

A 15-WEEK SURVEY OF
THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

15-WEEK STUDY

TRACING THE UNIFIED STORY OF SCRIPTURE
FROM CREATION TO PROMISE



GOD'S
COVENANT



HIS STORY
UNFOLDS



PROPHECY &
PROMISE



POINTING TO
THE MESSIAH



FULFILLED
IN CHRIST

UNDERSTAND. CONNECT. GROW.

See the Big Story of Scripture.

ONE STORY. ONE GOD. ONE UNSTOPPABLE PLAN.

The Old Testament is more than ancient history—
it is the foundation of everything that leads to Jesus.

This 15-week study gives you a clear, engaging, and practical
journey through every major book, event, and theme of the
Old Testament.

From creation to covenant, from prophets to promises,
from exile to expectation—you will see how it all connects.

Whether you are new to the Bible or ready to go deeper,
this survey will help you:

- ✓ Understand the big story of Scripture
 - ✓ See how every book fits together
 - ✓ Discover key themes, historical context,
and life application
 - ✓ Grow in faith, hope, and love for God's Word
-

*"These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ,
the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."*

John 20:31

THIS STUDY INCLUDES:

- 15 Weeks of Teaching Manuscripts
- Book Surveys & Historical Insights
- Theological Themes & Christ Connections
- Student Worksheets & Answer Keys
- Practical Applications for Everyday Life



DR. TIM W. GOULD

TEACH. EQUIP. INSPIRE.

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THE OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

The Story • The Struggle • The Promise

A 15-Week Survey of the Old Testament

COURSE PURPOSE

This course is designed to walk through all 39 books of the Old Testament in a way That's:

- Historically grounded
- Biblically accurate
- Academically structured
- Spiritually meaningful
- Centered on the unfolding promise of Christ

Rather than studying isolated stories, students will follow the unified narrative of Scripture—from creation to covenant, kingdom to exile, prophecy to promise.

Each week will examine:

- Historical and cultural background
- Author and approximate date
- Major themes and events
- Key passages
- Theological significance
- How the book(s) point forward to Jesus

MASTER COURSE OUTLINE

UNIT 1 — THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY

Creation, Sin, Covenant, and the Patriarchs

WEEK 1 — Genesis 1–11 Creation, Fall, Flood, and Babel

Books Covered:

- Genesis (Chapters 1–11)

Focus:

- Creation and the image of God
- The entrance of sin
- The spread of corruption
- Judgment and grace
- The first promise of redemption

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Ancient Near Eastern creation context
- Genealogies and early civilization
- Flood narratives in ancient cultures

Christ Connection:

- The promised “seed” (Genesis 3:15)
- God providing covering for sin
- Noah as a picture of salvation through judgment

WEEK 2 — Genesis 12–50
Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph

Books Covered:

- Genesis (Chapters 12–50)

Focus:

- Abrahamic covenant
- God's chosen people
- Faith and promise
- Joseph and Providence

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Patriarchal culture
- Covenant agreements
- Tribal and nomadic life

Christ Connection:

- Covenant blessing to all nations
- Isaac as a foreshadowing sacrifice
- Joseph rejected, then exalted

UNIT 2 — DELIVERANCE, LAW, AND HOLINESS

WEEK 3 — Exodus Deliverance and Covenant

Books Covered:

- Exodus

Focus:

- Slavery in Egypt
- Moses and the Exodus
- Passover
- The Law
- Tabernacle

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Egyptian influence and oppression
- Ancient covenant structures
- Wilderness journey

Christ Connection:

- Passover lamb
- Mediator imagery in Moses
- God dwelling among His people

WEEK 4 — Leviticus & Numbers Holiness, Sacrifice, and Wilderness Failure

Books Covered:

- Leviticus
- Numbers

Focus:

- Sacrificial system
- Priesthood
- Holiness
- Rebellion and wandering

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Ancient sacrificial practices
- Priestly function in Israel
- Wilderness survival and tribal structure

Christ Connection:

- Day of Atonement
- Blood sacrifice
- Christ as High Priest

WEEK 5 — Deuteronomy Covenant Renewal and Final Preparation

Books Covered:

- Deuteronomy

Focus:

- Moses' final speeches
- Covenant renewal
- Blessing and curse
- Preparing the next generation

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Ancient treaty/covenant format
- Transition of leadership
- Israel before entering Canaan

Christ Connection:

- Prophet like Moses
- Call to love God fully
- Covenant fulfillment in Christ

UNIT 3 — CONQUEST, JUDGES, AND KINGDOM

WEEK 6 — Joshua & Judges Conquest and Compromise

Books Covered:

- Joshua
- Judges

Focus:

- Entering the Promised Land
- Covenant faithfulness
- Cycles of sin and deliverance

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Canaanite culture
- Tribal warfare
- Early settlement of Israel

Christ Connection:

- Joshua as a deliverer figure
- Humanity's need for a righteous king
- God's faithfulness despite rebellion

WEEK 7 — Ruth & 1 Samuel Faithfulness and the Rise of Kingship

Books Covered:

- Ruth
- 1 Samuel

Focus:

- Redemption through Boaz
- Samuel as prophet
- Saul and David

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Family redemption laws
- Transition from judges to monarchy
- Early Israelite kingship

Christ Connection:

- Kinsman-redeemer imagery
- Davidic covenant beginnings
- God choosing a shepherd king

WEEK 8 — 2 Samuel & 1 Kings David, Solomon, and the Kingdom

Books Covered:

- 2 Samuel
- 1 Kings

Focus:

- David's reign
- Covenant with David
- Solomon and the Temple
- Kingdom division begins

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Royal courts and kingdoms
- Temple worship
- Political alliances

Christ Connection:

- Eternal throne promised to David
- Temple imagery
- Wisdom fulfilled in Christ

WEEK 9 — 2 Kings Division, Decline, and Exile

Books Covered:

- 2 Kings

Focus:

- Decline of Israel and Judah
- Prophetic warnings
- Assyrian and Babylonian exile

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Assyrian empire
- Babylonian captivity
- Ancient idolatry practices

Christ Connection:

- Need for a faithful king
- Hope beyond judgment
- Promise of restoration

UNIT 4 — WISDOM, WORSHIP, AND HUMAN STRUGGLE

WEEK 10 — Job & Psalms Suffering, Worship, and Trust

Books Covered:

- Job
- Psalms

Focus:

- Human suffering
- Honest worship
- Lament and praise
- Trust in God

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Ancient poetic literature
- Hebrew worship practices
- Wisdom traditions

Christ Connection:

- The suffering righteous one
- Messianic Psalms
- God as refuge and shepherd

WEEK 11 — Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon Wisdom, Meaning, and Love

Books Covered:

- Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes
- Song of Solomon

Focus:

- Practical wisdom
- Meaning of life
- Human relationships
- Fear of the Lord

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Wisdom schools
- Royal instruction literature
- Marriage imagery

Christ Connection:

- Christ as true wisdom
- Meaning fulfilled in God
- Covenant love imagery

UNIT 5 — MAJOR PROPHETS

WEEK 12 — Isaiah Judgment, Hope, and the Coming Messiah

Books Covered:

- Isaiah

Focus:

- Holiness of God
- Judgment and restoration
- Messianic prophecy

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Assyrian threat
- Political instability
- Prophetic ministry

Christ Connection:

- Virgin birth prophecy
- Suffering servant
- Future kingdom

WEEK 13 — Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel Exile, Judgment, and Future Hope

Books Covered:

- Jeremiah
- Lamentations
- Ezekiel
- Daniel

Focus:

- Fall of Jerusalem
- Exile
- Visions and prophecy
- Faithfulness in captivity

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Babylonian exile
- Temple destruction
- Life in foreign empires

Christ Connection:

- New covenant promise
- New heart and Spirit
- Son of Man imagery

UNIT 6 — MINOR PROPHETS

WEEK 14 — Hosea through Micah Covenant Unfaithfulness and Mercy

Books Covered:

- Hosea
- Joel
- Amos
- Obadiah
- Jonah
- Micah

Focus:

- Repentance
- Social justice
- Mercy and restoration
- God's pursuit of His people

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Northern Kingdom decline
- Prophetic symbolism
- Assyrian influence

Christ Connection:

- God's faithful love
- Bethlehem prophecy
- Outpouring of the Spirit

WEEK 15 — Nahum through Malachi Final Warnings and Final Promise

Books Covered:

- Nahum
- Habakkuk
- Zephaniah
- Haggai
- Zechariah
- Malachi

Focus:

- Justice and judgment
- Rebuilding after exile
- Spiritual apathy
- Final prophetic hope

Historical / Cultural Focus:

- Post-exilic restoration
- Persian Empire
- Rebuilding Jerusalem and the Temple

Christ Connection:

- Coming King
- Coming Messenger
- Final promise before silence

FINAL COURSE CONCLUSION

The Old Testament ends with:

- Promise unresolved
- Humanity still broken
- A coming Savior anticipated

And the New Testament begins with:

- Fulfillment
- Redemption
- The arrival of Christ

WEEK 1 — GENESIS 1–11

Creation, Fall, Flood, and Babel

Main Theme

God creates a good world, humanity rebels against Him, sin spreads through creation, and God begins revealing His plan of redemption.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Welcome to the beginning of the story. Not just the beginning of the Bible— the beginning of everything.

Mankind has been on earth roughly 6000 years. We know Jesus was about 2000 years ago.

The last Old Testament book was written around 400 years before Jesus.

That leaves the Old Testament books recording about 3500 years of history.

Genesis itself covers around the first 1500 years of mankind, almost HALF (2/5th) of the time of the Old Testament.

Genesis is foundational because every major biblical theme begins here:

- creation
- sin
- judgment
- grace
- covenant
- redemption

If you misunderstand Genesis, the rest of the Bible becomes harder to understand because the Bible constantly refers back to these opening chapters.

Genesis answers the major questions humanity still wrestles with today:

- Where did we come from?

- Why is the world broken?
- Why do humans struggle with evil?
- Why do relationships fracture?
- Why does death exist?
- Is there hope for restoration?

Genesis 1–11 is often called “primeval history,” meaning the earliest history of humanity.

These chapters move quickly across major events:

- creation
- the fall
- Cain and Abel
- the flood
- the Tower of Babel

And through all of it, one truth becomes painfully clear:

Humanity cannot save itself.

But even in judgment, God continues revealing grace and promise.

This section of Scripture lays the foundation for the entire Gospel story.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

GENESIS

Author

Traditionally Moses

Date Written

Approximately 1440–1400 BC

Historical Context

Genesis was likely written during Israel's wilderness period after the Exodus.

While the events themselves reach back to the beginning of humanity, the book was written to help Israel understand:

- who *God* is
- who *they* are
- *where* they came from
- and *why covenant relationship* with God matters.

The cultures surrounding Israel often had their own creation stories filled with chaos, violence, and multiple gods. Genesis stands apart by presenting one sovereign Creator who brings order, purpose, and design.

Purpose of the Book

Genesis establishes the foundation of biblical theology by introducing:

- God as Creator
- humanity as image bearers
- sin and its consequences
- judgment and grace
- covenant beginnings
- the promise of redemption

Major Themes

- Creation

- Human dignity
- Sin and rebellion
- Judgment
- Grace
- Covenant
- Redemption

Key Events / Structure

Genesis 1–11

- Creation
- Fall
- Cain and Abel
- Flood
- Tower of Babel

Genesis 12–50

- Abraham
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Joseph

This week focuses specifically on Genesis 1–11.

TEACHING

Let's begin with Genesis 1:1.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

The Bible does not begin by trying to prove God exists. It begins with the assumption that He does.

And immediately we see something important: God is not part of creation—

He is above it.

He creates light, land, sea, stars, animals, and finally humanity.

And throughout creation, a phrase keeps repeating: “And God saw that it was good.”

That matters.

The starting point of the Bible is not chaos It is goodness.

The world was designed with purpose, order, and meaning. Then we come to humanity.

Genesis 1:27 says: (ASV) “27 And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

Human beings are different from the rest of creation because they are made in the image of God.

That means humanity was created to:

- reflect God
- represent Him
- live in relationship with Him

Human life therefore has dignity and value because it reflects the Creator.

But Genesis 3:1 changes everything.

The serpent approaches Eve and says: (NIV) “1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, *"Did God really*

say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

Notice the first attack is not against behavior— it is against **trust**.

The enemy plants doubt about God's character and God's word. Adam and Eve chose autonomy over obedience.

They decide to define good and evil for themselves. That's the essence of sin.

Sin is not merely breaking rules.

It is humanity placing **itself** in God's position.

Immediately, the results appear:

- shame
- fear
- hiding
- **blame**

The relationship with God fractures. Human relationships fracture.

Creation itself is affected.

And this pattern continues. Cain murders **Abel**.

Violence spreads.

Human corruption increases.

Genesis 6:5 says: (ASV) "5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only **evil** continually."

That's a devastating statement about the condition of humanity.

So God sends judgment through the flood. But even in judgment, **grace** appears.

Noah and his family are preserved.

Then humanity gathers again at Babel and says: "Let us make a name for **ourselves**."

Once again:

Human pride attempts to replace dependence on God.

And once again:

God intervenes.

By Genesis 11, humanity is technologically advancing— but spiritually broken.

That still sounds familiar.

We have more knowledge than ever. More technology than ever.

More communication than ever. And yet:

violence, pride, division,

and brokenness remain. Genesis explains why.

The problem is not merely *external*. The problem is *internal*.

But right in the middle of humanity's failure, God gives a promise.

Genesis 3:15 says: (ASV) "15 and I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed: he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

This becomes the first promise of a coming **Deliverer**.

The rest of the Bible begins by asking one question:

Who is this coming One?

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Ancient Near Eastern Context

Many surrounding cultures had creation myths involving multiple gods battling one another. Genesis differs dramatically by presenting:

- one sovereign Creator
- intentional design
- orderly creation
- humanity with dignity and purpose

Genealogies

The genealogies in Genesis served important purposes:

- preserving family lineage
- establishing covenant history
- tracing the promised line

The Flood Narrative

Flood stories existed in other ancient cultures, but Genesis uniquely emphasizes:

- moral corruption
- divine judgment
- covenant grace

Babel and Human Civilization

Babel reflects humanity's growing pride, and desire for self-rule apart from God.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Creation

God is the sovereign Creator of all things.

Image of God

Human beings possess dignity, purpose, and moral responsibility.

Sin

Sin originates from rebellion and self-rule.

Judgment

God takes evil seriously and judges corruption.

Grace

Even in judgment, God preserves and provides.

Redemption

God begins revealing His plan to restore what sin destroyed.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Genesis 1–11 establishes the problem Jesus came to solve.

Genesis 3:15

The promised “seed” points forward to Christ defeating evil.

Covering for Sin

God's clothing of Adam and Eve foreshadows substitutionary covering.

Noah and Salvation

Noah passing safely through judgment points toward salvation through Christ.

Babel and Human Pride

Humanity cannot reach God through self-effort.
Salvation must come from God Himself.

The Greater Adam

Where Adam failed through disobedience, Christ succeeds through obedience.

The entire Gospel story begins taking shape here.

Names Pointing to Jesus

In Genesis chapter 5, what seems to be a dry genealogy reveals an amazing glimpse into the future hope of mankind. Names had meaning back then, and by looking at each name's meaning, it reveals a very fascinating picture:

- Adam — “Man”
- Seth — “Appointed”
- Enosh — “Mortal”
- Kenan (Cainan) — “Sorrow”
- Mahalalel — “The Blessed God”
- Jared — “Shall Come Down”
- Enoch — “Teaching”

- Methuselah — “His death shall bring”
- Lamech — “The Despairing”
- Noah — “Rest” or “Comfort”

When read together, many teachers present it like this:

“Man is appointed to mortal sorrow; but the Blessed God shall come down teaching; that His death shall bring the despairing rest/comfort.”

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Genesis is ancient—but it describes modern humanity with uncomfortable accuracy.

We still:

- seek autonomy
- define truth for ourselves
- struggle with pride
- hide shame
- blame others
- attempt to solve spiritual problems through human effort

Technology has advanced. Human nature has not.

Genesis reminds us:

the deepest human problem

is not political, economic, or technological. It is spiritual.

But Genesis also reminds us that God did not abandon humanity in its failure.

From the very beginning, He was already preparing redemption.

ANSWER KEY

Genesis begins with:

“In the beginning God created the HEAVENS and the earth.”

- Throughout creation, God repeatedly said creation was GOOD.
- Humanity was created in the IMAGE of God.
- The serpent’s first attack was not against behavior—it was against TRUST.
- Sin is humanity placing ITSELF in God’s position.
- After sin entered, humanity experienced:
 - shame
 - fear
 - hiding
 - and BLAME.
- Cain murdered ABEL.
- Genesis 6:5 says:

“Every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only EVIL all the time.”

- Even in judgment, GRACE appears.
- At Babel, humanity said:

“Let us make a name for OVERSELVES.”

- Genesis 3:15 introduces the first promise of a coming DELIVERER.

KEY THEMES

- Creation
- Sin
- Judgment
- GRACE
- Redemption

WEEK 2 — GENESIS 12–50

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph

Main Theme

God begins establishing His covenant people through Abraham and his descendants, revealing that redemption will come through a chosen line and that God remains faithful even when humanity struggles with fear, failure, and doubt.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Last week, we saw the problem. Creation was good.

Humanity rebelled.

Sin spread. Judgment came.

And the world became increasingly broken. But Genesis 3:15 introduced a promise: a coming Deliverer.

Now in Genesis 12, the story narrows dramatically. Instead of focusing on all humanity, God focuses on one man.....**Abraham**.

This is one of the most important turning points in the entire Bible because God begins building a covenant people through whom the promised Savior will eventually come.

Genesis 12–50 follows four major figures:

- Abraham
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Joseph

And through all of them, we repeatedly see two things:

- human weakness
- God's faithfulness

These chapters are not stories about perfect people. They are stories about a faithful God working through imperfect people.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

GENESIS

Author

Traditionally Moses

Date Written

Approximately 1440–1400 BC

Historical Context

Genesis was written to help Israel understand its origins and covenant identity.

The patriarchal period reflects
a nomadic culture centered around:

- family clans
- livestock
- land inheritance
- covenant relationships

This section takes place primarily in:

- Canaan
- Egypt
- surrounding Near Eastern regions

During this time, family lineage and inheritance were extremely important because identity, survival, and blessing were tied to descendants and land.

Purpose of This Section

Genesis 12–50 explains:

- The origin of Israel
- God's covenant with Abraham
- The preservation of the covenant family
- and the foundation for the future nation of Israel

Major Themes

- Covenant
- Faith
- Promise
- Obedience
- Providence
- Redemption

Key Events

- God's call to Abraham
- Covenant promises
- Isaac's birth
- Jacob and Esau
- Jacob renamed Israel
- Joseph sold into slavery
- Joseph's rise in Egypt
- Israel preserved during famine

TEACHING

Genesis 12 begins with God making a shift from all humanity to one man and speaking directly to Abram.

