

# Study Notes



## Old Testament Survey

By David O'Steen  
**Hope Bible Church**  
[www.hopebiblechurchga.com](http://www.hopebiblechurchga.com)

## Overview of the Old Testament

Jesus Christ taught that the OT was inspired scripture (John 5:39) and He confirmed the 39 books of its canon. God used Israel to preserve the OT (Rom. 3:2). Christ quoted and referred to the OT (Matt. 21:42; 24:15; Mk. 7:10; Lk. 4:16-21; Jn. 5:45-47).

- **Matt. 23:35** – Abel was killed in Gen. 4 and Zacharias in 2 Chron. 24. In the Hebrew OT the first book was Genesis and the last book was 2 Chronicles. In this verse, Jesus confirms the whole OT canon.
- **Luke 24:27, 44** – The Hebrew OT was divided into 3 groups. Paul refers to the law, prophets, and Psalms in his sermon in Acts 13 (vs.26-41).

### I. The Law (5) – written by Moses

1. Genesis – beginnings, Israel a family
2. Exodus – history, Israel becomes a nation
3. Leviticus – worship, Israel God's people
4. Numbers – history, Israel now a nation, numbered
5. Deuteronomy – instruction, Israel entering the land

### II. The Prophets (19)

*The Former Prophets – Zech. 7:7*

6. Joshua – Israel under priests
7. Judges – Israel under judges
- 8-9. Samuel – Israel under kings
- 10-11. Kings – decline and fall of kings

*The Latter Prophets*

12. Isaiah – messages to Israel in view of captivities
13. Jeremiah – messages to Israel going into captivity
14. Ezekiel – messages to Israel while in captivity
15. Hosea – Israel's sins, judgment, and restoration (before, during, after captivity)
16. Joel
17. Amos
18. Obadiah
19. Jonah
20. Micah
21. Nahum
22. Habakkuk
23. Zephaniah
24. Haggai
25. Zechariah
26. Malachi

- III. **The Psalms (12)** – called “Psalms” because it is the first and dominating book
27. Psalms – Israel’s praises
  28. Proverbs – Israel’s wisdom
  29. Job – Israel’s comfort
  30. Song of Solomon – Israel’s song of love
  31. Ruth – Israel’s redemption story
  32. Lamentations – Israel’s woes
  33. Ecclesiastes – Israel’s vanity
  34. Esther – Israel’s preservation
  35. Daniel – Israel’s future
  - 36-37. Ezra, Nehemiah – Israel resettled
  - 38-39. Chronicles – Israel’s history

There is nothing wrong with the order of OT books in our King James Bible. They are laid out in a practical manner for English readers:

- Law (Genesis – Deuteronomy)
- History (Joshua – Esther)
- Poetry (Job – Song of Solomon)
- Prophecy (Isaiah – Malachi)

The central theme of the Bible is the person and work of Christ. In the OT we learn about Him through theophany’s (e.g., Josh. 5:13-15), prophecy (e.g., Gen. 3:15), typology (e.g., Joseph), and shadows (e.g., Heb. 10:1).

The OT is primarily about the nation of Israel. God devotes just eleven chapters to the first 2,000 of history. He gets to Abraham quickly and from Genesis 12 – Malachi, Gentiles are only mentioned in connection with Israel. We must not interpret this to mean that God did not care about the Gentiles. Though He “gave up” (Rom. 1) on the Gentile world in Genesis 11, He promised to bless them through Israel. Israel was to:

- ✓ Be a witness of the one true God in the midst of universal idolatry (Deut. 6:4)
- ✓ Be an example to the Gentiles of the blessedness in serving the one true God (Deut. 33:26-29)
- ✓ Be the instruments to receive and preserve the scripture (Rom. 3:1-2)
- ✓ Produce the Messiah (Rom. 9:4-5)
- ✓ Be a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:5-6)

### **Why should we study the OT today in the age of grace?**

1. Foundation – The OT provides information concerning the origin of the universe, the origin of man, why man fell into sin, the birth and purpose of the Hebrew nation, the coming Savior, and that salvation is by blood. Practically every book in the OT is quoted or referred to in the NT. We cannot understand much of the NT without the OT.

2. Preparation – The OT reveals God’s preparation for the coming of His Son into the world. In Genesis we see the need for a Savior and the promise that He will come through the woman, the Jewish nation, and the tribe of Judah. The rest of the OT amplifies these basic facts and shows how Satan tried to destroy the Jewish nation to prevent the birth of Christ. In Genesis 3:15 we learn that there are two seeds (of Satan and of Christ) in conflict from Genesis 4 onward.

3. Illustration – In the OT God shows us His truth in types and symbols. There are NT doctrines that were foreshadowed in the OT (not the mystery of body of Christ, Eph. 3:1-13). For example, the Passover Lamb of Exodus 12 is a picture of the sacrifice of Christ (1 Cor. 5:7).

4. Demonstration – The OT is very practical by showing both the failures and successes of God’s people. We may learn from the many examples in the OT (1 Cor. 10:11). There is also doctrine revealed in the OT that we must learn if we are going to understand the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16). The OT also provides a wealth of devotional applications (Rom. 15:4).

The OT has 23,214 verses, 929 chapters, and 592,439 words.

# Genesis

**Writer:** Moses

**Theme:** Genesis is the book of beginnings (universe, mankind, marriage and family, sin, revelation, sacrifice, civilization, Babylon, Israel).

**Time:** Covers the first 2,300 years of history.

**Key Verse:** 1:1, (in one simple scientific statement of 10 words God refutes the philosophies of man.)

## **Outlines:**

### **I. Four Outstanding Events (1-11) – Mankind in general**

God uses 11 chapters to cover about 2000 years.

- A. The Creation (1-2)
  - B. The Fall (3)
  - C. The Flood (4-9)
  - D. The Babel Crisis (10-11)
- (The devolution of man, Rom. 1:18-32)

### **II. Four Outstanding Persons (12-50) – Israel in particular**

God uses 38 chapters to cover about 300 years. He gets to Abraham quickly and gives details about him and his seed.

- A. Abraham – God chooses Abram and makes and confirms a covenant with him
- B. Isaac – promised seed, chosen over older Ishmael
- C. Jacob – 12 tribes
- D. Joseph – how Israelites got down in Egypt

- I. Beginning of the World (1:1-25)
- II. Beginning of Man (1:26-2:25)
- III. Beginning of Sin (3)
- IV. Beginning of Satan's Plan to Rule the Earth (4-11)
- V. Beginning of Israel (12-50)

# Exodus

**Writer:** Moses

**Theme:** Exodus is the book of redemption. Genesis opened with God creating man in paradise and closed with a man in a coffin down in Egypt (50:26). The problem is SIN (Gen. 3). In Genesis God began the nation Israel with a wonderful covenant made with Abraham, but the book closes with the children of Israel down in Egypt (they got there because of sin). The Israelites are in Egypt for 400 years and become a people numbering in the millions. Exodus opens with the children of Israel in bondage (1:1-10). The book of Exodus is about God redeeming them out of Egypt in order to bring them unto Himself and into the land of promise to serve Him.

