

Old Testament Survey Notes

1 What Is the Old Testament (OT) & Why Study It?

1.1 *Canon: What is the Bible?*

- How do we know which books should be in the Bible? Does the apocrypha belong? What if archaeologists discover a new letter written by Paul?
- "Canon" comes from Hebrew & Greek words meaning "reed" or "measuring stick".
- Tests for canonicity:
 - Written by a prophet or other Spirit-led person – ensured that message was from God
 - Written to all generations – might be written to a particular audience, but applies universally
 - Written in accord with previous revelation – God's truth does not change or contradict itself
- Over time, the Hebrew people determined which books belonged in the OT.
- At the Council of Jamnia in AD 90, Jewish scholars & leaders confirmed the content of the OT.
- Hebrew & English versions of the OT are arranged differently (see chart on page 23 of book).

1.2 *Inspiration: How was the Bible written?*

- The Bible claims God's inspiration for itself (2 Tim 3:16). What role did human authors play?
- *Neo-Orthodox Theory*: God is beyond our comprehension, the Hebrews experienced God, the Bible is their written witness of God, and revelation occurs to us when we read the Bible.
 - BUT, the Bible claims itself to be God's Word, not just a witness to it (2 Tim 3:16).
- *Dictation Theory*: God simply dictated to human scribes.
 - BUT, while this did happen on occasion (Jer 26:2, Rev 2:1, 2:8), the human authors also express their own personalities (Gal 1:6, 3:1, Phil 1:3-4, 1:8).
- *Limited Inspiration Theory*: God inspired the human authors but not necessarily their words. The Bible may contain historical errors, but the Holy Spirit protected the doctrine.
 - BUT, many points of doctrine rely on Biblical history (Rom 5:12-21, Matt 12:41) and archaeological finds continue to affirm Biblical history.
- *Plenary Verbal Inspiration Theory*: God's inspiration extends to all Scripture (incl. history), down to the choice of individual words (more human involvement than dictation theory).
 - This is the position held by evangelicals.
 - Implications: the Bible is trustworthy and carries God's authority.

1.3 Textual Transmission: How did we get the Bible?

- Scribes played a key role in accurately recording political, economic, and religious writings.
- The Masoretes (AD 500-1000) served as OT scribes. They had 3 big contributions: they added vowels, added accents, and devised consistency checks for copying OT text.
- Important OT source text and other writings:
 - *Masoretic Text*: most reliable Hebrew text we have, based on text from AD 100.
 - *Samaritan Pentateuch*: based on text from 200-100 BC, but considered less reliable due to Samaritan theological influence.
 - *Dead Sea Scrolls*: scrolls from 200-100 BC, maintained by apocalyptic Qumran community.
 - *Septuagint (LXX)*: Greek translation of the OT, done around 300-200 BC in Alexandria.
 - *Aramaic Targums*: OT commentary, written in Aramaic during early Christian era.

1.4 Hermeneutics: How do we interpret the Bible?

- Historical-Cultural analysis
- Contextual analysis
- Lexical-Syntactical analysis
- Theological analysis
- Special literary forms analysis
- Applying the Biblical message to today's culture
- For more details, take ChASM's Hermeneutics class!

2 Where & When Did the Events of the OT Take Place?

- The book uses the word "incarnational" to describe God's involvement with the Israelites.

2.1 *Where did the events of the OT take place?*

2.1.1 Regions of the Ancient Near East

- Most land is inhospitable, but there is a "fertile crescent" of soil suitable for agriculture.
- *Mesopotamia*: the flat land between the Tigris & Euphrates rivers could be irrigated and supported farming. This land was subject to outside cultural influences & invasion. Writing was developed around 3000 BC. Major people groups included the Sumerians, Akkadians, Amorites. The Assyrian & Babylonian empires arose from this region.
- *Egypt*: the Nile River irrigated and annually rejuvenated nearby land, but the rest of the region is desert. Geographical barriers made this region more culturally isolated & less vulnerable to invasion. Cultural differences existed between the Northern and Southern portions of Egypt.
- *Syria-Palestine*: extends from the Northern bend of the Euphrates to the Sinai desert. This area forms a land bridge between Asia, Africa, and Europe; controlling it resulted in great economic and military benefit. Instead of unification fostered by large rivers, the region's geography leads to segmentation into sub-regions (see next section).

2.1.2 Subregions of Israel

- *Coastal plains*: rich soil, numerous springs, and a high water table make good farmland; lack of natural harbors preclude maritime activity. Towards the north, the coastal plains yield to the mountains. Towards the east, the Shephelah (lowlands) make excellent land for olive groves. Note the east-west orientation of the Jezreel Valley, which allows easy access to the Jordan Rift.
- *Central mountain range*: Mount Herman rises to 9,200 feet. The remaining Galilee mountains rise 2,000-3,000 feet. The Ephraim and Judean hill country lacks easy east-west passages.
- *Jordan Rift*: this 10-mile wide depression drops from 300 feet in the north to -1,275 feet at the Dead Sea.
- *Transjordanian highlands*: plateaus reach up to 5,700 feet, which causes enough rainfall to support sheep-herding and wheat. Four east-west river gorges create natural boundaries. There is no natural barrier to the Arabian desert.

2.1.3 Highways of the Ancient Near East

- *Way of the Sea*: travels along the coastal plain, then branches at Megiddo. The eastern branch traverses the Jezreel valley, then turns north towards Damascus.
- *King's Highway*: extends from the Gulf of Aqabah to Damascus, through the Transjordanian highlands. The route was 25-30 miles east of the Jordan River, to avoid east-west river gorges.

2.2 What events does the OT describe?

2.2.1 Israel's Ancestry: The patriarchs

- Middle Bronze Age (2000-1550 B.C.)
- Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
- Egyptian Middle Kingdom
- Arrival of Amorites and other ethnic groups in Mesopotamia
- Hammurapi and the Old Babylonian Empire

2.2.2 Israel's Beginnings: Moses and Joshua

- Late Bronze Age (1550-1200 B.C.)
- Bondage, Moses, the exodus, wanderings, and Joshua
- Egyptian New Kingdom
- Hittites and Egyptians fight over Syria Palestine
- Kassite dynasty in Mesopotamia

2.2.3 Israel's Statehood: David and his dynasty

- Iron Age (1200-332 B.C.)
- Judges, Saul, David, and Solomon
- Invasion of Sea Peoples and disruption of major powers
- Rise of new ethnic groups, including Arameans, Israelites, and Assyrians

2.2.4 Israel's Exhile and Restoration: Ezra and Nehemiah

- Divided Kingdom, fall of Israel and Judah in 722 and 587 B.C., respectively
- Weakened Egypt
- Rise and fall of Assyrian Empire
- Nebuchadnezzar II and the Neo-Babylonian Empire
- Cyrus and the Persian Empire
- Return of the exiles

3 Introduction to the Pentateuch

3.1 What is the Pentateuch?

- “Pentateuch”—five books
- “Torah”—instruction
- “The Law”
- Single literary unit
- Historical and theological foundation for rest of the Bible

3.2 What is the Pentateuch About?

It is the story of God’s people, tracing the actions of God and Israel in history.