Genesis 12:1 says: (ASV) “1 Now God said to Abram, Go out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, to the land that I will show You.”

Notice something important:

God calls Abram *before* Abram becomes Abraham.

Before the covenant. Before the nation.

Before the miracles.

God initiates the relationship.

And then comes one of the most important promises in Scripture.

Genesis 12:2–3 says: (ASV) “2 and I will make of you a great **nation**, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and you will be a blessing: 3 and I will bless them that bless you, and him that curses you I will curse: and through you shall all the people of the earth be **blessed**.”

That last phrase matters:

“All the peoples.”

From the very beginning, God’s plan was bigger than just one nation.

Israel was meant to become *the vehicle* through which blessing would reach the world.

And, because of that, they *do have a* special place in God’s heart.

Now, Abram is not presented as perfect. In fact, throughout Genesis, the patriarchs repeatedly struggle with:

- fear
- deception
- impatience

- favoritism

doubt

Honestly, that should encourage us. Because sometimes people imagine biblical figures as spiritually untouchable. “*Supermen and women*”

But Scripture is surprisingly honest about human weakness. Abram lies. Sarah doubts.

Jacob manipulates.

Joseph’s brothers betray him. And yet God continues working.

That becomes one of the major lessons of Genesis: God’s faithfulness is greater than human **failure**.

Then we come to Genesis 15, where God establishes a covenant with Abram. God promises:

- descendants
- land
- blessing

Even though Abram and Sarah are old and childless. Humanly speaking, the promise makes no sense.

And that becomes another pattern throughout Scripture:

God often works through impossible situations so that His power—*not* human ability—is the focus.

Eventually, Isaac is born. The promised **son**.

And then Genesis 22 gives us one of the most powerful moments in the Old Testament.

God tells Abraham to offer Isaac.

Genesis 22:2 says: (NIV) “2 Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love--Isaac--and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain, I will show you."

That language is intentional. Abraham prepares to obey, but God provides a **substitute** sacrifice.

A ram (male sheep) dies in Isaac's place.

That moment becomes one of the *clearest foreshadowings* of Jesus in the Old Testament.

(Mention some of the cool points.....location.... How Abraham returns down the mountain, but Isaac isn't mentioned again in the Bible until it involves finding his "bride" Every timing in the Bible is also inspired... what IS mentioned and what is subtly left out.... There are miracles in the pause...)

Gen 22:2, 19 NIV – “Then *Abraham* returned to his servants, and they set off together for Beersheba. And Abraham stayed in Beersheba.”

Two chapters later, after a pause, Isaac is mentioned again, as Eliezer (meaning the “God my Help”) sets out to identify *a bride* for *Isaac*.

Do you see the connection? Then we move to Jacob.

Jacob spends much of his life striving, manipulating, and struggling for blessing.

But in Genesis 32, Jacob wrestles with God.

And afterward, his name changes from Jacob (“*supplanter/deceiver*”) (Gen 27:36) to **Israel**. (“*one who struggles with God but prevails*”) (Gen 32:28)

The deceiver becomes the father of a nation.

Again, we see transformation through encounter with God. Finally, we come to Joseph. Joseph is betrayed by his brothers, sold into **slavery**, falsely accused, and imprisoned.

And yet God continually preserves him.

Eventually, Joseph rises to power in Egypt and saves countless lives during a famine—including the very brothers who betrayed him.

Genesis 50:20 becomes one of the defining statements of the book. Joseph says: (ASV) “20, And as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for **good**, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save the many people alive.”

That verse captures one of the central truths of Genesis: God is sovereign even when circumstances appear chaotic.

How well it would be for us to apply that fact to our everyday living.

And by the end of Genesis, the covenant family is preserved in Egypt. Setting the stage for Exodus.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Patriarchal Culture

The patriarchs lived as semi-nomadic shepherds. Wealth was measured largely through:

- livestock
- servants
- land access
- family size

Covenants

Covenants were binding agreements in the ancient world. Genesis presents God entering covenant relationship with humanity—not as equals, but through divine promise and grace.

Birthright and Blessing

Inheritance carried enormous significance. This explains much of the tension involving:

- Esau and Jacob
- Joseph and his brothers
- family favoritism

Egypt

By the end of Genesis, Egypt emerges as a place of both preservation and future bondage. It symbolizes the “World.”

This becomes crucial for understanding Exodus.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Covenant

God establishes binding promises with Abraham and his descendants. Faith. Abraham repeatedly learns to trust God beyond visible circumstances.

Providence

God works through both good and evil circumstances to accomplish His purposes.

Grace

God remains faithful despite repeated human failure.

Election

God chooses a people through whom His redemptive plan will unfold.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Genesis 12–50 repeatedly points forward to Christ.

Abraham's Covenant

“all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

This ultimately points to Christ bringing salvation to all nations.

Isaac

The beloved son who was nearly sacrificed points toward the Father offering His Son.

Substitutionary Sacrifice

God providing the ram foreshadows Christ dying in humanity's place.

Jacob / Israel

God forms a covenant people through whom the Messiah will come.

Joseph

Joseph becomes one of the clearest foreshadowings of Christ:

- rejected by his brothers
- falsely accused
- humbled through suffering
- exalted to save many

The pattern of suffering before exaltation points directly toward Jesus.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Genesis 12–50 reminds us that God works through flawed people.

That's encouraging

because most people know exactly how flawed they are.

The patriarchs struggled with:

- fear
- impatience
- deception
- favoritism
- jealousy

And honestly, humanity still struggles with the same things today.

But Genesis repeatedly shows that God's plan does not collapse because of human weakness. God remains faithful. And sometimes the very seasons that appear confusing or painful become part of a much larger purpose we cannot yet see.

Joseph's story especially reminds us:

God may still be working even when life feels unfair or unclear.

ANSWER KEY

- Genesis 12 marks a shift from all humanity to one man named **ABRAHAM**.
- God promised:

“I will make you into a great **NATION**.”

- Through Abraham, “all peoples on earth will be **BLESSED**.”
- The patriarchs struggled with:
 - fear
 - deception
 - impatience
 - favoritism
 - and **DOUBT**.
- God’s faithfulness is greater than human **FAILURE**.
- Isaac was the promised **SON**.
- In Genesis 22, God provided a **SUBSTITUTE** sacrifice.
- Jacob’s name was changed to **ISRAEL**.
- Joseph was sold into **SLAVERY** by his brothers.
- Genesis 50:20 says:

“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for **GOOD**.”

WEEK 3 — EXODUS

Deliverance, Covenant, and the Presence of God

Main Theme

God delivers His people from slavery and establishes a covenant relationship with them. He reveals that redemption requires sacrifice, obedience, and His presence among His people.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Genesis ended with God's covenant family preserved in Egypt through Joseph. But several hundred years pass between Genesis and Exodus.

And during that time, everything changes.

Exodus 1:8 says: (ASV) "8 Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph."

Israel grows numerically,

but instead of blessing, their growth creates fear in Egypt. So Pharaoh enslaves them.

What began as preservation in Egypt eventually became bondage.

That becomes a repeated biblical pattern:

Human systems often turn oppressive when power becomes rooted in fear.

But Exodus is ultimately a story about redemption. God hears the cries of His people.

God confronts oppression.

God delivers.

God establishes a covenant.

And God begins forming Israel into a nation set apart for Himself.

Exodus is one of the most important books in the entire Bible because nearly every major theme of redemption grows deeper here:

- deliverance
- sacrifice

- covenant
- law
- worship
- God's presence

And all of it points forward to Christ.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION EXODUS

Author

Traditionally Moses

Date Written

Approximately 1440–1400 BC

Historical Context

Exodus takes place during Israel's slavery in Egypt.

Egypt was one of the most powerful civilizations in the ancient world, known for:

- military strength
- political authority
- massive building projects
- polytheistic worship
- centralized kingship under the Pharaoh
- national and cultural pride (bias)

The Israelites lived under forced labor and oppression. Exodus records:

- Israel's deliverance from Egypt
- the journey to Mount Sinai
- the giving of the Law
- and the construction of the Tabernacle

Purpose of the Book

Exodus reveals:

- God as Deliverer
- God as covenant-maker
- God as holy
- and God dwelling among His people

Major Themes

- Redemption

- Deliverance
- Covenant
- Law
- Worship
- Holiness
- God's presence

Key Events

- Israel's slavery
- Birth of Moses
- Burning bush
- Ten plagues
- Passover
- Crossing the Red Sea
- Mount Sinai
- Ten Commandments
- Golden calf
- Tabernacle construction

TEACHING

Exodus begins in darkness. Israel is enslaved in Egypt. Oppressed.

Beaten down.

And Pharaoh even orders Hebrew baby boys to be killed. But into that darkness, Moses is born.

And even Moses' story reflects providence.

A child marked for death is preserved through water.

That pattern should already sound familiar

because Scripture constantly points forward through patterns. Then in Exodus 3, Moses encounters God at the burning bush.

Exodus 3:14 says: (ASV) "14 And God said unto Moses, I AM WHO I AM: and he said, So shall you say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you."

That statement matters.

God does not define Himself by comparison to anything else. He simply is.

Self-existent. Eternal.

Unchanging.

And God tells Moses: "And the LORD said, 'I have surely seen the misery of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.'" (Ex.3:7)

That's important because Exodus reminds us: God sees suffering.

Then comes the confrontation with Pharaoh. Pharaoh repeatedly hardens his heart.

And Egypt experiences the plagues. Now the plagues were not random.

Many scholars believe the plagues

directly confronted the gods of Egypt and symbols of power. The Nile turns to blood.

Darkness covers the land. Livestock die.

The gods of Egypt are exposed as powerless before the God of Israel. Then we arrive

at Passover.

This is one of the defining moments of the entire Old Testament.

Exodus 12:13 says: (ASV) “13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be upon you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.”

A lamb dies.

Blood covers the household. Judgment passes over.

That imagery becomes foundational

to understanding Jesus later in Scripture. Israel is delivered.

And then comes the crossing of the Red Sea.

What looked impossible becomes the pathway to freedom. Again and again, Exodus shows:

God makes a way where there appears to be no way.

Then Israel arrives at Mount Sinai.

And here something important happens.

God does not merely rescue Israel from slavery. He calls them into a covenant relationship.

Exodus 19:5 says: (ASV) “5 Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be my own possession from among all peoples, for all the earth is mine.”

Then God gives the Law. Including the Ten Commandments.

Now, some people misunderstand the Law. The Law was never meant to save Israel.

Israel was already delivered before the Law was given. The Law revealed:

- God’s holiness
- human **sinfulness**
- and how covenant people were to live, the standard of godliness

But almost immediately, Israel fails.

Moses is on the mountain,

and the people create the golden **calf**. Which is both tragic and painfully human. In the ancient world, bulls and calves symbolized:

- strength
- fertility
- power
- kingship
- virility
- agricultural prosperity

Many neighboring religions worshiped bull-associated deities.

The Israelites had just come from Egypt, where bull worship existed.

The Israelites were not trying to invent a totally new god, but trying to force God into their own “known” box.

People repeatedly struggle to trust what they cannot physically see. And yet even after rebellion,

God continues pursuing His people.

Finally, Exodus ends with the construction of the Tabernacle. A dwelling place for God’s presence.

Exodus 40:34 says: (ASV) “Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the **tabernacle**.”

That becomes the climax of the book. God dwells among His people.

That’s the goal of redemption:

Restored relationship.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Egyptian Society

Egypt was highly structured and centralized under the Pharaoh, who was viewed not merely as king, but as divine.

Slavery and Forced Labor

Israel likely participated in large-scale construction projects involving brick-making and labor systems common in Egypt.

The Plagues

The plagues likely confronted Egyptian religious beliefs and demonstrated Yahweh's supremacy over Egypt's gods.

Covenants

The covenant at Sinai resembles ancient treaties, where a greater king established terms with a lesser people. It was a structure they could readily understand.

The Tabernacle

The Tabernacle symbolized:

- worship
- holiness
- sacrifice
- and God's dwelling presence among Israel

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Redemption

God rescues His people from bondage.

Deliverance

Freedom comes through God's intervention, not human power.

Holiness

God is holy and calls His people to holiness.

Covenant

God establishes a relationship through covenant commitment.

Worship

True worship centers on God's presence and obedience.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Exodus repeatedly points forward to Christ.

Moses

Moses serves as a mediator between God and the people, pointing toward Christ as the ultimate mediator.

Passover Lamb

The lamb's blood protects people from judgment
foreshadows Jesus as the Lamb of God.

Deliverance

Israel's rescue from slavery points toward humanity's deliverance from sin.

The Law

The Law reveals humanity's inability to achieve righteousness apart from God.

The Tabernacle

God dwelling among His people points forward to Christ dwelling among humanity.

John 1:14 says: "The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us." Even the language echoes the Tabernacle.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Exodus reminds us that people still experience bondage today. Not always political slavery—but spiritual slavery.

Addiction.

Fear. Pride. Sin.

Shame.

And just as Israel could not free itself,
humanity cannot ultimately rescue itself spiritually.

Exodus also reminds us that freedom is not merely an escape from something.

It is a movement into relationship with God.

People still struggle with the same tension Israel faced: Trusting God *when the future feels uncertain*.

But Exodus repeatedly shows:

God remains faithful even when people are fearful, impatient, or inconsistent.

ANSWER KEY

- Israel became enslaved in **EGYPT**.
- Exodus 3:14 says:
“I AM WHO I AM.”
- God told Moses:
“I have indeed seen the **MISERY** of my people.”
- The plagues demonstrated God’s power over the gods of **EGYPT**.
- During Passover, a **LAMB** died so judgment would pass over the people.
- Exodus 12:13 says:
“When I see the **BLOOD**, I will pass over you.”
- God delivered Israel through the crossing of the **RED Sea**.
- The Law revealed:
 - God’s holiness
 - human **SINFULNESS**
 - and covenant living
- Israel created the golden **CALF** while Moses was on the mountain.
- Exodus ends with the glory of the Lord filling the **TABERNACLE**.

WEEK 4 — LEVITICUS & NUMBERS

Holiness, Sacrifice, and Wilderness Failure

Main Theme

God calls His people to holiness,
provides a system for atonement and worship,
and reveals that humanity consistently struggles to trust and obey Him even after experiencing deliverance.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Exodus ended with something incredible:
God's presence filled the Tabernacle.

But that immediately creates a problem. How can sinful people live in relationship with a **holy** God?

That's the question Leviticus answers. And honestly, this is where many people trying to read the Bible suddenly hit a wall.

Because Leviticus can feel repetitive:

- sacrifices
- laws
- rituals
- priests
- blood
- purity regulations

And people often ask:

“What does any of this have to do with me?”

But Leviticus is deeply important

because it teaches something modern culture often ignores: God is holy.

Not casually holy.

Not slightly better than humanity.

Completely holy.

And sinful humanity cannot casually walk into His presence. Then Numbers shows something equally important:

Even after redemption, people still struggle with trust.

Israel has seen:

- plagues
- miracles
- deliverance
- manna from heaven
- water from rocks
- the Red Sea split apart

And yet they still complain, rebel, and resist. Which honestly says something uncomfortable about human nature. External miracles alone don't change the human heart.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Leviticus

Author

Traditionally Moses

Date Written

Approximately 1440–1400 BC

Historical Context

Leviticus takes place while Israel is camped at Mount Sinai after the Exodus.

The Tabernacle has been completed, and Israel is learning how to function as a covenant nation with God dwelling among them.

The surrounding nations practiced pagan worship involving:

- idol worship
- ritual prostitution
- child sacrifice
- and moral corruption

Leviticus sets Israel apart as distinct and holy.

Purpose of the Book

Leviticus explains:

- holiness
- sacrifice
- priesthood
- worship
- purity
- and atonement

Major Themes

- Holiness
- Sacrifice
- Atonement
- Worship
- Purity
- Priesthood

Key Events / Structure

- Sacrificial system
- Priestly instructions
- Dietary laws
- Day of Atonement
- Holiness code

Numbers

Author

Traditionally Moses

Date Written

Approximately 1440–1400 BC

Historical Context

Numbers records Israel's wilderness journey from Sinai toward the Promised Land.

The book gets its name from the census taken of the tribes. But the real focus is not mathematics.

It is trust.

The Jewish or Hebrew name for this Book

is *Be-mid-bar* and is a more correct name meaning: "In the Wilderness"

Purpose of the Book ***Numbers reveals:***

- human rebellion
- God's patience
- consequences of unbelief
- and preparation for the next generation

Major Themes

- Faith
- Rebellion
- Judgment
- Wilderness testing
- God's faithfulness

Key Events

- Census of Israel
- Complaining and rebellion
- Twelve spies

- Forty years wandering
- Bronze serpent
- Balaam and the donkey

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Leviticus begins with sacrifices. Burnt offerings.

Grain offerings.

Sin offerings. Guilt offerings.

And honestly, modern readers often wonder:

“Why so much blood?”

Because Leviticus is teaching a central truth:

Sin is serious.

Modern culture often minimizes sin. Scripture does not.

Leviticus repeatedly shows that sin damages:

- relationship with God
- relationship with others
- and the community itself

Leviticus 17:11 says: (ASV) “11 For the life of the creature is in the **blood**; and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for yourself: for it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.”

Atonement means **covering**.

Something innocent dies so that guilt can be dealt with. That pattern runs through the entire sacrificial system.

And again:

This points forward to Christ. Then we come to the priesthood.

The priests served as mediators between God and the people.

But even the priests themselves had to offer sacrifices for their own sin.

Why? Because no human mediator was perfect.

Then comes one of the most important chapters in Leviticus: Leviticus 16 — the Day of Atonement.

Once a year, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place. One goat was sacrificed.

Another—the scapegoat— symbolically carried away the sins of the people into the wilderness.

That imagery is powerful. Sin must be dealt with.

Removed. Carried away.

Leviticus also contains many purity laws.

And people sometimes read those laws and think: “This feels strange.”

But remember:

God was forming a people distinct from the surrounding nations.

Israel was meant to reflect holiness in:

- worship
- morality
- relationships
- justice
- daily **living**

Then we move into Numbers.

And almost immediately, the people begin complaining.

Which honestly feels painfully human. People can experience incredible deliverance and still quickly become dissatisfied.

They complained about:

- food
- leadership
- hardship
- uncertainty.... (*sound familiar?*)

Then comes one of the defining moments of the book. Twelve spies enter the Promised Land.

Ten return afraid.

Two—Joshua and Caleb—trust God.

Numbers 13:31 says: (ASV) “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.”

Notice the issue was not military weakness. It was the unbelief.

The people responded with **fear** instead of trust.