**Time:** covers about 200 years (1700 – 1500 BC)

**Key word:** “I will” (84)

**Key Verses:** 3:7-8

## Outlines:

### I. The Exodus (1-17)

- A. Projected through Moses (1-4)
- B. Obstructed by Pharaoh (5-11)
- C. Effected by the LORD (12-17)

### II. The Law (18-24)

- A. The nation prepared (18-19)
- B. The law revealed (20-23)
  - 1. The commandments (moral) 20
  - 2. The judgments (social) 21-23
  - 3. The ordinances (religious) in next section
- C. The covenant ratified

### III. The Tabernacle (25-40)

- A. Described (25-31) structure, furniture, priesthood, offerings
- B. Needed (32-34)
- C. Completed (35-40)

**I. Redemption** – God’s Power (1-17)

**II. Righteousness** – God’s Holiness (18-24)

**III. Restoration** – God’s Mercy (25-40)

# Leviticus

**Writer:** Moses

**Theme:** The first words spoken are by the LORD “out of the tabernacle” concerning the offerings (“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying”, found 35 times). Leviticus is an instructional book for the Levitical priesthood under the Mosaic Law. This is the book of worship and service. Holiness is required for true worship and service. Exodus showed the way OUT of bondage and Leviticus shows the way INTO the sanctuary.

**Key words:** Sin (89), Offering (249), Blood (88), Holy (94)

**Key verses:** 17:11; 19:1-2

**Outline:**

**I. Offerings (1-7)** (Burnt, Meat, Peace, Sin, Trespass)

**II. Priesthood Ministry (8-10)**

- A. The consecration of Aaron and his sons (8)
- B. The functions of the priesthood exercised (9)
- C. Judgment on Nadab and Abihu for offering strange fire (10)

**III. A Difference Between the Unclean and Clean (11-15)**

- A. Food (11)
- B. Childbirth (12)
- C. Leprosy (13-14)
- D. Issues (15)

**IV. The Day of Atonement (16-17)**

**V. Laws for Practical Holiness (18-22)**

- A. Different relationships (18)
- B. Duties (19)
- C. Warnings against certain Sins (20)
- D. Laws for the priests (21-22)

**VI. Feasts (23)**

(Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles)

**VII. Instructions and Warnings (24-27)**

- A. Candlestick, Shewbread, Blasphemy (24)
- B. The Sabbatic Year and Year of Jubilee (25)
- C. Conditions for Blessings and Warnings of Chastisement (26)
- D. The Seriousness of Vows (27)

# Numbers

**Writer:** Moses

**Time:** covers about 40 years

**Theme:** The book gets its name from the fact that it records two numberings of Israel (1:1-3, 26:1-4). The first census was taken the second year after Israel left Egypt (603,550) and the second was taken thirty-eight years later when they were about to enter the land of Canaan (601,730). These numberings were not of the entire nation but of the men that were able to fight. Numbers is a historical book that records the wilderness wanderings of the generation that would not take the Promised Land because of unbelief.

**Key word:** wilderness (42)

**Key Verses:** 14:28-35

## **Outline:**

### **I. The Old Generation, From Sinai to Kadesh (1-14)**

- A. The numbering (1-4)
- B. The instructing (5-9)
- C. The journeying (10-14)

### **II. The Transition Era in the Wilderness (15-20)**

The longest funeral march in history

### **II. The New Generation, From Kadesh to Moab (21-36)**

- A. The journeying (21-25)
- B. The numbering (26-27)
- C. The instructing (28-36)

# Deuteronomy

**Writer:** Moses

**Time:** reviews about 40 years (also contains prophecy)

**Theme:** The word “Deuteronomy” means “second law”. It is not the giving of a new law but simply the reiteration of the law to the new generation that was about to enter the land. This book also contains a summary of the wilderness journeys of Israel, the land covenant, prophecy about Israel’s history, and the parting words and death of Moses. The basic message of the book is that the possession and enjoyment of Canaan was conditioned on the faith and obedience of the people to the law.

**Key verses:** 11:26-28

**Key words:** Thou shalt (230 times), Heart (47), Hear (34), Do, Observe, Keep, Obey (170)

## Outline:

### I. Looking Backward (1-11)

A. Review of the journey since Sinai (1-3)

*From Sinai to Kadesh-barnea (1) and the journey back to the border (2-3)*

B. Review of the law from Sinai (4-11)

*This is not merely a repeating of the law, but an expounding of parts of it in sermon form*

### II. Looking Forward (12-34)

A. Final rules and warnings to Israel (12-30)

*These are given in light of entering the land and are in accordance to the law with some adjustments (due to moving from the wilderness into the land). The Land Covenant is given in chapter 30.*

B. Final words and actions of Moses (31-34)

*His charge (31), song (32), blessing (33), and death (34)*

The book of Deuteronomy is basically a discourse. God inspires Moses to preach to the nation and he covers several basic things.

1. The Basic Commandment – 6:4-5
2. The Basic Purpose – 7:6-8
3. The Basic Requirement – 10:12-13
4. The Basic Warning – 8:10-20
4. The Basic Pledge – 4:25-31
5. The Basic Choices – 30:15-20

# Joshua

**Writer:** Joshua

**Time:** covers about 25 years of history (1450-1425 BC)

**Theme:** The title is taken from the name of the leading figure in the book (Joshua means “God’s salvation”). Six is the number of man (Rev. 13:18; example – Adam created on the 6<sup>th</sup> day). Joshua (6 letters) is the first book of the Bible that bears a man’s name and it is the 6<sup>th</sup> book of the Bible. Joshua is a book about a land (Canaan) and a people (Israel). The land is an inheritance promised by God, waiting to be occupied by His people. The people must overcome the obstacles of war, greed, and fear to lay hold on the promises made to their fathers. Redemption has two parts: “out” and “into” (Deut. 6:23). In Exodus the people were brought OUT of bondage and in Joshua they are brought INTO their inheritance.

**Key words:** Inherit, Inheritance (59)

**Key verses:** 1:1-9

## Outline:

### I. Crossing into the Land (1-5:12)

- A. Joshua’s commission (1)
- B. Rahab and the spies (2)
- C. Crossing the Jordan River (3-4)

*Note: Christ will cross Jordan in the path of his 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent when He comes to destroy His enemies and set up His kingdom. Kingdom baptism was in the Jordan River (Matt. 3) and perhaps at the very spot where Joshua and Christ cross over.*

- D. The circumcision at Gilgal (5:1-12)

### II. Conquering the Enemy (5:13-12)

- A. The Captain of the host of the LORD (5:13-15)
- B. The central campaign: Jericho; Ai; Gibeon (6-9)
- C. The southern campaign (10)
- D. The northern campaign (11)
- E. The defeated kings (12)

### III. Claiming the Inheritance (13-24)

- A. The tribal territory assigned (13-19)
  - 1. East (13-14)
  - 2. West (15-19)
- B. The special cities appointed (20-21)
  - 1. The cities of refuge (20)
  - 2. The priestly cities (21)
- C. The border tribes allotted (22)
- D. The nation admonished (23-24)

# Judges

**Writer:** probably Samuel

**Time:** covers about 300 years (1425-1125 BC)

**Theme:** As Joshua continued the history of Israel after the death of Moses (Josh. 1:1) so Judges continues the history after the death of Joshua (Jud. 1:1). This book records the failure of Israel as predicted by Joshua (Josh. 23:11-13). Throughout the book we see the cycle of apostasy, servitude, and deliverance repeated six times. Thirteen judges are listed in this book. Twelve judges were chosen by God, but the SIXTH judge (Rev. 13:18) was a usurper and pictures the Antichrist. The servitudes were in accordance with the Law Covenant and were predicted in Lev. 26:14-17 (Lev. 26 reveals 5 courses of punishment on Israel). Apostasy can take place in just one generation (Jud. 2:6-10).