- Genesis—beginnings of the universe and the origins of God’s people
 - Chapters 1-11 present a problem; 12-50, a solution
- Exodus—traces Israel’s salvation
 - Describes God’s special covenant with his people
- Leviticus—a call for holiness
 - Shows God’s people how to maintain their relationship with Him
- Numbers—a book of wanderings
 - Israel’s disobedience costs her dearly
- Deuteronomy—a program for renewal
 - Aims to reestablish the covenant between God and his people

3.3 Overarching Themes

3.3.1 Sovereignty of God

- Control of his creation
 - Creatio ex nihilo
 - The flood
 - The tower of Babel
- His dealings with individuals
 - Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
 - Joseph
 - Moses
- His lordship over nations
 - The plagues
 - Mount Sinai

3.3.2 History

The creation narratives describe the beginning of history by relating the creation of time and space. (Gen 1:5, 9-10)

In contrast with myths of other religions taking place beyond time and space, God created history and worked through its events.

3.3.3 Fallen Condition of Humanity

- Gen 1-2: Shalom (“peace”)
 - Peace with God
 - Access to his presence
 - Wholeness, well-being
 - Significance, meaning
- Gen 3-: Sin
 - Humanity incapable of righting its own wrongs

3.3.4 Salvation

Though God is sovereign and has no needs (including to fellowship with humans), humanity remains in a hopeless predicament. Only God’s loving and compassionate nature in giving humanity salvation bridges the gap between its depravity and God’s perfection.

3.3.5 Holiness

Humanity’s only proper response to God is holiness. God’s invitation in grace and love comes with requirements for righteous living and a holy lifestyle. God is never content to be in relationship with his people if they are making no effort to imitate his character.

3.4 Authorship

3.4.1 Authorship and Traditional Consensus

Jewish and Christian Tradition affirms Mosaic authorship. This position is also held by the Talmud, the Mishnah, Josephus, and the writers of the New Testament.

3.4.2 Modern Critical Approaches

- Source and redaction criticism
- Documentary Hypothesis
 - J document was composed around 850 B.C. and uses the divine name “Yahweh”
 - E document was written around 750 B.C. to correct J document and uses “Elohim”
 - D document was written around 650 B.C. to reinforce purity of Judah’s worship
 - P document written in fifth century B.C. to address neglected priestly concerns of the JED document

- Form criticism
 - Analyzes many different literary types and attempts to uncover the “historical kernel” for each literary genre.
- Source and redaction criticism
- Documentary Hypothesis
 - J document was composed around 850 B.C. and uses the divine name “Yahweh”
 - E document was written around 750 B.C. to correct J document and uses “Elohim”
 - D document was written around 650 B.C. to reinforce purity of Judah’s worship
 - P document written in fifth century B.C. to address neglected priestly concerns of the JED document
- Form criticism
 - Analyzes many different literary types and attempts to uncover the “historical kernel” for each literary genre.
- Tradition criticism
 - Oral accounts were passed down through the centuries before they were written down.
 - However, literary traditions were often recorded in writing soon after the events in the ancient Near East.
- Canonical and literary approaches
 - Canonical criticism—studying the received form to expose the theological message
 - Literary criticism—addresses larger literary issues and often antagonistic to source and form critical approaches
- Evangelical Contributions—3 main positions
 1. Mosaic authorship, limited post-Mosaic material
 2. Most of Pentateuch is Mosaic, but substantial amounts post-Mosaic—completed between Joshua and Solomon
 - Much of Pentateuch consists of additions from important crisis moments in Israel’s history—current form acquired between ninth and fifth centuries
- Tradition criticism
 - Oral accounts were passed down through the centuries before they were written down.
 - However, literary traditions were often recorded in writing soon after the events in the ancient Near East.
- Canonical and literary approaches
 - Canonical criticism—studying the received form to expose the theological message
 - Literary criticism—addresses larger literary issues and often antagonistic to source and form critical approaches
- Evangelical Contributions—3 main positions
 3. Mosaic authorship, limited post-Mosaic material
 4. Most of Pentateuch is Mosaic, but substantial amounts post-Mosaic—completed between Joshua and Solomon
 5. Much of Pentateuch consists of additions from important crisis moments in Israel’s history—current form acquired between ninth and fifth centuries

4 Genesis 1-11

4.1 *Primeval History and Its Nature*

The Genesis account of creation is unique in its monotheism and the significance it places in humanity. Two Mesopotamian accounts of creation include the Enuma Elish and the Epic of Atrahasis. Though these accounts are similar to the Genesis account, there is no evidence that the Old Testament borrowed from any of these parallels. Instead, the Old Testament answered the same questions that other authors of the world were considering—and in unique ways that expressed Israel’s distinctive theology.

- Enuma Elish
 - The most complete Mesopotamian account of Creation
 - Marduk kills the monstrous Tiamat
- Epic of Atrahasis
 - The oldest Near Eastern primeval history
 - The most direct parallel to the Biblical account
 - Confirms that the basic plot of Genesis 1-11 was well-known throughout the ancient Orient
- Genesis 1-11
 - 500 years newer than the Atrahasis epic

4.2 *Contents of Genesis 1-11*

4.2.1 **Creation and Its Nature**

- Genesis 1
 - Is Genesis 1:1 a dependent clause or an independent clause?
 - “When God set about to create the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void. . .” implies that God began with pre-existing matter. This compares to Enuma Elish.
 - “God created the heavens. . .” implies that God was alone at the beginning and created the universe from nothing (ex nihilo). This speaks directly against polytheism.
 - Creative events of each day:
 - Day 1—light
 - Day 2—sea and sky
 - Day 3—fertile earth
 - Day 4—luminaries
 - Day 5—creatures for water and sky
 - Day 6—creatures for fertile earth
 - Day 7—Sabbath
 - If one word could summarize the essence of creation in this chapter, it would be “good.” God is pleased with all that he sees in his created order; this is especially apparent in

days 3 and 6, when the evaluation is stated twice.

- Chapter 2
 - The term “generations” means offspring or history.
 - A more intimate account of the Garden of Eden and the creation of Man and Woman
 - The Garden of Eden is the paradise as God designed it, with humanity in full fellowship with himself.

4.2.2 Sin and Its Nature

- Chapter 3
 - Rebellion and the fall
 - Adam and Eve lose innocence, access to God, and paradise
- Chapter 4
 - Cain and Abel and the first murder
 - Sin moves from eating fruit to the first murder
- Chapter 5
 - Seth and the godly line
 - Ten generations of the faithful line including Seth
- Chapter 6-9
 - Universal wickedness and the flood
 - Wickedness increases to the point that the creation is destroyed
- Chapter 10
 - Shem and the godly line
 - Classification of the nations including Shem’s line
- Chapter 11
 - Corporate rebellion at the tower of Babel
 - The “Gate of God” becomes “balal”

5 Genesis 12-50

5.1 *Background of the Patriarchal Narratives*

Chapter 12 begins a new literary subunit within the Pentateuch. Genesis 1-11 is concerned with broad, universal themes and an illustration of humanity's moral failure. Conversely, Genesis 12-50 focuses on a single family and illustrates how their journey of faith becomes the means for God's solution.

5.2 *The Story of the Patriarchs*

5.2.1 Abraham and Isaac

The Journey of Abram:

1. Gn 11:31—From Ur to Haran
2. Gn 12:5-6—From Haran to Shechem in Canaan
3. Gn 12:10—From Canaan to Egypt
4. Gn 13:1—From Egypt to the Negev and Canaan

God's covenant with Abram:

- Gn 12—The promise of land and descendants who bless others
- Gn 15—The assurance of a statement (v.5) and a ceremony (vv.8-21)

Who did Abraham believe would be his heir?

