew Bible), the book of Ruth shows a story of love and faithfulness in a time of sin and apostasy.

RUTH'S RESOLVE (chapter 1) Because of a famine in the land, Elimelech and Naomi took their sons, Mahlon and Chilion, and moved to the land of Moab. There the boys married Gentile girls, Orpah and Ruth. Both moving to Gentile land and marrying Gentile women were disobedient to God (Deuteronomy 7:1-3). Because of this God removed the father first, then the sons. This was God's discipline of death because of their continuing in sin (1 John 5:16-17; Acts 5:1-11). Since the women have no way to support themselves and their resources have run out, Naomi decides to return home. This signifies an inner turning back to God, too (1:20-21). Orpah returns home, but Ruth commits herself to stay with Naomi. Her love and loyalty to Naomi as well as to God motivate her. She refers to God as YHWH, showing a personal relationship with Him (1:15-16). She decides to stay with God as well as Naomi.

RUTH'S RIGHTS (chapter 2) God made provision for poor Jews to work for food by commanding landowners to leave some grain standing around the edges of their fields which could be gathered by the needy. In this time of apostasy and greed, very few Jews let any grain stand, but a godly man named Boaz did. Ruth ended up in his field, gathering left-over grain for Naomi and herself. Her sacrificial hard work so impressed Boaz that he made sure she was safe and her needs were met. Perhaps the fact that Boaz's mother was a Gentile, Rahab (Matthew 1:5), made him more sympathetic to Ruth's plight. Instead of running after a husband, Ruth took care of aged Naomi. Because she put others first, God took care of her.

RUTH'S REQUEST (chapter 3) Realizing they cannot continue on indefinitely in this manner, Naomi encourages Ruth to request Boaz to come to their aid and redeem their property which had been sold for money on which to live. God established the law of the kinsman-redeemer in which a near relative could take the place of the one in need by paying the price to redeem that which was lost. "Redeem" means "to buy back" and is used of a slave owner who must purchase back a slave that was his but

ran away. This is a picture of Jesus, who became one of us at the incarnation so He could do what we couldn't do -- free us from our debt to sin. We were His by creation, then we got into sin, so He had to pay the price for us on the cross.

The kinsman-redeemer must be a near relative (Ruth 2:1,3,20; 3:13), and Christ was human like us (Philippians 2:5-8; John 1:14; Hebrews 2). He had to be willing to redeem (Ruth 2:8; 3:11) as was Christ (Matthew 20:28; John 10:28; Hebrews 10:17). In addition the kinsman-redeemer must be able to redeem the one in bondage (Ruth 2:1). Christ was able to redeem us (John 10:11, 18). That means he must be free himself. Boaz was, so was Christ (John 3:16). He had the price of redemption (Ruth 2:1) as did Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19) and paid the price in full, as did Jesus (Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

Why didn't Boaz voluntarily do this? Why did he have to be asked? He knew there was a closer relative, he didn't consider that a young woman like Ruth would be interested in marrying an older man like him, and the practice was all but forgotten for it wasn't used much in those days.

RUTH'S REWARD (chapter 4) As it turned out, the closer relative was interested in getting the land for himself, but when he realized Ruth came with it, and therefore any proceeds would go to her and any children she might have, he turned it down. Greed was his motive. Therefore Boaz was free to buy back Naomi's inheritance as well as marry Ruth and provide a home for her and Naomi. They had a son named Obed, who had a son named Jesse, who had a son named David. This made Naomi the great-grandmother of David and an ancestor of Jesus. This is a beautiful example of how God gives the best to those who leave the choice to Him! If Ruth had gotten bitter at God over the death of her husband or sought to meet her own needs by trying to catch a husband, it would not have turned out as nice for her. How much blessing do you and I miss by impatiently taking things into our hands and trying to meet our own needs?

OUTLINE OF RUTH

I. RUTH'S DECISION 1

- A. Her Background
- B. Her Choice
- C. Her Arrival in Bethlehem

II. RUTH'S DEVOTION 2

- A. The right to Glean
- B. the Results of Gleaning
- C. the Report of Gleaning

III. RUTH'S DELIVERER 3

- A. Suggested by Naomi
- B. Executed by Ruth
- C. Agreed to by Boaz

IV. RUTH'S DELIGHT 4

- A. Husband
- B. Son
- C. Lineage

BIBLE OVERVIEW

12. SAUL



MAIN EVENTS: Kingdom under Saul

MAIN PEOPLE: Saul, Samuel, David

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE: 1 Samuel

BIBLE VERSE: *1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

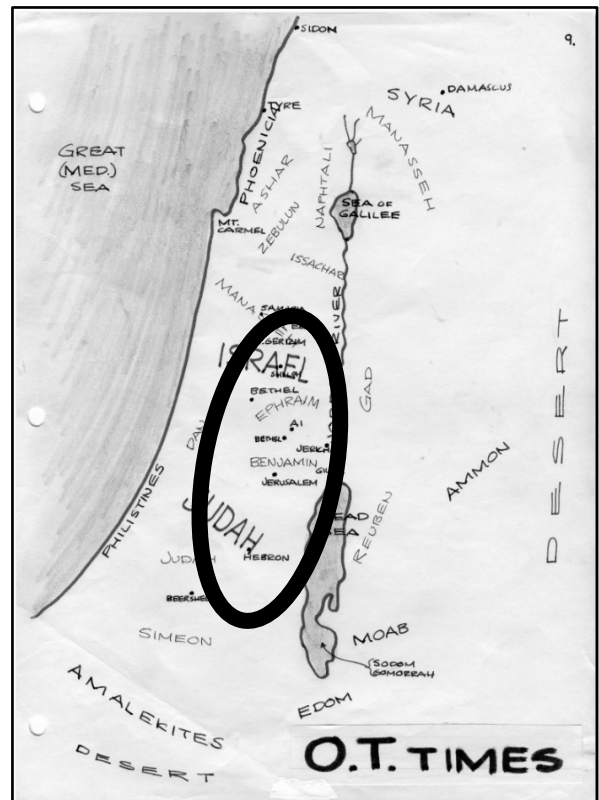
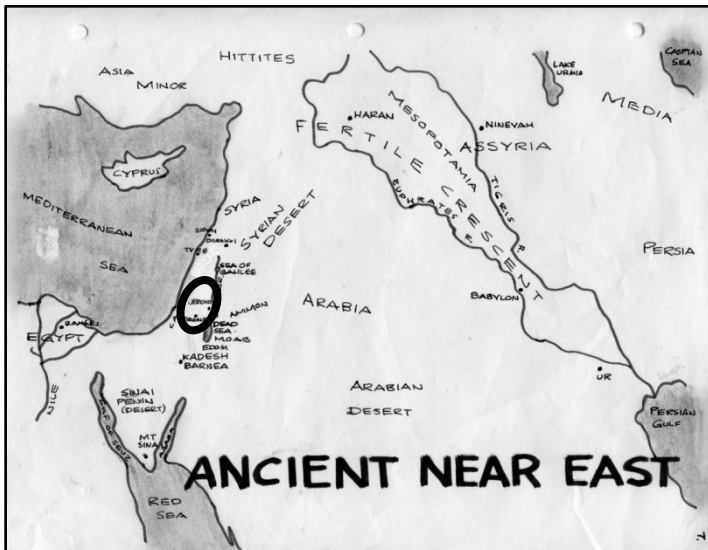
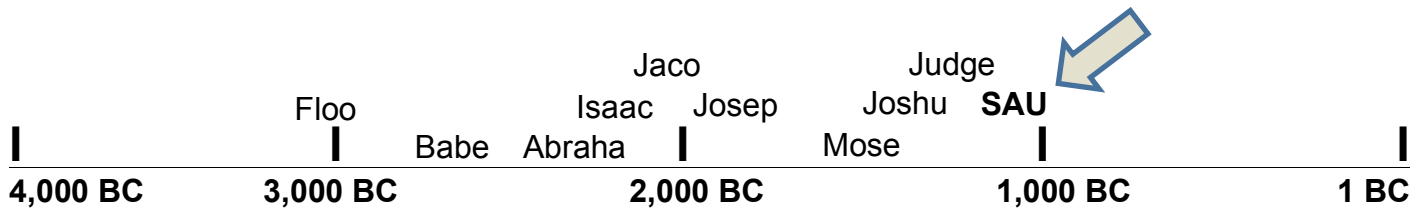
TIME: 1,050 BC

WORLD EVENTS AT THIS TIME:

Vedic period in India

End of New Kingdom in Egypt

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: Palestine



After Moses, then Joshua, the nation of Israel

was ruled for about 400 years by a series of people who were called "judges." Eventually they wanted a king like the other nations around them had. They didn't want God to be their King any more. They wanted someone they could take pride in, someone like Saul, even though he didn't fully follow God. Saul's 40 year reign was one of defeat for him and the nation. The pattern seen from the beginning is that God reaches out to man and offers His guidance and protection, but man thinks he is better off running his own life instead of trusting God. The results are always the same – disaster.

MEET SAUL

Saul was the first king of Israel (1 Samuel 9:2-31:12; 1 Chronicles 8:1-26:28). He lived in turbulent times. For many years, Israel had consisted of a loose organization of tribes without a single leader. In times of crisis, leaders had arisen; but there was no formal government. Samuel was the leader before Saul, but he was a spiritual leader, not a king. When the people insisted on having a king, God warned them through Samuel that they would regret it. But they insisted.

Why was he chosen? Saul was exactly what the people wanted so God let them learn the hard way that He knew what was better for them than they did. Saul was a large man of attractive appearance, which led to his quick acceptance by the people. In addition, he was from the tribe of Benjamin, situated on the border between Ephraim and Judah. Because of this he appealed to both the northern and southern sections of Israel. Furthermore, he was a capable military leader, as shown by his victories early in his career. One of the most important episodes of his career was his first encounter with the Philistines. It seemed he would be defeated, but Jonathan saved the day and opened the door to victory.

Saul's first sin was his failure to wait for Samuel at Gilgal (1 Samuel 13:8-9). There he assumed the role of a priest by making a sacrifice to ask for God's blessing. Only priests could do that. His second sin followed soon afterward. After defeating Moab, Ammon, and Edom, he was told by Samuel to go to war against the Amalekites and to "kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey" (1 Samuel 15:3). Saul carried out his instructions well except that he spared the life of Agag, the king, and saved the best of the animals. Then he lied and told Samuel that he had followed God's instructions exactly.