**Key Words:** Judge, Judged, Judgment (22)

**Key Verse:** 17:6, 21:25

## Outline:

### I. Apathy (1-2)

A. Early victories (1:1-26)

B. Defeats (1:27-36)

C. Divine rebuke (2:1-5)

D. Serving other gods (2:6-23)

*Note: 2:6-23 summarizes the book*

### II. Apostasy (3-16)

Six times we read, "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD" (3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1). As a result, we read six times that they became captives (3:8, 12; 4:2; 6:1; 10:7; 13:1). And we read six times that they were delivered (3:9, 15; 4:23; 8:28; 11:33; 16:30).

### III. Anarchy (17-21)

These final chapters are an illustrative epilogue to the book. Chronologically the events took place not long after the death of Joshua.

A. Religious corruption (17-18)

B. Moral corruption (19)

C. Political corruption (20-21)

# Ruth

**Writer:** unknown, but written during the reign of David (see 4:22)

**Time:** covers about 10 years (1322 – 1311 BC) during the time of the Judges (1:1)

**Theme:** This is the first book in the Bible named after a woman and the only other such book is Esther. Ruth is a Gentile that marries a Jew and Esther is a Jewess that marries a Gentile. Both marriages show that Gentiles are blessed through Israel (Gen. 12:1-3). The story of Ruth provides:

- 1) The ancestry of David and the Lord Jesus Christ (4:16-22)
- 2) Example that God works through His godly remnant in days of apostasy
- 3) Prophetic picture of Israel (Naomi) and believing Gentiles (Ruth) in the last days
- 4) Typology of Christ as the Redeemer (Boaz)

Many try to make Ruth a type of the church which is the Body of Christ, but that was a mystery hid in God until He revealed it through the apostle Paul (Eph. 3:8-9; Col. 1:26). Actually, Ruth is a type of the believing Gentile nations that enter the Kingdom Age (Matt. 25:31-40). Ruth gets blessed because she cleaves to the Hebrew widow Naomi (1:16-17). Naomi's condition in chapter 1 pictures the condition of Israel before the Kingdom Age: out of the land of promise, empty, and without a husband. When Naomi returns to her land, she and Ruth are blessed because of the kinsman redeemer. Today, the Church is blessed WITHOUT Israel (Rom. 11:12, 25). The bride of the Messiah will be ISRAEL (Isa. 54:4-8; Hosea 2:14-23), not the Gentiles.

**Key words:** Kinsman (14), Redeemed (9)

**Key verse:** 1:15-16; 4:10

## Outline:

### I. Ruth's Sorrow (1)

- A. Naomi and her sorrows (1:1-5)
- B. The return from Moab (1:6-12)
- C. Orpah returns and Ruth cleaves (1:14-18)
- D. Naomi and Ruth in Bethlehem (1:19-22)

### II. Ruth's Service (2)

- A. Ruth gleaning in the field of Boaz (2:1-3)
- B. Boaz shows grace to Ruth (2:4-17)
- C. Naomi tells Ruth about Boaz (2:18-23)

### III. Ruth's Surrender (3)

- A. Naomi instructs Ruth (3:1-5)
- B. Ruth at the feet of Boaz (3:6-7)
- C. Boaz desires to be the part of a kinsman (3:8-13)
- D. Boaz gives Ruth six measures of barley (3:14-18)

#### **IV. Ruth's Satisfaction (4)**

- A. The nearer kinsman (4:1-8)
- B. Boaz's redemption (4:9-10)
- C. The marriage (4:11-13)
- D. Naomi's happiness (4:14-17)
- E. The ancestry of David (4:18-22)

# 1 & 2 Samuel

**Writer:** Samuel (1 Samuel), Nathan and/or Gad (2 Samuel, 1 Chron. 29:29)

**Time:** 1 Samuel covers about 115 years (1171-1056 BC), 2 Samuel covers about 38 years (1056-1017 BC).

**Theme:** 1 Samuel records the transition from the time of the judges (theocracy) to the time of the kings (monarchy). Israel rejected God as their King in favor of a human king. Samuel was the last of the judges (7:15) and the first of the national prophets (Acts 3:24, 13:20-23). He anointed Saul as the first king and then David his successor. 2 Samuel records the establishment of the kingdom under David.

**Key words:** "Saul" (138) in 1 Samuel. "David" (268) in 2 Samuel

**Key verses:** 1 Samuel 8:7; 2 Samuel 7:8-16

## Outline:

- I. **Samuel: The Last of the Judges (1 Sam. 1-7)**
  - A. Birth and Childhood (1-2)
  - B. Call and Office (3)
  - C. Ministry (4-7)
  
- II. **Saul: The First of the Kings (1 Sam. 8-15)**
  - A. Becomes King (8-10)
  - B. Early Victories (11-12)
  - C. Sins and Rejection (13-15)
  
- III. **David: The Anointed Successor (1 Sam. 16 - 2 Sam. 24)**
  - A. Shepherd (1 Sam. 16-17)
  - B. Servant (1 Sam. 18-19)
  - C. Exile (1 Sam. 20-31)
  - D. King (2 Sam. 1-24)
    1. Triumphs (1-12)
      - a. King over Judah, at Hebron (1-12). Civil War, 7 years
      - b. King of all Israel, at Jerusalem (5-12). Conquest, 13 years
    2. Troubles (13-24)
      - a. David's Sin and Repentance (11-12)
      - b. David's Troubles in the Family (13-18)
      - c. David's Troubles in the Nation (19-24)

# 1 & 2 Kings

**Writer:** Unknown, Jewish tradition says it was Jeremiah

**Time:** 1 Kings about 118 years (1015 – 897 BC), 2 Kings about 308 years (896 – 588 BC)

**Theme:** These books, as the title indicates, deal with the kings of the nation. 1 Kings opens with the glorious reign of Solomon but by the middle of the book the kingdom is divided. The trouble in both the northern (Israel) and southern (Judah) kingdoms was the constant rejection of God and embracing of false religion. 2 Kings ends with the captivity of Judah by Babylon. The object of these books is to show the rise and fall of the Hebrew kingdom according to the people's acceptance or rejection of their God.

**Key word:** "Kings" (250 in I Kings and 340 in II Kings)

**Key Verses:** 1 Kings 2:12; 11:9-13; 2 Kings 17:18-23

## Outline:

### I. The Kingdom United (1 Kings 1-11)

- A. Solomon's wealth and wisdom (1-4)
- B. Solomon's temple (5-9)
- C. Solomon's sins (10-11)

### II. The Kingdom Divided (1 Kings 12-22)

- A. Division of the kingdom, Rehoboam and Jeroboam (12-14)
- B. Kings over Judah (15:1-24)
- C. Kings over Israel (15:25-16)
- D. Elijah and Ahab (17-22)

### III. The Kingdom Taken Captive (2 Kings 1-25)

- A. Israel headed toward captivity (1-17)  
(Ministry of Elisha, 2-13)
- B. Judah headed toward captivity (18-25)

# 1 & 2 Chronicles

**Writer:** Possibly Ezra

**Time:** 1 Chron. covers about 40 years (1055 – 1015 BC, excluding genealogies), 2 Chron. about 420 years (1015 – 595 BC)

**Theme:** 1 & 2 Chronicles are one book in the Hebrew canon and concludes the OT (Luke 11:51). Chronicles opens with the first Adam and leads us to the Last Adam (Matthew follows Chronicles). It deals primarily with the kingdom of Judah because Christ was to be the seed of David. Kings was written before the captivity of Judah and from a prophet's point of view. Chronicles was written after the captivity (1 Chron. 6:15) and from a priest's point of view. Chronicles tells the history of the kings from God's perspective (example, compare 1 Sam. 31 with 1 Chron. 10:13-14).