- Gn 12—Lot
- Gn 15—Eliezar
- Gn 16—Ishmael
- Gn 17—Isaac
- Gn 22—Resurrected Isaac

Abraham's journey of faith:

- Gn 12—God originally gives the promises of land and descendants who will bring blessing to humankind.
- Gn 15—God officially establishes the covenant and assures Abram that his heir will be one of his biological offspring
- Gn 16—Abram and Sarai attempt to achieve the promises in their own strength, and Ishmael is born
- Gn 17—17:1-5 is the focal point of the Abrahamic materials, as it describes the life-changing consequences of a relationship with God. God gives circumcision as the sign of the covenant, and Abram and Sarai become Abraham and Sarah—"father of a multitude" and "Princess."
- Gn 21—God fulfills his word in the birth of Isaac, while Abraham and Sarah are 100 and 90 years old, respectively.
- Gn 22—Abraham passes the ultimate test of his faith with flying colors as he obeys the word of God.

5.2.2 Jacob and His Twelve Sons

Major events of Jacob's life:

- Gn 25:19-27:40—Displaces his brother as heir of the promises
- Gn 27:41-43—Runs away from the promised land after the dispute with Esau
- Gn 28—God confirms he is the heir in a dream
- Gn 29-31—Marries and his family grows
- Gn 32—Wrestles with God, name changed to Israel

5.2.3 Joseph

While Joseph is not in the direct line of the covenant promises, his narrative is important and is included for two basic reasons.

1. His life is worthy of emulation—his story demonstrates how God can use an obedient servant to accomplish his divine and benevolent purposes, even in the face of severe human persecution and opposition.
2. The Joseph narrative explains how God's people came to be in Egypt instead of in Palestine.

5.3 *Theology of the Patriarchal Narratives*

5.3.1 Election

God's election of the patriarchs focuses on his plans for them as his instruments of salvation to the world. They prepared the way for the coming of Israel's Messiah, through whom salvation would be accomplished and offered to the world.

5.3.2 Promise

The promises that God made to Abram in chapter 12 concerning land and descendants were only partially fulfilled during his lifetime, in the form of a burial plot and a single son. However, we know that after Genesis, the fulfillment included the whole land of Canaan, a large nation, and ultimately the Messiah through whom all the peoples of the earth would be blessed.

5.3.3 Covenant

God's covenant with the patriarchs is foundational to other covenants in the Bible, including the Mosaic covenant with the Israelite nation, the Davidic covenant with his royal dynasty, and the new covenant between God and his people throughout the world. The covenant was necessary to maintain the right kind of relationship with God. The promises were central and eternal. But the covenant taught the patriarchal believers what was expected of them in their relationship with God: "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless" (Gen 17:1).

6 Exodus

The Book of Exodus shows how God led Israel from Egypt through the desert to Mount Sinai. It describes two main events: Israel's departure from Egypt (rescue) and her newly established alliance with God (relationship).

6.1 *Contents of the Book of Exodus*

- Israel in Egypt (1:1-12:36)
 - Ch 1: Hebrews enslaved
 - Ch 2: Moses forgets—God remembers
 - Ch 3-4: Call for Moses
 - Ch 5-11: Yahweh sovereign over Egyptian god-king
- Israel in the desert (12:37-18:27)
 - Ch 12-15: Rescue of Israel—Passover, Reed Sea
 - Ch 16-18: Desert odyssey
- Israel at Mt Sinai (19-40)
 - Ch 19: Covenant introduced
 - Ch 20-23: Covenant explained
 - Ch 24: Covenant ceremony
 - Ch 25-31: Tabernacle instructions
 - Ch 32-34: Rank disobedience
 - Ch 35-39: Tabernacle constructed
 - Ch 40: God's glory filled the tabernacle

6.2 *Historical Problems of the Exodus*

6.2.1 **Historicity of the Exodus**

The Exodus is so central to later Israelite thought and theology, it is inconceivable the events could have no basis in the national history. Furthermore, it seems unlikely Israel would have been so uncomplimentary about her past as to include suffering and servitude if it were not true.

6.2.2 **Date of the Exodus**

Refer to chart on page 109

6.2.3 **Route of the Exodus**

Refer to map on page 111. The body of water was probably a fresh water lake. Possible routes include the Reed Sea, the Bitter Lakes, and the Red Sea. Though Mount Sinai could have been located in Midian, most believe its location to have been in the Sinai Peninsula.

6.3 Theological Significance of the Exodus

6.3.1 Deliverance

- From Egyptian bondage
- Through the plagues
- Through the miracle at the Sea of Reeds

6.3.2 Covenant

- Founded on patriarchal covenants
 - The promises to Abraham of land and descendants are partially fulfilled and continued on the Sinai covenant.
- Established clear instruction
 - The details of living in relationship with God are clearly revealed.
- Given as response to salvation, not the means
 - These laws were only given after God had redeemed them and established his bond of intimate relationship with them.

6.3.3 Presence of God

The purpose of the exodus from Egypt and the covenant at Sinai, with its Law and tabernacle, can be summarized in this way: God was preparing Israel for his arrival in their midst.

7 Leviticus

Though Leviticus seems quite strange to modern readers and appears at first glance to interrupt the flow of events in the story of God's people, it makes an essential contribution to our understanding of God's relationship with humankind.

7.1 Background of Leviticus

Three distinctive of the Israelite sacrificial system that distinguished it from those of Israel's neighbor's in the ancient Near East:

1. Clairvoyance—sacrificial animals were not used to determine the future actions of the gods
2. Covenant—sacrifices were a major ingredient of the covenant bond
3. Holiness—holiness impacted the sacrificial system for worship

7.2 Contents of Leviticus

Whereas Exodus ended by emphasizing *where* to worship God (i.e., the tabernacle), Leviticus deals with *how* to worship him.

7.2.1 Overview

Expiation—the purging of impurity caused by sin

Atonement—the ransoming of the sinner from the death which the sinner deserved

Types of sacrifices in Lv 1-7:

- Burnt (Lv 1)—typical Hebrew offering and probably the oldest form of atonement sacrifice
- Cereal (Lv 2)—the term simply means “gift;” probably served as a less expensive burnt offering
- Peace (Lv 3)—the basic form of sacrifices brought on feast days; consumed by humans
- Sin (Lv 4:1-5:13)—expiatory for offenses against God; emphasized the act of purification
- Guilt (Lv 5:14-6:7) expiatory, but devoted to restitution and reparation; deals with social violations

Nadab and Abihu's death ends the unit on the priesthood (chapters 8-10) by emphasizing the holiness of Yahweh and the necessity of approaching him *only* as he has prescribed.

Why did God make a distinction between clean and unclean (chapters 11-16)?

- Possibly:
 - Disease
 - Public health
 - Associated
 - Blood and life were synonymous
 - No predatory carnivores
- Ultimately:
 - The chapters describe what is meant by uncleanness so that it may be absolved on the Day of Atonement.

The Day of Atonement, Lv 16

- The slain animals—atonement for the nation and the High Priest; blood sprinkled in the Holy of

Holies

- The scapegoat—removal of the nation’s sin

The Holiness Code (chapters 17-27) prescribes the way of holiness for all Israelites. It deals with topics ranging from sexual purity to observance of sacred holidays to fair treatment of the poor. This appeal for holy living is based on God’s holy character: “You shall be holy, for I the Lord your god am holy.” (Lv 19:2)

7.3 Themes of Leviticus

7.3.1 Law

How do these laws relate to us?