God allowed him to remain king, but His Spirit departed from Saul who wanted to follow his own will and not God's will. From then on he was bothered by an evil spirit, a demon, that badly tormented him. It was during this time that Samuel anointed David as the next king.

At first Saul was friendly to David, but when David became popular because of his success against Goliath and the Philistines, Saul became jealous and tried to kill him. As time went on he turned further and further from God. Finally, after a 40 year reign, he and his sons were killed in battle.

He seemed he was full of promise at the start of his reign, but because he didn't obey God but thought he knew best, he lost everything, eventually even his life. He could have done great things for God and for Israel, instead he left the nation in a shambles politically and spiritually. If he could do it over again he would have done much differently, but God only gives us one life to live. Make sure you live it for Him!

1 SAMUEL: LOOK INSIDE

TITLE: After Samuel ("1 Kings" to Jews)

AUTHOR: Unknown (Gad or Nathan?)

DATE of WRITING: Time of Solomon

PLACE of WRITING: Israel

TIME COVERED: 56 years (1067-1011 BC)

RECIPIENTS: Jews

KEY VERSE: *1 Samuel 16:7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

KEY WORDS: "Anoint" "Reject" (7 times each)

PURPOSE: Continue history of Israel after the judges and to show the origin of the Kingdom.

THEME: Contrast internal godliness with external worldliness.



The poinsettia is a popular flower, especially around Christmas time. However, most people don't realize that it is really a fake. Those are red leaves, not flowers. In fact, the real flower is insignificant and unattractive. It contains no nectar or useful fruit. Ingestion can make one ill. It looks great, but is really a fake! Many people are like that, too. We call them hypocrites. Outwardly they seem great, but inside they are empty, hollow, ungodly. In our day and age outer appearance is greatly emphasized, to the exclusion of inner beauty. Jesus says inner beauty is more important than outer, though (John 7:24; 1 Peter 3:3-4). It's what's inside that counts! 1 Samuel contains many good examples of this!

HANNAH Because she didn't have a son, Hannah poured out her heart to God in prayer. Eli, the high priest, was watching her pray. By her outer appearance he thought she was drunk and reprimanded her, but he was wrong! God saw her heart, answered her prayer, and gave her a fine son - Samuel. Samuel grew up in the tabernacle under the guidance of Eli.

ELI Although a fine man of God himself, Eli let his sons go through the outer motions of being priests while inside their hearts were full of greed, lust and rebellion against God. Because they were this way, and Eli didn't work to change them, they all lost their lives and ministries!

THE NATION Because there were no godly priests to lead them, the people asked God for a king. They wanted to be like everyone else, for all the nations around them had a king. They thought this looked impressive. Being concerned only with externals, they thought this was the end of their problems. God gave them a king, knowing that they would have to learn the hard way. They should have followed Him as their King but didn't.

SAUL Saul was tall, dark and handsome with an outgoing personality, so the Jews thought he was the man for the job of being king! Inside, though, he was self-centered, insecure, and prideful. He disobeyed God by offering sacrifices (1 Samuel 13), giving a rash order (1 Samuel 14) and not killing all the Amalekites (1 Samuel 15). Then he tried to kill David. Eventually God removed him.

DAVID God's choice for a replacement king was a shepherd boy named David. Outwardly he wasn't striking as Saul was, but God passed over his good-looking big brothers in favor of David's inner

beauty (1 Samuel 16:7). David relied on inner strength, not outer, in defeating Goliath. By all outer appearances, it wasn't even a close match -- but outer appearances can be deceiving!

JONATHAN David's faithful friend, Jonathan, gave up his own claim to the throne to help his friend David. The inner love and commitment they had for each other was very strong!

MICHAL & ABIGAIL David's first wife, Michal, was outwardly beautiful and a princess. Inside, though, she was selfish, narrow and unconcerned about godly things. Abigail, while beautiful, was known for her wisdom and humility. Her inner strength helped David through hard years of hiding from Saul, while Michal deserted him and took another husband.

REVIVAL! There was one brief period when the nation turned back to God, focusing on their inner relationship with Him. They had a real desire to be close to God (1 Samuel 7:1-2), turned from their sin (1 Samuel 7:3-4) and gathered together to worship God while learning the Bible (1 Samuel 7:5). They were serious about having a deep inner, personal relationship with God (1 Samuel 7:6). God used Samuel to lead this revival (1 Samuel 7-8). God allowed their new faith to be tested by letting the Philistines attack them during this revival, but they passed the test by calling out to God for help (7:9). He gave them victory and blessed them (1 Samuel 7:10-11) and they thanked and worshipped Him (1 Samuel 7:12).

A young officer who was blinded during the war met and later married one of the nurses who took care of him in an army hospital. One day he overheard someone speaking about himself and his wife: "It was lucky for her that he was blind since he never would have married such a homely woman if he had sight!" He rose to his feet and walked toward the voices, saying, "I overheard what you said, and I thank God from the depths of my heart for blindness of eyes that might have kept me from seeing the marvelous worth of the soul of this woman who is my wife. She is the most noble character I have ever known; if the shape of her features is such that it might have masked her inward beauty to my soul, than I am the greater gainer by having lost my sight." Make sure you, too, focus on inner beauty and not outer beauty (Proverbs 31:30).

OUTLINE OF 1 SAMUEL

I. TRANSGRESSION 1-15

- A. Samuel (Last Judge) 1-8
 - 1. Samuel's Resolve 1-3
 - 2. Ark's Return 4-6
 - 3. Jew's Revival 7-8
- B. Saul (First King) 9-15
 - 1. Saul's Reign 9-11
 - 2. Samuel's Reminder 12
 - 3. God's Rejection 13-15

II. TRUST 16-31

- David (Second King) 16-31
 - 1. Saul's Replacement 16
 - 2. David's Reward 17-18
 - 3. People's Reaction 19-26
 - 4. David's Refuge 27-30
 - 5. Saul's Removal 31

BIBLE OVERVIEW

13. DAVID

MAIN EVENTS: Kingdom under David

MAIN PEOPLE: David, Saul, Michal, Bathsheba

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE: 2 Samuel, Psalms

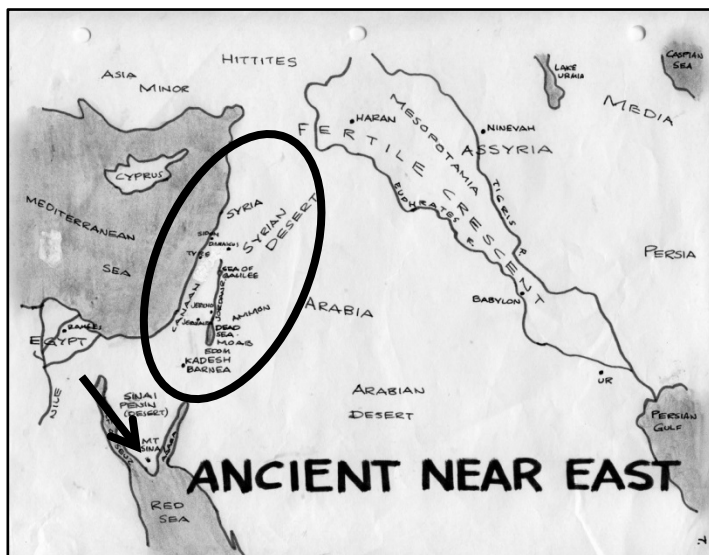
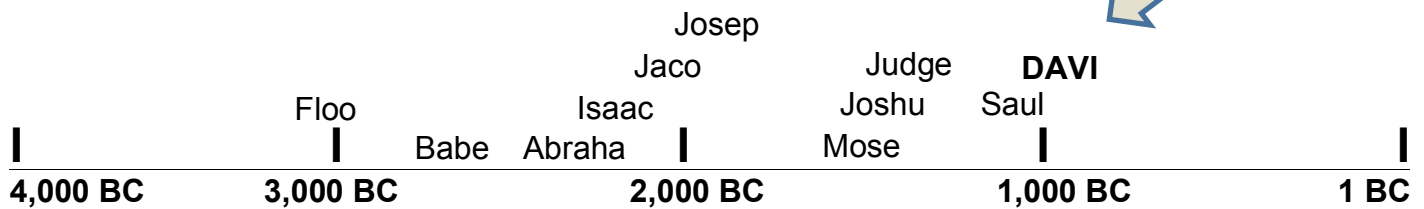
BIBLE VERSE: *2 Samuel 12:13 Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." Nathan replied, "The Lord has taken away your sin."*

TIME: 1,010 BC

WORLD EVENTS AT THIS TIME:

Mayan dynasty in Central America forming

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: Palestine



The nation Israel was at its greatest during the reign of David. In size, power and world influence the nation rose to heights never achieved before or after. This stage in our overview of the Bible is the highlight of the nation Israel. David obeyed and served God. God prospered David and the nation. Unfortunately David's sin with Bathsheba started a series of events that slowly but surely brought decrease in the nation.

MEET DAVID

David is mentioned over 1,000 times in the Bible, more than anyone else, even Jesus,

Who is called the "Son of David" 12 times. He's remembered for his greatest achievement - Goliath's death, when He was full of the Spirit, as well as his greatest failure - Bathsheba's seduction, when He was full of the flesh. One reason so many people like him is because they can identify with him in each case. Listen to his story and learn from it.

BACKGROUND David was the youngest, the 8th son, in his family. He was given charge over his father's flocks. We find him to be strong, he killed a lion and a bear which threatened his father's

flock, a musician who played a harp and sang beautifully, and a young man who could capably carry out his duties whether being left alone in charge or sent off to deliver messages and gather news. However, much like Joseph in the book of Genesis, he was mocked by his brothers. And it seems his father thought little of his place in the family. Being left alone by his family so much, David had plenty of time in the fields to think on the things of God, feeding his faith and loyalty to Him, which we see evident first in his famous encounter with Goliath. The prophet Samuel anointed this teenager in the witness of his family to be the next king over Israel. But much had to happen before David would sit on the throne.

GOLIATH David burst on the national scene when he killed Goliath, the 9+ foot giant champion of the Philistines. As a result the Jewish army defeated the Philistines and regained their freedom. He became very popular, but this made King Saul extremely jealous of him. His life was in danger because of this.