**Key words:** 1. Chron. "David" 190, 2 Chron. "house" (referring to the temple) 203

**Key verses:** 1 Chron. 29:26-27; 2 Chron. 36:15-21

## Outline:

- I. **Genealogies from Adam to King Saul (1 Chron. 1-9)**
- II. **The Reign of King David (1 Chron. 10-29)**
  - A. Death of King Saul (10)
  - B. Reign of King David established (11-16)
  - C. God's covenant with David (17)
  - D. David expands the kingdom (18-20)
  - E. David numbers the people (21)
  - F. Preparation for building the temple (22-29)  
(Transition to Solomon and death of David)
- III. **The Reign of King Solomon (2 Chron. 1-9)**
  - A. Solomon receives God's blessing (1)
  - B. Solomon builds and dedicates the temple (2-7)
  - C. Solomon's fame and splendor (8-9)
- IV. **The Divided Kingdom, Kings of Judah (2 Chron. 10-36)**
  - A. Kingdom divided (10)
  - B. Twenty kings of Judah (11-36)
  - C. Deportation to Babylon and decree of Cyrus (36:15-23)

# Ezra & Nehemiah

**Writer:** Ezra and Nehemiah

**Time:** Both books combined cover about 50 years (453-403 BC). This chronology is based on the fact there was 483 years from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the death of Christ (Dan. 9:25-26). Christ died in AD 30 therefore the decree must have been made in BC 453.

**Theme:** These two books were considered one book in the Hebrew canon. Ezra and Nehemiah record the history of the return of a Jewish remnant to Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the wall and temple. Tradition places Ezra historically many years before Nehemiah, but there are references in the books that link them closely together (for example compare Ez. 3:4-5 with Neh. 8:16-18). Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall before the temple was rebuilt as recorded in Ezra, but the book of Ezra comes before Nehemiah because the spiritual (the temple) is more important than the physical (the wall).

**Key words:** Jerusalem (48 times in Ezra); wall (32 times in Nehemiah)

**Key verses:** Ezra 2:1, 7:9-10; Neh. 2:17-18

## Outline:

### I. Return Under Zerubbabel, Rebuilding of Temple (Ez. 1-6)

- A. Returning to the land (1-2)
  - 1. Proclamation of Cyrus (1)
  - 2. Registration of the people (2)
- B. Rebuilding the temple (3-6)
  - 1. Establishing the altar (3:1-6)
  - 2. Laying the foundation (3:7-13)
  - 3. The building ceases (4)
  - 4. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah (5)
  - 5. The building is completed (6)

### II. Return Under Ezra, Reformation (7-10)

- A. Ezra comes to Jerusalem (7-8)
- B. Ezra confesses the sins of the people (9)
- C. The cleansing of the people (10)

### III. Repairing the Wall (1-6)

- A. Preparation (1-2)
- B. Cooperation (3)
- C. Opposition (4-6)

### IV. Reviving the People (7-13)

- A. The people registered (7)

- B. The law proclaimed to the people (8)
- C. The confession (9)
- D. The covenant (10-12)
- E. The cleansing (13)

# Esther

**Writer:** Possibly Mordecai (9:20)

**Time:** Covers about 12 years (472-460 BC)

**Theme:** This book reveals the secret watch care of the Lord (God is not mentioned by name one time in this book) over the dispersed Jews. A remnant of about 50,000 Jews went back to Jerusalem (Ezra, Nehemiah), but the mass of the people preferred to stay under Persian rule of which they had grown comfortable. In spite of their condition, God protects them from an evil plot to destroy them. The book is named for a Jewish orphan who became the Persian Queen that God used to bring the Jews deliverance. Esther is 1 of 2 books of the Bible named after a woman (Ruth, was a Gentile that married a Jew and Esther was a Jew that married a Gentile).

**Key word:** Jews (45)

**Key verse:** 4:14

## Outline:

### I. The Danger to the Jews (1-4)

- A. The king removes Vashti as queen (1)
- B. The king chooses Esther as queen (2)
- C. The evil plot of Haman (3)
- D. The great mourning of Mordecai and the Jews (4)

### II. The Deliverance of the Jews (5-10)

- A. Esther before the king and her request (5:1-8)
- B. Haman's delusion (5:9-14)
- C. Mordecai is honored and Haman humiliated (6)
- D. Haman exposed and killed (7)
- E. The king's new decree (8)
- F. The Jews' victory (9)
- G. Mordecai's exaltation (10)

# Job

**Writer:** Elihu (speaks in first person in 32:16)

**Time:** We cannot be sure of the exact date of this book. It is very possible that this is the same Job mentioned in Genesis 46:13 as a son of Issachar which would put the life of Job in the time of the Patriarchs (around 1700 – 1500 BC). Job is probably the oldest book in the world. It is obvious that the events of this book took place before Israel became a nation under the Law Covenant. Like Abraham, Job acted as a priest over his own house.

**Theme:** This book tells the story of an upright man enduring affliction at the hand of Satan, under the permissive will of God, while surrounded by miserable comforters. It is written in the form of a dramatic poem. The “scholars” claim it to be an allegory with fictional characters, but according to the Holy Spirit Job was a real person (Ezk. 14:14; Jam. 5:11). This book answers the question, “Why do the godly suffer?” We learn that God allows it for His glory (1:8; 2:3) and for our own good (40:3-5; 42:1-6). The temptation of Job pictures what Israel will go through in the tribulation period. Satan will accuse Israel and God permits him to afflict them (Rev. 12:7-17). The godly remnant that endures to the end will be saved and receive double blessing (Matt. 24:13; Isa. 61). The tribulation period will humble Israel and prepare them to receive Christ (Ezek. 36:31). The Great Tribulation lasts 42 months and Job has 42 chapters. In the Great Tribulation the great dragon comes down on the earth (1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:9) and in Job he walks on the earth (1:7) and is described in chapter 41.

**Key words:** Affliction, Afflicted (10)

**Key Verses:** 23:8-10

## Outline:

### **I. Job and Satan (1-2:10)**

- A. Job’s prosperity (1:1-5)
- B. Job’s adversity (1:6-2:10)

### **II. Job and His Friends (2:11-37)**

- A. Arrival of three friends (2:11-13)
- B. Job’s speech (3)
- C. Debates (4-37)
  - 1. First round (4-14)
    - a. Eliphaz (4-5) – Job’s reply (6-7)
    - b. Bildad (8) – Job’s reply (9-10)
    - c. Zophar (11) – Job’s reply (12-14)
  - 2. Second round (15-21)
    - a. Eliphaz (15) – Job’s reply (16-17)
    - b. Bildad (18) – Job’s reply (19)
    - c. Zophar (20) – Job’s reply (21)
  - 3. Third round (22-37)
    - a. Eliphaz (22) – Job’s reply (23-24)

- b. Bildad (25) – Job’s reply (26-31)
- c. Elihu (32-37)

**III. Job and the LORD (38-42)**

- A. God humbles Job (38-42:6)
- B. God honors Job (42:7-17)
  - 1. God rebukes his critics (42:7-10)
  - 2. God restores (doubles) his wealth (42:11-17)

## Psalms

**Writer:** Of the 150 Psalms, David's name is inscribed on 73 of them. We know he wrote more than 73 because the NT ascribes Psalm 2 and 95 to him also (Acts 4:25, Heb. 4:7). Some of the Psalms are anonymous and others were written by men such as Asaph (50, 73-83), Solomon (72, 127), sons of Korah (42-49, 84-85, 87-88), Ethan (89), and Moses (90).