- Common view—there are three types of law in the Old Testament:
 - Moral law—only the 10 commandments relate to us
 - Civil law specific to OT society
 - Ceremonial law—sacrifices and ritual cleansing
- Better view?—the laws fall into two categories
 - For all people—some laws are broad and generally intended for all cultures
 - For Israel only—some are specific to Israelite culture and cannot be applied to Western culture

7.3.2 Sacrifice

- What
 - Sin and guilt offerings provided expiation from sin.
 - It results in sin’s removal, the granting of forgiveness, and the restoration of the relationship between the sinner and God.
- How
 - The worshiper place his hand on the head of the animal.
 - The animal suffered the consequences of the person’s sin.
- Why
 - The blood makes atonement.
 - Life itself must be returned to God to atone for sin.
 - The animal list its life in order for the sinner to live.

7.3.3 Holiness

“Be holy, for I am holy.” While God’s holiness is intrinsic, our holiness is derived from him, as we live in fellowship with him and learn to obey his will.

8 Numbers

Though the English Bible calls this book “Numbers,” the Hebrew title *běmidbar*, “in the desert,” more accurately reflects the book’s contents, as the book describes events that occurred during the nearly forty years Israel wandered in the desert. Numbers relates Israel’s difficulty in obeying God and describes the consequences of that disobedience.

8.1 Contents of the Book of Numbers

8.1.1 Literary Structure

Geographical and chronological arrangement in three parts:

1. Numbers 1:1-10:10—instructions and preparations at Mount Sinai
2. Numbers 10:11-20:21—wandering in the wilderness as Israel fails to trust God
3. Numbers 20:22-36:13—preparations on the plains of Moab to enter the promised land

Though the combination of different types of materials in an apparently random order may seem disorganized, the book contains a unified interpretation of God’s will for his people by contrasting holy with the profane. The book of Numbers portrays the holy :as the presence of God the blessing of numbers, the laws of cleanliness, the service of the Levites, the atonement of Aaron, and the inheritance of a clean land.” On the other hand, “the profane consists of all sorts of uncleanness, and results in the wrath of God, his plagues of judgment, a lost inheritance by a dying people, and the pollution of the land.”

8.1.2 The Book's Use of Numbers

Inaccurate Comparisons

- A group of over 2 million Israelites would more than fill northern Egypt.
- The Israelite army would probably have outnumbered the Egyptian army by 30 to 1, with Egyptian army having only 20,000 men.

Inaccurate Logistics

- 2 million people marching in close order would create a line so long that the first rank would reach Kadesh Barnea before the last rank crossed the Red Sea

Inaccurate Solutions

- The term “thousand” and “hundred” may originally have referred to social units or to military units, calculating a population of 72,000. But this solution is tentative, and a conclusive answer to this problem remains elusive.

8.1.3 Overview

Preparations at Mount Sinai (1:1-10:10)

- Ch 1-2: Military census and organization around the tabernacle
- Ch 3-4: Organization for service to the tabernacle
- Ch 5-6: Maintain clean and holy lives because of God’s presence
- Ch 7-8: Instructions for transporting the tabernacle

- Ch 9-10: Final preparations for departure

Disobedience in the Desert (10:11-20:21)

- Ch 10: The divine cloud rises and Israel departs for the promised land
- Ch 11: complaining about the desert diet
- Ch 12: Opposition of Aaron and Miriam to Moses' leadership
- Ch 13-14: Israel's ultimate failure and refusal to enter the promised land
- Ch 15: Laws for protecting Israel from uncleanness
- Ch 16: The rebellion of Korah/vindication of Aaron
- Ch 17-19: Laws on offerings when in Canaan
- Ch 20: Not even Moses is exempt from the consequences of sin

The book of Numbers is basically silent on events that occurred during the more than 37 years of desert wanderings. This silence reflects the book's primary purpose. Numbers is not a history of Israel, but an essay about the consequences of disobedience.

Preparations in the Plains of Moab (20:22-36:13)

- Ch 21: Bronze serpent—simplicity and availability of salvation
- Ch 22-24: The curses and blessings of Balaam
- Ch 25: Baalism in Moab
- Ch 26: Census taken in preparation for entering the land
- Ch 27: Instructions for worship
- Ch 28-36: Instructions for land allotment, wars, justice, and worship

8.2 Use of the Book of Numbers in the NT

8.2.1 First Corinthians 10

In 1 Corinthians 10 Paul uses the Israelites' failure recorded in the book of Numbers to warn the Corinthians of sexual immorality (v.8, Nm 25:1-9), rebellious rejection of authority (v.9, Nm 21:5), and complaining (v.10, Nm 14:2). "So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall" (v.12).

8.2.2 Hebrews

The author of the letter to the Hebrews refers to the account of the spies and the nation's refusal to enter the promised land as a warning to Christian readers (3:7-4:13). "Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall through such disobedience as theirs" (4:11).

9 Deuteronomy

The Book of Deuteronomy relates the reestablishment of the covenant with Israel, including the laws of the covenant.

9.1 *Contents of the Book of Deuteronomy*

9.1.1 Literary Structure

Recent studies have detected a five-part concentric pattern known as chiasm:

- A The Outer Frame: a look backwards (1-3)
- A' The Outer Frame: a look forwards (31-34)

These two can be read as a continuous whole.

9.1.2 Overview

- First speech: the great king's faithfulness (1:6-4:43)
 - By reviewing the recent past, Moses sought to prepare the nation to obey God in the future. Moses reviewed both the victories of Israel, such as protection from Edom and success over Heshbon and Bashan, and its failures, such as the rebellion at Kadesh-Barnea and Moses' sin at Meribah.
- Second speech: the covenant way of life (4:44-26:19)
 - Deuteronomy 5-26 has two sections: 5-11 is a general statement about the covenant law, while 12-26 is a specific application of that law to future Israelite society
- "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Dt 6:4).
 - The Shema expresses not only that Yahweh is the only God in existence, but that his character never changes.
- In this unit, Moses urges the Israelites to both love and fear God. Love without fear becomes sappy sentimentality and fails to result in obedience. Likewise, fear without love becomes terror and drives people away from an intimate relationship with God. Together love and fear produce a healthy relationship with him.
- The Decalogue—refer to the chart on page 147.
- Third speech: covenant sanctions (27:1-31:30)
 - Moses instructed the Israelites to renew the covenant at Shechem between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, where the priests were to sing the warnings and the people were to respond antiphonally.
- Appendices (32:1-34:12)
 - 32—Moses' song: a covenant song intended to motivate the nation to keep its covenant with God
 - 33—Moses' blessing: assurance of God's commitment to the nation
 - 34—Moses' death: Moses sees—but does not enter—the land because of his sin at Meribah

9.2 *Parallels from the Ancient World*

Covenant—a means of establishing a binding relationship that does not naturally exist otherwise.

9.2.1 The Hittite Parallels

- Parts of the Hittite suzerainty covenant:
 1. Preamble—usually identifies the suzerain king and gives his titles and attributes
 2. Historical prologue—relations between the two parties leading to this agreement, intending to make the vassal feel obligated to the suzerain
 3. Stipulations—outlines the terms of the agreement, customarily requiring an annual visit to the suzerain
 4. Provisions for deposit—document placed as sacred object in sanctuary of vassal, with required public readings
 5. List of Witnesses—gods of the Hittites served as these, also sometimes deified mountains, rivers, etc.
 6. Curses and blessings—these were listed as the actions of the gods, and the Hittite military was merely the agent of divine will.