COVER-UP # 1 From the ages of 17-29 David was running, hiding from Saul's wrath. He should have trusted God as he did with Goliath, but didn't. He took matters into his own hands. He fled during the night in fear, went to Samuel for advice and was promised God's protection. However He was full of fear and panic and he passed that on to Jonathan. He came up with a scheme to protect himself: ask Jonathan to lie to his father, Saul, about his whereabouts. He fled in panic, then tried to cover up his sin of fear. He didn't want to admit and confess his sin. Often the cover-up is worse than the sin itself (1 John 1:6-10). As when Joseph's brothers tried to cover up their wrong treatment of him by selling him and lying to their father, they were racked by guilt the rest of their lives and many innocent people were badly hurt.

Anyway, David went to Ahimelech, the priest, as he fled Saul. He lied again, pretending to be on a secret mission for Saul. Ahimelech believed him and helped him. Saul found this out and killed Ahimelech and 85 other priests. That was because of David's cover-up of sin.

David fled to the Philistines, his enemies, for protection. He pretended to be insane so he could stay. Instead of trusting God, he had sunk low in his attempts to cover up and not confess his sin so he could turn to God for His protection and help. When He finally did that God did help. Twice he was able to resist getting revenge on Saul. He didn't do quite so well against Nabal, but Abigail intervened and kept a disaster from happening. Truly God was with him.

COVER-UP # 2 Soon, however, he again fled to the land of the Philistines. God forbid His people to live there, but David was out of His perfect will for his life. All went smoothly at first, it seemed 'doors opened' for him. It wasn't God's blessings, though, but Satan's trap developing. Through a series of deceptions, trickery and half-truths, his followers and he got their own city, Ziklag. He was again meeting his own needs in the flesh instead of trusting God to meet them.

Soon thousands of Jews who didn't want to follow Saul had joined him in hiding from Saul. He didn't have enough food to feed them all. Instead of trusting God he came up with his own solution. He attacked neighboring tribes, killed them and stole their food. By killing everyone, there was no one to tell who did it. He told the Philistines He was killing Jews and stealing their food. They believed that other Jews were attacking their people. Again he was trying to cover up his sin, and again the cover-up was worse than the sin. Again the cover-up resulted in murder.

He almost had to help the Philistines fight the Jews (lying catches up with you). But God intervened and the Philistine army sent them home instead. When they got home they found their city Ziklag plundered and burnt. What they had been doing to others happened to them, but their families were spared and they were taken captive. David and his followers repented of their sins and God enabled them to win back their loved ones. Meanwhile the Philistines had attacked the Jews, and Saul and his family were killed. The door was open for him to become king.

COVER-UP # 3 God did many wonderful things through David, who tried to love and serve Him with all his heart, but once again gave in to his old sin pattern. When not stopped early these sin patterns become much harder to break later in life.

He was 50 years old, half way through his 40 year reign. He was popular, loved by everyone. He had made Jerusalem his capital and gathered materials to build a beautiful temple to God. He wrote many Psalms and led in worship. He was rich and prosperous. The lands of Israel had increased 10-fold. Israel was at its high peak as a nation. He was successful, but that is when Satan likes to attack. He had been setting a trap David, sin and now he used it.

One spring David stayed in Jerusalem, enjoying his success, instead of fulfilling his God-given responsibility of leading God's army against his enemies (2 Samuel 11). Because of this he was in a position to see a woman bathing, naked. Instead of looking away and moving on, he lusted and took action to have her brought to him. Again He was trying to fill his needs himself, instead of trusting and waiting for God's provision. Again it ended in a cover-up: do whatever necessary to make it seem like her husband, who was away in his army, made her pregnant and not David. Again it ended in murder, for he had her husband killed so no one would know it wasn't the husband's baby. His life and the nation went downhill from there.

Satan had been setting up this trap for many years. First there was the pattern started as a young man of meeting his own needs his way and then covering up so he wouldn't get in trouble. Also, there was a pattern of lust that started early in his life. He was always lusty, sensual, enjoying things of the flesh -- forbidden as well as legitimate. In his 20's he disobeyed by taking several wives, indulging his sexual lusts. He had numerous wives and concubines, he didn't need Bathsheba. This continued in his 30's and 40's and culminated with his sin with Bathsheba in his 50's. Satan had been setting up this trap for 30 years, and it worked!

Watch those 'little' lusts and sins. Watch the small cracks that develop in your personality. Watch that lie that says you can meet your own legitimate needs in your way and your timing. Watch that pride that motivates you to cover up your sin instead of admitting and confessing it.

As a result of this sin David lost his testimony to Bathsheba, his friends, his servants, his family, the nation, and even to his enemies (2 Samuel 12:14). His relationship with God was broken until he humbled himself and confessed it. Consequences from this sin continued throughout his life, and even down to today. His family, and the nation, started a slow decline from this time. Never has Israel achieved the greatness it had right before this sin.

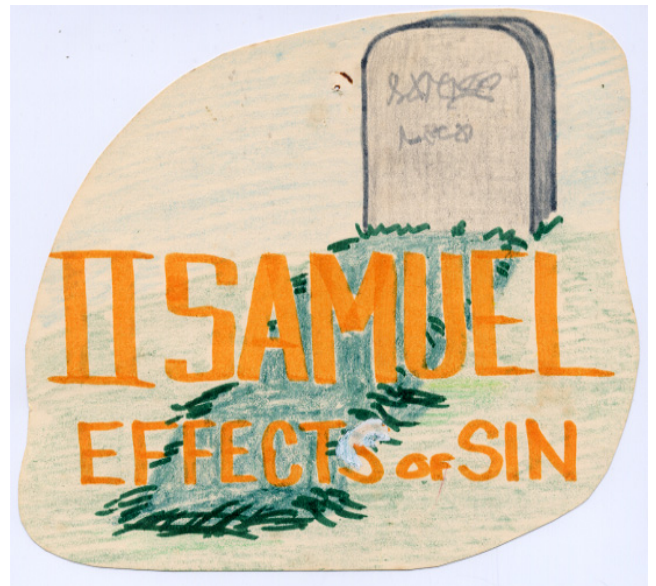
Throughout the stories of David we can also see a great love affair between man and God. David received judgment of his sins and lived with their consequences and was weighed down by them. But for the tender mercies of God he would have been utterly destroyed. God continually responded to David's great love for Him, knowing that David, in his heart of hearts, desired to do good, to live his love for God. David believed in the promises of his God, both of judgment and mercy. Though David was king of Israel, he understood and accepted that the LORD God is the one true King.

Ask God to search your heart now. "Search him, O God, and know his heart; test him and know his anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in him, and lead him in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23-24). Confess whatever He shows you. Don't ever cover up sin. It'll always catch up with you and cause you deep regrets. Learn from David's experience.

2 SAMUEL:

EFFECTS OF SIN

TITLE: Continuation of 1 Samuel
AUTHOR: Unknown (Gad or Nathan)
DATE of WRITING: Time of Solomon
PLACE of WRITING: Israel
TIME COVERED: 40 years (1011 - 971 BC)
RECIPIENTS: Jews
KEY VERSE: *2 Samuel 11:27b But the thing David had done displeased the LORD.*
KEY WORD: "David" 280 times
PURPOSE: To explain about David's reign (it's ups and downs) and to continue the history of Israel from Saul to Solomon
THEME: Effects of sin



When Leonardo da Vinci was painting his masterpiece *The Last Supper*, he sought long for a model for his Christ. At last he located a chorister in one of the churches of Rome who was lovely in life and features, a young man named Pietro Bandinelli. Years passed, and the painting was still unfinished. All the disciples had been portrayed save one -- Judas Iscariot. Now he started to find a man whose face was hardened and distorted by sin -- and at last he found a beggar on the streets of Rome with a face so villainous; he shuddered when he looked at him. He hired the man to sit for him as he painted the face of Judas on his canvas. When he was about to dismiss the man, he said, "I have not yet found out your name." "I am Pietro Bandinelli," he replied, "I also sat for you as your model of Christ." What had happened? Sin happened. The consequences and effects of sin are awful. Man reaps what he sows (Galatians 6:7; Colossians 3:25; Job 4:8; Hosea 8:7). The life of David shows that same truth. Even a "man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22; 1 Samuel 13:14; 1 Kings 15:3)" must suffer the consequences of sin. 2 Samuel is a prime example of that.

TRIUMPH The first half of the book (chapters 1 - 10) shows David's triumph. He becomes ruler over the nation Israel and captures Jerusalem (still called the "City of David"), making it his capital. He expands the nation from 6,000 square miles to 60,000. He shows mercy to Mephibosheth. God blesses everything he does. He is greatly successful and prosperous. He is very rich, popular, and tremendously used by God. Unfortunately that sets him up for defeat, for it is when things are going well that we neglect our spiritual disciplines and Satan attacks.

TRANSGRESSION Half way through his 40 year reign David decides to stay home from war because things are going so well for his army (2 Samuel 11:1). When we neglect our God-given duties and responsibilities we are sitting ducks for Satan's attacks. If David had been doing as he should, leading his army, his sin wouldn't have happened.

A late-night walk on the roof of the highest building in Jerusalem led to a chance glance at Bathsheba bathing herself in the privacy of her own home (v. 2). Instead of looking away and removing the picture from his mind, David fed the thought until it became an action (v. 3). While secure against his enemies without, David's greatest enemy was within. He couldn't help the first look, and temptation isn't sin (we don't have to confess being tempted, just when we give in to it mentally or physically). It was the lust that he let build from the look that was sin, as Jesus Himself said in Matthew 5:28. He should have fled, as Joseph did from Pharaoh's wife (Genesis 39:1-13). God always provides a way out (2 Corinthians 10:13) if we flee, but not a way through if we keep

going ahead. Satan baits his traps with something that appeals to us. With David it was a woman, a “beautiful” woman (to make it that much more tempting). Watch out!

Remember that this wasn’t just a one-time sin on David’s part. Satan had been building this trap for him for almost 30 years. David had a weakness for women, a lust for them, as evidenced in his several wives & concubines (1 Samuel 27:3; 30:5). This was magnified in his son Solomon who had almost 1000 wives and concubines (1 Kings 11:3). David was a sensual person, Satan used that to set a trap for him. He tries that with everyone. It may be a lust or greed, or it may be a mental attitude sin like anger (which kept Moses out of the Promised Land), fear or bitterness. He doesn’t care what sin it is as long as it works! Make sure you know what ‘little’ sin Satan is working on in your life. God’s plan is for you to have peace and joy and to grow spiritually. Satan’s plan is to keep those from you. He can’t take away your salvation but he can take away your witness and peace.