**Time:** Most of the Psalms were written during the reign of King David

**Theme:** Psalms is the inspired prayer and praise book of Israel. The 150 Psalms are divided into 5 books that correspond with the 5 books of Moses. The Psalms were divinely arranged in order and they are in the same order today in our Bible (Acts 13:33). The Psalms speak much of Christ (Lk. 24:44). A note in the Old Scofield Bible says, *"The truth revealed is wrought into the emotions, desires, and sufferings of the people of God by the circumstances through which they pass. But those circumstances are such as to constitute an anticipation of analogous conditions through which Christ in His incarnation, and the Jewish remnant in the tribulation (Isa. 10:21) should pass; so that many of the Psalms are prophetic of the sufferings, the faith, and the victory of both. The great themes of the Psalms are, Christ, Jehovah, the Law, Creation, the future of Israel, and the exercises of the renewed heart in suffering, in joy, in perplexity. The promises of the Psalms are primarily Jewish, and suited to a people under the law, but are spiritually true in Christian experience also, in the sense that they disclose the mind of God, and the exercises of His heart toward those who are perplexed, afflicted, or cast down."*

**Key word:** Praise (176)

### Outline:

#### I. Psalms 1-41 – Genesis, Concerning Man

- A. Man and the Son of Man (1-8)
- B. The Man of the Earth (9-15) Antichrist
- C. The Man Christ Jesus (16-41)

#### II. Psalms 42-72 – Exodus, Concerning Israel as a Nation

- A. Israel's Ruin (42-49)
- B. Israel's Redeemer (50-60)
- C. Israel's Redemption (61-72)

#### III. Psalms 73-89 – Leviticus, Concerning the Sanctuary

- A. The Sanctuary in Relation to Man (73-83)
- B. The Sanctuary in Relation to God (84-89)

#### IV. Psalms 90-106 – Numbers, Concerning Earth and the Nations

- A. Rest for the Earth Desired (91-94)
- B. Rest for the Earth Anticipated (95-100)

- C. Rest for the Earth Valued (101-106)
  
- V. Psalms 107-150 – Deuteronomy, Concerning God and His Word**
  - A. Deliverance by the Healing Word (107-118)
  - B. Quickening and Sustaining by the Revealing Word (119-150)

# Proverbs

**Writer:** Solomon (1:1, 10:1, 25:1). According to 1 Kings 4:32, King Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs. Here are the ones inspired of God. Though Solomon may not have spoken every proverb in the book (30:1), he compiled and put the book together.

**Time:** around 1000 BC

**Theme:** Proverbs is a book of divine wisdom. Wisdom is more than the right use of knowledge it is a spiritual matter of the heart. There is “wisdom” that is not of God (1 Cor. 3:19, Jam. 3:15). Our English word “proverb” is made up of two Latin words: pro (instead of) and verba (words). So, a proverb is a sentence that is given instead of many words. Proverbs is basically a collection of wise sayings that are inspired of God. Proverbs 1:1-7 is the introduction and states the purpose of the book. Proverbs has a prophetic application for the godly remnant of Israel in the Great Tribulation. The “strange woman” (8 times) represents the great whore of Babylon. Israel must have wisdom to resist the Beast and endure to the end.

**Key words:** Wise (66 times), Wisdom (54 times)

**Key verse:** 9:10 (the fear of the LORD mentioned 14 times)

## Outline:

### I. My Son (1-7)

“My son” is found 15 times in the first seven chapters. Subjects include: obedience to parents (1:8-9), companions (1:10-19), seeking wisdom (1:20-2:22), blessings of wisdom (3:1-26), kindness (3:27-35), wisdom (4:1-13), depart from the way of the wicked (4:14-22), heart (4:23-27), adultery (5, 6:20-7:27), surety (6:1-5), and laziness (6:6-19).

### II. Praise of Wisdom (8-9)

Wisdom is pictured as a righteous woman (8:1-11, 9:1-12) and in contrast folly is pictured as an evil woman (9:13-18). Christ is wisdom personified (8:12-36).

### III. Contrasts (10-15)

A series of proverbs contrasting wisdom and folly

### IV. Counsels (16-31)

A series of proverbs giving warnings and instructions on practical matters

Proverbs mentions 3 classes of men who are in need of wisdom; the fool, the simple, and the scorner.

1. The Fool (61 times) – hates instruction (1:7, 22), is self-confident (12:15), talks without thinking (29:11), and makes a mock at sin (14:9)
2. The Simple (14 times) – believes everything and everyone (14:15), easily led astray (7:7), and cannot see ahead (22:3)

3. The Scorned (13 times) – seeks wisdom but can't find it (14:6), is proud and haughty (21:24), never profits from rebuke (9:7-8, 13:1), causes contention and strife (22:10).

In contrast we read about the wise man who listens to instruction (1:5), obeys what he hears (10:8), stores what he learns (10:14), is diligent in daily work (10:5), flees from sin (14:16), and watches his tongue (16:23). There are 34 statements made about the wise in proverbs.

# Ecclesiastes

**Writer:** Solomon (1:1)

**Time:** latter part of Solomon's reign (about 980 BC)

**Theme:** The word "Ecclesiastes" means preacher or teacher. This book is written in the form of a sermon. There is an introduction and announcement of a theme, a development of the theme, and a practical application in conclusion. The theme is: What is the chief good? The standpoint is that of natural reason. We are meant to see where the quest for the chief good leads us when conducted simply on the ground of natural experience, observation, and induction. The preacher, Solomon, preaches from a carnal perspective of life under the sun.

**Key word:** Vanity (37)

**Key verses:** 1:2-3

## Outline:

### I. Solomon's Initial Reasoning (1-2)

- A. Introduction (1:1-3)
- B. Cycle of life (1:4-11)
- C. The grief of wisdom and knowledge (1:12-18)
- D. Earthly pleasures do not satisfy (2:1-11)
- E. Both the wise and fool are forgotten (2:12-23)
- F. Conclusion: enjoy the good things (2:24-26)

### II. Solomon's Deeper Observations (3-8)

- A. General observations (3-5)
- B. Practical morality (6-8)

### III. Solomon's Review and Final Conclusions (9-12)

- A. Review (9-10)
- B. Live by faith (11:1-6)
- C. Remember life will soon end (11:7-12:7)
- D. Fear and obey God (12:8-14)

## Revelation and Inspiration

When studying this book, we must keep in mind the difference between revelation and inspiration. What Solomon wrote was given by inspiration of God, but what he wrote about was not revelation from God as in the sense of Ephesians for example. False teachers love certain verses in Ecclesiastes which SEEM to support their false doctrine (such as soul sleep for example, 9:10).

# Song of Solomon

**Writer:** Solomon (1:1)

**Time:** about 1015 BC

**Theme:** Solomon wrote 1,005 songs (1 Kings 4:32), but among them this is the “song of songs”. This song was sung annually on the eighth day of the Passover feast. The song has both a literal and historical interpretation as well as a spiritual and prophetic application. It presents true love between a husband and his wife and is very descriptive of the marriage relationship (Heb. 13:4). The song also has a deeper spiritual significance. Most think that the Shulamite woman pictures the church which is the Body of Christ, but she does not. The church which is the Body of Christ is not the subject of OT prophecy. The Shulamite woman pictures the bride of the Lamb; the godly remnant of Israel. Solomon pictures the Antichrist who tries to win the heart of a woman (godly remnant of Israel), but she stays faithful to her beloved Shepherd (Christ).