9.2.2 Treaty Structure in Deuteronomy

The ancient Near-Eastern treaties are alike in several respects:

- In form and structure, not content
- In the exclusive nature of the relationship of the vassal to the suzerain
- In the commitment of the suzerain to the vassal

9.3 *Significance of Deuteronomy in Biblical Thought*

Deuteronomy is a pivotal book, bridging the Pentateuch with the historical books.

9.3.1 Role of Deuteronomy in the Pentateuch

The basis of the nation's relationship to God flowed from his love for them and from their appropriate response of obedience. Obedience to God's law is a byproduct of a relationship of love. Love is the essence of the relationship; law is the natural result.

9.3.2 Deuteronomy and the Historical Books

Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings all show a strong deuteronomical influence.

10 Introduction to the Historical Books

The historical books cover a period of time at least eight-hundred years in length, from Joshua's conquest to the Persian Empire in which Esther lived.

10.1 *Contents of the Historical Books*

- Joshua shows the surpassing value of obedience and Israel's conquest of the land.
- Judges vindicates Israel's need for a king, showing an almost hopeless state after the conquest.
- Ruth illustrates God's sovereign care for faithful individuals in the midst of apostasy.
- Samuel traces the early history of the monarchy, especially Saul and David.
- Kings contrasts obedience with disobedience, detailing the period from Solomon to the fall of Jerusalem.
- Chronicles reminds Israel of her past victories as a means of providing hope for the future.
- Ezra/Nehemiah relates the rebuilding of the walls, temple, and the people's social/religious foundations.

10.2 *The Role of History in the Bible*

Whereas most religious expression in the ancient Near East was mythological, Israel saw her own national history as an arena for divine revelation.

10.2.1 **Herodotus, the Father of History?**

A hundred years before Herodotus, the Bible had a history of Israel containing cause-and-effect connections, continuous narration, and fully developed characterization.

10.2.2 **The Jewish Canon and the Christian Canon**

The Jewish canon describes Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings as the "former prophets" because they narrate the nation's reaction to the covenant throughout history from a prophet's point of view. The Christian canon groups these books in the historical books because they narrate the story of Israel's history from a religious point of view.

10.2.3 **History and Theology**

Heilsgeschichte—literally, "salvation history"

The events of salvation history are supernatural divine revelations in time and space, recorded in Scripture to promote faith.

The correct interpretation of historical events (theology) is based on the foundation that the events are truthfully recorded (history). The faith the Bible defines is expressly a historical faith. It is rooted and grounded in the historicity of events.

10.3 Authorship

All of the historical books are anonymous. How do these books relate to each other and to the Pentateuch?

10.3.1 The Deuteronomistic History

- Two views on authorship:
 - Hexateuch—Genesis through Joshua is one unit
 - Tetrateuch—Genesis through Numbers is one unit
- Deuteronomistic History:
 - An anonymous editor (called the “Deuteronomist”) combined several sources into one long work. One modification of this hypothesis proposes that there were two Dtr editors: a first editor (Dtr¹) composing the initial work during the time of Josiah (640-609 B.C.), and a second (Dtr²) finishing the work during the exile (around 550 B.C.).
- Positive aspects of the Noth-Cross theory
 - There can be no doubt that these historical books share a theology of retribution which seems to be clearly based on the book of Deuteronomy.
 - The theory accentuates the continuity between Deuteronomy and the historical books.
- Difficulties of the Noth-Cross theory
 - Most scholars holding to it assume a late date for the book of Deuteronomy (ignores parallels with ancient Near Eastern suzerainty treaties).
 - Many scholars dissect Deuteronomy from the Pentateuch, making it a Tetrateuch (denying the canonical function of Deuteronomy its authoritative reinterpretation of the first four books).
 - It fails to account for the enormous amount of variety in the historical books.
 - The entire Old Testament contains “deuteronomic” influences

Whatever extent the anonymous author of Kings had a hand in the compilation of Joshua, Judges, or Samuel is impossible to determine. But he conceived of his work as a continuation and culmination of that history. To that extent, we may refer to a Deuteronomistic Historian.

10.3.2 Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah

- Early Jewish tradition names Ezra as the author of Chronicles.
- A new consensus chooses an anonymous author as the author of Chronicles.
- The most likely author of Ezra is Ezra.
- The most likely author of Nehemiah is Ezra.

10.3.3 Ruth and Esther

- Jewish tradition credits Samuel with the authorship of Ruth.
- The most likely author of Ruth is an anonymous author.
- The authorship of the book of Esther is most likely attributed to an anonymous author.

11 Joshua

11.1 *Background of the Book of Joshua*

- The book of Joshua continues the story of the Pentateuch.

11.1.1 Joshua the Man

- Joshua is first introduced as Moses' helper (Battle w/ Amalekites, Mt. Sinai, meeting tent).
- Joshua was one of the 2 spies that returned with a good report about Canaan.
- Joshua appointed as the leader by Moses before he dies.

11.1.2 Date and Authorship

- Events within the book of Joshua span about 20 years; most likely occurred 1405 – 1385 B.C.
- Joshua 24:26 suggests that Joshua wrote at least part of the book.
- Obviously the account of Joshua's death was written after he died.
- The phrase "until this day" (4:9, 5:9, 7:26, etc.) suggests some time had passed since the events.
- Joshua 15:63 and 16:10 imply a date before 1000 BC and 970 B.C., respectively.

11.1.3 Archeology and the Book of Joshua

- Evidence of significant destruction at Lachish, Debir, and Hazor during 13th century B.C.
 - Some scholars use this to argue for a late exodus date.
 - BUT, the OT records that only Jericho, Ai, and Hazor were destroyed in the conquest.
 - The Philistines (a.k.a. "Sea Peoples") arrived about 1200 B.C.
- The Amarna Letters, written in the second quarter of the 14th century B.C., describe turmoil attributed to invading 'apiru'.

11.1.4 Themes of Joshua

- transition of power from Moses to Joshua
- conquest (chapters 1-12) and division (chapters 13-24) of Canaan
 - two purposes: punish inhabitants of the land & bless the Israelites
- God's faithfulness to His promises

11.2 *Message of the Book of Joshua*

- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings

12 Judges and Ruth

- The repeated expression, "in those days Israel had no king" (17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21:25) and the "*Bethlehem Trilogy*" suggest that this book was written during David or Solomon's reign.
- Anonymous authorship.

12.1 *Contents of the book of Judges*

- The Hebrew word translated as "judge" is a charismatic military leader that God empowered for specific deliverance (2:16).
- The book opens with "Now after the death of Joshua", which serves as a transition from the unified conquest and general victory described in Joshua to a time of disobedience and failure.
- Two main themes of disobedience: failure to drive out the Canaanites & adopting their idols.
- Repeating cycle used as a literary device:
 - Israel sins (e.g. 2:10-13, 3:7)
 - The Lord weakens Israel and allows their enemies to conquer them (e.g. 2:14-15, 3:8)
 - Israel cries out to the Lord and repents (e.g. 2:15, 3:9)
 - The Lord raises up a judge to deliver Israel (e.g. 2:16, 3:9-11)
 - And then repeat ... (2:19)
- 6 major judges are highlighted: Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson
- 6 minor judges are mentioned: Shamgar, Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon
- Chapters 17-21 recount 2 stories that illustrate the idolatry, conspiracy, senseless violence, and sexual degeneracy of the times.
 - The focus is on internal decay, not external threats.
 - These stories are not necessarily in chronological order with the rest of the book.
 - These 2 stories form part of the *Bethlehem Trilogy*.
 - Repeated use of the phrase "in those days Israel had no king".