TRIALS Everyone knows how the story of David and Bathsheba concluded (2 Samuel 11 - 12). David resorts to lying and deceit to cover up his sin (11:5-7), even to drunkenness (v. 8-13). When none of that works he uses murder (14-17), thinking he has covered over his sin. But God knew (v. 27), and so did those in his household. Before long his enemies knew and it became a terrible testimony to them (12:14). Eventually David does repent (12:1-13; Psalm 51), after a year of misery (Psalm 32). Still, the consequences continue: the baby died, he who took another’s wife has his wives taken, his children follow his example with lust, rape, murder, death and deception common in his family, and the whole nation weakened. Enemies began to prosper against Israel. He was forgiven, but had to reap what he sowed. Watch out for Stan’s traps in your lives. He has one going against each of us. Only by always staying close to Jesus and quickly fleeing every tempting thought that comes into our minds will we be safe from such devastating consequences in our lives. Proverbs 28:13 says that “He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.”

OUTLINE OF 2 SAMUEL

I. TRIUMPH, *FAME* (Obedience = Blessing) 1-10

- A. People’s Reactions 1
- B. David’s recognition 2-4
- C. Nation’s Reunion 5-6
- D. God’s Reassurance 7
- E. Enemies’ Removal 8-10

II. TRIALS, *SHAME* (Disobedience = Judgment) 11-24

- A. David’s Reversal 11
- B. Nathan’s Rebuff 12a
- C. David’s Remorse 12b
- D. Sin’s Results 13-20
 - 1. Amnon’s Sin 13
 - 2. Absalom’s Rebellion 14-18
 - 3. Nation’s Regression 19
 - 4. People’s Revolution 20
- E. David’s Reminiscence 21-24

PSALMS:

WORSHIP

TITLE: "Songs Sung to the Accompaniment of a Stringed Instrument"

AUTHOR: Various (see outline)

DATE of WRITING: From 1410 - 430 BC

PLACE of WRITING: Mostly in Palestine

TIME COVERED: From Creation to 430 BC

RECIPIENTS: Some Psalms to individuals, others to Israel nation, many to mankind in general

KEY VERSE: 33:1-4 *Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him.*

Praise the LORD with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre. Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy. For the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does.

KEY WORDS: "Praise" 176 times; "bless" 92 times

PURPOSE: Israel's inspired book of prayer & praise to God

THEME: Worshipping God



Why do you go to church? Honestly. Not why SHOULD you go, but why DO you go? What motivates you to go? What do you think about as you sit awaiting the start of church?

In all truthfulness, people go to church for many reasons. The best reason, though, is to go to worship God. He wants our minds occupied with Who and what He is. He wants our hearts full of love and thankfulness and praise.

Martin Luther said two things were needed to have a church service: a Bible and a hymn book. God speaks to us through His Word. We speak to Him in music and song. That's how we express our love and thankfulness and praise. The Bible and the hymn book.

The book of Psalms was the Jewish hymn book. Actually it was an accumulation of five hymn books put together. Most churches have favorite hymns they love and sing often. They also have some praise songs they like to use. In addition there may be some choruses or contemporary Christian music. We may come across another song book that had music in it we like and use. Take the best from all these sources and put them into one and you have an accumulation similar to the book of Psalms.

HEBREW POETRY In our music today most songs have words that rhyme. Jewish poetry never rhymed words (or it would be lost in translation into English) but rhymed thoughts. Some thing would be said and then repeated in different words to reinforce the thought (Synonymous Parallelism; 24:1-3). The opposite was sometimes done, with the second line being in contrast to the first to emphasize the truth being stated (Antithetic Parallelism; 1:6; 37:9). Another form of poetry was to have the second line add to and explain the first line (Synthetic Parallelism; 19:7-9). To see what kind of poetry is being used, see how the second line relates to the first. This will help you interpret the Psalms better.

Actually this doesn't apply just to the psalms but to all Hebrew poetry. This includes Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, and many parts of other Old Testament books. All in all nearly 50% of the Old Testament was written in poetic style, but much of that has been lost in translation to English.

TYPES OF PSALMS Praise singing is quite popular in many churches today, supplementing the standard hymns which are known mostly for teaching. Other songs are good for expressing our trials and sufferings in life. Psalms contains songs about all these subjects, too.

Praise songs are the most prevalent. Some are an individual praising God (18, 30, 34, 40, 106, 116, 138) while others are written for the whole nation to worship God together (33, 36, 105, 111, 113, 117, 135, 136, 146, 147). Each of these follow the same pattern: the reason for praising God is given, then the praise itself.

Lament songs are also quite common. The trial or problem is described followed by a profession of trust in God and a request for deliverance. Then comes a closing declaration of faith in God. These, too, are either by individuals (6, 12, 13, 26, 28, 52, 58, 59, 69, 109, 140, 142) or the nation as a whole (13, 44, 60, 74, 80, 83).

Psalms about the Messiah abound as well. Some are Messianic Psalms, about the Messiah's first coming, death, burial, resurrection and ascension (16, 22, 45, 69, 72, 89, 118, 132). Royal Psalms praise the Messiah as reigning over God's Kingdom (2, 4, 7, 8, 20, 21, 45, 47, 72, 89, 93, 96, 97, 98, 101, 110, 144).

There were other kinds of Psalms, too. Confession of Sin songs confessed sin and asked for forgiveness, then praised God for it and exhorted all to live a holy life (3, 6, 25, 32, 38, 39, 40, 51, 102, 130). Pilgrim songs were sung by the people walking to Jerusalem or home (120-134). History songs taught Jewish history with a challenge to praise & thank God for His faithfulness in the past (78, 80, 81, 105, 106, 135, 136).

As you read Hebrew poetry, especially the book of Psalms, look for the types of parallelism as well as the type of Psalm it is. Some may be hard to determine, but for the most part this will really help you enjoy and get more out of the book of Psalms. Read them as prayers, sing them in your heart as praise. Memorize them. Absorb yourself in them. I'll bet you'll find yourself singing them in heaven -- so get familiar with them now!

OUTLINE OF PSALMS

Psalms 1: Introduction to the book of Psalms

I. ADORING WORSHIP (Mainly by David) 1-41

Like Genesis: creation and man

Doxology 41:13

II. WONDERING WORSHIP (Mainly by David & Korah) 42-72

Like Exodus: deliverance and redemption

Doxology 72:18-19

III. CEASELESS WORSHIP (Mainly by Asaph) 73-89

Like Leviticus: worship and sanctuary

Doxology 89:52

IV. SUBMISSIVE WORSHIP (Mainly Anonymous) 90-106

Like Numbers: wilderness wanderings

Doxology 106:48

V. PERFECTED WORSHIP (Mainly by David) 107-150

Like Deuteronomy: Scripture and praise

Doxology 150:6

Psalms 150: Conclusion to book of Psalms

BIBLE OVERVIEW

14. SOLOMON

MAIN EVENTS: Kingdom under Solomon

MAIN PEOPLE: Solomon

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE: 1 Kings, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon

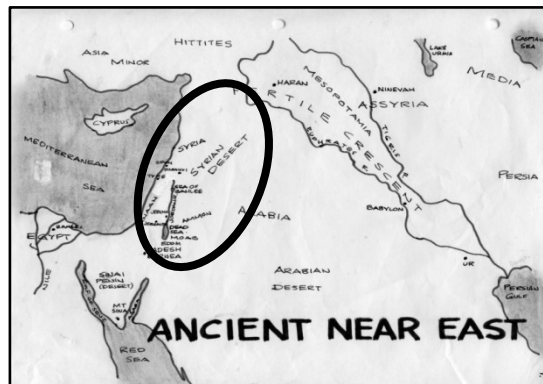
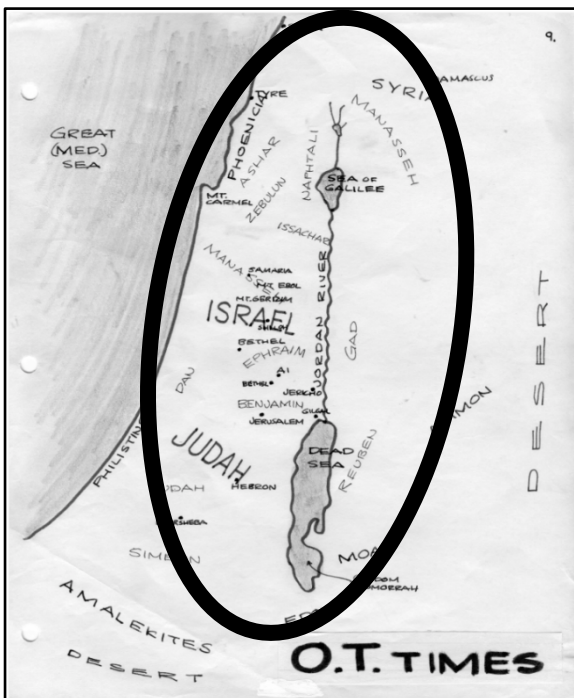
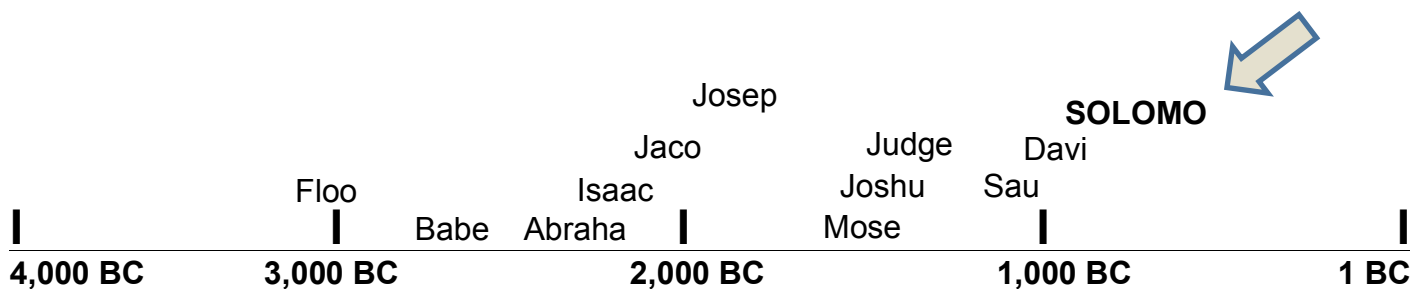
BIBLE VERSE: *1 Kings 10:23-24 King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth. The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart.*

TIME: 970 BC

WORLD EVENTS AT THIS TIME:

Iron Age in India

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: Palestine



Our Bible overview continues with Solomon, son of David, who also reigned 40 years. While Saul wasn't fully committed to God, David was, but Solomon was only partway committed. This time period ends the prosperous days of Israel, for after this they will be divided into two nations and then go into captivity. Solomon was wiser and richer than anyone else, but because he didn't obey God in all things the nation started in decline.