They saw the size of the obstacle and forgot the size of their God. As a result, Israel refuses to enter the land.

And an entire generation wanders the wilderness for **forty** years.

That becomes one of the clearest pictures of what unbelief does: it keeps people wandering outside what God intended.

But even in rebellion, *in spite of their rebellion, even*, God continues providing:

- manna
- water
- guidance
- protection

Then we reach the bronze serpent in Numbers 21:4-9 - The people rebel again, and poisonous snakes spread through the camp.

God instructs Moses to lift up a bronze serpent.

Anyone who looks at it in **faith** lives.

Again, strange imagery.

But Jesus directly connects this to Himself in John 3:14-15

The pattern is clear:

Salvation comes through trusting what God provides.

By the end of Numbers, a new generation stands ready to enter the Promised Land.

The older generation died wandering because of unbelief. But God’s promise

continues.

Because *human failure cannot stop God's covenant plan.*

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Sacrificial Systems

Sacrifice existed in many ancient cultures, but Israel's sacrificial system uniquely emphasized:

- holiness
- moral accountability
- covenant relationship
- substitutionary atonement

Priests

Priests functioned as representatives between God and humanity. Their role involved:

- sacrifices
- worship oversight
- teaching the Law
- maintaining ritual purity

The Wilderness

The wilderness represented:

- dependence versus self-dependence
- testing
- formation
- and preparation

Census and Tribal Structure

Numbers reflects Israel functioning

as an organized covenant nation, set apart and specific, rather than merely a gathering of escaped slaves.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Holiness

God is completely set apart and morally perfect.

Atonement

Sin requires covering and sacrifice.

Mediation

Humanity needs a mediator between itself and God.

Faith

Trust in God determines obedience and direction.

Unbelief

Unbelief repeatedly leads to wandering, rebellion, and judgment.

Grace

Even in rebellion, God continues sustaining His people.

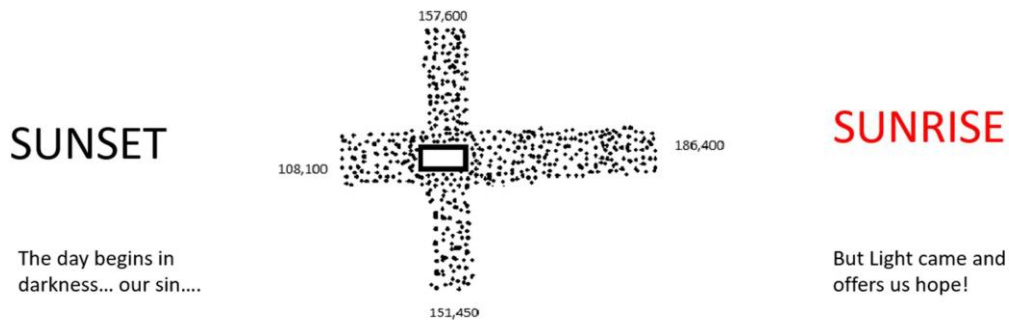
HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Leviticus and Numbers constantly point forward to Christ.

Sacrificial System

The sacrifices foreshadow Jesus as the final sacrifice for sin.

(Review Numbers 1,2 from a helicopter)



High Priest

The priesthood points toward Christ as the ultimate mediator.

Day of Atonement

Jesus fulfills both:

- the sacrifice
- and the sin-bearer

Holiness

Christ accomplishes what humanity could never achieve through the Law alone.

The Bronze Serpent

Jesus directly compares Himself to the serpent lifted up in the wilderness.

John 3:14 says: “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up...”

The pattern is unmistakable:

look in faith and live.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Leviticus and Numbers reveal something humanity still struggles with today:

We want God's blessings,
but often resist God's authority.

People still:

- complain
- doubt
- fear uncertainty
- resist obedience
- and struggle to trust God fully

Frankly, many people still live spiritually like Israel did in the wilderness: delivered from something,

but not fully trusting that God is still leading.

These books also remind us: sin is not small.

Holiness matters.

And the relationship with God is costly. But they also remind us:

God continually provides grace even when people struggle to trust Him.

ANSWER KEY

- Leviticus answers the question:
“How can sinful people live in relationship with a **HOLY** God?”
- Leviticus 17:11 says:
“It is the **BLOOD** that makes atonement for one’s life.”
- Atonement means **COVERING**.
- The priests served as **MEDIATORS** between God and the people.
- The scapegoat symbolically carried away the people’s **SIN**.
- Israel was meant to reflect holiness in:
 - worship
 - morality
 - relationships
 - justice
 - and daily **LIVING**.
- The people responded with **FEAR** instead of trust.
- Israel wandered in the wilderness for **FORTY** years.
- Anyone who looked at the bronze serpent in **FAITH** lived.

WEEK 5 — DEUTERONOMY

Covenant Renewal and Preparing the Next Generation

Main Theme

God calls His people to remember His faithfulness, renew covenant commitment, and understand that true obedience must come from the heart— not merely external behavior.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

By the time we reach Deuteronomy, Israel is standing at a major turning point.

The wilderness generation has largely died.

A new generation now stands at the edge of the Promised Land.

And Moses knows something important: people are quick to forget.

Forget pain. Forget lessons.

Forget consequences. Forget God's faithfulness.

And honestly, humanity still does the same thing. People pray desperately when life falls apart.

Then life stabilizes and suddenly

independence feels easier than dependence on God.

Deuteronomy is essentially Moses' final message before Israel enters the land.

The name "Deuteronomy" means "second law," not because God gives a different Law,

but because Moses is restating and reinforcing the covenant truth for a new generation.

This book is deeply pastoral.

Moses knows he will not enter the Promised Land himself because of his own failure.

So these are the words of a leader preparing people to move forward without him.

And throughout Deuteronomy, one message keeps repeating:

Remember.

Remember who God is. Remember what He has done. Remember the covenant.

Remember the consequences of rebellion. Remember the blessings of obedience.

Because forgetting God has always been one of humanity's greatest spiritual dangers.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Deuteronomy

Author

Traditionally Moses

Date Written

Approximately 1400 BC

Historical Context

Deuteronomy takes place on the plains of Moab shortly before Israel enters the Promised Land.

The forty years of wilderness wandering are nearly complete.

Moses is addressing a new generation preparing to inherit the covenant promises.

The structure of Deuteronomy closely resembles ancient covenant treaties, where a ruler reminds people of:

- past faithfulness
- covenant obligations
- blessings
- and consequences

Purpose of the Book

Deuteronomy renews covenant commitment

and prepares Israel to live faithfully in the Promised Land.

The book emphasizes:

- obedience
- covenant loyalty
- remembrance
- worship
- and wholehearted devotion to God

Major Themes

- Covenant
- Obedience
- Remembrance
- Faithfulness
- Blessing and curse
- Love for God

Key Events / Structure

- Moses reviews Israel's history
- Repetition of the Law
- Blessings and curses
- Call to covenant faithfulness
- Joshua appointed as successor
- Death of Moses

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Deuteronomy opens with Moses reviewing Israel's history. This is not just history for information's sake.

Moses is trying to help the people understand something:

their future will be shaped

by whether or not they remember God.

Again and again, Moses reminds them:

- God delivered you
- God provided for you
- God sustained you
- God remained faithful even when you rebelled

Deuteronomy 8:2 says: (NIV) “2 Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands.”

That word remember becomes one of the defining ideas of the book. Because, spiritually speaking, People tend to drift gradually— not suddenly.

Ironically, in Eden, humanity fell wanting to gain knowledge. In Deuteronomy, the danger is losing remembrance.

Very few people wake up one day intending to rebel against God. It usually begins with forgetting.

Forgetting dependence. Forgetting gratitude.

Forgetting truth.

Then Moses repeats the Law. But again, the Law was never merely about rule-following.

God was forming a people who reflected His character.

Then we arrive at one of the most important passages in the Old Testament: the **Shema**.

Deuteronomy 6:4–5 says: (ASV) “4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one God: 5, and you shall love The Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

Notice the emphasis: not partial devotion—wholehearted love. And honestly, this confronts modern people as well.

Because people often want:

- spiritual comfort
- blessings
- guidance
- peace

Without full surrender. But a covenant relationship has always involved the heart.

Moses repeatedly warns Israel
that *prosperity* can become *spiritually dangerous*.

Deuteronomy 8:11 says: (ASV) “11 Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God, by forgetting his commandments, and his ordinances, and his statutes, which I command you this day:”

That warning matters because success often creates the illusion of self-sufficiency.

What happens? People begin trusting:

- wealth
- security
- comfort
- achievement

Instead of God.

Then Moses lays before the people blessings and curses. Obedience brings blessing.

Rebellion brings destruction.

Not because God is cruel— but because rebellion naturally separates people from the source of life. Then comes one of the most important moments in the book.

Deuteronomy 30:19 says: (ASV) “19 I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and the curses, therefore choose **life**, that you may live, you and your children;”

That becomes the heart of Deuteronomy.

God continually places humanity before a decision: trust Him or trust self.

And honestly, That’s still the human struggle today.

Finally, Moses prepares **Joshua** to lead Israel.

And then Moses dies before entering the land himself. God buries Moses Himself.

Scripture says nobody knows where the grave is. (Deut. 34:5-6) Why? Possibly to keep it from becoming a place of idol worship. Which feels tragic at first. But even Moses—the great deliverer— was never meant to be the final **solution**.

But it gets even more fascinating, Moses later appears with Elijah at the Transfiguration of Jesus.

So the man who could not enter the earthly promised land stands inside the greater promise with Jesus.

The story was always pointing beyond him to Jesus.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Covenant Treaty Structure

Deuteronomy closely resembles ancient Near Eastern covenant treaties that included:

- historical review
- covenant terms
- blessings
- curses
- witnesses

This structure reinforced Israel's covenant relationship with God.

Oral Culture

Israel functioned largely through oral teaching and memorization. This explains the repeated emphasis on:

- teaching children
- remembering
- reciting the Law

The Shema

The Shema became one of the central confessions of Jewish faith and identity.

Promised Land Context

Israel was preparing to enter a land filled with pagan nations and competing religious systems.

Deuteronomy repeatedly warns against compromise and idolatry.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Remembrance

Spiritual health requires remembering God's faithfulness.

Covenant

God's relationship with Israel is covenant-based, involving commitment and loyalty.

Obedience

Obedience flows from love and trust in God.

The Heart

God desires inward devotion, not merely outward religion.

Choice

Humanity continually faces the choice between life and rebellion. Eden had a choice

The Wilderness had a choice; Israel had/has a choice. We still do too.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Deuteronomy repeatedly points forward to Christ.

The Prophet Like Moses

Deuteronomy 18:15 says: “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me...”

This ultimately points toward Jesus.

Perfect Obedience

Where Israel repeatedly failed to obey, Christ perfectly fulfilled the Law.

The Shema

Jesus later identifies loving God fully as the greatest commandment.

Covenant Fulfillment

Deuteronomy anticipates the need for inward transformation— not merely external obedience.

Jesus fulfills this through the New Covenant.

The Greater Deliverer

Moses delivered Israel from Egypt. Jesus delivers humanity from sin.

Moses, the giver of the Law, can reveal the promise, but only Joshua/Jesus brings the people into it.

Interesting fact:

Jesus defeats temptation using the wilderness scriptures. Israel failed in the wilderness. Jesus succeeds in the wilderness

Every response He gives comes from Deuteronomy (Matt 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13). This is not accidental.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Deuteronomy reminds us that *spiritual drift* usually happens slowly. People often don't reject God all at once.

They simply become distracted:

Comfortable. Self-reliant.

And honestly, modern culture *constantly pushes people* toward self-sufficiency. People trust:

- careers
- money
- politics
- technology
- personal success

While forgetting dependence on God.

Deuteronomy also reminds us that faith is not merely intellectual agreement. God desires:

- love
- loyalty
- trust
- obedience from the heart

And the question Moses placed before Israel still remains before humanity today: Who—or what—will you trust?

ANSWER KEY

- The name Deuteronomy means “second **LAW**.”
- Moses repeatedly tells Israel to **REMEMBER** God’s faithfulness.
- Deuteronomy 8:2 says:
“**REMEMBER** how the Lord your God led you...”
- The Law was never merely about **RULE**-following.
- Deuteronomy 6:4–5 is called the **SHEMA**.
- God called Israel to love Him with all their:
 - heart
 - soul
 - and **STRENGTH**.
- Prosperity can create the illusion of self- **SUFFICIENCY**.
- Deuteronomy 30:19 says:
“I have set before you life and death... Now choose **LIFE**.”
- Moses prepared **JOSHUA** to lead Israel into the Promised Land.
- Moses was never meant to be the final **SOLUTION**.

WEEK 6 — JOSHUA & JUDGES

Conquest, Compromise, and the Cycle of Human Failure Main Theme

God remains faithful to fulfill His promises, but humanity repeatedly struggles with obedience, compromise, and spiritual drift when left to follow its own desires.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Deuteronomy ended with Moses dying and Joshua preparing to lead Israel into the Promised Land.

Now the question becomes: Will Israel trust God enough to move forward?

Joshua is a book of conquest, courage, and covenant fulfillment. Judges is a book of compromise,

collapse, and spiritual chaos.

And honestly, the contrast between these two books is dramatic. Joshua begins with strength,

unity, and victory.

Judges end with confusion, corruption, violence, and moral collapse.

Together, these books reveal something deeply important:

Humanity has a tendency to drift spiritually when people stop fully trusting and obeying God.

Sadly, that still happens today.

People often begin with passion, conviction, and dependence on God.

But over time:

- compromise grows
- priorities shift
- comfort increases
- obedience weakens

And spiritual drift slowly follows. Joshua and Judges show both:

- the power of faith
- and the danger of compromise

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Joshua

Author

Traditionally, Joshua, with possible later additions

Date Written

Approximately 1400–1370 BC

Historical Context

Joshua records Israel entering and conquering the Promised Land after forty years in the wilderness.

The land of Canaan was occupied by various pagan nations known for:

- idolatry
- child sacrifice
- violent warfare
- and moral corruption

Israel's conquest was not merely military expansion.

It was presented as divine judgment against deeply corrupt cultures while fulfilling God's covenant promises.

Purpose of the Book

Joshua demonstrates:

- God's faithfulness
- covenant fulfillment
- victory through obedience
- and possession of the Promised Land

Major Themes

- Faith
- Obedience

- Courage
- Covenant fulfillment
- God's faithfulness

Key Events

- Crossing the Jordan River
- Fall of Jericho
- Conquest battles
- Division of the land
- Joshua's farewell speech

Judges

Author

Traditionally Samuel

Date Written

Approximately 1050–1000 BC

Historical Context

Judges takes place after Joshua's death.

Israel exists as a loose tribal confederation without a centralized king.

Instead of fully removing pagan influence from the land, Israel begins compromising with surrounding nations.

The result is spiritual and moral decline.

Purpose of the Book

Judges reveals:

- the *consequences* of compromise
- *cycles* of rebellion
- and *humanity's need* for righteous leadership

Major Themes

- Rebellion
- Compromise
- Judgment
- Deliverance
- Spiritual decline

Key Events

- Cycles of oppression
- Deborah and Barak
- Gideon
- Samson

- Civil conflict
- National moral collapse

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Joshua begins with a transition. Moses is gone.

And honestly, leadership transitions are often moments of uncertainty.

But God tells Joshua in Joshua 1:9: (NIV) “9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

That becomes the foundation of the book.

Victory would not come through Israel’s military strength alone. It would come through God’s presence.

Then Israel crosses the Jordan River.

Which intentionally mirrors the Red Sea crossing from Exodus.

Once again:

God makes a way forward where there appears to be an obstacle.

Then comes Jericho.

And honestly, God’s battle strategy sounds ridiculous from a military perspective.

March around the city. Blow trumpets.

Wait.

But Joshua repeatedly teaches that obedience often requires trusting God even when His instructions don’t seem logical by human standards.

And the walls fall.

Not because Israel was powerful— but because God was faithful.

Throughout Joshua, the land is gradually conquered and divided among the tribes.

And Joshua repeatedly reminds the people:

God has kept His promises.

Joshua 21:45 says: “Not one of all the Lord’s good promises to Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.”

That verse becomes one of the theological anchors of the book. God keeps covenant promises.

Then Joshua ends with a challenge.

Joshua 24:15 says: (ASV) “15 And if it seems evil to you to serve God, choose this day whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwelt: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

Again, humanity is placed before a decision. Trust God—or drift elsewhere.

Then we enter Judges.

And the tone changes immediately.

Judges is honestly one of the darkest books in the Bible. It is designed like a downward spiral.

Because it shows what happens

when people gradually abandon spiritual faithfulness.

A cycle begins repeating throughout the book:

- sin
- oppression
- crying out
- **deliverance**
- temporary peace

then sin again Over and over.

The people turn away from God. Enemies oppress them.

They cry out.

God raises a judge. Deliverance comes. Then the cycle repeats.

Even today,

the cycle feels painfully human.

People often seek God most intensely when consequences become unavoidable.

One of the most important verses in Judges appears near the end of the book.

Judges 21:25 says: (ASV) “25 In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did as they saw **fit.**”

That verse summarizes the spiritual condition of the nation. People became their own authority.

Truth became subjective.

Morality became flexible.

Personal desire replaced covenant obedience.

And modern culture often sounds very similar to this.

Judges introduce several major figures.

While male leadership collapses repeatedly, Deborah leads with wisdom and courage.

Gideon *begins fearful* and learns dependence on God. but later he becomes a warning that spiritual success does not guarantee lifelong faithfulness. Samson has incredible **strength** but *almost no self-control*.

Everything about Samson is a contradiction:

- set apart, but immoral,
- empowered, but uncontrolled,
- strong externally, weak internally.

His eyes dominate the story:

- he sees women,
- he wants what looks good,
- eventually his eyes are gouged out.

The man ruled by sight ends blind.

And that becomes another repeated theme:

external gifting *does not* guarantee internal character.

You see, the judges were temporary **deliverers**

raised up during times of crisis.

The tribe of Dan completely abandons its calling. (Judg 18)

Dan was assigned territory...

but instead of trusting God to possess it,
they migrate and establish idolatry.

Later in Revelation 7:5-8, Dan is absent from the tribal listing.

By the end of Judges,

Israel is spiritually fractured and morally collapsing.

Which creates a growing longing for:

- righteous leadership
- faithful kingship
- and ultimately a greater **Deliverer**

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Canaanite Culture

The Canaanites practiced religions involving:

- fertility worship
- idol worship
- ritual prostitution
- and child sacrifice

Israel was repeatedly warned not to adopt these practices.

Ancient Warfare

Cities like Jericho were heavily fortified.

Victory in Joshua emphasized divine intervention rather than military superiority.

Tribal Structure

During Judges, Israel functioned as tribes rather than a unified monarchy. This often created instability and disunity.