12.2 *Historical Problems in Judges*

- Simply summing the number of years the judges ruled yields 390 years. Add additional time in between judges for Israel to sin & then suffer invasion. BUT, this time can be compressed because the judges were regional, so there was probably some overlap of individual reigns.
- Significant (unrealistic?) compression required to support a late exodus date. Saul's reign began around 1050 B.C. and we still have to account for Eli & Samuel.
 - Note from JJH: I personally estimate the time covered by Judges to be about 250 years, with an early exodus date.

- Modern scholars (e.g. Noth) have suggested that the political arrangement was similar to that of ancient Greece, BUT, there is little Scriptural evidence to support this.
- Religious & ethical ties bound the 12 tribes together during this absence of national leadership.

12.3 *The Book of Ruth*

- Anonymous authorship, probably written during David or Solomon's reign. (same reasons as book of Judges)
- Literary style: an **idyll**, which is a simple description of rustic life.
- Literary structure: a four-act play; each chapter has a clear opening and concluding paragraph and each chapter revolves around an important dialog.
- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings
- The law encouraged families to hold on to their land for future generations; a *kinsman-redeemer* could buy back the land.
 - BUT, the same law could penalize the redeemer because of birth rights and the avoidance of "blotting out a name" for future generations. This is why the "closer relative" declined Boaz's offer in chapter 4.
- God uses Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz as part of His sovereign plan to provide a Messiah.
- Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz illustrate faithful living during the dark period of the judges.

12.4 *The Bethlehem Trilogy*

- Micah and the Levite (Judges 17-18) – the Levite (Moses' grandson) departs from Bethlehem.
 - Foreshadows government sanction of idol worship.
- The Levite's Concubine (Judges 19-21) – the Levite departs from Bethlehem with concubine.
 - Paints the town of Gibeah & the tribe of Benjamin in an unflattering light.
 - Saul's home town was Gibeah! He likely descended from the women of Jabesh-Gilead.
- Ruth (Ruth 1-4) – Naomi departs from & returns to Bethlehem
 - The punch line of Ruth is the genealogy of David.
- The Bethlehem Trilogy (especially the last 2 stories) serves to discredit the house of Saul and exalt the house of David.

13 First Samuel

13.1 Contents of First Samuel

13.1.1 Setting

- The book of 1 Samuel begins in the period of judges.
- The major powers (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon) were in decline, but the Philistines were a threat.
- The tabernacle rested at Shiloh, as it had since Joshua's time.

13.1.2 Authorship and Date

- The books of 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel were originally written as one Hebrew book.
- Anonymous authorship.
- 1 Samuel 27:6 suggests that the book was written after the kingdom divided in 930 B.C.
 - BUT, this note might have been added later as an editorial comment.
- Author must have had good access to eyewitness accounts of events in the earlier chapters.

13.1.3 Themes

- Samuel's ministry
 - Eli failed to curtail the corrupt priestly ministry of his sons; God judged Eli's household & replaced it with Samuel's ministry.
- Saul's reign
 - In reaction to the neighboring nations, Israel desired to replace God's leadership with an earthly king's leadership.
- David's rise to prominence
 - Saul's sin led to his loss of the kingdom (13:8-14, 15:1-28).

13.2 Message of First Samuel

- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings

14 Second Samuel

14.1 Contents of Second Samuel

- Saul has just died in battle, so Israel lacks a king.
- David is in Ziklag, after rescuing its citizens from the Amalekites.
- See discussion of authorship & date of composition under 1 Samuel.

14.1.1 Themes

- David's rise to kingship in Israel
- Jerusalem becomes Israel's capitol
- God's covenant with David
 - David's direct descendant will build a temple to God
 - God will continue to love David's descendants, even when they sin
 - David's throne will last forever!
- David's sin leads to serious consequences

14.2 Message of Second Samuel

- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings

15 First Kings

15.1 *The Author and His Method*

- Jewish tradition identifies Jeremiah as the author of 1 & 2 Kings.
- Anonymous authorship
- mostly historical narrative, tracing the results of sin versus obedience to God.

15.1.1 Retribution Theology

- God's covenant (especially as revealed in Deuteronomy) promises:
 - blessings for those who follow God
 - curses for those who turn away from God
- 1 & 2 Kings use the history of Israel to illustrate this theology.

15.1.2 Regnal Formula and Sources

- Each king is evaluated on how he obeyed God; often compared to David or Jeroboam.
- Each king's covenant faithfulness is more important than political prowess.
 - Omri, Jeroboam II, and Uzziah given relatively little attention.
 - Ahab, Manasseh, Hezekiah, Josiah given much attention.
- Regnal Formula used as a framework to cover each king after Solomon (see page 223 of text).
- 3 primary sources: "book of the annals of Solomon" (11:14), "book of the annals of the kings of Israel" (14:19, 15:31, etc.), and the "book of the annals of the kings of Judah" (14:29, 15:7, etc.)

15.1.3 Historical Perspective from Exile

- Kings was likely written between 561 BC (2 Kings 25:27-30) and 539 BC (2 Chr. 36:22-23), during the last 22 years of captivity in Babylon.
- World powers of Assyria & Babylon viewed as God's tools to punish His people for their sin.

15.2 *Contents of 1 Kings*

- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings
- The accounts of Elijah's ministry herald the rise of the *office of prophecy*.

16 Second Kings

16.1 Contents of 2 Kings

- The books of 1 Kings and 2 Kings were originally written as one Hebrew book.
- 2 Kings picks up after Ahab's death & runs until shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem.
- Significance of Elisha's prophetic ministry:
 - The kingdom succeeded when it followed the leadership of the prophets.
- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings

16.2 Themes of the Books of Kings

- *Retribution Theology*: the history of Israel is presented in the context of the Mosaic covenant.
 - Each king is evaluated on their obedience or deviation from God's laws.
 - The result is either blessing or curses from God.
- Emphasizes the role and significance of prophecy; contains many promises that are fulfilled within the same book.

17 First and Second Chronicles

17.1 The Author and His Purpose

- Jewish tradition identifies Ezra as the author of 1 & 2 Chronicles.
- Until recently, scholars thought Chronicles, Ezra, & Nehemiah were written by the same author.
- Modern scholarship claims that Chronicles has a different author:
 - Chronicles occurs after Ezra & Nehemiah in the Jewish Bible, even though it chronologically precedes them.
 - Common material (2 Chr. 36:22-23 & Ezra 1:1-3) believed to be an editor's later attempt to join two separate and independent books.
- Based on genealogies, this book was probably written in the second or third generation after the exile ended: somewhere between 450 and 400 BC.
- Author's purposes: (1) show that God's promises (especially to David) are still true and (2) trace the history of covenant, faith, and salvation.

17.2 Chronicles and the Canon

17.2.1 Location in the Canon

- Chronicles occurs last in the Hebrew bible.
 - Perhaps the Jewish canonizers recognized the late date of authorship or canonicity?
 - Perhaps the Jewish canonizers wanted to end on an encouraging note?

17.2.2 Relationship to Samuel and Kings

- Main sources are the books of Samuel & Kings.
 - The positive aspects of history are featured, the negative aspects are minimized or ignored.
 - Chronicles may be thought of as a commentary on other parts of the OT.