**Key word:** Beloved (33)

**Key verse:** My beloved is mine, and I am his (2:16, 6:3, 7:10)

## Outline:

### I. Introduction. The Shulamite Separated (1:1-11)

Taken by Solomon from her home and her beloved shepherd

### II. The Shulamite and Her Beloved Together (1:12-2:7)

### III. The Shulamite and Her Beloved Apart (2:8-3:5)

### IV. The Shulamite and Her Beloved Together (3:6-5:1)

### V. The Shulamite and Her Beloved Apart (5:2-8:4)

### VI. Conclusion. The Shulamite Restored (8:5-14)

Return from Solomon's to her home with her beloved shepherd

# Isaiah

**Writer:** Isaiah (1:1)

The critics claim that this book was written by two or even three different Isaiah's. One of the reasons they claim this is the change in style between chapters 1-39 and 40-66. There is a change in style because there is a change in theme. Christ quoted from both sections and attributed the quotes to ONE Isaiah (Jn. 12:37-41). In the NT there are 21 quotes from this book (10 from 1-39 and 11 from 40-66) and they all attributed to ONE Isaiah.

**Time:** Isaiah was commissioned in the year King Uzziah died (6) which was in 758 BC. He continued his ministry for about 60 years until according to Jewish tradition King Manasseh had him "sawn asunder" (Heb. 11:37).

**Theme:** The book divides itself into two main sections. The main theme of the first section (1-39) is God's chastening of Judah for their sins and looks toward the coming captivity. The main theme of the second section (40-66) is God's consolation of the captives after their suffering and looks beyond the captivity. No OT book gives such a full picture of Jesus Christ as does Isaiah. Isaiah gives much prophecy about "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (1 Pet. 1:10-11). For example, compare 52:13-53:12 with 63:1-6. Both advents of Christ are presented without any mention of a Grace Age in between (61:1-3; Eph. 3:5). The Lord's disciples didn't understand that there would be two advents, therefore Christ had to instruct them on the matter after His resurrection (Lk. 24:25-27, 44-47). There are 17 references in Isaiah to the suffering servant, 13 have the nation of Israel in view and the Lord in type (41:8-9; 43:10; 44:1-2, 21, 26; 45:4; 48:20; 49:3-7) and 4 refer only to Christ (42:1, 19; 52:13; 53:11). Israel was the servant of God that was disobedient and had to be chastened. Christ is the true and perfect servant who was wounded for the transgressions of others.

**Key Verses:** 1:1-2 and 40:1-2

**Key Word:** Hear (44)

## Outline:

### I. Condemnation (1-39)

- A. Preaching against Judah and Israel (1-12)
- B. Judgment of the nations and the day of the LORD (13-23)
- C. Songs of future glory for the nation (24-27)
- D. Woes against the sins of the people (28-35)
- E. Historical parenthesis concerning King Hezekiah (36-39)

### II. Consolation (40-66)

- A. Deliverance promised (40-48)
- B. Suffering and glory of the Servant (49-57)
- C. Coming Age of Glory (58-66)

## Jeremiah & Lamentations

**Writer:** Jeremiah (1:1)

**Time:** Jeremiah prophesied for 40 years leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem (2 Chron. 36:1-21), from the 13<sup>th</sup> year of King Josiah (627 BC) to the 11<sup>th</sup> year of King Zedekiah (587 BC). He remained in the land ministering to the poor remnant until they went into Egypt and he also went to Egypt and died there early on in the 70-year captivity.

**Theme:** Jeremiah preached against the sins of his nation and called on them to repent. The people rejected the message (25:1-12) and persecuted the prophet that delivered it (38:1-6). The vision of Jeremiah includes the impending Babylonian captivity and the return after 70 years (29:10), the world-wide dispersion, the final re-gathering of Israel (23:3-8), the judgment on Gentile nations, and the Kingdom Age (31:31-40).

**Key Word:** Backsliding (13), Babylon (169)

**Key Verses:** 21:7, 14

### Outline:

- I. **Jeremiah's commission (1)**
- II. **Prophecies to the Jews (2-20)**
- III. **History regarding Jehoiakim (not chronological) (21-35)**
- IV. **Baruch and his mission to Jehoiakim (36)**
- V. **History regarding Zedekiah (not chronological) (37-45)**
- VI. **Prophecies against Gentiles (46-51)**
- VII. **Historical appendix (52)**

### Lamentations

The Lamentations of Jeremiah is the heart cry of a man that loved his nation, his holy city, and his brethren as he watches the ruin resulting from their sin. The occasion was the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple by Nebuchadnezzar in 587 BC. The five chapters are basically five poems that express lamentation over that destruction. A note in the Old Scofield Bible says, *"The touching significance of this book lies in the fact that it is the disclosure of the love and sorrow of Jehovah for the very people whom He is chastening."*

The book is written in acrostic form. In the Hebrew text, each of the 22 verses in chapters 1, 2, and 4 begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in order. The third chapter has 66 verses (3x22) and in every 3 verses each verse begins with a different Hebrew letter in order. Order gives way to emotions in prayer and the acrostic is not found in the last chapter. This book looks ahead to the sorrow of Christ (1:12, 3:30) and the Jews in the Great Tribulation.

# Ezekiel

**Writer:** Ezekiel (1:1-3). A contemporary of Jeremiah and Daniel, he was carried away in the second deportation of the Babylonian captivity. He went to Babylon about 8 years after Daniel and 12 years before Jerusalem was destroyed (33:21). His wife died the year that the siege of Jerusalem began and her death was used as a sign to Israel (24:15-18). He was a priest that God called to be a prophet to “house of Israel” and he began his prophetic ministry in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of his arrival in the land of exile.

**Time:** About 595 BC to 575 BC

**Theme:** For 6 years of his ministry, Ezekiel preached to the exiled while Jerusalem was still standing and prophesied of the coming destruction and why it was deserved. In addition to this he prophesied concerning the inevitable judgment on the surrounding Gentile nations. After Jerusalem fell his ministry took a drastic turn and he was given the duty of revealing the future restoration of Israel and their coming glory, keeping the covenant promises before the generation born in captivity and teaching them about the national sins that led to the exile. Ezekiel had 13 visions that are given exact dates and he was told to illustrate his message by doing symbolic acts (chapter 4 for example).

**Key Phrase:** “shall know that I am the LORD” (51 times)

**Key Verses:** 36:16-28

## Outline:

### I. The Preparation and Commission of Ezekiel (1-3)

### II. The Condemnation of Judah (4-24)

A. A disobedient nation (4-7)

B. A departed glory (8-11)

*Ezekiel sees the glory of the LORD departing from and then returning to the Temple at Jerusalem. It leaves slowly (10:3, 4, 18-19; 11:22-23), and returns suddenly (43:1-5). Such is the way of love: it lingers when leaving and hastens when returning. Jesus Christ is the “glory of the LORD” (Matt. 23:37-24:3).*

C. A disciplined nation (12-24)

### III. The Condemnation of Gentile Nations (25-32)

### IV. The Restoration of Israel (33-48)

A. They return to their land (33-36)

B. They obtain new life and unity (37)

C. They are protected from their enemies (38-39)

D. They worship the Lord acceptably (40-48)

# Daniel

**Writer:** Jesus Christ said it was Daniel (Matt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14). Daniel (name means “my judge is God”) was very young when Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem and began his conquest of Judah. There were several deportations of Jews to Babylon and Daniel was in the first group because he was of the princely line (1:1-6). He was made a eunuch in the palace of the king of Babylon; thus fulfilling about 100 years later the prediction of Isaiah 39:7. Daniel died in his eighties in about 534 BC. He lived through the reign of four rulers (Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus). He stayed pure throughout his life and was mightily used by God. Daniel the prophet was a contemporary of the prophets Ezekiel and Jeremiah (Ezk. 14:14, 28:3).