The Judges

Judges were not kings.

They were temporary deliverers raised up during times of crisis.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Faith

Victory and stability required trusting God.

Obedience

Partial obedience eventually became a compromise.

Compromise

Spiritual compromise gradually produced moral collapse.

Deliverance

God repeatedly rescued His people despite rebellion.

Human Failure

Human leadership consistently proved insufficient. *Something Better Was Needed*

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Joshua and Judges both point forward to Christ.

Joshua

Joshua leads people into the Promised Land, pointing toward Jesus leading his people into ultimate rest and salvation.

Joshua meets the pre-incarnate Jesus (Jos. 5:13-15)

also called the Christophany

How do we know?

- Joshua bows in worship
- The figure DOES NOT reject the worship (Revelation 19:10, 22:8-9– angel response)
- The ground becomes holy in His presence (Exodus 3:1-6)
- The language parallels divine encounters. (Num.22:31, Gen 16, Gen 22, Judg 6, 13)

Covenant Fulfillment

God's faithfulness in Joshua points toward His ultimate fulfillment in Christ.

The Judges

The repeated cycle of failure and temporary deliverance reveals humanity's need for a permanent Deliverer.

Human Kings Fail

Judges create longing for a righteous King who would truly lead God's people faithfully.

The Greater Joshua

Even the name Joshua shares roots with the name Jesus:

"The Lord saves."

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Joshua and Judges remind us that spiritual drift rarely happens instantly.

It usually happens gradually through:

- compromise
- distraction
- comfort
- self-reliance

People then as well as today still struggle with:

- partial obedience
- cultural compromise
- and treating *personal preference* as *ultimate truth*

Judges especially warn about what happens when people become their own authority.

And honestly, modern society often celebrates the very mindset Judges warns against:

“Everyone did as they saw fit.”

But these books also remind us:

God remains faithful even when humanity repeatedly fails. And ultimately, temporary human leaders were never enough. Humanity needed a greater Deliverer.

ANSWER KEY

- God told Joshua to be strong and **COURAGEOUS**.
- Victory would come through God's **PRESENCE**, not merely military strength.
- Joshua 21:45 says:

“Everyone was **FULFILLED**.”

- Joshua challenged the people:

“Choose for yourselves this day whom you will **SERVE**.”

- Judges reveal a repeating cycle of:
- sin
- oppression
- crying out
- **DELIVERANCE**
- temporary peace
- Judges 21:25 says:

“Everyone did as they saw **FIT**.”

- Samson had incredible **STRENGTH** but lacked self-control.
- The judges were temporary **DELIVERERS** raised up during times of crisis.
- Judges reveals humanity's need for a greater **DELIVERER**.

WEEK 7 — RUTH & 1 SAMUEL

Redemption, Kingship, and the Search for a Faithful Leader Main Theme

God works through ordinary people, establishes the foundation for kingship in Israel, and reveals humanity's deep need for a faithful leader after His own heart.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Judges ended in chaos. Spiritual confusion.

Moral collapse.

Everyone doing what they saw fit.

And honestly, after reading Judges, the nation feels unstable and fractured.

Then Ruth begins quietly and personally.

Instead of armies, battles, and national rebellion, we suddenly focus on:

- grief
- loyalty
- family
- redemption

and ordinary faithfulness And that shift matters.

Because Scripture reminds us

that God is not only working through massive historical events. He is also working through ordinary lives.

Ruth becomes a story of hope in the middle of darkness.

Then 1 Samuel introduces another major transition: Israel moves from judges to kings.

The people want a king like the surrounding nations. And with that request, it reveals something deeply human:

People often believe *external leadership* will solve internal problems.

But 1 Samuel repeatedly shows:

Humanity's deepest issue *is not* political structure. It is the condition of the heart.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Ruth

Author

Traditionally Samuel

Date Written

Approximately 1000 BC

Historical Context

Ruth takes place during the time of the Judges—
a period marked by instability and spiritual decline.

The story centers around:

- Bethlehem
- family inheritance
- covenant loyalty
- and redemption customs

The book highlights God's providence working quietly through ordinary people.

Purpose of the Book

Ruth demonstrates:

- covenant faithfulness
- redemption
- God's providence
- and the lineage leading to David

Major Themes

- Redemption
- Loyalty
- Providence
- Faithfulness

- Grace

Key Events

- Naomi's loss
- Ruth's loyalty
- Boaz as kinsman-redeemer
- Marriage and restoration
- Davidic lineage

Samuel

Author

Traditionally, Samuel, with later prophetic contributions

Date Written

Approximately 930–900 BC

Historical Context

1 Samuel records the transition from judges to monarchy.

Israel faces:

- Philistine oppression
- political instability
- and spiritual decline

The book introduces:

- Samuel
- Saul
- and David

Purpose of the Book

1 Samuel explains:

- the rise of kingship
- the failure of Saul
- and God's selection of David

Major Themes

- Leadership
- Obedience
- Kingship
- Faith

- The heart

Key Events

- Birth of Samuel
- Call of Samuel
- Israel demands a king
- Saul becomes king
- David and Goliath
- Saul's decline
- David anointed

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Ruth begins with loss.

Famine strikes the land. Naomi loses her husband. Then her sons die.

And suddenly the story feels deeply personal. Not national.

Not political. Human.

Naomi decides to return to Bethlehem. And Ruth—a Moabite widow—makes one of the most powerful statements of loyalty in Scripture.

Ruth 1:16b says: (ASV) “...Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my **God**.”

That statement matters

because Ruth is not merely choosing Naomi. She is choosing covenant identity and faith.

Ruth’s story is surprising because Moabites were outsiders and enemies of Israel

Yet God draws an outsider into His covenant story.

That becomes an important biblical theme:

God’s redemptive *plan* was always *bigger* than *ethnicity or nationality*.

Then Ruth meets Boaz. (Ruth 2:20)

Boaz is described as a **kinsman-redeemer**. That role mattered in ancient Israel.

A kinsman-redeemer could:

- restore inheritance
- protect family lineage
- rescue relatives from poverty
- and provide restoration

Boaz willingly redeems Ruth and Naomi’s family situation. And the story ends not merely with survival—but restoration.

Then comes one of the most important details in the book. Ruth becomes part of the family line leading to David.

And ultimately:

to Jesus.

The book repeatedly shows God guiding ordinary events quietly instead of through dramatic miracles.

No parted seas.

No fire from heaven.

Just providence through ordinary life. That is one reason Ruth feels so personal. Then we enter 1 Samuel.

Israel is spiritually unstable. The priesthood is corrupt.

And people begin demanding a king.

1 Samuel 8:5 says: (ASV), “and they said to him, ‘Behold, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.’”

That request reveals Israel’s growing desire to be like surrounding cultures.

And frankly, humanity still struggles with that tension: trusting God’s design

versus copying the world around us. So Saul becomes Israel’s first king.

And initially, Saul looks impressive. Tall.

Strong.

Leadership presence.

Externally, he appears totally qualified. But inwardly, problems begin surfacing quickly.

Saul repeatedly struggles with:

- pride
- insecurity
- impatience

- and **disobedience**

Then comes one of the defining statements of the book.

1 Samuel 16:7 says: (ASV) – “7 But Jehovah said to Samuel, ‘Do not look on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have rejected him: for the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the **heart**.’”

That verse changes the focus completely. God evaluates differently than humanity does. Then David enters the story.

And honestly, David initially seems unlikely.

Young.

A shepherd.

Overlooked even by his own family.

But David demonstrates something Saul lacked: A trust in God.

That becomes clear in the story of David and Goliath.

Everyone else sees an impossible giant. David trusted that God was bigger than the **giant**.

1 Samuel 17:45 says: (ASV) “Then said David to the Philistine, ‘You come to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a javelin: but I come to you in the name of the Lord **Almighty**, the God of the armies of Israel, which you have defied.’”

(Interesting detail)

When David rejects Saul’s armor, he is symbolically rejecting dependence on human methods.

David wins not by becoming “more like Saul” —but by trusting differently.

Again, the issue is not merely military strength.

It is faith.

David eventually defeats Goliath.

But 1 Samuel does not present David as perfect. In fact, the book repeatedly shows

that even the best human leaders remain **flawed**.

David is anointed *long before* he becomes king. That gap matters.

There is a *long wilderness* between
calling and *fulfillment*.

Anointing did not eliminate the process. That encourages people deeply.

And that becomes important because the story is creating anticipation for a greater King still to come.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Kinsman-Redeemer

The kinsman-redeemer was a family protector responsible for preserving the inheritance and caring for vulnerable relatives.

This background becomes essential for understanding Ruth and the later Christ imagery.

Moabites

Moabites were often viewed negatively by Israel due to historical conflict.

Ruth's inclusion demonstrates God's grace extending beyond Israel alone.

Transition to Monarchy

Israel's demand for a king reflected surrounding political systems in the ancient Near East.

Philistines

The Philistines were one of Israel's primary enemies during this period and possessed advanced military technology.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Redemption

God restores what appears broken and hopeless.

Providence

God works quietly through ordinary circumstances and people.

The Heart

God values inward faithfulness over outward appearance.

Leadership

Human leadership remains flawed and insufficient.

Faith

Victory ultimately depends on trust in God.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Ruth and 1 Samuel *both point forward* to Christ.

Boaz the Redeemer

Boaz foreshadows Christ as Redeemer:

- restoring
- rescuing
- and bringing outsiders into covenant blessing

Davidic Line

Ruth connects directly to the lineage of David and ultimately Jesus.

The Shepherd King

David points forward to Christ as the true Shepherd-King.

Heart Transformation

God's emphasis on the heart anticipates the deeper inward transformation fulfilled through Christ.

The Greater King

Saul's failure and David's limitations reveal the need for a perfect King who would rule faithfully forever.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Ruth reminds us that God often works through ordinary faithfulness rather than dramatic moments.

People often want:

- instant answers
- visible miracles
- dramatic breakthroughs

But Scripture repeatedly shows God quietly working through:

- loyalty
- obedience
- faithfulness
- and daily trust

1 Samuel also confronts modern culture's obsession with outward appearance.

People still evaluate based on:

- image
- charisma
- status
- influence
- external success

But God looks at the heart.

Humanity today still struggles with the same mistake Israel made: Believing that external systems or leaders can solve internal spiritual problems.

Ultimately, these books remind us:

Humanity does not merely need better leadership. Humanity needs a perfect Redeemer and King.

ANSWER KEY

- Ruth said:

“Your people will be my people and your God my **GOD**.”

- Boaz served as a **KINSMAN-redeemer**.
- Ruth became part of the family line leading to **DAVID**.
- Israel demanded a **KING** like the surrounding nations.
- Saul appeared qualified outwardly, but struggled inwardly with:
 - pride
 - insecurity
 - impatience
 - and **DISOBEDIENCE**.
- 1 Samuel 16:7 says:

“The Lord looks at the **HEART**.”

- David trusted that God was bigger than the **GIANT**.
- David said:

“I come against you in the name of the Lord **ALMIGHTY**.”

- Even the best human leaders remained **FLAWED**.

WEEK 8 — 2 SAMUEL & 1 KINGS

David, Solomon, and the Rise and Division of the Kingdom

Main Theme

God establishes the kingdom under David, promises an eternal throne, and reveals that even humanity's greatest leaders cannot fully solve the problem of sin and spiritual failure.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

By the end of 1 Samuel, Saul's leadership has collapsed. David has been anointed king, but the nation is still unstable.

Now in 2 Samuel, David officially rises to power.

David now becomes one of the most important figures in the entire Old Testament.

Why?

Because David represents:

- kingship
- covenant
- worship
- leadership
- and *messianic expectation*

Much of the Old Testament after this point will look back to David as the model king.

But 2 Samuel also refuses to romanticize human leadership. David is faithful in many ways.

How David responded and treated Mephibosheth is a true story And picture of the grace we receive from God.

Not because we are worthy, but because of our relationship with Jesus. But David is still flawed.

And that tension matters.

Because Scripture repeatedly shows:

even humanity's best leaders

cannot ultimately fix the human condition. Then 1 Kings begins with Solomon.

Israel reaches incredible wealth, influence, and power. The Temple is built.

The kingdom expands.

Wisdom became famous throughout the ancient world. And yet even at the height of success, spiritual compromise begins quietly growing beneath the surface.

Solomon's wisdom begins strong, but his heart becomes divided before the kingdom does.

1 Kings 11:4 says: "His wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord."

That line is the key to the whole kingdom split. Before Israel divides politically, Solomon divides spiritually.

The nation's fracture begins in the king's heart. That is a huge teaching point:

Public collapse often begins with private compromise. Which honestly, is another deeply human pattern.

People often assume success guarantees spiritual health.

Scripture repeatedly says otherwise.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

1 Samuel

Author

Traditionally connected to prophetic records from Samuel, Nathan, and Gad

Date Written

Approximately 930–900 BC

Historical Context

2 Samuel records David's reign as king over Israel.

The nation becomes politically unified and militarily established.

Jerusalem becomes the political and spiritual center of the kingdom.

Purpose of the Book

2 Samuel explains:

- David's reign
- the Davidic Covenant
- victories and failures
- and the establishment of the kingdom

Major Themes

- Kingship
- Covenant
- Worship
- Leadership
- Sin and consequences

Key Events

- David becomes king
- Jerusalem established
- Davidic Covenant
- Bathsheba

- Absalom's rebellion
- David's later reign

1 Kings

Author

Traditionally associated with Jeremiah

Date Written

Approximately 560 BC

Historical Context

1 Kings records:

- Solomon's reign
- construction of the Temple
- the kingdom's division
- and increasing idolatry

The kingdom eventually divides into:

- Israel (Northern Kingdom)
- Judah (Southern Kingdom)

Purpose of the Book

1 Kings demonstrates:

- the blessings of wisdom and obedience
- and the destruction caused by *compromise and idolatry*

Major Themes

- Wisdom
- Worship
- Covenant faithfulness
- Idolatry
- Leadership

Key Events

- Solomon becomes king
- Solomon's wisdom
- Temple construction
- Kingdom prosperity
- Solomon's compromise
- Kingdom division
- Elijah confronts Ahab

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

2 Samuel begins with David becoming king.

And one of the first things David does
is establish Jerusalem as the center of the kingdom.

That matters because Jerusalem will become central throughout the rest of biblical history. And even today, for those who pay attention.

Then in 2 Samuel 7: 8-16, God makes a covenant with David.

This becomes one of the most important covenant moments in Scripture.

God promises David: (NIV)“16 Your house and your kingdom will endure **forever** before me; your throne will be established forever.”

That promise becomes foundational for messianic expectation.

Because eventually people begin asking:

Who is the future King from David’s line?

Now David experiences tremendous victories.

But 2 Samuel also records one of David’s greatest failures.
David sees Bathsheba.

Commits adultery.

Then arranges for her husband Uriah to die in battle. David’s sin with Bathsheba begins with him not being where kings were supposed to be.

2 Samuel 11:1 says: (ASV) “1 And it came to pass, at the return of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah.

But David remained at Jerusalem.” That is not a throwaway detail.

The chapter starts by telling us David is out of position. Before the adultery.

Before the cover-up. Before the murder.

He is already where he should not be. That is a great teaching point:

Major collapse is often preceded

by small displacement.

David's fall did not begin on the rooftop. It began with *comfort*,

passivity, and *being out of his calling*.

And as you will see,

Scripture handles this with brutal honesty.

David—the man after God's own heart—is still capable of **terrible sin**.

Which reminds us:

Spiritual gifting does not eliminate human weakness.

Nathan the prophet then confronts David. And David repents.

That matters because one of the defining differences between Saul and David is how they respond to sin.

Saul deflects.

David responds with **repentance**.

But even forgiven sin still carries consequences. David's family begins unraveling:

- violence
- betrayal
- rebellion
- division

Sin never remains isolated. Then we move into 1 Kings.

David dies.

Solomon becomes king.

And early in Solomon's reign, God asks what he desires.

Solomon asks for **wisdom**.

1 Kings 3:9 says: (ASV) – “9 Give your servant an understanding heart to judge your people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge your great people?”

And God grants him wisdom beyond anyone else of his time. Then Solomon builds the Temple.

This becomes another defining moment in Israel’s history. The Temple represented:

- worship
- sacrifice
- covenant
- and God’s dwelling **presence** among His people

At its dedication, God’s glory fills the Temple.

Again, the theme of God dwelling with humanity and the desire to be in close relationship with us continues growing throughout Scripture.

But then compromise begins.

1 Kings says Solomon loved many foreign women.

And eventually, those relationships pull his heart toward idolatry.

That progression matters.

Rarely does spiritual collapse happen instantly. You see, compromise usually grows **slowly**.

One decision at a time.

One divided loyalty at a time. Eventually, the kingdom divides.

Israel in the north.

Judah in the south.

And from this point forward, division, idolatry, and instability increasingly define the nation.

Then Elijah enters the story.

And Elijah confronts King Ahab and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel.

1 Kings 18:21 says: (NKJV) “21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, ‘How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, **follow** Him; but if Baal, follow him.’ But the people answered him not a word.”

That question still confronts humanity today.

Because people still try to live divided spiritually: part devotion to God,
part devotion to everything else.

And Scripture repeatedly warns:

Divided worship eventually leads to spiritual collapse.

Elijah then uses twelve stones even though the kingdom is divided.

1 Kings 18:31 says Elijah took twelve stones, “One for each of the tribes descended from Jacob.”

But at this point, the kingdom is divided. Israel and Judah are politically split.

Yet Elijah builds with twelve stones. Why?

Because God still sees His covenant people as one.

Human division does not erase God’s covenant purpose. That is a great overlooked detail.

Even when people are fractured, God’s redemptive plan is still whole.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Jerusalem

Jerusalem became:

- political capital
- spiritual center
- and covenant symbol for Israel

The Davidic Covenant

Ancient kings often established dynasties, but God's covenant with David carried eternal significance beyond ordinary monarchy.

The Temple

The Temple replaced the Tabernacle as Israel's central worship location.

It symbolized:

- holiness
- sacrifice
- covenant
- and God's presence

Ancient Idolatry

Foreign worship practices often involved:

- fertility cults
- idol worship
- ritual prostitution
- and political alliances

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Kingship

Human leadership matters, but no earthly king is ultimately sufficient.

Covenant

God establishes enduring covenant promises through David.

Repentance

True repentance involves humility and confession.

Wisdom

Wisdom begins with dependence upon God.

Compromise

Spiritual compromise gradually leads to destruction.

Worship

Humanity continually struggles between true worship and idolatry.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

2 Samuel and 1 Kings strongly point toward Christ.

The Davidic Covenant

God's promise of an eternal throne
points directly toward Jesus as eternal King.

The Temple

The Temple foreshadows God dwelling fully among humanity through Christ.

Wise King Imagery

Solomon's wisdom points, imperfect as it was, toward Jesus as the ultimate source of wisdom.