MEET SOLOMON

If we had to describe Solomon in one phrase it would be "very wise but also very imprudent." He was both. The name Solomon means 'peaceable.' When his father David died he became king in his place (1 Kings 1:33-39). David had given Solomon instructions as to how to govern God's people (1 Kings 2:1-9). He knew it would take great wisdom to lead the people as God wanted so when he was asked what he wanted from God it was wisdom he requested (1 Kings 3:5-15).

Wisdom became very important to Solomon, and God showered it on him (1 Kings 4:29-34). He even wrote a book called Proverbs which contains 917 proverbs conveying some of his wisdom. Only Jesus had greater wisdom than he had (Matthew 12:42) but God will share His wisdom with us if we ask (James 1:5). God enabled Solomon to use wisdom in his duties as king (1 Kings 3:16-28).

His father, David, had made plans for a temple to God but was not allowed to build it. Solomon was given that privilege (1 Kings 8:12-21). God was pleased, and promised to bless him and his descendants if they lived in obedience to Him (1 Kings 9:1-9).

Not only did God make Solomon the wisest person on earth, He also made him the richest even though he hadn't asked for riches (1 Kings 10:14-15, 23-29). Because of his great riches and the wonderful kingdom his father David had left to him, he had many opportunities to marry women from other countries. This was a way to seal friendship or treaties with them. Here's where his poor judgment showed itself – he married 700 wives and 300 concubines, women who weren't followers of Jehovah God, and they led him astray (1 Kings 11:1-6). This was against God's laws and commands (Deuteronomy 17:14-17). God became very angry because of this (1 Kings 11:9-13, 31).

Another unwise thing he did was to keep raising taxes to finance his extravagant life style. That led to problems among the people, and eventually to the nation splitting after his death. He had the privilege of ruling in Jerusalem for 40 years before he died (1 Kings 11:41-43).

So now you can see how he was wise but also unwise. Disobeying God is always senseless, no matter how much wisdom or money you have. Solomon had more of each of them than anyone alive, but they didn't make up for his failure to stay true to God.

What tempts you to stray from God? Despite His many blessings on you, where do you drift from Him? Don't be unwise, always do what He says for He knows what He is talking about!

1 KINGS: IDOLATRY

TITLE: After Israel's Kings

AUTHOR: Unknown (Jeremiah?)

DATE of WRITING: Over many years

PLACE of WRITING: Israel - Judah

TIME COVERED: 130 years (791-841 BC)

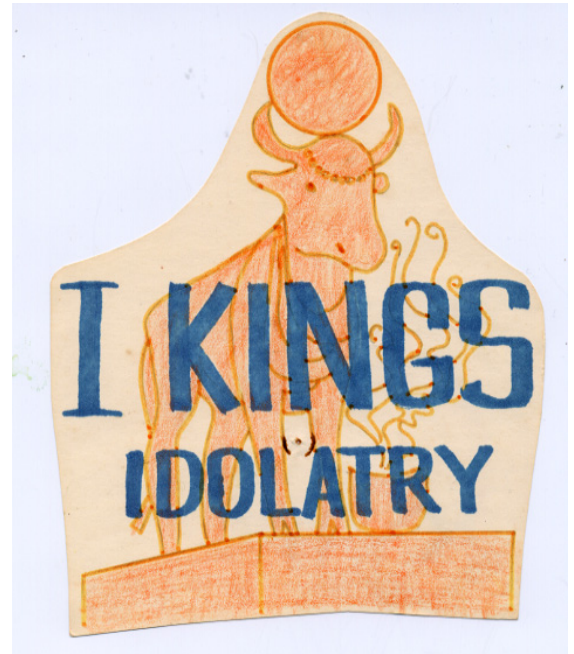
RECIPIENTS: Jews

KEY VERSE: *1 King 11:1-8 King Solomon ... had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray.*

KEY WORD: "King" 250 times; "Prophet" 43 times

PURPOSE: To show the history of Israel from David through the split

THEME: The results of turning from God to idolatry.



There used to be a TV commercial that began with a close-up of a man most didn't know. "You probably don't know me," he says. "I created the Muppets." Then the background suddenly comes alive with fuzzy little creatures who say in unison, "Big deal!" The man continues, "Everyone knows them, but nobody knows me." That's why wherever I go I carry my American Express credit card." At that point "Jim Henson" is visually typed on the card.

What was true there is also true today. God created man and the whole world, yet He hardly gets the credit or recognition He deserves. We know the creation better than the Creator. When the creation gets more recognition than the Creator this is idolatry! Whatever we put before God becomes an idol: money, things, happiness, family, sex, popularity, food, education, music, love, etc. 1 Kings is a serious warning against this!

SOLOMON'S SUCCESS After his sin, David went downhill fast. Solomon replaced him as king of Israel when he was just 20. David advised Solomon to stay close to God. David had been very close to God and very far from God, and he certainly knew close was better! Unfortunately, man rarely takes advice from his parents. We don't seem to learn from the mistakes of the previous generation. Solomon didn't, either.

Solomon started off very well. When God told Solomon he could have anything he wanted Solomon didn't ask for money or popularity or power but wisdom to properly lead God's people. As a result God gave him riches and popularity along with the wisdom.

Solomon had the privilege of building the temple which David had designed. This was the highpoint of Israel spiritually. You know, it is naturally built into man to worship something or someone. Everyone worships something. We all have something we live for, put our trust in, turn to for satisfaction and meaning, and look to for solace and comfort. Unfortunately most people have replaced the Creator with what he has created. That is idolatry.

During Solomon's reign the nation of Israel got very rich. Trade with many parts of the world made them strong and prosperous. There weren't wars to enlarge Israel, but the armies kept all the territory David had conquered. This was a time of peace and prosperity such as Israel never had before or since. However, the seeds of destruction were being sowed.

SOLOMON'S SEDUCTION Instead of trusting God to keep the peace with other nations Solomon resorted to the common treaty-making practices of the day where daughters were given as wives to other kings to assure peace. Solomon accumulated 700 wives and 300 mistresses. David's appetite

for women and having more than one wife set the groundwork for Solomon to take this to the extreme. Worst of all, these women weren't believers in Jehovah. They brought their foreign gods with them, continued their idolatrous worship, taught their children the same pagan practices, and slowly but surely influenced Solomon into idolatry and immorality (for that is the form their worship took).

SOLOMON'S SORROW By the time Solomon turned 60 (Saul, David and Solomon all ruled for 40 years) his life and kingdom was falling apart. The man who wrote the Song of Solomon about faithfully loving one wife when he was a young man has changed. The wisdom of Proverbs written in his mature years warned against idolatry and immorality, but he didn't take his own advice. Ecclesiastes, showing how empty life is without God, even if there is power and money, expressed what had happened to Solomon. What a sad end to a fine life! While Saul had no heart for God and David had a whole heart for God, Solomon only had a half heart.

CONSEQUENCES OF IDOLATRY After Solomon's death the nation of Israel split into two over greed for money and power -- idols which still destroy people today. The northern 10 tribes, Israel, went headlong into gross idolatry and immorality, building two golden calves to worship. The southern 2 tribes, Judah, had the temple but weren't much better. Despite a revival during the time of Elijah, the nation continued its downward slide from God, all because they put the creation before the Creator.

What is first in YOUR life: the Creator or some part of His creation? God's warning is clear, worship the Creator only, keep from idols (1 John 5:21).

OUTLINE OF 1 KINGS

I. SOLOMON - TRANQUILITY 1-11

- A. David's Replacement 1-2
- B. Solomon's Reasoning 3-4
- C. Solomon's Real Estate 5-8
- D. Solomon's Reputation 9-10
- E. Solomon's Removal 11

II. DIVIDED KINGDOM – TRAGEDY 12-22

- A. Israel's Rebellion 12
- B. Jeroboam's Revolt 13-14
- C. Elijah's Revival 15-22a
- D. Nation's Regression 22b

SONG OF SOLOMON: MARRIED LOVE

TITLE: A song of love by Solomon

AUTHOR: Solomon, when young

DATE of WRITING: about 970 BC

PLACE of WRITING: Jerusalem (?)

TIME COVERED: Several years of Solomon's marriage to an unnamed Shulammite maiden (Song of Solomon 6:3)

RECIPIENTS: Not specifically stated, but to young lovers of their day

KEY VERSE: 2:16 *My lover is mine and I am his; he browses among the lilies*

KEY WORDS: "Beloved" 32 times; also "love," fair," "come"

PURPOSE: To glorify marriage and wedded love (emotional and physical)

THEME: The tender love of the husband and wife for each other is pleasing to God and necessary for a good marriage



Throughout the centuries men and women have used various means of expressing their love for one another. One of the most common is writing a song or poem for the one you love. When in love it is natural to want to write of one's love in a private, personal way which is meant only for the eyes of the loved one. Suppose, though, your personal love notes and reflections were found and printed for the whole world to read? That is exactly what the Song of Solomon is: a love story written by the husband but using the woman's memories. It reminisces about their courtship, wedding and early struggles. It's private and personal, but God included it in the Bible for us to study.

A LOVE STORY The Song of Solomon is a lyric idyll, actually 14 short love songs that trace the development of their married love. They aren't all in chronological order, though. The book is more like a movie with flashbacks filling in spaces. It's hard to technically analyze a love poem, it must be viewed as poetry. What can make this harder to understand is that the language is foreign to us today. Each couple develops their own 'love language,' incorporating terms from their culture and coining phrases unique to them. Medical terms to express sex are cold, clinical and lacking in love. Cultural slang is usually crude, dirty and impersonal. Thus much is missed when just quickly reading through this book.