17.3 Contents of the Books of Chronicles

- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings

17.4 Themes of the Books of Chronicles

- David and His Dynasty – David's genealogy, reign, eternal Davidic covenant (1 Chr. 17:13), son's reign, and descendants' reign receive prominence.
- The Temple and the Worship of God – provided continuity to the past (Solomon's temple & Moses' tabernacle). Kings were evaluated on the basis of allegiance to proper temple worship.

18 Ezra, Nehemiah, & Esther

- These books are the last of the "historical books" of the OT.

18.1 *The Books of Ezra & Nehemiah*

- Covers post-exilic history of Israel, 538 to 430 BC.
- Ezra & Nehemiah are combined as one book in the Jewish canon.
- Lots of historical details: lists, records, royal edicts, & memoirs.
- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings

18.1.1 Authorship

- Scholars use to believe a single author (perhaps Ezra) wrote Chronicles, Ezra, & Nehemiah.
- BUT Ezra 7-10 and large sections of Nehemiah are written in first person.
- Most likely scenario: anonymous historians, memoirs of Ezra, memoirs of Nehemiah all combined by an editor ~ 300 BC.

18.1.2 Chronology

- Literal reading of the text suggests that Ezra came in 458 BC, Nehemiah came in 445 BC.
- Some scholars believe that Nehemiah came before Ezra, BUT traditional view is best supported.
 - See "Kingdom of Priests" by Eugene Merrill, pages 503-506.

18.1.3 Theological Themes

- God's divine intervention in historical events to reveal himself - *salvation history*
- Emphasis on "law of the LORD" or "law of Moses" (Ez 7:10, Neh 8:1)

18.2 *The Book of Esther*

- Set in Susa (capitol of Persian empire) around 483 BC.
- Romantic drama involving dialog, plot, and character development. (plus a beauty pageant!)
- Anonymous authorship
- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings

18.2.1 Theological Themes

- God is not mentioned by name, but He is the central character. He sovereignly causes events to occur in order to save His people.

19 Introduction to the Poetical Books

- The OT "poetical books" include Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs.
- Even though Ecclesiastes does not contain much poetry, it has been associated with the other poetical books, most likely because it contains Hebrew wisdom literature.

19.1 Hebrew Poetry

19.1.1 Meter

- English poetry is often characterized by meter (rhythm) & rhyme.
- Hebrew poetry is said to contain a *meter of ideas, not sounds*. Hebrew poetry seldom rhymes.

19.1.2 Parallelism

- *synonymous parallelism*: 2nd line contains a similar thought as the 1st line. (Ps 19:1, Prov 9:10)
 - Synonymous parallelism can occur with questions. (Ps 15:1)
 - If a phrase is missing, the parallelism is said to be *incomplete*. (Ps 24:1, Prov 19:29)
- *antithetic parallelism*: 2nd line stands in sharp contrast to the 1st line. (Ps 1:6, Prov 10:2, 10:4)
- *synthetic parallelism*: 2nd line completes the thought started by the 1st line. (Ps 1:3, Eccl 11:1)

19.1.3 Chiasm

- Nesting of paired ideas, such as A-B-B-A or A-B-C-C-B-A.
- See textbook p. 285 for an analysis of Psalm 8.

19.1.4 Acrostics

- Beginning each line or small section with a Hebrew alphabetic letter, based on some pattern.
- Examples include Psalm 119 and Prov. 31:10-31.

19.2 Ugaritic Parallels

- "Ugaritic" denotes the language spoken on the Syrian Mediterranean ~ 1500-1200 BC.
 - Distinct from Akkadian, but very similar to OT Hebrew.
- Ugaritic texts helps us understand some Hebrew words that are rarely used in the OT.
- Ugaritic texts contain parallelism similar to Hebrew poetry.
- Ugaritic texts help us understand the polytheism in Israel's neighbors; they reveal much about Baal and Asherah.

20 Job

20.1 Introduction to Wisdom Literature

- Scholars designate the books of Job, Proverbs, & Ecclesiastes as "wisdom literature".
- However, some passages in Psalms and Song of Songs contains wisdom literature.
- Several prophetic books (e.g. Isaiah, Hosea) contain some wisdom literature.

20.1.1 Ancient Near Eastern Wisdom Literature

- Archaeologists have discovered examples of wisdom literature from all parts of the ancient Near East. There are two kinds:
 - brief proverbial maxims stating observations about life in general
 - *dialogues* or *monologues* (lengthy essays) written by sages.
- Egyptian instructional wisdom - similar to OT book of Proverbs
 - The teacher is often called "father" or "mother"; the student is called "child" or "son".
 - Examples: *The Instruction of Ptahhotep* (2450 BC) & *Instruction of Amenemope* (1200 BC).
- Mesopotamian discursive wisdom - similar to OT books of Job & Ecclesiastes.
 - Accepts retribution theology; sought to explain why righteous people suffer.
 - Examples: *Ludlul bel nemeqi* (~ 1200 BC) & *Babylonian Theodicy*.

20.1.2 Old Testament Wisdom Literature

- Many similarities, in both form & content, between OT and ancient Near East wisdom literature.
- We gain insight by comparing & contrasting OT and ancient Near East wisdom literature.
- OT authors may have borrowed literary ideas from their neighbors, or vice-versa.
- OT literature was monotheistic, whereas other nations' literature was usually polytheistic.

20.2 Contents

- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings

20.3 Authorship

- Anonymous authorship
- Job's home is probably between Edom & northern Arabia. His friends came from Edom.
- It is very likely that Job is the oldest book of the OT:
 - Job offers sacrifices without a priest.
 - Job's wealth is measured in terms of servants & livestock.
 - His long life span (> 140 years) reminds us of generations closer to the flood.
- The book contains both ancient and relatively late Hebrew words.
- Job may not have even been an Israelite.
- Many scholars believe that it was written sometime between eighth and third centuries, BC.

20.4 Theological Themes

- The Sinai covenant lays the basis of retribution theology.
- BUT, retribution theology is a general moral principle of God's justice, not a hard & fast rule.
- Job's case was exceptional.
- Compare with NT account of Jesus' teaching in John 9:2-3.
- Some human misery and suffering is neither punitive nor redemptive; it is just meaningless.
- Ultimately, this book teaches about the sovereignty of God. His ways are right and we are in no position to complain about them.

21 Psalms

21.1 *Background to the Psalms*

- English word "psalm" comes from the Greek word "psalmos", which means a song or hymn.
- The Hebrew title of the book means "praises".

21.1.1 Authorship

- 73 songs begin with "Psalm of David" - he most likely wrote at least these. Many psalms describe specific times in David's life.
- Asaph was appointed as chief musician by David. Psalms 50, 73-83 are attributed to Asaph.
- Some psalms (44 and 85) are credited to the "sons of Korah". They reflect the time of the Babylonian exile or later.
- Psalm 90 is credited to Moses.
- Psalms 72 and 127 are credited to Solomon.
- About 50 psalms have no heading; their authorship remains unknown.

21.1.2 Unique Place in Scripture

- The psalms give us insight into Israelite worship, both corporate (136) & personal (3).
- The psalms deal with all aspects of Hebrew life.
- Many people find the psalms valuable for counseling.