The Failure of Human Kings

Even Israel's greatest kings fail morally and spiritually. This creates longing for a perfect King.

The Greater Son of David

Jesus is repeatedly called:

"Son of David."

Because Jesus fulfills the covenant promise of the eternal kingdom.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

These books remind us that success and blessing don't automatically protect people spiritually.

David was powerful. Solomon was wise. Both still struggled.

And even today, modern people often assume:

- success equals health
- influence equals maturity
- gifting equals character

Scripture repeatedly warns otherwise.

These books also reveal how compromise grows gradually. People rarely wake up intending spiritual collapse.

It usually happens slowly through:

- divided loyalties
- hidden sin
- pride

and drifting priorities But these books also remind us:

God's covenant faithfulness

continues even through human failure.

And ultimately,

humanity still needs a King greater than David or Solomon.

ANSWER KEY

- God promised David that his throne would endure **FOREVER**.
- David's sin with Bathsheba revealed that even godly leaders are still capable of

TERRIBLE SIN.

- Unlike Saul, David responded to sin with **REPENTANCE**.
- Solomon asked God for **WISDOM**.
- The Temple represented:
 - worship
 - sacrifice
 - covenant
 - and God's dwelling

PRESENCE.

- Spiritual compromise usually grows **SLOWLY**.
- The kingdom eventually divided into:
 - Israel in the north
 - and **JUDAH** in the south.
- Elijah asked:

"If the Lord is God, **FOLLOW** Him."
- Jesus fulfills the promise of the eternal **KINGDOM**.

WEEK 9 — 2 KINGS

Division, Decline, Exile, and the Consequences of Idolatry

Main Theme

God continually warns His people through prophets, but persistent rebellion and idolatry eventually lead to judgment, exile, and the collapse of both kingdoms—while still preserving hope for future restoration.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

By the end of 1 Kings,
the united kingdom has divided.

Israel exists in the north. Judah exists in the south.

And from this point forward,
the spiritual condition of both kingdoms steadily declines. 2 Kings is honestly a heavy book.

Because it shows what happens
when people repeatedly ignore God's warnings.

The book is filled with:

- corrupt kings
- idolatry
- political instability
- violence
- compromise
- and spiritual rebellion

Honestly, one of the hardest truths in Scripture is this: God's patience is real—but so are consequences.

Again and again, prophets call the people back. Again and again, the people refuse.

And eventually: Judgment comes.

But even in collapse, God continues preserving His covenant promises because human rebellion does not erase God's plan.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

2 Kings

Author

Traditionally associated with Jeremiah

Date Written

Approximately 560 BC

Historical Context

2 Kings records the decline and fall of both:

- Israel (Northern Kingdom)
- Judah (Southern Kingdom)

The book spans several centuries and includes:

- political turmoil
- prophetic ministry
- foreign invasions
- and eventual exile

Major empires influencing this period include:

- Assyria
- Babylon
- Egypt

Purpose of the Book

2 Kings explains why both kingdoms ultimately fell.

The book demonstrates:

- the consequences of idolatry
- covenant unfaithfulness
- rejection of God's warnings
- and the need for true spiritual renewal

Major Themes

- Judgment
- Idolatry
- Prophetic warning
- Covenant failure
- Exile
- Hope

Key Events

- Elijah taken to heaven
- Elisha's ministry
- Fall of Israel
- Assyrian conquest
- Reforms under Hezekiah
- Reforms under Josiah
- Fall of Jerusalem
- Babylonian exile

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

2 Kings begins during a spiritually unstable period. The kingdoms continue drifting further from God.

One of the repeated phrases throughout the book is devastating.

Again and again, kings are evaluated by whether they did: “Evil in the eyes of the Lord.”

That phrase repeats constantly. Because leadership matters spiritually. You see, a king influences:

- worship
- morality
- national direction
- and covenant faithfulness

Then Elijah’s ministry comes to an end.

2 Kings 2 describes Elijah being taken into heaven in a whirlwind. And Elisha continues the prophetic ministry.

Now, the prophets were not merely predictors of the future. They were covenant messengers.

Their job was to call people back to faithfulness. Again and again, the prophets warn:
Turn away from idolatry.

Return to God.

Repent before judgment comes. But the people continually resist.

Eventually, the Northern Kingdom of Israel falls to Assyria in 722 BC.

It becomes one of the defining moments in Old Testament history. 2 Kings 17 explains why Israel fell.

The people:

- worshiped idols
- rejected God’s covenant

- ignored prophetic warnings
- and adopted pagan **practices**

The issue was never merely political weakness. It was spiritual rebellion.

Frankly, Scripture repeatedly teaches that

external collapse often begins with internal **corruption**.

Then attention shifts toward Judah. Some kings attempt reforms.

Hezekiah trusts God during a crisis.

Josiah rediscovers the Book of the **Law**

and leads spiritual renewal.

Josiah's story becomes incredibly important because it shows how easily people can drift when they stop grounding themselves in God's truth.

When the Law is rediscovered,

the people realize how far they have wandered spiritually. That still happens today.

People slowly normalize compromise until truth itself feels unfamiliar.

But despite moments of reform,

Judah eventually follows the same path as Israel.

Jerusalem is attacked

And the Temple is destroyed when **Babylon** rises to power.

And the people are taken into **exile**.

That moment would have felt catastrophic. The city of David destroyed.

The Temple gone.

The covenant people displaced.

People probably wondered:

Has God abandoned us?

But even in exile,

God continues speaking through the prophets.

Because judgment was not the end of the story, God was still preserving **hope**.

One of the most important truths in 2 Kings is this: God's discipline was never meaningless destruction.

It was connected to covenant faithfulness and eventual restoration.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Assyria

Assyria was known for military brutality and conquest.

The Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom
and dispersed many Israelites throughout their empire.

Babylon

Babylon became the dominant empire after Assyria.

The Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and carried many Jews into exile.

Idolatry

Ancient idol worship often involved:

- fertility cults
- political alliances
- pagan rituals
- and false gods tied to prosperity and power

Prophets

Prophets served as covenant representatives
calling people back to obedience and warning of judgment.

Exile

Exile represented:

- judgment
- displacement
- loss
- and spiritual crisis

But it also became a period of reflection and renewed dependence on God.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Judgment

Persistent rebellion eventually produces consequences.

Idolatry

False worship continually *pulls people away* from God.

Prophetic Warning

God *repeatedly warns* before judgment comes.

Covenant Faithfulness

God *remains faithful* even when His people *are not*.

Exile

Exile reflects both *judgment and purification*.

Hope

Even in collapse, *God preserves* future hope.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

2 Kings creates growing anticipation for a greater solution.

Failed Kings

Even good kings eventually fail or die.

Human leadership cannot
permanently solve humanity's spiritual problem.

The Prophets

The prophets point toward humanity's need for deeper heart transformation.

Exile

Exile reflects humanity's separation caused by sin.

The Need for Restoration

The destruction of the Temple and kingdom creates longing for ultimate restoration.

The True King

The collapse of Israel's kings increases expectation and longing for a perfect eternal King from David's line.

Jesus ultimately fulfills that role.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

2 Kings reminds us that spiritual compromise rarely remains small. What begins quietly eventually shapes entire lives and cultures.

People still drift through:

- compromise
- distraction
- misplaced worship
- and ignoring truth

In reality, modern idolatry may often look different externally— but functions similarly internally.

People still build identity around:

- power
- success
- money
- politics
- pleasure
- and self

2 Kings also reminds us that God's warnings are acts of mercy.

God repeatedly called people back before judgment came.

And even in failure and discipline, God preserved hope.

Because restoration was always part of the larger story.

ANSWER KEY

- Many kings were described as doing “evil in the eyes of the **LORD.**”
- The prophets served as covenant **MESSENGERS.**
- The Northern Kingdom of Israel fell to **ASSYRIA.**
- Israel fell because of:
 - idolatry
 - covenant rejection
 - ignoring prophetic warnings
 - and pagan **PRACTICES.**
- External collapse often begins with internal **CORRUPTION.**
- King Josiah rediscovered the Book of the **LAW.**
- Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed by **BABYLON.**
- The people were taken into **EXILE.**
- Even in judgment, God continued preserving **HOPE.**
- The failure of Israel’s kings created longing for a perfect, eternal **KING.**

WEEK 10 — JOB & PSALMS

Suffering, Worship, Lament, and Trust

Main Theme

Job and Psalms teach us how to bring real life before God: suffering, confusion, worship, fear, grief, praise, anger, and trust. These books show that faith is not pretending life is easy; faith is learning to trust God honestly in the middle of real life.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

Up to this point,
we have mostly followed the historical storyline of Israel.
Creation. Covenant. Deliverance. Law.
Wilderness. Conquest.
Judges. Kings. Division. Exile.

Now we move into a different kind of literature.

Job and Psalms are not historical narratives in the same way Joshua, Samuel, or Kings are.

They are part of what we often call *wisdom* and *poetic literature*.

That means these books are less focused on

moving the storyline forward

and more focused on

helping us understand life with God.

Because eventually everyone asks questions like:

Why do people suffer? Can I be honest with God?

What do I do when life makes no sense?

How do I worship when I am hurting?

How do I trust God when I cannot see what He is doing? Job and Psalms step directly into those questions.

They don't give shallow answers.

And thank God for that, because shallow answers don't help much when life is falling apart. Job deals with suffering.

Psalms gives us the language of worship, prayer, lament, confession, praise, and trust.

Together, these books remind us that biblical faith is not fake. It is **honest**. It brings the whole human experience before God.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Job

Author

Unknown

Date Written

The events may reflect the patriarchal period, possibly around 2000–1800 BC, though the final written form is uncertain.

Around the time of Abraham, Isaac or Jacob

The oldest written book in the Bible. Prior to the nation of Israel,

Prior to the Law, kings or prophets.

Historical Context

Job is set outside the land of Israel, likely in the ancient Near East.

Job is described as a righteous man who fears God and turns away from evil.

The book does not focus on Israel's national history, the Law, the Temple, or the monarchy.

Instead, it deals with a universal human question: Why do righteous people suffer?

Purpose of the Book

Job wrestles with suffering, justice, faith, and the limits of human understanding.

The book challenges simplistic thinking that says: good people always prosper and suffering always means personal sin.

Major Themes

- Suffering
- Faith
- God's sovereignty
- Human limitation
- Wisdom
- Trust

Key Events

- Job introduced as righteous
- Job loses possessions, children, and health
- Job's friends accuse him
- Job questions and laments
- God answers Job
- Job is restored

Psalms

Author

David wrote many psalms.

Other contributors include Asaph, the sons of Korah, Solomon, Moses, and anonymous writers.

Date Written

Approximately 1400–400 BC

Historical Context

Psalms developed over many centuries and became Israel's worship and prayer book.

The psalms were used in:

- personal prayer
- public worship
- temple worship
- national lament
- celebration
- confession

Purpose of the Book

Psalms teaches God's people how to pray, worship, lament, confess, remember, and trust.

It gives language to almost every human emotion.

Major Themes

- Worship
- Lament
- Trust
- Confession
- Praise

- God's kingship
- Messianic hope

Key Types of Psalms

- Praise psalms
- Lament psalms
- Thanksgiving psalms
- Royal psalms
- Wisdom psalms
- Messianic psalms

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Let's begin with Job.

Job opens by telling us something very important about the man.

Job 1:1 says: (ASV) "1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and turned away from evil."

So before anything bad happens, Scripture makes it clear:

Job is not suffering because he is secretly wicked.

That matters because the rest of the book challenges the idea that suffering is always a direct punishment for personal sin.

Then disaster hits.

Job loses his wealth. He loses his servants. He loses his children.

Eventually, he loses his health. Job suffers deeply.

Job 2:7 says: (ASV) "7 So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and struck Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown."

This is physical suffering. Emotional suffering.

Spiritual confusion. Total loss.

Then Job's friends arrive.

At first, they do one thing right. They sit with him in silence.

That might be the smartest thing they do in the whole book. Because after that, they start talking.

And once they start talking, things go downhill quickly.

Job's friends assume his suffering must be caused by his sin.

Their theology is simple and fairly straightforward.

They believed:

Good people prosper, bad people suffer
So if Job is suffering,
they assume Job must have done something wrong.
But the book already told us that it is not the case.
This is important because people still do this today.
When someone suffers, people often rush to explain it.
Sometimes they even spiritualize it.
And honestly, bad theology in a painful moment can do real damage.
Job does not receive a simple explanation. Instead, Job wrestles honestly with God.
He asks questions. He grieves.
He laments. He is confused.
But he keeps bringing his pain before God. And that really matters.
Faith is bringing your pain to God instead of walking **away** from Him.
Eventually, God answers Job. But God does not answer every question Job asked.
Instead, God reveals His greatness, wisdom, and sovereignty.
Job 38:4 says: (ASV) “4 ‘Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Tell me, if you have any understanding.’”
That sounds intense. And it is.
God is reminding Job that human beings don’t see the whole **picture**.
Where we see a chapter. God sees the whole book.
When we see the moment. God sees eternity.
By the end of Job,
the issue isn’t that Job now understands everything.
The issue is that Job learns to trust God even without a full **explanation**.
That’s hard.

But that's also real faith. Now let's move to Psalms.

If Job teaches us how to suffer honestly, Psalms teaches us how to pray honestly.

Psalms is the worship book of Israel.

But don't think of worship only as happy songs. The Psalms include praise, yes.

But they also include grief. Fear.

Anger. Confession. Questions. Desperation. Hope.

In other words,

Psalms teach us that God can handle the truth.

You don't have to clean up your emotions before bringing them to Him.

Psalm 13:1 says: "How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?" That's in the Bible.

Which means lament is not unbelief.

Lament is faith speaking honestly from pain.

Psalm 23 gives one of the most well-known pictures of trust. Psalm 23:1 says: "The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing."

That does not mean life is easy.

In the same psalm, David says: "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me."

Notice that.

God does not always keep His people from the valley. But He is with them in the valley.

That's a major theme in Psalms. God is refuge.

God is shepherd. God is king.

God is deliverer.

Psalm 46:1 says: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."

Not occasionally present. Not distant.

Ever-present.

Then we have confession.

Psalms 51 is David's confession after his sin.

Psalms 51:10 says: "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

David understands something:

sin is not just behavioral. It is a heart issue.

That connects directly to everything we have been seeing since Genesis.

The problem is not only what people do.

The problem is who we are apart from God's transforming work.

Psalms also point forward through royal and messianic psalms.

Psalms 2 speaks of the Lord's Anointed King.

Psalms 22 contains language that later appears at the crucifixion. Psalm 110 speaks of a priest-king.

So, the Psalms are not only prayer and worship. It also creates expectation.

A righteous King is coming.

A suffering righteous one is coming. A greater deliverer is coming.

And that brings us back to the bigger story.

Job shows us the righteous sufferer. Psalms give us the language of suffering, worship, confession, and hope.

And together, these books teach us that faith is not shallow. Faith is not fake positivity.

Faith is trusting God honestly in a broken world.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Wisdom Literature

Job belongs to wisdom literature, which often explores deep questions about life, suffering, justice, and God's ways.

Ancient Views of Suffering

Many ancient people assumed suffering was always connected to divine punishment. Job challenges that simple formula.

Hebrew Poetry

Psalms use Hebrew poetic forms such as parallelism, repetition, imagery, and contrast.

Temple Worship

Many psalms were used in Israel's worship life, especially around the Temple.

Lament

Lament was a normal part of Israel's prayer life.

Biblical faith made room

for grief and complaint before God.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Suffering

Job shows that suffering is not always the result of personal sin.

Trust

Faith trusts God even when explanations are incomplete.

Worship

Psalms teaches that worship includes praise, confession, lament, and thanksgiving.

God's Presence

God is present with His people *in trouble*, not only *after* trouble ends.

The Heart

True worship involves honesty before God.

Hope

Even in suffering, Scripture points toward future restoration and deliverance.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Job and Psalms both point forward to Jesus in powerful ways.

Job

Job shows us a righteous sufferer. While Job is not sinless, his suffering points forward to the truly righteous sufferer, Jesus.

Jesus suffered not because of His own sin, but for the sins of others.

Job also longs for a mediator and redeemer.

Job 19:25 says: “I know that my redeemer lives...” That longing finds its ultimate answer in Christ.

Psalms

Psalms repeatedly points toward Christ. Psalm 2 points to the Lord’s Anointed King.

Psalm 22 foreshadows the suffering of the Messiah.

Psalm 23 points to the Lord as Shepherd, fulfilled in Jesus the Good Shepherd.

Psalm 110 points to a priest-king, fulfilled in Christ. Jesus Himself quotes the Psalms, showing their deep connection to His life, suffering, and mission.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Job and Psalms are deeply relevant because people still suffer. People still grieve.

People still ask why. People still feel abandoned.

People still need language for pain.

Today, many believers feel pressure to act more okay *than they really are*.

But Job and Psalms refuse shallow spirituality. They show us that real faith can:

- grieve
- question
- lament
- confess
- worship
- and trust

Psalms especially remind us that prayer does not have to be polished to be faithful.

Sometimes the most honest prayer is simply: “How long, Lord?”

And Job reminds us that not every question gets answered the way we want.

But despite this,

God Himself remains trustworthy.

ANSWER KEY

- Job is not suffering because he is secretly **WICKED**.
- Job's friends assume his suffering must be caused by his **SIN**.
- Faith is bringing your pain to God instead of walking **AWAY** from Him.
- God reminds Job that human beings do not see the whole **PICTURE**.
- Job learns to trust God even without a full **EXPLANATION**.
- Psalms teach us how to pray honestly from our **PAIN**.
- Psalm 23 says:

“The Lord is my **SHEPHERD**.”

- David says:

“Even though I walk through the darkest **VALLEY**...”

- Psalm 51:10 says:

“Create in me a pure **HEART**, O God.”

- Psalm 2 speaks of the Lord's Anointed **KING**.

Wisdom, Meaning, and Covenant Love

Main Theme

These wisdom books explore how to live wisely, wrestle honestly with the meaning of life, and understand love, relationships, and devotion through the lens of God's design.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

If Job and Psalms taught us how to suffer, worship, and trust honestly before God, the wisdom books now ask another major question:

How should we live? And in many ways, people still ask that every day. How do you make wise decisions? What actually gives life meaning?

Why do people chase success and still feel empty? What does healthy love look like?

What happens when people pursue pleasure without God?

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon each approach those questions differently.

Proverbs is practical. Ecclesiastes is brutally honest.

Song of Solomon is relational and poetic.

Together, these books explore:

- wisdom
- purpose
- relationships
- fulfillment
- and the human search for meaning

What's interesting is, Ecclesiastes especially feels surprisingly modern.

Because it describes people who:

- achieve success
- pursue pleasure
- gain wealth
- build careers

- seek knowledge
- ...and still feel empty inside.