Remember that God created sex before sin entered the world. He inspired this book and included it in the Bible. Sex between two married people of the opposite sex is wonderful and beautiful in His sight. Our culture today has taken away our innocence and purity in this area so that it is hard to think of a couple entering marriage with only positive, clean, wholesome thoughts about sex. Because sex is God's wedding gift to a married man and woman, and because it so beautifully exemplifies God's union with His church, Satan has worked hard at tarnishing and staining our thoughts of it. We don't talk or pray about this issue at church. It is unacceptable and embarrassing. For Solomon and his bride, the Shulammite woman, this was not so. We must read the book, looking at sex from their virtuous and pure eyes, and ask God to restore that innocence to us.

WEDDED LOVE (1:1-5:1) The first half of the book talks about their wedding day and night. Solomon evidently met the Shulammite woman when he went north to Galilee to take care of business interests. She was different from the big-city, high-society girls who were so available to him in Jerusalem. Her freshness and open honesty won his heart and he came to see her whenever he could. They used this time to work through problems (defeat the "little foxes") and strengthen their

relationship for when they would wed. Clearly they abstained from sex before marriage, in fact three times the reader is warned that no physical desires must be even aroused before marriage (2:7; 3:5; 8:4). Where does God draw the line before marriage? Nothing can be done or said to in any way start what should ultimately lead to sex. How far to go? God says don't even start anything at all! That's the way Solomon and the Shulammite woman were.

Thus when the wedding night came, it was a time of joy and beauty. The wedding itself was not their main focus (as it has become today). Instead, everything pointed to their first night together. What they said, how they felt and all they did is explained in detail (1:15-2:7; 4:12-5:1). It is beautiful and loving. In fact, God Himself encourages them to really completely enjoy each other as He watches them and gives His 100% approval of all they are doing (last sentence in 5:1).

MARRIED LIFE (5:2-8:14) As in all relationships, things aren't always perfect. She was homesick, he was gone a lot, and they neglected each other. This affected their sex life. They had to learn to remember why they married the person and make sure they had realistic expectations. That had to return to focusing on meeting their mate's needs instead of thinking how their needs should be met by their mate. They rekindled their wedding night love. What a tremendous book this is for our sex-sick culture and time, a real 'cure for what ails us.'

OUTLINE OF SONG OF SOLOMON

I. COURTSHIP (In Lebanon)

- A. Developing Purity 2:8-14
- B. Defeating Problems 2:15-17
- C. Determining Priorities 3:1-5

II. WEDDING (In Jerusalem Palace)

- A. Wedding Procession 3:6-11
- B. Wedding Preparations 1:1-8
- C. Wedding Feast 1:9-14
- D. Wedding Night - I 1:15 - 2:7
- E. Wedding Night - II 4:1 - 5:1

III. MARRIED LIFE

- A. Sexual adjustments (in Jerusalem Palace) 5:2-8
 - 1. Wrong Attitude 5:2-8
 - 2. Right Attitude 5:9 - 6:3
 - 3. Unconditional Acceptance 6:4-10
 - 4. Total Commitment 6:11-13a
 - 5. Total Delight 6:13b - 8:4
- B. Putting the Other First (in Lebanon) 8:5-14

PROVERBS:

WISDOM



TITLE: "To be like, to represent" in Hebrew

AUTHOR: Solomon & others (see chart)

DATE of WRITING: 950-700 BC

PLACE of WRITING: Mostly in Judah

TIME COVERED: 950-700 BC

RECIPIENTS: Specifically Solomon's son (1:8; 2:1)
but applies to all mankind (8:1-5)

KEY VERSE: 1:1-7 *The proverbs of Solomon son of*

David, king of Israel: for attaining wisdom and discipline; for understanding words of insight; for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; for giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young-- let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance-- for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.

9:10 *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*

KEY WORDS: "my son" 22 times; "wise/wisdom" 119 times; "instruction" 26 times

PURPOSE: To give common sense wisdom expressed in short, crisp form

THEME: Principles from heaven for life on earth

What is wisdom? Do you have it? How do you know if someone is wise? Where can a person get wisdom? Although not valued in our time and culture as it should be, wisdom is of supreme importance. Having wisdom means being able to make a decision as God would, view a matter as God does, have the attitude God would have. It means having the mind of Christ, thinking and doing what Jesus would do where He here, what is best in the long run.

The book of Proverbs contains wisdom: short, wise sayings and principles drawn from experience and a godly perspective. They are true principles, but not promises.

WHAT IS WISDOM? In the first 7 verses, Solomon tells what real wisdom is.

First, he says it is knowledge of God (1:4). Having facts doesn't make one wise. Wisdom is the correct use of those facts. But the facts, the raw material, is necessary to become wise. This is especially true of knowledge of God. Knowing God and His Word gives a good base of facts and truth which can be formed into wisdom. Much wisdom can be learned from listening to others or from reading about people from the past (history). This is an excellent way of gaining knowledge of life which leads to wisdom.

Next, Solomon tells his son that insight and understanding (1:2b; 2:2; 14:33) are part of wisdom. The ability to discern between good and evil (Heb 5:14) in particular circumstances is wisdom. Actually it comes from God's Holy Spirit nudging and giving insight (James 1:5). We must be alert to God's Spirit as He directs. Being sensitive is more important than being smart.

Third, self-discipline (1:2) is necessary for wisdom. It takes self control to resist the easiest path which the flesh screams out for. It takes self control to learn to think and not just respond by emotions, to ask questions, to patiently await insight, to be totally objective and honest, to stick with a wise decision and not change it, to admit the need for wisdom and ask others for help. Self-discipline is an important ingredient of wisdom.

Common sense is also part of wisdom (1:3a). Wisdom is not some far away, unapproachable, deep truth. It is common sense. Proverbs as well as Jesus' teachings are just common sense statements when you really think about them.

HOW CAN WE GET WISDOM? Although we are the best-education nation ever, we lack wisdom. We don't seek it, we don't even know how to get it if we want it. Proverbs tells us:

Ask God for it is the basic advise given (2:6). He wants us to have wisdom (Luke 21:15). When given his choice of asking God for anything at all, Solomon asked for wisdom. Job, the oldest book in the Bible, asks this question (20:12,20), concluding that man doesn't naturally possess wisdom (20:13) and it can't be bought (20:14-19) but only comes from God. Instead of always just asking God for certain direction, ask Him to make you more like Jesus, to have the mind of Christ (Proverbs 1:7). The better you know someone the more likely you are to know what they will think about a certain thing. The same is true with Jesus.

In order to receive wisdom you must be humble (James 3:13-18). It takes the open attitude of a child to receive advice from others and from God.

Of course, we must always rely on the Holy Spirit as said earlier (1 Corinthians 12:8) and be sensitive to His leading and impulses within.

Learning from the past is important as well. Wisdom doesn't just 'happen' overnight. Keep a record of things God is teaching you so you can apply them as time goes on.

Also, learn from others. Woodrow Wilson said "I use not only all the brains I have but all I can borrow." Anyone who thinks he doesn't need others opinions is really a fool (Job 8:8-10; Proverbs 19:20). Solomon gives great wisdom in the book of Proverbs -- avail yourself of it!

Finally, always remember to view everything in light of eternity. Instead of thinking what is easiest or best for now, ask yourself what you will wish you had done when you look back in 20 years, or 50 year, or 100 years! That will help keep things in perspective.

OUTLINE OF PROVERBS

Prologue: Purpose of Writing 1:1-7

I. PRINCIPLES OF WISDOM (Commendation) 1-9

- A. Principles for Youth (by Solomon) 1-7
- B. Principles for All (by Solomon) 8-9

II. PROVERBS OF WISDOM (Observation, Comparison) 10-29

- A. Proverbs About Godly Living (by Solomon) 10-22
- B. Proverbs About People (by Wise Men) 23-24
- C. Proverbs About Relationships (by Solomon) 25-29

III. PRACTICE OF WISDOM (Description) 30-31

- A. Practices of All (by Agur) 30
- B. Practices of Wives (by Lemuel) 31

ECCLESIASTES: LIFE WITHOUT GOD IS EMPTY



TITLE: "Preacher" (Greek)

AUTHOR: Solomon (aged)

DATE of WRITING: about 935 BC

PLACE of WRITING: Judah

TIME COVERED: Solomon's later years

RECIPIENTS: Solomon's sons (12:12)

KEY VERSE: 1:12-14 *I, the Teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. I devoted myself to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under heaven. What a heavy burden God has laid on men! I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind. ... 2:11 Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.*

KEY WORD: "wise/wisdom" 49 times; "vanity/empty/meaningless" 37x; "under the sun" 31x

PURPOSE: to show that nothing in this world can satisfy, only God

THEME: The emptiness of life and everything in it without God

Why are you alive? What is the purpose of your existence? What is life all about, anyway? Is there any reason or purpose to it? Shakespeare said life is a "tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." Benjamin Disraeli said, "Youth is a mistake, manhood a struggle and old age a regret." Others have said: "Man is a sick fly, taking a dizzy ride on a gigantic wheel." "Man's life has no more meaning than that of the humblest insect, crawling from one annihilation to another." "Men are but tiny lumps of carbon and water who crawl about for a few years until they are dissolved again into the elements of which they are composed." Without the reality of God as an anchor and guidepost, life is empty and meaningless, temporary and fragile. Solomon himself, the wisest man who ever lived, said that life is "meaningless" (1:12-14; 2:11). He was referring to life without God, without any spiritual element ("under the sun" 2:11). The word translated "meaningless" (sometimes translated "empty" or "void") refers to vapor, our breath that comes out on a cold day and immediately disappears. What a picture of life!

If life without God is so empty, how can people without Him go on living? The answer is simple: substitutes. None of the substitutes replace Him or satisfy, but they do give temporary hope. When one is found to not work, there are many others to choose from.

WORLD'S WAY (SUBSTITUTES) In the first half of the book Solomon lists 7 substitutes that don't work. Worldly wisdom says that this is what life is all about, this is what brings meaning and satisfaction. These include fun (sensuality 2:1-11), work (human labor 2:18-23; 4:4-6), ego (man his own god 2:24 - 3:27), poverty (4:1-3), asceticism (9:7-10), riches (materialism 4:7-12; 5:10-20; 6:1-12), social status (popularity 4:13-16) and going through the motions of religion (5:1-7).