**Time:** 607 – 534 BC

**Theme:** This book is both practical and prophetic. Daniel deals with the “times of the Gentiles” (Lk. 21:24), which is the period of time that began in 606 BC with the captivity of Jerusalem and will end when Christ returns to earth to judge the Gentile nations and establish His kingdom. In the various visions and dreams in Daniel, we see the program of Gentile history from the rise of Babylon through the conquests of the Medes, Persians, Greeks, Romans, and to the rule of the Antichrist in the tribulation period. One of the great lessons of the book is that “the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (4:25).

**Key Word:** King and Kings (188), Kingdom (56)

**Key Verses:** 1:8 and 2:44-45

## Outline:

### I. Personal History of Daniel (1)

### II. The Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s Dreams (2-4)

- A. The dream of the image (2)
- B. The golden image and fiery furnace (3)
- C. The dream of the tree (4)

### III. Personal History of Daniel (5-6)

*Under the reigns of Belshazzar and Darius*

- A. Handwriting on the wall (5)
- B. The lion’s den (6)

### IV. The Visions of Daniel (7-12)

- A. Vision of four beasts (7)
- B. Vision of the ram and he goat (8)
- C. Prayer and the revelation of 70 weeks determined upon Israel (9)
- D. His final vision of the future (10-12)

# Hosea

**Writer:** Hosea (1:1). Hosea (name means “salvation”) was the last writing prophet to minister to the northern kingdom of Israel before they fell to the Assyrians.

**Time:** 785 – 725 BC. Hosea began to prophesy during the reign of Jeroboam II and continued to preach through the reign of 7 kings (4 of which were assassinated).

**Theme:** Hosea’s message is to the nation of Israel (also called “Ephraim”), exposing their sins and warning them of God’s judgment. There is also a message of hope for the future. But the unique thing about his message is that he had to live it out in his personal life as a striking object lesson for the people. God told Hosea to marry a woman that would become a whore, have children with her, and take her back after she left him and became an adulteress.

**Key Verses:** 1:8-11

**Key Words:** Whoredom, Whoring, Harlot (13 times) Return (15 times)

## Outline:

### I. Israel’s Unfaithfulness Pictured (1-3)

- A. Judgment pictured in the children (1)
- B. Sins of the nation pictured in the wife (2)
- C. Restoration of the people pictured in the husband (3)

### II. Israel’s Sins Proclaimed (4-7)

In this section Hosea uses several illustrations to show the condition of the people. For example: morning cloud (6:4), half-baked cake (7:8), gray hairs (7:9), silly dove (7:11), deceitful bow (7:16)

### III. Israel’s Judgment Pronounced (8-10)

In this section Hosea uses several pictures to illustrate the coming judgment. For example: swift eagle (8:1), whirlwind (8:7), burning fire (8:14), sowing and reaping (10:10-15)

### IV. Israel’s Restoration Promised (11-14)

In this section the prophet speaks of the future glory of Israel. Just as his own wife was brought back and restored, so the nation would one day be brought back and restored to her land and to her Lord. These chapters magnify the faithful love of God in contrast to the unfaithfulness of His people.

# Joel

**Writer:** Joel (1:1; Acts 2:16) “Jehovah is my God”

**Time:** about 835 BC, (considered the oldest of the “minor prophets”) probably during the reign of Joash (2 Chron. 22-24).

**Theme:** Joel prophesied to the southern kingdom of Judah. There are historical references (chastening with a plague of locusts), but the majority of the book looks ahead to the “day of the LORD.” Even the historical event of the locusts is used to illustrate the army of locusts in the tribulation period (1:4-6; Rev. 9:1-11). The day of the LORD is not a 24-hour period, but a prophetic day which includes the tribulation period, the battle of Armageddon, the Second Advent of Christ, the millennial kingdom, the final battle with Satan, the renovation of the heavens and earth with fire, and the great white throne judgment. The Second Advent of Christ is the day of the LORD in particular, but the events that prepare for it and that are the result of it are also included in that expression.

**Key Verse:** 1:15

**Key Phrase:** “the day of the LORD” (5)

## Outline:

### I. Desolation (1:1-2:17)

- A. Proclamation (1)
- B. Tribulation (2:1-11)
- C. Humiliation (2:12-17)

### II. Deliverance (2:28-3:21)

- A. The promise of restoration (2:18-27)
- B. The promise to pour out the Spirit (2:28-32)
- C. The promise of judgment on their enemies (3:1-17)
- D. The promise of blessings (3:18-21)

# Amos

**Writer:** Amos (1:1; 7:14-15) “to burden”

**Time:** about 785 BC

**Theme:** Amos was from the little town of Tekoa, six miles south of Bethlehem in the kingdom of Judah. The LORD took him while he worked as a shepherd, and sent him north to Bethel, the center of idol worship and the residence of King Jeroboam II, who reigned over the kingdom of Israel. At the time of this prophecy, Israel was at the height of its power and prosperity but it had also become full of idolatry and sin. Amos exposes the sins of the people and warns that God will punish them (3:1-2). Nothing could seem more improbable that the fulfillment of Amos’ warnings; yet within 50 years the kingdom was utterly destroyed.

**Key Verses:** 4:11-12

**Key Word:** “Transgressions” (11 times)

## Outline:

### I. Declaration of Sin and Judgment (1-2)

Beginning with the nations surrounding Israel, Amos swings in a kind of counterclockwise circle proclaiming God’s judgment. Eight times we read “For three transgressions ... and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof”.

### II. Exhortations about Sin and Judgment (3-6)

In this section there are 3 sermons that begin with “Hear this word”.

- A. The reason for God’s judgment (3)
- B. The result of God’s judgment (4)
- C. The repentance needed in view of God’s judgment (5-6)

### III. Visions of Judgment and Restoration (7-9)

In this section there are 6 visions (5 negative and 1 positive) and each begins with “the Lord GOD shewed unto me” or “I saw”.

- A. Grasshoppers (7:1-3)
- B. Fire (7:4-6)
- C. Plumbline (7:7-9)
- D. Historical interlude: opposition from the priest of Bethel (7:10-17)
- E. Basket of summer fruit (8)
- F. Smiting of the temple (9:1-10)
- G. Restoration (9:11-15)

## Obadiah

**Writer:** Obadiah (1:1) “servant of the LORD”

**Time:** about 585 BC (many say earlier, 885, because of a few similarities with Jeremiah but it is clear he wrote AFTER the captivity, v.11 and 20)

**Theme:** This is the shortest book in the OT (21 verses, 669 words). Edom (descendants of Esau) is to be judged because of their constant conflict with Israel, their prideful rejoicing over the fall of Jerusalem, and their opposition to the fleeing remnant of Judah during the Babylonian conquest. This book looks ahead to the future deliverance and blessing of Israel in the kingdom age.