These books remind us that wisdom is not merely intelligence.

Wisdom is learning to live rightly before God.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Proverbs

Author

Primarily Solomon, with additional contributions from other wise men

Date Written

Approximately 950–700 BC

Historical Context

Proverbs reflects wisdom instruction commonly used in the ancient Near East.

These teachings were often used to prepare young people for wise and responsible living.

However, biblical wisdom differs from worldly wisdom because it begins with reverence for God.

Purpose of the Book

Proverbs teaches practical wisdom for everyday life. The book addresses:

- speech
- relationships
- work
- parenting
- money
- temptation
- pride
- discipline
- and decision-making

Major Themes

- Wisdom
- Fear of the Lord

- Righteousness
- Discipline
- Speech
- Integrity

Key Features

- Short wisdom sayings
- Contrasts between wisdom and foolishness
- Practical instruction for daily life

Ecclesiastes

Author

Traditionally Solomon

Date Written

Approximately 940 BC

Historical Context

Ecclesiastes reflects the perspective of someone who has experienced:

- wealth
- achievement
- pleasure
- wisdom
- power
- and success

Yet still wrestles with life's meaning.

Purpose of the Book

Ecclesiastes explores the emptiness of life pursued apart from God.

The book wrestles honestly with:

- mortality
- injustice
- frustration
- temporary pleasure
- and human limitations

Major Themes

- Meaning
- Vanity

- Mortality
- Time
- Wisdom
- Fear of God

Key Features

- Philosophical reflection
- Repeated phrase: “meaningless”
- Observations about human striving

Song of Solomon “The Song of Songs” (HEBREW)

Author

Traditionally Solomon

Date Written

Approximately 950 BC

Historical Context

Song of Solomon is poetic literature celebrating covenant love, marriage, desire, and relational intimacy.

Purpose of the Book

The book celebrates love and covenant relationships within God’s design.

Major Themes

- Love
- Covenant relationship
- Beauty
- Devotion
- Desire

Key Features

- Poetic dialogue
- Romantic imagery
- Celebration of marital love

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Let's begin with Proverbs. Proverbs 1:7 says: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." That verse becomes the foundation of the entire book.

Biblical wisdom does not begin with intelligence alone.

It begins with rightly recognizing God.

Because people can be highly educated and still deeply foolish spiritually.

Proverbs repeatedly contrasts:

- wisdom and foolishness
- righteousness and wickedness
- discipline and laziness
- humility and pride

What is fascinating about this book

is that Proverbs gets extremely practical.

It talks about:

- words
- anger
- money
- friendships
- work ethic
- parenting
- temptation

Because wisdom is meant to shape daily life.

Proverbs repeatedly warns about the power of the tongue.

Proverbs 18:21 says: "The tongue has the power of life and **death**."

Truthfully, everyone knows words can build people up or absolutely destroy them.

Then Proverbs addresses pride.

Proverbs 16:18 says: “Pride goes before destruction...”

That pattern appears throughout Scripture.

Human beings continually elevate themselves, then experience collapse.

Proverbs also emphasize discipline.

And modern culture often resists discipline because discipline feels restrictive.

But Proverbs presents discipline as protection, growth, and maturity.

Wisdom is not merely knowing things. Wisdom is learning how to live.

Now we move into Ecclesiastes.

What’s striking is,

Ecclesiastes feels shockingly modern.

The writer spends much of the book exploring what happens when people search for meaning in:

- success
- pleasure
- achievement
- wealth
- knowledge
- work

And repeatedly, the conclusion is the same.

Ecclesiastes 1:2 says: “Meaningless! Meaningless!... Everything is meaningless.”

Now that sounds depressing at first.

But Ecclesiastes is not teaching hopelessness. It is exposing the emptiness of life disconnected from God.

The writer basically says: “I tried everything people think will satisfy them. And none of it was enough.”

That still describes modern culture perfectly.

People still chase:

- money
- status
- pleasure
- influence
- success

Thinking fulfillment is always one more achievement away. But Ecclesiastes says:

Temporary things cannot carry eternal meaning.

Then Ecclesiastes introduces another major theme:

time.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 says: “There is a time for everything...”

Life contains:

- joy
- grief
- building
- breaking
- beginnings
- endings

And human beings cannot control all of it. That realization humbles people.

Finally, Ecclesiastes concludes with one of the clearest summary statements in wisdom literature. Ecclesiastes 12:13 says: “Fear God and keep his commandments...”

That becomes the conclusion after all the searching. Life apart from God ultimately leaves people empty.

Now we come to Song of Solomon.

Many people sometimes feel awkward about this book because it openly celebrates love, desire, beauty, and intimacy.

But that matters because Scripture doesn't present love or marriage as shameful.

Song of Solomon celebrates covenant love as part of God's design.

The book emphasizes:

- devotion
- delight
- loyalty
- beauty
- and relational intimacy

And beneath the relationship imagery, many believers have also seen reflections of God's covenant love for His people.

Love is not merely emotional attraction.

Biblically, love involves covenant commitment and **faithfulness**.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Wisdom Literature

Wisdom literature focused on practical living, moral instruction, and understanding life through reverence for God.

Ancient Instruction Traditions

Proverbs reflects teaching methods

commonly used to train young leaders and future rulers.

Hebrew Poetry

Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon use poetic structure, imagery, repetition, and symbolism.

Marriage Imagery

Song of Solomon reflects covenant-centered views of marriage in ancient Israel.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Wisdom

True wisdom begins with reverence for God.

Meaning

Life disconnected from God ultimately becomes empty.

Pride

Pride consistently leads toward destruction.

Speech

Words possess enormous power for life or harm.

Love

Biblical love involves covenant faithfulness and devotion.

Human Limitation

People cannot control life apart from God.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

These wisdom books point toward Christ in several important ways.

True Wisdom

Jesus fulfills perfect wisdom.

1 Corinthians 1:24 describes Christ as the wisdom of God. (ASV) “24 but to those that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

The Fear of the Lord

Christ perfectly lived in obedience and reverence toward the Father.

Meaning and Fulfillment

Ecclesiastes reveals that life apart from God cannot satisfy the human soul.

Jesus fulfills the deeper purpose humanity longs for.

Covenant Love

Song of Solomon’s imagery of faithful love

points toward Christ’s covenant relationship with His people.

The Better King

Solomon possessed immense wisdom, wealth, and influence— yet still fell into compromise.

Jesus becomes the truly faithful and perfect King.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

These books remain incredibly relevant because modern humanity still struggles with the exact same issues.

People still:

- chase success
- pursue pleasure
- struggle with pride
- misuse words
- seek meaning
- and wrestle with relationships

Proverbs remind us that wisdom matters in daily life.

Ecclesiastes reminds us that achievement alone cannot satisfy the soul.

Song of Solomon reminds us that love is meant to reflect covenant faithfulness rather than shallow self-centered desire.

The hard truth is,

modern culture often encourages people to pursue fulfillment without grounding life in God.

But these books repeatedly remind us:

without God, even good things eventually feel empty.

ANSWER KEY

- Proverbs 1:7 says:

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of **WISDOM**.”

- Proverbs teaches that the tongue has the power of life and **DEATH**.
- Proverbs 16:18 says:

“Pride goes before **DESTRUCTION**.”

- Wisdom is learning how to **LIVE**.
- Ecclesiastes repeatedly says that everything is **MEANINGLESS** apart from God.
- Ecclesiastes 3:1 says:

“There is a **TIME** for everything.”

- Ecclesiastes concludes:

“Fear God and keep His **COMMANDMENTS**.”

- Song of Solomon celebrates covenant **LOVE**.
- Biblical love involves covenant commitment and **FAITHFULNESS**.
- Jesus fulfills perfect **WISDOM**.

WEEK 12 — ISAIAH

Judgment, Holiness, Hope, and the Coming Messiah

Main Theme

Isaiah reveals the holiness of God, the seriousness of sin, the certainty of judgment, and the future hope of redemption through the coming Messiah.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

We now enter the Major Prophets.

This is where many people start feeling intimidated by the Old Testament.

Because the prophetic books can seem:

- overwhelming
- repetitive
- symbolic
- emotional
- and intense

There is judgment. Warnings.

Visions. Poetry.

Future promises. National collapse.

But underneath all of it,

the prophets are dealing with one major issue: God's people have drifted spiritually.

The prophets are not random fortune tellers predicting disconnected events.

They are covenant **messengers**

calling people back to faithfulness.

And Isaiah becomes one of the most important prophetic books in all of Scripture.

Some people even call Isaiah:

“The fifth Gospel.” Why?

Because Isaiah contains some of the clearest prophecies about the coming Messiah in the entire Old Testament.

Isaiah is massive in scope. It speaks about:

- judgment
- holiness
- idolatry
- pride
- injustice
- exile
- restoration
- and the coming Savior

Honestly, Isaiah feels incredibly relevant because it confronts a truth humanity still struggles with today:

People want God's blessings—without God's authority or accountability.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Isaiah

Author

Isaiah son of Amoz

Date Written

Approximately 740–680 BC

Historical Context

Isaiah ministered during a turbulent period in Judah's history. Major world powers included:

- Assyria
- Egypt
- and later Babylon

Israel and Judah were spiritually compromised, politically unstable, and increasingly influenced by idolatry and injustice.

Isaiah prophesied during the reigns of several kings, including:

- Uzziah
- Jotham
- Ahaz
- and Hezekiah

Purpose of the Book

Isaiah warns of coming judgment, while also proclaiming future restoration and messianic hope.

The book emphasizes:

- God's holiness
- humanity's sinfulness
- judgment against rebellion

- and salvation through the coming Servant-King

Major Themes

- Holiness
- Judgment
- Salvation
- The Messiah
- Restoration
- Hope

Key Events / Structure

- Isaiah's vision and calling
- Warnings against Judah and the nations
- Assyrian crisis
- Hezekiah's reign
- Messianic prophecies
- Suffering Servant passages
- Future kingdom restoration

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Isaiah begins with confrontation.

God speaks against

the spiritual condition of His people.

The issue is not that Judah abandoned religion completely. The issue is that their worship became empty.

They still performed sacrifices. Still observed rituals.

Still maintained outward religion.

But their hearts were drifting.

Isaiah 1:13 says: (ASV) “13 Bring no more meaningless offering; your incense is an abomination to me; new moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies,--I cannot bear with iniquity and your solemn meetings.”

That’s intense.

God is basically saying: External religious activity without genuine devotion means nothing.

And that is something that still confronts people today. Because people can:

- attend church
- know religious language
- perform spiritual routines
- and still have hearts far from God

Then Isaiah receives an overwhelming vision of God’s holiness.

Isaiah 6:1-3 says: (NIV) – “1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.’”

That repetition matters.

In Hebrew culture, repetition emphasized importance. God is not merely holy.

God is utterly, perfectly, completely holy.

And Isaiah's response is immediate.

Isaiah 6:5 says: (NIV) 5 "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty."

When Isaiah truly sees God's holiness, he immediately recognizes his own sinfulness.

That's another major biblical pattern: The clearer the vision of God, the clearer the understanding of human sin. Then something powerful happens. A coal touches Isaiah's lips. And he is cleansed.

Again, grace appears in the middle of human unworthiness. Then Isaiah begins warning Judah about the coming judgment.

He points out that people trust:

- political alliances
- military strength
- wealth
- and false worship

Instead of trusting God. Ironically, humanity still does the same thing.

People often place ultimate trust in:

- governments
- money
- technology
- security
- influence

While treating God as secondary. But Isaiah repeatedly warns: Anything placed above or equal to God eventually becomes an idol.

Then Isaiah begins introducing some of the clearest messianic prophecies in Scripture.

Isaiah 7:14 says: (ASV) “14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

Isaiah 9:6 says: “ASV” “6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

These passages begin building expectation for a coming King unlike any ordinary ruler.

Then we arrive at Isaiah 53.

Isaiah 53 is one of the most astonishing chapters in the Old Testament.

Written centuries before Jesus, it describes a suffering servant who bears the sins of others.

Isaiah 53:5 says: (NIV) “2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

3 He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces, he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

4 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.

5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.”

That word matters. A transgression is more than a mistake. It is crossing a line.

Rebelling intentionally.

Violating what is right. And Isaiah says the servant suffers for the transgressions of others.

Then Isaiah 53:6 says: (NIV) “6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

He summarizes humanity perfectly. People wander spiritually.

Drift morally. Pursue self-rule.

And yet Isaiah says: “The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

That becomes one of the clearest pictures of substitutionary atonement in the entire Old Testament.

Isaiah points toward a coming suffering servant so others can be restored. Then Isaiah closes with hope.

Judgment is real. Exile is coming.

But restoration will come too.

Isaiah describes:

- a future kingdom
- peace
- justice
- healing
- and God dwelling with His people

Because ultimately,

judgment was never God’s final goal. Redemption was.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Assyria

Assyria was the dominant military power during much of Isaiah's ministry.

The Assyrian threat created fear and political instability throughout Judah.

Prophetic Ministry

Prophets functioned as covenant messengers confronting:

- idolatry
- injustice
- false worship
- and spiritual rebellion

Temple Worship

Judah maintained active religious rituals, but Isaiah repeatedly warned against empty external religion.

Messianic Expectation

Isaiah helped shape Jewish expectations for a future deliverer, king, and servant figure.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Holiness

God is utterly holy and distinct from sinful humanity.

Sin

Human rebellion affects both individuals and nations.

Judgment

Persistent rebellion eventually leads to consequences.

Idolatry

Anything elevated above God becomes spiritually destructive.

Grace

God continually offers cleansing and restoration.

Messianic Hope

A coming Servant-King will bring ultimate redemption.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

Isaiah points toward Jesus constantly and powerfully.

Virgin Birth

Isaiah 7:14 points toward Christ's birth.

Divine King

Isaiah 9 describes a coming ruler with divine titles.

The Suffering Servant

Isaiah 53 becomes one of the clearest prophetic pictures of Jesus' suffering and atonement.

Substitution

The servant bears the sins and transgressions of others.

Ultimate Restoration

Isaiah's vision of peace and restoration points toward Christ's eternal kingdom.

The Holy One

Jesus uniquely fulfills the perfect holiness Isaiah describes.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Isaiah confronts modern people in uncomfortable ways. Because people still:

- trust idols
- maintain outward religion without inward devotion
- pursue self-sufficiency
- ignore injustice
- and drift spiritually

Isaiah reminds us that God is not impressed by empty religious performance.

God desires transformed hearts.

Isaiah also reminds us that holiness matters. Modern culture often minimizes sin.

Isaiah does not.

But Isaiah also overflows with hope. Because even in judgment,

God was preparing redemption.

Finally, Isaiah 53 still hits hard because it reminds us: humanity's deepest need was so serious that redemption required a suffering Savior.

ANSWER KEY

- The prophets served as covenant **MESSENGERS**.
- Isaiah warned against meaningless religious **OFFERINGS**.
- The seraphim cried:
“Holy, holy, holy...”
- God is completely and perfectly **HOLY**.
- When Isaiah saw God clearly, he recognized his own **SINFULNESS**.
- Anything placed above God eventually becomes an **IDOL**.
- Isaiah 7:14 says:
“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a **SON**.”
- Isaiah 53:5 says:
“He was pierced for our **TRANSGRESSIONS**.”
- “We all, like sheep, have gone **ASTRAY**.”
- Isaiah points toward a coming suffering **SERVANT**.

WEEK 13 — JEREMIAH, LAMENTATIONS, EZEKIEL & DANIEL

Exile, Judgment, Visions, and Hope in Captivity

Main Theme

These prophetic books reveal the devastating consequences of rebellion, the pain of exile,
the faithfulness of God in the middle of judgment,
and the promise that restoration and renewal are still coming.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

This week is heavy.

Frankly, there is no other way to say it.

Everything the prophets warned about is now happening. Jerusalem falls.

The Temple is destroyed.

The people are carried into exile. The kingdom collapses.

And for Israel and Judah, this would have felt like the end of everything.

Imagine it:

- the city of David destroyed
- the Temple in ruins
- families displaced
- foreign empires ruling over them
- covenant identity shaken

People are asking:

Has God abandoned us? Were the promises lost? Is there still hope?

In stark reality, exile is more than geographic displacement.

Exile is spiritual disorientation. Everything familiar is gone.

These books wrestle with:

- grief
- judgment
- repentance
- faithfulness
- hope
- and future restoration

But they also contain

some of the most fascinating and dramatic material in the Old Testament:

- prophetic visions
- strange symbolism
- fiery furnaces
- lions' dens
- watchmen
- dry bones
- handwriting on walls
- and apocalyptic visions of kingdoms

And through all of it, one truth keeps emerging: Empires rise and fall.

Human kingdoms collapse. But God remains sovereign.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Jeremiah

Author

Jeremiah, with assistance from Baruch

Date Written

Approximately 626–580 BC

Historical Context

Jeremiah ministered during Judah's final years before the Babylonian exile.

He witnessed:

- political collapse
- spiritual rebellion
- and the destruction of Jerusalem

Jeremiah repeatedly warned the people to repent before judgment came.

Purpose of the Book

Jeremiah warns of coming judgment while also promising future restoration and a new covenant.

Major Themes

- Judgment
- Repentance
- Covenant
- False prophets
- Restoration
- The new covenant

Interesting Fact

Jeremiah is often called the “weeping prophet” because of his deep grief over Judah's rebellion and coming destruction.

Lamentations

Author

Traditionally Jeremiah

Date Written

Approximately 586 BC

Historical Context

Lamentations was written after Jerusalem's destruction by Babylon.

The book mourns the devastation of the city, the Temple, and the suffering of the people.

Purpose of the Book

Lamentations expresses grief, sorrow, repentance, and hope in the middle of catastrophe.

Major Themes

- Grief
- Judgment
- Suffering
- Hope
- God's faithfulness

Interesting Fact

Lamentations is written as Hebrew poetry using acrostic structure, meaning chapters follow the Hebrew alphabet in sequence.

Ezekiel

Author

Ezekiel

Date Written

Approximately 593–571 BC

Historical Context

Ezekiel prophesied while living among the exiles in Babylon.

The people believed Jerusalem would never fully fall because the Temple was there.

Ezekiel shattered that false confidence.

Purpose of the Book

Ezekiel warns of judgment, exposes false security,
and promises future restoration and spiritual renewal.

Major Themes

- God's glory
- Judgment
- Responsibility
- Restoration
- New heart and spirit

Interesting Fact

Ezekiel contains some of the most unusual and symbolic visions in Scripture:

- wheels within wheels
- creatures with multiple faces
- dry bones
- symbolic actions
- a future temple vision

Daniel

Author

Daniel

Date Written

Approximately 605–530 BC

Historical Context

Daniel takes place during the Babylonian exile.