GOD'S WAY (REALTHING) Solomon concludes with what He has learned through his life: only God satisfies! These 7 upward steps are more narrow and harder to climb while the world's way is broad and easy going (downhill to emptiness). Only God's upper path leads to victory, though. These steps are humility (taking advice from the wise 7:5-7), patience in trials (7:8-10), self-discipline (fruit of Holy Spirit to overcome world, flesh, Satan 7:19-22), submission to God in all things (8:1 - 9:12), faith in God (10:1-20), helping others (not self-centered but other centered 11:1-8) and joy (from God's inner peace 11:9 - 12:7).

In effect what we have here is God's world view versus other world views. The Biblical world view says there is a reason and purpose for everything, including life itself. We are here to serve God and others. This life isn't all there is. God's Word is true and gives us final absolutes on moral and ethical areas. In contrast, the world's 'world view' is that man is the final authority in all things, this life is all there is, truth is different for each person, and each one is on his own to find some pleasure in any way he chooses. No wonder this is called 'empty.'

How do you view life? What do you live for? What motivates you? What do you turn to to find meaning and purpose in life? There are basically two ways to view life: by God's wisdom or by the world's wisdom. Which are you following?

OUTLINE OF ECCLESIASTES

I. THE PROBLEM 1-6

- A. Summarized 1-2
 - 1. Meet Solomon
 - 2. Life Without God Is Empty 1-2
- B. Detailed 3-6
 - 1. Life is Boring 3a, 4b
 - 2. Life Isn't Fair 3b, 4a, 5a
 - 3. 'Things' don't Satisfy 5b-6

II. THE SOLUTION 7-12

- A. Use Money Wisely 6
- B. Be Wise 7-8
 - 1. Wise Living 7
 - 2. Wise Leaders 8
- C. Don't Be Foolish 9-10
 - 1. Life and Death 9
 - 2. Fools and Foolishness 10
- D. Be Faithful 11-12
 - 1. Faith and Faithfulness 11
 - 2. Truth and Justice 12

BIBLE OVERVIEW

15. SPLIT

MAIN EVENTS: Nation splits into Israel and Judah

MAIN PEOPLE: Rehoboam, Jeroboam, Elijah, Elisha

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE: 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles

BIBLE VERSE: *2 Kings 17:21-22 When the Lord tore Israel away from the house of David, they made Jeroboam son of Nebat their king. Jeroboam enticed Israel away from following the Lord and caused them to commit a great sin.*

TIME: 930 BC

WORLD EVENTS AT THIS TIME:

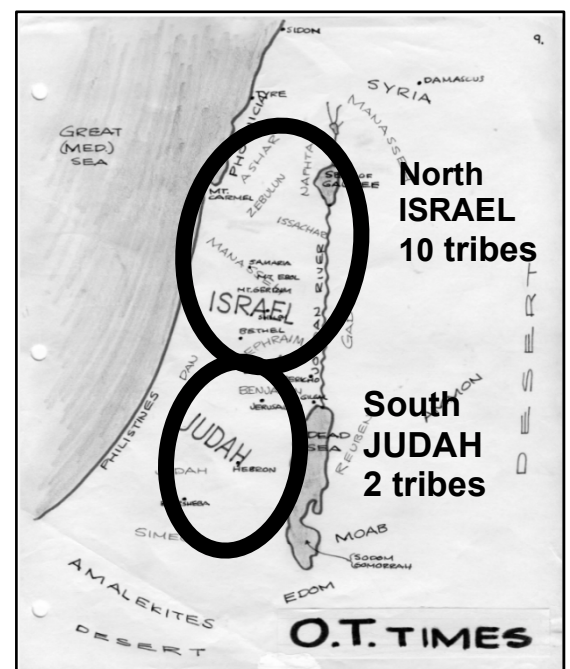
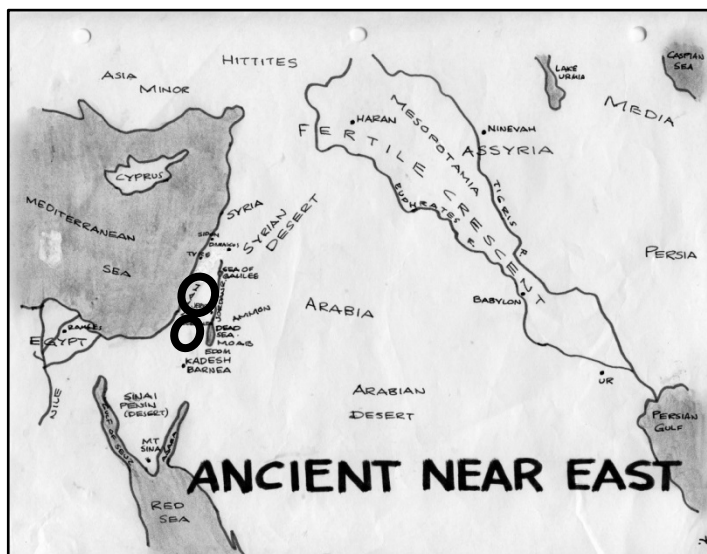
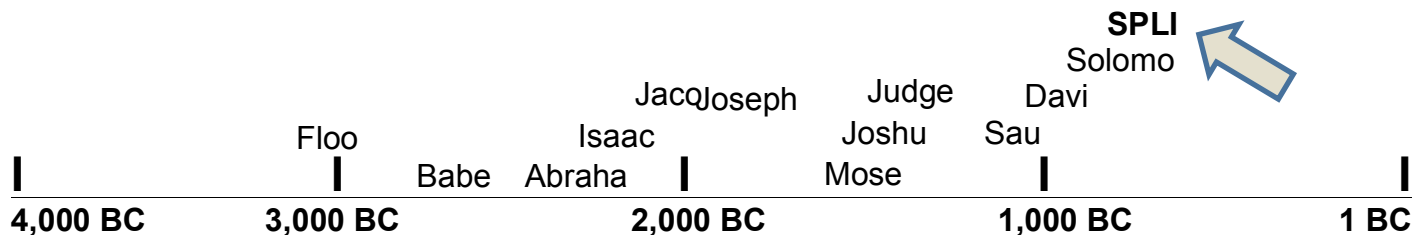
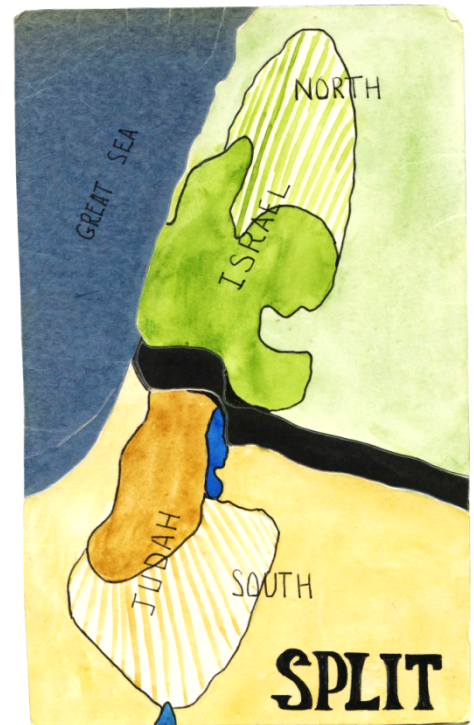
Carthage founded by Phoenicians

First Olympic Games in Greece

Founding of Rome

Homer writes in Italy

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: Palestine



This time period called the “Split” is when the nation divided into the Northern Kingdom (Israel, 10 tribes) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah, 2 tribes). Solomon had put a very heavy tax burden on the people to support his building projects, and when he died the people needed relief, but instead of giving it his son, Rehoboam, greatly increased the tax burden. As a result, the northern 10 tribes broke away to form their own nation. The north and the south each had their own king and capital. Sometimes they even fought each other in battle. What a sad end to David’s glorious kingdom, and it only took 60 years for it to happen. Despite His goodness and many blessings, mankind in general and the Jews in particular, still continue to turn from Him in rebellion.

ISRAEL – NORTHERN 10 TRIBES First King

JEROBOAM, king for 22 years when the nation split after the death of Solomon (1 Kings 11:26-14:20; 2 Chronicles 9:29-13:22). He was a servant of Solomon. The prophet Ahijah tore a garment into 12 pieces and gave 10 to Jeroboam, signifying the nation would be torn after Solomon’s time and he would rule the 10 northern tribes. So he wouldn’t be killed because of this prophecy he fled to Egypt. He returned when Solomon died and Rehoboam raised the taxes. The northern 10 tribes asked him to be king. He built 2 gold calves so the people would not go to Jerusalem, which was in the southern kingdom, to worship. Thus he set an idolatrous pattern for the north. He was told to repent by several prophets: Ahijah, Iddo, an old unnamed prophet and another prophet who predicted his death. He didn’t repent and was stricken by God and died.

JUDAH – SOUTHERN 2 TRIBES First King

REHOBAM was the first king of the south and reigned 17 years (1 Kings 11:42-14:31; 2 Chronicles 9:31-12:16). He was the son and successor of Solomon but because he rejected the advice of his older advisors and followed the suggestions of his young friends, his greed led to the country breaking in two. Solomon had heavily taxed the people and they needed relief but Rehoboam increased the tax load, thus causing the ten northern tribes to pull away in 922 BC. God’s prophet **SHEMAIAH** advised him to not try to force the north to stay. Judah, some of Benjamin, and later Simeon stayed faithful. Jerusalem stayed their capital. The south was soon attacked by Egypt, who took away the vast riches Solomon had accumulated. Even though they seemingly stayed faithful to God, they still set up high places for Baal worship and made wooden images to bow down to and worship.

2 KINGS: JUDGMENT



TITLE: About the Kings of Judah & Israel

AUTHOR: Unknown (Jeremiah?)

DATE of WRITING: Over many years

PLACE of WRITING: In Judah and Israel

TIME COVERED: 267 years (853 - 586 BC)

RECIPIENTS: Jews

KEY VERSE: *2 Kings 17:7-8, 18-23 All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD their God. They worshipped other gods and followed the practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before them, as well as the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced. So the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah was left, and even Judah did not keep the commands of the LORD their God. They followed the practices Israel had introduced.*

KEY WORD: "King" 340 times; "Prophet" 31 times

PURPOSE: To show how and why Judah and Israel went into captivity.