**Key Verse:** v.15

**Key Word:** Esau, Edom (9)

### Outline:

#### I. Esau Have I Hated (1-16)

- A. The certainty of their overthrow (1-9)
- B. The cause of their overthrow (10-14)
- C. The character of their overthrow (15-16)

#### II. Jacob Have I Loved (17-21)

# Jonah

**Writer:** Jonah (1:1) means “dove”. The Lord Jesus Christ told us that Jonah was a literal person and that he was literally swallowed by a whale (Matt. 12:39-40; Lk. 11:32).

**Time:** About 860 BC. Jonah lived in the northern kingdom of Israel and prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:23-27).

**Theme:** God sent Jonah to preach to the great city of Nineveh which was the capital of the Assyrian empire. Assyria had oppressed many people, including the Jews, so nothing would have pleased Jonah the patriot more than the fall of Nineveh. The fall of Nineveh would mean prosperity for Israel but the prosperity of Nineveh would mean the fall of Israel. The prophet rebelled against his commission because he knew that if Nineveh repented, God would spare them (3:10-4:2). This book is unique in that the Hebrew prophet is sent to Gentiles and the fact that it deals with the prophet more than his message. Jonah pictures the nation of Israel in many ways.

**Key Verse:** 3:2

**Key Word:** Prepared (4). God prepared a wind (1:4), a tempest (1:4), a great fish (1:17), a gourd (4:6), a worm (4:7), and a wind (4:8) in order to work in Jonah’s life.

**Outline:**

**I. Jonah Rebelling (1)**

**II. Jonah Repenting (2)**

**III. Jonah Resent (3)**

**IV. Jonah Rebuked (4)**

## Micah

**Writer:** Micah (1:1) means “who is like Jehovah?” He was a prophet in Judah (Jer. 26:18).

**Time:** About 720 - 680 BC. Micah prophesies during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, which makes him a contemporary of Isaiah (Isa. 1:1). Micah and Isaiah correspond in 16 passages because they preached a similar theme to the same people.

**Theme:** The purpose of this book is to show the sins of Israel, the inevitable judgment because of these sins and the eventual restoration. The message is for both the northern (Israel, Samaria) and southern (Judah, Jerusalem) kingdoms. Both advents of Christ are clearly seen in this book (5:2; 4:1-3).

**Key Verses:** 1:5, 4:1-4

**Key Word:** Hear (9)

### Outline:

I. Judgment (1-3)

II. Restoration (4-5)

III. Call for Repentance (6-7)

## Nahum

**Writer:** Nahum (1:1) means “comforter” (destruction of Nineveh comforted Israel)

**Time:** About 740-700 BC, during the time of Hezekiah and Isaiah.

**Theme:** Nahum was written about 150 years after Jonah and deals with the destruction of Nineveh. Though Nineveh repented under the preaching of Jonah, the city went back to its wickedness.

**Key Verse:** 1:2

**Key Word:** Vengeance, Revengeth (3)

### Outline:

I. Destruction of Nineveh Declared (1)

II. Destruction of Nineveh Described (2)

III. Destruction of Nineveh Defended (3)

## Habakkuk

**Writer:** Habakkuk (1:1, 3:1) name means “wrestler”

**Time:** about 625 BC (during reign of Josiah), he was contemporary with Jeremiah

**Theme:** This book is unique in that two-thirds of it is a conversation between the prophet and the Lord. Habakkuk couldn’t reconcile his belief in a good and righteous God with the conditions he observed (wickedness in Judah, and God going to use the wicked Babylonians against His people). He was perplexed and poured out his soul to God. God answers him with a vision which causes the prophet to rejoice.

**Key Verse:** 2:4 (quoted 3 times in NT – Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38)

**Key Word:** Faith (2:4 is the ONLY positive reference to faith in the OT)

**Outline:**

**I. Burden (1)**

**II. Answer (2)**

**III. Prayer (3)**

## Zephaniah

**Writer:** Zephaniah (1:1) name means “the LORD hides” (encouragement to remnant, 2:3)

**Time:** about 630 BC (during reign of Josiah), he was contemporary with Jeremiah

**Theme:** The purpose of this book was to warn Judah of the coming judgment and to comfort the faithful remnant. There had been an enforced reformation under Josiah (II Kings 22) but it was superficial and would not last. The theme is the “day of the LORD” (mentioned 20 times in 3 chapters) as prefigured by the Babylonian invasion.

**Key Verse:** 3:8 (contains all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet)

**Key Word:** Desolation (7)

**Outline:**

**I. The Day of LORD (1-3:8)**

A. Earth (1:2-3)

B. Judah (1:4-2:3)

C. Nations (2:4-15)

D. Jerusalem (3:1-7)

E. Earth (3:8)

**II. Deliverance of the LORD (3:9-20)**

A. Regathering (3:9-10)

B. Repentance (3:11-13)

C. Rejoicing (3:14-15)

D. Redeemer (3:16-20)

## Haggai

**Writer:** Haggai (1:1), “Festive”

**Time:** 520 BC. He is the first prophet by whom God spoke after the 70-year Babylonian captivity. Zechariah prophesied with him (Ezra 5:1, 6:14).

**Theme:** The rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem is the theme of this book. Sixteen years had passed since the remnant had returned and the temple was unfinished while the people were busy finishing their own houses. Haggai preached in order to stir up the leaders and the people to fulfill their duty in finishing the Lord’s house.

**Key Verse:** 1:14, 2:9

**Key Word:** House (9)

**Outline:**

Each division is marked by the words, “came the word of the LORD by Haggai”

**I. Consider Your Ways (1)**

**II. The Temples (2:1-9)**

**III. Renewal of Consecration for the Priests (2:10-19)**

**IV. Judgment on the Kingdoms (2:20-23)**

## Zechariah

**Writer:** Zechariah (1:1), “Remembered by Jehovah”

**Time:** 520 BC (the first prophecy of Zechariah was given between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prophecies of Haggai).

**Theme:** The subject of this book is the city (Jerusalem, mentioned over 40 times), as the prior book was the temple. The book not only deals with the judgment of the nations which oppressed Israel, and with the establishment of Jerusalem, but it predicts the final and glorious restoration of Zion, and the punishment of the nations which will then oppress her. The advent and presence of the Messiah and the manifestation of his power from Jerusalem is prominent in this prophecy.

**Key Verses:** 1:14-17

**Key Words:** LORD of hosts (53)

**Outline:**

**I. Eight Visions (1-6)**

**II. Four Messages (7-8)**

**IV. Two Burdens (9-14)**

## Malachi

**Writer:** Malachi (1:1), "My Messenger"

**Time:** about 400 BC (the last of the prophets to the restored remnant, 400 silent years between Malachi and John the Baptist)

**Theme:** Malachi served to strengthen Nehemiah in the way that Haggai and Zechariah encouraged Zerubbabel. Following a period of revival (Neh. 10:28-39) the people became spiritually indifferent and morally lax. Malachi rebukes the people during the time recorded in Neh. 13:4-31. The temple worship had been restored, but ceremonial formalism and hypocrisy were rampant. Sadly, the attitude of the people was one of sneering self-defense.

**Key Verse:** 3:6

**Key Words:** Ye say (11)

### Outline:

- I. They Doubted His Love (1:1-5)
- II. They Despised His Name (1:6-14)
- III. They Defiled His Covenant (2:1-17)
- IV. They Disobeyed His Word (3:1-15)
- V. The Day of the LORD (3:16-4:6)