Daniel and other young Jews are taken into Babylon and trained within the Babylonian empire.

Purpose of the Book

Daniel demonstrates God's sovereignty over earthly kingdoms and encourages faithfulness in hostile cultures.

Major Themes

- Sovereignty
- Faithfulness
- Kingdoms
- Deliverance
- Future hope

Interesting Fact

Daniel contains both narrative stories and apocalyptic visions about future kingdoms and God's eternal kingdom.

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Let's begin with Jeremiah. Jeremiah's ministry is heartbreaking.

God calls Jeremiah to speak truth to people who largely refuse to listen.

Jeremiah warns again and again:

judgment is coming. Babylon is coming. Jerusalem will fall.

But false prophets keep telling the people: "Everything is fine." And much like today, people usually prefer comforting lies over uncomfortable truth.

Jeremiah 17:9 says: (KJV) "9 The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

That statement cuts deep.

Because Jeremiah understands the real problem is not merely political.

It is internal.

The human heart itself is broken.

Jeremiah also experiences rejection personally. He is mocked.

Threatened. Beaten.

Ignored.

Which makes him one of the most relatable prophets emotionally.

At one point, Jeremiah becomes so discouraged that he wishes he had never been born.

Yet he keeps speaking the truth anyway.

Then Jeremiah introduces one of the most important promises in the entire Old Testament.

Jeremiah 31:31 says: (ASV) "31 Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah."

That matters enormously.

Because the old covenant repeatedly
revealed humanity's inability to remain faithful.

Now God promises something deeper: internal transformation.

Not merely external law. Changed hearts.

Then Jerusalem falls.

And Lamentations captures the grief afterward. Lamentations overall feels raw.

It does not sanitize suffering. The city is devastated.

People are starving.

The Temple is destroyed.

And yet right in the middle of grief

comes one of the most famous declarations of hope in Scripture.

Lamentations 3:22–23 says: (NIV) “22 Because of the LORD's great **love** we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

That's astonishing.

In the middle of devastation, hope still exists.

Then we move to Ezekiel. And Ezekiel is a wild ride.

There are visions everywhere. Strange creatures.

Symbolic actions. Dramatic imagery.

At one point, Ezekiel lies on his side

for extended periods as a prophetic symbol.

Which makes people today realize

prophetic ministry was not exactly a *comfortable career path*. But Ezekiel's central message is powerful.

Because people believed the Temple guaranteed security.

But Ezekiel shows that outward religious symbols cannot replace true obedience.

Then comes one of the most famous visions in the Old Testament:

The valley of dry **bones**.

Ezekiel 37 describes a valley filled with bones representing spiritually dead Israel.

Eze 37:1-3 (NIV) “1 The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. 2 He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. 3 He asked me, ‘Son of man, can these bones live?’ I said, ‘Sovereign LORD, you alone know.’”

And God asks: “Can these bones live?” Humanly speaking, the answer is obviously no. But then God breathes life into them.

The image is powerful:

God can restore what appears completely dead. Then Ezekiel introduces another major promise.

Ezekiel 36:26 says: (NIV) “26 I will give you a new **heart** and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”

Again, the issue is inward transformation. Humanity does not merely need better behavior.

Humanity needs renewal from within. Onward we go now to the book of Daniel.

Daniel is taken captive in Babylon as a young man. And immediately, he faces pressure to compromise.

Different culture. Different empire. Different beliefs.

But Daniel remains **faithful**.

That matters because Daniel shows believers

how to live faithfully inside hostile environments. Then come the famous stories.

The fiery furnace.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refuse to worship Nebuchadnezzar’s image.

And they are thrown into the fiery **furnace**.

But God preserves them.

Then Daniel is thrown into the lions' **den** for refusing to stop praying.

Again: faithfulness under pressure.

But Daniel also contains massive prophetic visions. Kingdoms rise and fall.

Empires appear powerful—yet temporary.

Daniel 2 describes a stone that crushes earthly kingdoms and grows into an **eternal** kingdom.

That kingdom points toward God's everlasting reign. And throughout Daniel, one truth remains constant:

God is sovereign over every empire, ruler, and kingdom.

Even in exile. Even in suffering.

Even when everything feels unstable.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Babylonian Exile

The Babylonian exile reshaped Jewish identity and theology profoundly. Without:

- king
- Temple
- or homeland

the people had to wrestle with *covenant identity* in exile.

False Prophets

Many false prophets promised peace and denied coming judgment.

Jeremiah strongly confronted them.

Apocalyptic Literature

Daniel contains apocalyptic imagery using symbols, visions, and future kingdom language.

Dry Bones Imagery

Dry bones symbolized hopelessness, death, and national collapse.

God breathing life into them symbolized restoration.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Judgment

Persistent rebellion eventually leads to consequences.

The Heart

Humanity's deepest problem is inward corruption.

Faithfulness

God's people are called to remain faithful even in hostile environments.

Restoration

God promises renewal after judgment.

Hope

Even exile is not the end of the story.

Sovereignty

God rules over nations, empires, and history itself.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

These books *strongly* point toward Christ.

The New Covenant

Jeremiah's promise of a new covenant is fulfilled in Jesus.

The New Heart

Ezekiel's promise of a new heart points toward spiritual transformation through Jesus

Faithful Sufferer

Jeremiah's suffering points toward Jesus's rejection and sorrow.

Resurrection Imagery

The dry bones vision foreshadows resurrection and spiritual renewal.

The Eternal Kingdom

Daniel's visions point toward God's everlasting kingdom fulfilled in Christ.

The Son of Man

Daniel 7 introduces the title "Son of Man," later used repeatedly by Jesus Himself.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

These books feel incredibly relevant

because people still experience forms of exile today.

Not necessarily geographic exile— but spiritual displacement.

People still feel:

- lost
- unstable
- disoriented
- pressured to compromise

Modern culture constantly pressures people to conform. Daniel especially reminds believers:

Faithfulness matters even when culture moves in the opposite direction.

Jeremiah reminds us that the real problem is still the heart.

Ezekiel reminds us that God can restore what appears spiritually dead.

And Lamentations reminds us that grief and hope can exist together.

Because even in judgment, God was still preparing redemption.

ANSWER KEY

- Jeremiah said the human **HEART** is deceitful above all things.
- Jeremiah promised a coming **NEW** covenant.
- Lamentations says:

“Because of the Lord’s great **LOVE** we are not consumed...”

- Ezekiel saw a valley of dry **BONES**.
- Ezekiel promised that God would give people a new **HEART**.
- Daniel remained **FAITHFUL** even in Babylon.
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were thrown into the fiery **FURNACE**.
- Daniel was thrown into the lions’ **DEN**.
- Daniel teaches that earthly kingdoms are temporary, but God’s kingdom is

ETERNAL.

- Jesus later used Daniel’s title: “Son of **MAN**.”

WEEK 14 — 1 & 2 CHRONICLES, EZRA, NEHEMIAH & ESTHER

Restoration, Rebuilding, Providence, and Covenant Renewal

Main Theme

These books reveal God restoring His people after exile, rebuilding worship and identity,

preserving His covenant promises, and quietly working behind the scenes even when His presence seems hidden.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

By this point in the Old Testament story, Israel has experienced devastating judgment. Jerusalem fell.

The Temple was destroyed.

The people were carried into exile. Everything looked lost.

But exile was never meant to be the end of the story. Now we come to the restoration books.

These books are deeply encouraging because they deal with something humanity still experiences constantly:

Rebuilding after failure. Rebuilding after collapse. Rebuilding after loss.

Rebuilding after spiritual drift. These books are about restoration.

But they are also honest about how difficult restoration can be.

Because rebuilding is rarely quick. Rarely easy.

Rarely clean.

Many people want instant transformation

while God often works through long processes of rebuilding. These books also contain some fascinating details.

For example:

- Chronicles retells Israel's history from a priestly and worship-centered

perspective.

- Ezra and Nehemiah focus on rebuilding both the Temple and the people.
- Esther is the only book in the Bible that never directly mentions the name of God.

And yet God's fingerprints are all over it. That alone becomes a powerful lesson: God is still working even when He seems invisible.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

1 & 2 Chronicles

Author

Traditionally Ezra

Date Written

Approximately 450–430 BC

Historical Context

Chronicles was written after the exile

and retells much of Israel's history from Adam through the kings.

Unlike Samuel and Kings, Chronicles focuses heavily on:

- worship
- the Temple
- covenant
- David's line
- and spiritual faithfulness

Purpose of the Books

Chronicles remind the restored community of:

- their covenant identity
- God's faithfulness
- proper worship
- and the importance of seeking God

Major Themes

- Worship
- Covenant
- Davidic kingship
- Temple worship

- Restoration

Interesting Fact

Chronicles spends far more time emphasizing David's preparation for the Temple than David's personal failures.

Ezra

Author

Traditionally Ezra

Date Written

Approximately 440 BC

Historical Context

Ezra records the return of Jewish exiles
from Babylon and the rebuilding of the Temple.

Purpose of the Book

Ezra emphasizes spiritual renewal,
covenant restoration, and returning to God's Word.

Major Themes

- Restoration
- Worship
- Repentance
- God's Word

Interesting Fact

When the foundation of the rebuilt Temple was laid, some people celebrated while older people wept because they remembered Solomon's Temple.

Nehemiah

Author

Traditionally, Nehemiah with Ezra

Date Written

Approximately 430 BC

Historical Context

Nehemiah focuses on rebuilding Jerusalem's walls and restoring national stability.

Purpose of the Book

Nehemiah demonstrates leadership, perseverance, prayer, and spiritual renewal.

Major Themes

- Leadership
- Restoration
- Prayer
- Perseverance
- Renewal

Interesting Fact

Nehemiah was cupbearer to the Persian king before becoming governor of Jerusalem.

Esther

Author

Unknown

Date Written

Approximately 460–330 BC

Historical Context

Esther takes place during the Persian period after many Jews remained dispersed throughout the empire.

Purpose of the Book

Esther reveals God's providence in protecting His people from destruction.

Major Themes

- Providence
- Courage
- Deliverance
- Faithfulness

Interesting Fact

God's name never appears directly in Esther, yet His providence shapes the entire story.

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Let's begin with Chronicles.

Honestly, if people start reading Chronicles casually, they often get stuck immediately in the genealogies.

Pages and pages of names.

But those genealogies mattered deeply.

Because after exile, the people needed to remember who they were.

Identity mattered. Covenant identity mattered.

Chronicles repeatedly emphasizes:

- worship
- the Temple
- David's line
- and seeking God

One of the major themes repeated throughout Chronicles is this: When people seek God, they experience spiritual renewal.

But when they abandon Him, collapse follows.

Chronicles also presents David

somewhat differently than Samuel and Kings. David's failures are not emphasized nearly as much. Why?

Because Chronicles is focused on covenant hope

and worship restoration for the post-exile community. Then we move into Ezra.

Ezra is about rebuilding both physically and spiritually. The people return from exile to rebuild the Temple.

But the process is difficult. There is opposition.

Discouragement. Fear.

Delay.

Have you ever noticed:

Rebuilding usually feels slower than destruction.

Destruction can happen overnight. Restoration often takes years.

Then something powerful happens in Ezra 7:10.

It says: (NIV) - 10 For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the LORD, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel.”

That matters because spiritual renewal always reconnects people to God’s truth.

Not merely emotion. Not merely enthusiasm. Truth.

Then we come to Nehemiah.

Nehemiah is one of the greatest leadership books in Scripture. Nehemiah hears that Jerusalem’s walls remain broken.

And he is devastated.

The walls represented:

- protection
- identity
- stability
- and dignity

Nehemiah immediately responds with prayer.

That becomes one of the defining features of his leadership. Prayer before action.

Then Nehemiah goes to Jerusalem and begins rebuilding.

He learns quickly that

rebuilding is often slower than **destruction**.

Opposition appears immediately. Criticism.

Threats.

Discouragement. Intimidation.

Here is a subtle truth:

Anytime people try rebuilding something meaningful spiritually, resistance usually appears too.

But Nehemiah refuses to quit.

One of the famous lines in the book comes in Nehemiah 6:3: (NIV) “3 so I sent messengers to them with this reply: ‘I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?’”

That mindset matters.

Nehemiah understood the importance

of staying focused on what God had called him to do. Eventually, the walls are rebuilt.

But Nehemiah realizes something important: walls alone cannot fix hearts.

So the people gather to hear the Book of the Law read publicly. And the people begin weeping.

Why?

Because they realize how far they had drifted spiritually.

Then comes one of the most quoted verses in Nehemiah. Nehemiah 8:10 says: “The joy of the Lord is your **strength.**”

That statement comes during repentance and restoration.

Joy is always rooted in God—not circumstances.

Then we arrive at Esther.

Esther reads almost like a dramatic political thriller.

There is:

- political manipulation
- hidden identity
- assassination plots
- reversals
- danger
- courage

And at the center stands Esther.

A young Jewish woman who becomes queen of **Persia**.

Then Haman develops a plan to destroy the Jewish people.

Everything suddenly becomes life-or-death.

Mordecai tells Esther something incredibly important in Esther 4:14: “And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a **time** as this?”

That line has inspired people for generations. Because it reminds us:

God places people strategically for His purposes.

Even when they cannot fully see it yet. And remember:

God’s name is never directly mentioned in **Esther**.

Yet His providence appears everywhere. The timing.

The reversals. The protection. The preservation.

God is working constantly behind the scenes.

Many believers still experience seasons where God feels silent or hidden.

Esther reminds us:

Silence does not mean absence.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

Post-Exilic Judaism

These books take place after the Babylonian exile during Persian rule.

Genealogies

Genealogies helped restore covenant identity after exile and displacement.

The Second Temple

The rebuilt Temple was far smaller
and less magnificent than Solomon's Temple.

Persian Empire

Persia allowed many captive peoples to return to their homelands and rebuild.

The Feast of Purim

The Jewish festival of Purim originates from the events in Esther, celebrating deliverance from destruction.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Restoration

God restores His people after judgment and exile.

Identity

God's people must remember who they are.

Worship

True worship remains central to covenant life.

Leadership

God raises leaders to rebuild and guide His people.

Providence

God works even when unseen.

Renewal

Spiritual rebuilding must accompany physical rebuilding.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

These books continue building messianic hope.

David's Line

Chronicles preserves focus on the covenant line leading toward Christ.

The Temple

The rebuilt Temple points toward God dwelling among His people ultimately through Jesus.

Renewal Through the Word

Ezra's emphasis on the Law anticipates Christ as the fulfillment of God's Word.

The Rebuilder

Nehemiah's rebuilding points toward Christ restoring broken humanity.

Providence

Esther reminds us that God is sovereign even when unseen.

The Preserver

God preserves His covenant people because the promised Messiah must still come.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

These books are incredibly practical because people constantly experience seasons of rebuilding.

Rebuilding after:

- failure
- addiction
- spiritual drift
- loss
- broken relationships
- discouragement

And truthfully, rebuilding can feel exhausting. But these books remind us:

God specializes in restoration.

They also remind us that:

- leadership matters
- prayer matters
- worship matters
- truth matters
- perseverance matters

Esther especially reminds us that God continues working even when He seems silent.

And Nehemiah reminds us that spiritual focus matters when opposition comes.

Because rebuilding always requires perseverance.

These books emphasize restoration, worship, and covenant faithfulness.

ANSWER KEY

- Chronicles emphasizes worship, covenant, and spiritual **RENEWAL**.
- Ezra devoted himself to studying the **LAW** of the Lord.
- Rebuilding is often slower than **DESTRUCTION**.
- Nehemiah said:

“I am carrying on a great **PROJECT...**”

- The joy of the Lord is your **STRENGTH**.
- Esther became queen of **PERSIA**.
- Mordecai told Esther:

“For such a **TIME** as this.”

- God’s name is never directly mentioned in **ESTHER**.
- God continues working even when He seems **SILENT**.
- These books emphasize restoration, worship, and covenant **FAITHFULNESS**.

WEEK 15 — THE MINOR PROPHETS
Hosea Through Malachi — Judgment, Mercy, Restoration, and the Coming Messiah

Main Theme

The Minor Prophets close the Old Testament by confronting sin, exposing spiritual compromise, calling people to repentance, and building growing anticipation for the coming Messiah and final restoration.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WEEK

We have officially arrived at the final section of the Old Testament.

These books are often overlooked because they are shorter and packed tightly together. But these prophets are incredibly important.

They are the final covenant voices before the silence between the Old and New Testaments.

And their message is consistent:

God's people have drifted. Judgment is real.

Repentance is necessary. Hope still remains.

And a Savior is coming.

These books are deeply practical because they confront issues humanity still struggles with constantly:

- pride
- injustice
- hypocrisy
- spiritual apathy
- empty religion
- idolatry
- greed

- compromise

The Minor Prophets feel uncomfortably modern at times. Because people still:

- want blessing without *surrender*
- spirituality without *obedience*
- religion without *transformation*

But throughout all twelve books, one truth keeps appearing:

God continues pursuing people even when they continually drift from Him.

BOOK SURVEY INFORMATION

Hosea

Author

Hosea

Date Written

Approximately 755–715 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Hosea uses marriage imagery to portray Israel's spiritual unfaithfulness and God's faithful love.

Major Themes

- Covenant unfaithfulness
- Mercy
- Redemption
- God's faithful love

Interesting Fact

God commands Hosea to marry Gomer as a living picture of Israel's spiritual adultery.

Joel

Author

Joel

Date Written

Possibly 835–800 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Joel calls the people to repentance and points toward the coming Day of the Lord.

Major Themes

- Repentance
- Judgment
- Restoration
- The Day of the Lord

Interesting Fact

Joel prophesies that God will pour out His Spirit on all people.

Amos

Author

Amos

Date Written

Approximately 760 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Amos confronts injustice, hypocrisy, and corrupt worship.

Major Themes

- Justice
- Righteousness
- Accountability
- Judgment

Interesting Fact

Amos was a shepherd and fig farmer before God called him as a prophet.

Obadiah

Author

Obadiah

Date Written

Possibly 586 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Obadiah warns Edom about pride and celebrates God's justice.

Major Themes

- Pride
- Judgment
- Justice
- Restoration

Interesting Fact

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament.

Jonah

Author

Traditionally Jonah

Date Written

Approximately 785–760 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Jonah reveals God's mercy toward outsiders and exposes Jonah's resistant heart.

Major Themes

- Mercy
- Compassion
- Repentance
- God's sovereignty

Interesting Fact

The fish is not the real focus of Jonah— the condition of Jonah's heart is.

Micah

Author

Micah

Date Written

Approximately 735–700 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Micah confronts injustice while pointing toward future restoration and the coming ruler from Bethlehem.

Major Themes

- Justice
- Mercy
- Judgment
- Messianic hope

Interesting Fact

Micah specifically prophesies that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem.