THEME: God judges sin.

Every year thousands of taxpayers receive a letter beginning: "Dear taxpayer, in processing your return, we need more information about certain items." People think they won't get caught, so they can 'get away' with something. But some times their sins catch up with them. That's not how it is with God. There is no statute of limitations, and NO ONE gets away with sin. A person can get away with things from the IRS, but not from God!

TRAGEDY (chapters 1 - 17) Because of their sin, God warns his people of coming judgment and calls them to repentance. Elijah was one such man. He had ministered for 50 years and then was taken to heaven in a flaming chariot.

Elisha replaced Elijah as God's main messenger (chapter 2 - 8). He, too, performed many miracles (including bringing a dead boy back to life). Both Elijah and Elisha ministered to the northern kingdom, Israel. Of their 19 kings, none followed God. In the south, Judah, 8 of the 20 kings followed God for at least part of their reigns.

Jehu (chapter 9-10) started off all right, under Elisha's influence, and cleansed the land from Ahab's family and influence, but then fell into idolatry himself. Ahab's removal is another example that we all will "reap what we sow" (Gal 6:7). "Be sure your sins will find you out" (Num. 32:23) is exemplified by Ahab & Jezebel, who died an awful death (chapter 9).

Long ago there was a famous black smith who was put into a prison dungeon. He began to examine the chain that bound him looking for a flaw so he could escape. His hope was in vain for he found his own mark upon it -- he had made it and it had been his boast that none could break a chain that he had forged. Ahab had forged his own chains of sin and was caught in them. They, too, were unbreakable. Under Joash, Judah returned to God (chapter 11), but soon relapsed (chapter 12). Israel, meanwhile, turned further from God (chapter 13). Uzziah brought Judah back to God, but then fell to pride (chapter 14-16). Finally Israel was removed (chapter 17). The godly remnant from Israel had all moved to Judah, so the twelve tribes continued on in Judah.

TRAVAIL (chapters 18 - 25) Judah continued for about 150 years after Israel fell. Between two of the worst kings was one of the best - Hezekiah (chapters 18 - 20). His son, Manasseh, offered his children as sacrifices (chapter 21). Josiah, his son, was the opposite again, being one of the most

godly kings (chapter 22), but the final kings of Judah all did evil (chapter 24). Finally Judah, too, was removed, taken into captivity by Babylon (chapter 24 - 25).

Some years ago in the mountainous region of Europe an avalanche of snow came down from the mountain and dammed up the river. Water couldn't flow so it formed a lake behind the snow, threatening to burst through snow and ice and ruin villages below. It held a long time, and people were lulled into false security. The longer wait, though, just meant more destruction when it did burst, and that is what happened. Sin works the same way.

TRUTH The Bible clearly says that God will judge sin. Galatians 6:7-8 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Proverbs 1:31 They will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes. Proverbs 5:22-23 The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast. He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly. Proverbs 22:8 He who sows wickedness reaps trouble.

God's people especially must turn from sin. We are not exempt, instead we are more accountable (Matthew 3:9-10). "Judgment begins at the house of God" (1 Peter 4:17). Luke 12:47-48 says "That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked." We can't lose salvation (Romans 8:1), but that is no excuse to sin.

One day in Colorado a great stalwart tree fell down. It was four hundred years old. It was a sapling when Columbus landed at San Salvador. It had been struck by lightning fourteen times. It had braved undaunted the storms of four hundred years. It had defied earthquakes and hurricanes. It had laughed in scorn at the winter's blasts and blizzards that would have destroyed it. But in the end the tiny little beetles killed it. They bored under the bark, dug into its heart, ate away its mighty fiber and one day down came the mighty king of the forest.

OUTLINE OF 2 KINGS

I. TRAGEDY (Last Days of Israel) 1-17

- A. Elijah's Removal 1-2
- B. Elisha's Remedies 3-8a
- C. Enemies Revolt 8b
- D. Jehu's Revival 9
- E. Ahab's Removal 10
- F. Judah's Repentance 11
- G. Judah's Relapse 12
- H. Israel's Relapse 13a
- I. Elisha's Removal 13b
- J. Israel & Judah's Regression 14-16
- K. Israel's Removal 17

II. TRAVAIL (Last Days of Judah) 18-25

- A. Hezekiah's Reforms 18-20
- B. Judah's Relapse 21
- C. Josiah's Reforms 22
- D. Judah's Relapse 23
- E. Judah's Rebellion 24
- F. Judah's Removal 25

1 & 2

CHRONICLES:

FAITHFULNESS



TITLE: Latin Vulgate title (all 1 book to Jews)

AUTHOR: Many, compiled by Ezra

DATE of WRITING: After return from Babylon

PLACE of WRITING: Judah

TIME COVERED: Adam to Cyrus (536 BC)

RECIPIENTS: Jews back from Babylon

KEY VERSE: *1 Chronicles 17:10 and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also subdue all your enemies. "I declare to you that the LORD will build a house for you:*

KEY WORD: David (180 times, Temple & House of God (148 times), priest (80 times)

PURPOSE: to show the history of Israel from a spiritual point of view, showing the importance of the temple and of being faithful to God who has always been faithful to them.

THEME: Faithfulness of God

Faithfulness to others is not seen as an important virtue today. Everything teaches us to be loyal only to ourselves, to put our needs and wants first, to make selfishness and self-centeredness a virtue. Faithfulness to mate, family, job, country, favorite sports team, etc., only seems to last as long as it is profitable. When things get hard people seem to move on quickly. Fortunately God isn't that way. 1 & 2 Chronicles proves that.

Originally one book in the Hebrew canon, Chronicles covers basically the same information as 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings, but from a different perspective. While they show the civil and political happenings from a human viewpoint, Chronicles shows it from God's view point. For example, 1 Samuel 31 tells of the death of Saul from man's viewpoint - how he died. 1 Chronicles 10 tells the same story, but from the divine perspective - how and why God removed him. 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings shows how man is unfaithful, but 1 & 2 Chronicles shows how God is faithful, no matter how man is (similar to the theme of Deuteronomy).

CHRONOLOGY OF JUDAH'S KINGS (1 Chronicles 1 - 9) traces the genealogy from Adam to the Babylonian captivity. It shows the fulfillment of God's promise to send a Messiah from the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:14-15) as God promised. He sets the groundwork to prove that Jesus is that Messiah (Matthew 1, Luke 3). Especially this section shows the faithfulness of God to Abraham (many nations did come from him), to David (whose descendants did rule Judah) and to everyone, for God knows and remembers all by name.

CHRONICLES OF JUDAH'S KINGS (1 Chronicles 10 - 2 Chronicles 36) hits some highlights of the kings in David's line, especially the godly ones.

This section starts with David returning the ark to Jerusalem and all the praise and worship that came with it (1 Chronicles 10-16). David's sin with Bathsheba isn't mentioned in Chronicles, it is forgiven and gone. The focus is on God's faithfulness, not man's unfaithfulness. God's promises are reaffirmed to David, stating that God would faithfully keep His promise to have David's descendants as the kingly line, right up to the Messiah (1 Chronicles 17-21). David's preparations for the temple are elaborated, too (1 Chronicles 22-27), and so is Solomon's building of the temple (2 Chronicles 1-9). There is so much about the temple in these chapters because it is the people's link with God. It reminds them that all they have comes from God and it isn't anything they earned or deserve. The

temple calls man to be faithful to God in response to His faithfulness to man. It's not just a building, it's a way of life!

When the nation splits, Chronicles only follows the kings of the southern tribe, Judah. The unfaithful north is ignored. True believers from there moved down to the south, so the southern kingdom had the godly remnant, the representatives of all 12 tribes. God's faithfulness to Judah is seen in his enabling Abijah to defeat Jeroboam (2 Chronicles 13), Asa defeat the Ethiopians (14), Jehosaphat defeating the Moabites (20) and Hezekiah's deliverance from Sennacherib (31). The Jews response of revival (15) and repairing the temple and returning to God every time an evil king led them astray (23-24, 30, 35) shows their response of faithfulness to Him. Unfortunately their times of unfaithfulness were greater and eventually God let the Babylonians take them into captivity. Still God was faithful, preserving a remnant and giving promises of future deliverance and restoration.

"Old Faithful" is a famous geyser in Yellowstone National Park. It shoots 10 to 12 thousand gallons of boiling water 150 feet into the air. There are other geysers who send out more water, and send it higher. Why, then, is this one more famous and more visited? It's because of it's 'faithfulness' -- every 65.5 minutes it erupts. It can be counted on. No one knows when the others will erupt. God is like that -- totally dependable and consistent. We can always count on Him. He is the original "Old Faithful." God wants us to respond to His faithfulness to us by our being faithful to Him in return. Thank God for His faithfulness to you Be faithful to Him. "It is required that a man be found FAITHFUL" (1 Corinthians 4:2).

OUTLINE OF CHRONICLES

I. CHRONOLOGY OF JUDAH'S KINGS 1 Chron. 1-9

- A. The Royal Line 1-4
- B. The Related Lines 5-9

II. CHRONICLES OF JUDAH'S KINGS 1 Chron. 10-19; 2 Chron. 1-26

- A. The Throne of David 1 Chron. 10-29
 - 1. God's Ark 10-16
 - 2. God's Covenant 17-21
 - 3. God's Temple 22-27
 - 4. David's Message 28-29
- B. The Temple of Solomon 2 Chron. 1-9
 - 1. Solomon's Temple 1-5
 - 2. Solomon's Worship 6-9
- C. The Testimony of History 2 Chron. 10-26
 - 1. Regression (Divided Kingdom) 10-11
 - 2. Reform & Relapses (Southern Kingdom) 12-26

END OF BOOK REFLECTION QUESTIONS

To help you get more out of this book, think about the following questions and how you would answer them. You can write down your answers if you want, or just meditate on them. The answers don't get turned in; they are for your benefit.

Who is your favorite Bible person? Why?

In what ways is Joshua similar to Jesus?

What lessons can you learn about sin and disobedience from Saul?

What lessons can you learn about faithfulness to God from David?

What lessons can you learn about temptation and sin from David?