21.2 *The Division of the Psalms*

- The Book of Psalms is divided into 5 sections: 1-41, 42-72, 73-89, 90-106, 107-150. These divisions reflect an old tradition.
- Each section (except the last) has a *doxology* in the last few verses of that section. Psalm 150 may be seen as a chapter-long doxology to finish the Book of Psalms.
- Each of the sections circulated as a separate book for some time, then they were joined together.
 - Scholars have suggested various theories regarding the arrangement of the 5 books. None of these theories seem definitive.

21.3 *Psalm Titles*

- Many psalms have a title "A psalm of X", where "X" is a person. This is probably the author, although it could be indicating that the psalm was written in honor of the person.
- Ancient Hebrew text contains these headings, so we must treat them as reliable.
- Psalm titles also feature musical notations (e.g. "selah"). We don't know what these mean.

21.4 Classification of the Psalms

- *Hymns*: praise God and offer Him thanksgiving (e.g. 8, 136, 150)
- *Penitential psalms*: express sorrow for sin (e.g. 51, 38)
- *Wisdom psalms*: relate general observations about life (e.g. 1, 14, 73)
- *Royal psalms*: focus on Israel's king, describing him as God's representative (e.g. 2, 45, 110)
- *Messianic psalms*: depict aspects of the future Messiah's coming (e.g. 2, 16, 22)
- *Imprecatory psalms*: calls for God's judgment on the psalmist's enemies (e.g. 35, 69, 137)
- *Lament psalms*: 1) bemoan one's condition, 2) state the psalmist's trust in God, and 3) end with praise to God (e.g. 3, 4, 6)

21.5 The Psalms and the Christian

- Many lyrics of worship songs, old & new, come from Psalms.
- The psalmists faced the same kinds of issues that we face today; we can learn from them and be encouraged by their faith.

22 Proverbs

22.1 What is a "Proverb"?

- A proverb is a succinct and persuasive saying, proven true by experience.
- Over time, these statements were collected and related to each other.
- The collective purpose is to encourage the reader to live righteously before God.
- A proverb is not a promise. (e.g. 22:6)
- A proverb is not a command. (e.g. 22:24-25, 24:27) (JJH: need to mull this one over.)
- Proverbs are general principles of life.
- Proverbs are figures of speech; they are interpreted according to certain hermeneutical rules.

22.2 Contents

- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings
- Parallels between "sayings of the wise men" (22:17-24:34) and the *Instruction of Amenemope*.
 - Many scholars believe Hebrews imported these sayings from the Egyptians.
 - JJH: I believe God gave wisdom to cultures beyond Israel, as part of common grace. The common literary material does not prove copying.

22.3 Authorship

- Solomon is the main author of Proverbs:
 - Textbook credits 10:1 through 22:16 to Solomon (10:1)
 - If the theory of borrowing proverbs from the Egyptians is wrong, then Solomon is most likely the author of 22:17-24:34.
 - Chapters 25-29 are "more proverbs of Solomon, copied by the men of Hezekiah" (25:1)
 - Many modern scholars reject Solomon as the author.
- Chapter 30 is written by Agur; we know nothing else about him.
- Chapter 31 is written by King Lemuel; we know nothing else about him.

22.4 Theological Themes

- Proverbs presents the wisdom needed for successful living.
- Knowledge presented in Proverbs is mainly *relational*, not intellectual.
 - Rooted in a personal knowledge of God. It also impacts human relationships.
- Many examples of retribution theology, by contrasting the way of the righteous vs. the wicked.

23 Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs

23.1 The Book of Ecclesiastes

- The word "ecclesiastes" comes from the Vulgate (Latin OT) and the Septuagint (Greek OT).
 - Hebrew word *qohelet* in 1:1 - "The words of *qohelet*, son of David, king in Jerusalem."
 - Greek word *ekklaysia* means "assembly" and is often translated as "church" in the NT.
 - We think *qohelet* means leader or speaker of the assembly.
 - Some versions use "preacher"; others use "teacher".

23.1.1 Contents

- Recurring theme: things of this life are temporal, and therefore meaningless.
- Ecclesiastes contains poetry, narrative, proverbial sayings, and brief meditations.
- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings

23.1.2 Authorship

- Linguistic evidence is inconclusive; there appears to be Aramaic influences (late date), but there is also pre-exilic grammar & vocabulary.
- Modern scholars: this book was written in the third millennium BC.
- Textbook: We should not assume Solomon is the author, yet "the book clearly has some connection with Solomon".
- JJH: I violently disagree.
 - Much of this book is written in first person. The author identifies himself as "the son of David" (1:1), king over Israel in Jerusalem (1:12), one who spent much time seeking wisdom, and one who attained great wealth. Who else could it be?
 - Based on the textbook's reasoning, we should reject John as the author of his Gospel because he refers to himself as "the one whom Jesus loved".
 - I am very confident that Solomon wrote this book near the end of his life.

23.1.3 Theological Themes

- Textbook: I think the book wastes 5" of column space here.
- JJH: Mankind tends to pursue worthless concerns & activities. Our time on the earth is better spent obeying God & enjoying the life (gifts) He has given us.

23.2 The Song of Songs

- Many scholars see this book as a collection of different love songs.
- Attempts to interpret the book allegorically:
 - Jewish attempts: the book is about God's love for His people, the Jews.
 - Christian attempts: the book is about Christ's love for His church.
- Best to take the book at face value: it celebrates sexual love between a man & a woman.
- This book is difficult to interpret, because the person(s) being quoted keeps switching among the male lover, the female lover, and a chorus of women.

23.2.1 Contents

- Some scholars see a 3-character drama of a love triangle: king, woman, and shepherd.
- Some scholars see a 2-character drama: the king & the shepherd are the same person.
- Some scholars see a collection of songs from different sources, with no particular plot.
- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings

23.2.2 Authorship

- Textbook: verse 1:1 does not imply that Solomon is the author. Song of Songs is most logically "an expression of two young lovers rejoicing in the splendor of their own 'royal' occasion."
- JJH: I violently disagree.
 - In addition to 1:1, it is clear that Solomon is one of the characters (3:9, 3:11, 8:11, and 8:12).
 - The book is written in first and second person.
 - I believe this book was composed by Solomon and his lover.

23.2.3 Theological Themes

- The sensual side of human nature is part of God's wonderful creation.
- The book affirms an intimate, monogamous relationship between a man & a woman.

24 Introduction to the Prophets

24.1 JJH level 2 heading

24.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

25 Isiah 1-39

25.1 JJH level 2 heading

25.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

26 Isiah 40-66

26.1 JJH level 2 heading

26.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

27 Jeremiah 1-20

27.1 JJH level 2 heading

27.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

28 Jeremiah 21-52 and Lamentations

28.1 JJH level 2 heading

28.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

29 Ezekiel 1-24

29.1 JJH level 2 heading

29.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

30 Ezekiel 25-48

30.1 JJH level 2 heading

30.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

31 Daniel

31.1 JJH level 2 heading

31.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

32 Hosea, Joel, & Amos

32.1 JJH level 2 heading

32.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

33 Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, & Zephaniah

33.1 JJH level 2 heading

33.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

34 Haggai, Zechariah, & Malachi

34.1 JJH level 2 heading

34.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

35 Epilogue

35.1 JJH level 2 heading

35.1.1 JJH level 3 heading

- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item

JJH : SCRATCH

>>> Note to James: finish me!!!

- >>> JJH: go through NKJV in class, looking at headings
- Level 1 bullet item
 - Level 2 bullet item
 - Level 3 bullet item