Nahum

Author

Nahum

Date Written

Approximately 660–630 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Nahum announces judgment against Nineveh and Assyria.

Major Themes

- Judgment
- Justice
- God's sovereignty

Interesting Fact

Nineveh was considered nearly impossible to conquer.

Habakkuk

Author

Habakkuk

Date Written

Approximately 609–597 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Habakkuk wrestles honestly with evil, suffering, and trusting God.

Major Themes

- Faith
- Justice
- Trust
- God's sovereignty

Interesting Fact

Much of Habakkuk is a direct conversation between the prophet and God.

Zephaniah

Author

Zephaniah

Date Written

Approximately 640–609 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Zephaniah warns of judgment while promising future restoration.

Major Themes

- Judgment
- Restoration
- Hope
- Purification

Interesting Fact

Zephaniah says God rejoices over His people with singing.

Haggai

Author

Haggai

Date Written

Approximately 520 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Haggai calls the people to prioritize rebuilding the Temple and restoring worship.

Major Themes

- Priorities
- Worship
- Renewal
- Obedience

Interesting Fact

The people rebuilt their own homes while neglecting God's Temple.

Zechariah

Author

Zechariah

Date Written

Approximately 520–518 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Zechariah encourages the people through visions of restoration and messianic hope.

Major Themes

- Restoration
- The Messiah
- Hope
- God's kingdom

Interesting Fact

Zechariah contains some of the clearest messianic imagery in the Minor Prophets.

Malachi

Author

Malachi

Date Written

Approximately 430 BC

Purpose / Major Theme

Malachi confronts spiritual apathy and points toward the coming messenger before the Messiah.

Major Themes

- Worship
- Covenant faithfulness
- Repentance
- Future hope

Interesting Fact

Malachi is the final prophetic voice before the 400 years of silence leading into the New Testament.

TEACHING MANUSCRIPT

Let's begin with Hosea.

Hosea may be one of the most emotionally painful prophetic books in Scripture. God commands Hosea to marry Gomer,

a woman who becomes unfaithful. Why?

Because Hosea's marriage becomes a living picture of Israel's spiritual unfaithfulness.

Yet God continues pursuing His people despite their rebellion.

That becomes one of the central themes of the Minor Prophets: God's mercy is greater than human failure.

Then Joel describes a devastating locust plague. Fields destroyed.

Food gone. Economic collapse.

But Joel says these point toward a greater coming judgment: the Day of the Lord.

Yet Joel also gives hope.

Joel 2:28-29 says: (NIV) "28, "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. 29 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days."

That prophecy later becomes foundational in Acts 2 at Pentecost. Then Amos enters with brutal honesty.

Israel looked prosperous outwardly. But internally:

- corruption
- injustice
- exploitation
- and hypocrisy were everywhere

Amos 5:24 says: (NIV) "24 But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!"

God was not impressed by empty religious activity disconnected from righteousness.

Then Obadiah warns Edom about pride.

And honestly, pride remains one of humanity's oldest problems. People continually elevate themselves above God.

But Obadiah reminds us:

Human pride eventually collapses.

Then we come to Jonah.

Jonah *almost* reads like dark humor at times.

God says: "Go to Nineveh." Jonah runs in the opposite direction.

Storm. Panic. Fish.

Repentance.

But the real issue is Jonah's **heart**.

Jonah wanted mercy for himself— but not for his enemies.

Yet God's compassion extends beyond Israel alone.

Then Micah gives one of the clearest summary statements in the prophets.

Micah 6:8 says: (NIV) "8 He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love **mercy** and to walk humbly with your God."

Not empty religion. Real transformation.

Micah also prophesies the coming ruler from **Bethlehem**.

Then Nahum announces judgment against Nineveh after the nation returned to violence and corruption.

Nahum reminds us:

God does not ignore evil forever.

Then Habakkuk asks one of the deepest questions in Scripture: Why does evil seem to prosper?

Today, people still ask that constantly.

But Habakkuk 2:4 says: (NIV) 4 "See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright--but the righteous person will live by **faith**—"

That becomes foundational to New Testament theology.

Then Zephaniah warns about judgment

but also gives one of the most beautiful pictures of God's love.

Zephaniah 3:17 says: (NIV) – "17 The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love, he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with **singing**."

Then Haggai confronts misplaced **priorities**. The people rebuilt their own homes while neglecting God's Temple. And before we throw stones, people today still do this spiritually all the time.

Then Zechariah introduces astonishing messianic imagery. See if you recognized these pictures:

Zechariah 9:9 says: (NIV) "9 Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a **donkey**, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

Then Zechariah 12:10 says: (NIV) "10 And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have **pierced**, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son."

Again, the prophets keep pointing toward Christ. Then we arrive at Malachi.

Overall, Malachi feels spiritually exhausted.

The people still practiced religion outwardly— but internally passion had faded.

Then Malachi 3:6 says: (NIV) “6 I the LORD do not **change**. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.”

That matters deeply.

Because everything else changes:

- empires
- leaders
- cultures
- people

But God remains faithful.

Then Malachi closes with expectation: A messenger is coming. And after Malachi.....silence.....

Roughly 400 years pass before John the Baptist appears preparing the way for Jesus. The Old Testament closes with longing for the Messiah.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INSIGHTS

The Minor Prophets

The “Minor Prophets” were grouped together because of shorter length, not lesser importance.

The Day of the Lord

This phrase referred to future judgment, divine intervention, and restoration.

Assyria & Babylon

Many prophets ministered during periods of rising military empires and national instability.

Post-Exilic Fatigue

Later prophets addressed people struggling with discouragement and spiritual apathy after exile.

Messianic Expectation

The prophetic books increasingly pointed toward a coming Deliverer, King, and Savior.

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL THEMES

Repentance

God continually calls people to return to Him.

Justice

God cares deeply about righteousness and how people treat one another.

Mercy

God repeatedly offers restoration despite rebellion.

Faith

The righteous live by faith.

Priorities

People drift spiritually when worldly concerns dominate life.

Messianic Hope

The prophets increasingly point toward the coming Messiah.

HOW THIS POINTS TO JESUS

These prophets constantly point toward Christ.

The Faithful Bridegroom

Hosea's faithful pursuit
reflects Christ's love for His people.

The Spirit

Joel's prophecy about God pouring out His Spirit points toward Pentecost.

The Shepherd-King

Micah's ruler from Bethlehem points directly toward Jesus.

Faith

Habakkuk's statement about living by faith becomes central to the Gospel.

The Coming King

Zechariah's king riding on a donkey points directly to Jesus.

The Pierced One

Zechariah's prophecy about the one being pierced foreshadows the crucifixion.

The Messenger

Malachi points toward John the Baptist preparing the way for Christ.

MODERN APPLICATION & REFLECTION

These prophets remain incredibly relevant because humanity still struggles with:

- pride
- compromise
- injustice
- spiritual apathy
- misplaced priorities
- and empty religion

And modern idols may look more sophisticated— but spiritually they function the same way.

People still worship:

- success
- money
- politics
- pleasure
- self-image
- power

The Minor Prophets remind us that God desires:

- genuine worship
- repentance
- justice
- humility
- mercy
- and transformed hearts

And throughout all twelve books, hope remains.

Because God was still preparing redemption through Jesus.

ANSWER KEY

- Hosea's marriage pictured Israel's spiritual **UNFAITHFULNESS**.
- Joel prophesied that God would pour out His **SPIRIT**.
- Jonah's greatest issue was the condition of his **HEART**.
- Micah said to love **MERCY** and walk humbly with God.
- Micah prophesied that the Messiah would come from **BETHLEHEM**.
- Habakkuk declared:
"The righteous will live by **FAITH**."
- Zephaniah said God rejoices over His people with **SINGING**.
- Haggai confronted misplaced **PRIORITIES**.
- Zechariah prophesied the coming king would ride on a **DONKEY**.
- Zechariah also spoke of the one being **PIERCED**.
- Malachi declared that God does not **CHANGE**.
- The Old Testament closes with expectation for the coming **MESSIAH**.

WEEK 1 — GENESIS 1–11
Creation, Fall, Flood, and Babel

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Genesis begins with:

“In the beginning God created the _____ and the earth.”

- Throughout creation, God repeatedly said creation was _____.
- Humanity was created in the _____ of God.
- The serpent’s first attack was not against behavior—it was against _____.
- Sin is humanity placing _____ in God’s position.
- After sin entered, humanity experienced:
 - shame
 - fear
 - hiding

- and _____.
- Cain murdered _____.

- Genesis 6:5 says:

“Every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only _____ all the time.”

- Even in judgment, _____ appears.
- At Babel, humanity said:
“Let us make a name for _____.”
- Genesis 3:15 introduces the first promise of a coming _____.

KEY THEMES

- Creation
- Sin
- Judgment
- _____
- Redemption

NOTES:

WEEK 2 — GENESIS 12–50
Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Genesis 12 marks a shift from all humanity to one man named _____.
- God promised:
 “I will make you into a great _____.”
- Through Abraham, “all peoples on earth will be _____.”
- The patriarchs struggled with:
 - fear
 - deception
 - impatience
 - favoritism
 - and _____.
- God’s faithfulness is greater than human _____.

- Isaac was the promised _____.
- In Genesis 22, God provided a _____ sacrifice.
- Jacob's name was changed to _____.
- Joseph was sold into _____ by his brothers.
- Genesis 50:20 says:
 “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for _____.”

NOTES:

WEEK 3 — EXODUS
Deliverance, Covenant, and the Presence of God

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Israel became enslaved in _____.
- Exodus 3:14 says:
 “I AM WHO _____.”
- God told Moses:
 “I have indeed seen the _____ of my people.”
- The plagues demonstrated God’s power over the gods of _____.
- During Passover, a _____ died so judgment would pass over the people.
- Exodus 12:13 says:
 “When I see the _____, I will pass over you.”
- God delivered Israel through the crossing of the _____ Sea.
- The Law revealed:

- God's holiness
- human
- and covenant living
- Israel created the golden_____while Moses was on the mountain.
- Exodus ends with the glory of the Lord filling the _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 4 — LEVITICUS & NUMBERS
Holiness, Sacrifice, and Wilderness Failure

LEVITICUS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

NUMBERS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Leviticus answers the question:

“How can sinful people live in relationship with a _____ God?”

- Leviticus 17:11 says:

“It is the _____ that makes atonement for one’s life.”

- Atonement means _____.
- The priests served as _____ between God and the people.
- The scapegoat symbolically carried away the people’s _____.
- Israel was meant to reflect holiness in:
 - worship
 - morality
 - relationships
 - justice
 - and daily _____.
- The people responded with _____ instead of trust.
- Israel wandered in the wilderness for _____ years.
- Anyone who looked at the bronze serpent in _____ lived.

NOTES:

WEEK 5 - DEUTERONOMY

Covenant Renewal and Preparing the Next Generation

DEUTERONOMY

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- The name Deuteronomy means “second _____.”
- Moses repeatedly tells Israel to _____ God’s faithfulness.
- Deuteronomy 8:2 says:
 “_____ how the Lord your God led you...”
- The Law was never merely about _____-following.
- Deuteronomy 6:4–5 is called the _____.
- God called Israel to love Him with all their:
 - heart
 - soul

- and _____.
- Prosperity can create the illusion of self_____.
- Deuteronomy 30:19 says:
“I have set before you life and death... Now choose _____.”
- Moses prepared _____to lead Israel into the Promised Land.
- Moses was never meant to be the final _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 6 — JOSHUA & JUDGES
Conquest, Compromise, and the Cycle of Human Failure

JOSHUA

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

JUDGES

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- God told Joshua to be strong and _____.
- Victory would come through God's _____, not merely military strength.
- Joshua 21:45 says:

“Every one was _____.”

- Joshua challenged the people:

“Choose for yourselves this day whom you will _____.”

- Judges reveal a repeating cycle of:

- sin
- oppression
- crying out
- _____
- temporary peace

- Judges 21:25 says:

“Everyone did as they saw _____.”

- Samson had incredible _____ but lacked self-control.
- The judges were temporary _____ raised up during times of crisis.
- Judges reveals humanity's need for a greater _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 7 — RUTH & 1 SAMUEL
Redemption, Kingship, and the Search for a Faithful Leader

RUTH

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

1 SAMUEL

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Ruth said:
“Your people will be my people and your God my _____.”
- Boaz served as a _____-redeemer.
- Ruth became part of the family line leading to _____.
- Israel demanded a _____like the surrounding nations.
- Saul appeared qualified outwardly, but struggled inwardly with:
 - pride
 - insecurity
 - impatience
 - and_____.
- 1 Samuel 16:7 says:
“The Lord looks at the_____.”
- David trusted that God was bigger than the _____.
- David said:
“I come against you in the name of the Lord _____.”
- Even the best human leaders remained _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 8 — 2 SAMUEL & 1 KINGS
David, Solomon, and the Rise and Division of the Kingdom

2 SAMUEL

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

1 KINGS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- God promised David that his throne would endure _____.
- David's sin with Bathsheba revealed that even godly leaders are still capable of _____.
- Unlike Saul, David responded to sin with _____.
- Solomon asked God for _____.
- The Temple represented:
 - worship
 - sacrifice
 - covenant
 - and God's dwelling _____.
- Spiritual compromise usually grows _____.
- The kingdom eventually divided into:
 - Israel in the north
 - and _____ in the south.
- Elijah asked:
"If the Lord is God, _____ Him."
- Jesus fulfills the promise of the eternal _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 9 — 2 KINGS

Division, Decline, Exile, and the Consequences of Idolatry

2 KINGS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Many kings were described as doing “evil in the eyes of the _____.”
- The prophets served as covenant _____.
- The Northern Kingdom of Israel fell to _____.
- Israel fell because of:
 - idolatry
 - covenant rejection
 - ignoring prophetic warnings
 - and pagan _____.
- External collapse often begins with internal _____.
- King Josiah rediscovered the Book of the _____.

- Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed by _____.
- The people were taken into _____.
- Even in judgment, God continued preserving _____.
- The failure of Israel's kings created longing for a perfect eternal _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 10 — JOB & PSALMS
Suffering, Worship, Lament, and Trust

JOB

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

PSALMS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Job is not suffering because he is secretly _____.
- Job's friends assume his suffering must be caused by his _____.
- Faith is bringing your pain to God instead of walking _____ from Him.
- God reminds Job that human beings do not see the whole _____.
- Job learns to trust God even without full _____.
- Psalms teaches us how to pray honestly from our _____.
- Psalm 23 says:
 "The Lord is my _____."
- David says:
 "Even though I walk through the darkest _____..."
- Psalm 51:10 says:
 "Create in me a pure _____, O God."
- Psalm 2 speaks of the Lord's Anointed _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 11 — PROVERBS, ECCLESIASTES & SONG OF SOLOMON
Wisdom, Meaning, and Covenant Love

PROVERBS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

ECCLESIASTES

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

SONG OF SOLOMON

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Proverbs 1:7 says:

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of _____.”

- Proverbs teaches that the tongue has the power of life and _____.

- Proverbs 16:18 says:

“Pride goes before _____.”

- Wisdom is learning how to _____.

- Ecclesiastes repeatedly says that everything is _____ apart from God.

- Ecclesiastes 3:1 says:

“There is a _____ for everything.”

- Ecclesiastes concludes:

“Fear God and keep His _____.”

- Song of Solomon celebrates covenant _____.

- Biblical love involves covenant commitment and _____.

- Jesus fulfills perfect _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 12 — ISAIAH
Judgment, Holiness, Hope, and the Coming Messiah

ISAIAH

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- The prophets served as covenant _____.
- Isaiah warned against meaningless religious _____.
- The seraphim cried:
 “Holy, holy, holy...”
- God is completely and perfectly _____.
- When Isaiah saw God clearly, he recognized his own _____.
- Anything placed above God eventually becomes an _____.
- Isaiah 7:14 says:
 “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a _____.”

- Isaiah 53:5 says:

“He was pierced for our _____.”

- “We all, like sheep, have gone _____.”
- Isaiah points toward a coming suffering _____.

NOTES:

WEEK 13 — JEREMIAH, LAMENTATIONS, EZEKIEL & DANIEL
Exile, Judgment, Visions, and Hope in Captivity

JEREMIAH

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

LAMENTATIONS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

EZEKIEL

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

DANIEL

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Jeremiah said the human _____ is deceitful above all things.
- Jeremiah promised a coming _____ covenant.
- Lamentations says:
“Because of the Lord’s great _____ we are not consumed...”
- Ezekiel saw a valley of dry _____.
- Ezekiel promised that God would give people a new _____.
- Daniel remained _____ even in Babylon.
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were thrown into the fiery _____.
- Daniel was thrown into the lions’ _____.
- Daniel teaches that earthly kingdoms are temporary, but God’s kingdom is _____.
- Jesus later used Daniel’s title: “Son of _____.”

NOTES:

WEEK 14 — 1 & 2 CHRONICLES, EZRA, NEHEMIAH & ESTHER
Restoration, Rebuilding, Providence, and Covenant Renewal

1 & 2 CHRONICLES

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

EZRA

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

NEHEMIAH

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

ESTHER

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Chronicles emphasizes worship, covenant, and spiritual _____.
- Ezra devoted himself to studying the _____ of the Lord.
- Rebuilding is often slower than _____.
- Nehemiah said:

“I am carrying on a great _____...”

- The joy of the Lord is your _____.
- Esther became queen of _____.
- Mordecai told Esther:

“For such a _____ as this.”

- God’s name is never directly mentioned in _____.
- God continues working even when He seems _____.

- These books emphasize restoration, worship, and covenant _____.

NOTES:

**WEEK 15 — THE MINOR PROPHETS – HOSEA, JOEL, AMOS,
OBADIAH, JONAH, MICAH, NAHUM, HABAKKUK, ZEPHANIAH,
HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, MALACHI**

Judgment, Mercy, Restoration, and the Coming

HOSEA

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

JOEL

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

AMOS

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

OBADIAH

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

JONAH

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

MICAH

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

NAHUM

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

HABAKKUK

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

ZEPHANIAH

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

HAGGAI

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

ZECHARIAH

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

MALACHI

AUTHOR:

DATE WRITTEN:

PURPOSE / MAJOR THEME:

Fill in the blanks as you follow along with the teaching manuscript:

- Hosea's marriage pictured Israel's spiritual _____.
- Joel prophesied that God would pour out His _____.
- Jonah's greatest issue was the condition of his _____.
- Micah said to love _____ and walk humbly with God.
- Micah prophesied that the Messiah would come from _____.
- Habakkuk declared:
 "The righteous will live by _____."
- Zephaniah said God rejoices over His people with _____.
- Haggai confronted misplaced _____.
- Zechariah prophesied the coming king would ride on a _____.
- Zechariah also spoke of the one being _____.
- Malachi declared that God does not _____.
- The Old Testament closes with expectation for the coming _____.

NOTES: