

Virtual

Survey

of the

Old Testament

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Leader: Stephen Clyborne
Senior Pastor
Earle Street Baptist Church
Greenville, South Carolina

Survey of the Old Testament

<u>Session</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
Session 1	An Introduction to the Old Testament	
Session 2	The Prehistorical Period	Genesis 1-11
Session 3	The Patriarchal Period c. 1800 - 1700 B.C.	Genesis 12-50
Session 4	From Egypt to the Promised Land c. 1700 - 1240 B.C.	Exodus - Deuteronomy
Session 5	Fall Break - No class	
Session 6	Conquest of Canaan and the Tribal Confederation 1240 - 1020 B.C.	Joshua - 1 Samuel 10
Session 7	The United Monarchy 1020 - 922 B.C.	1 Samuel 11 - 1 Kings 11 1 Chronicles 1 - 2 Chronicles 9
Session 8	The Divided Monarchy: The Northern Kingdom 922 - 722 B.C.	1 Kings 12 - 2 Kings 25 Amos, Hosea
Session 9	The Divided Monarchy: The Southern Kingdom 922 - 587 B.C.	2 Chronicles 10 - 36 Isaiah 1-39, Micah, Nahum Habakkuk, Jeremiah, Zephaniah
Session 10	Exile, Restoration, and Reconstruction 597 - 440 B.C.	Lamentations, Ezekiel Isaiah 40-66, Haggai, Zechariah 1-8, Ezra, Nehemiah
Session 11	Worship and Wisdom Literature	Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon, Job
Session 12	Post-Exilic Literature 539 - 63 B.C.	Obadiah, Malachi, Joel Zechariah 9-14, Daniel Esther, Ruth, Jonah
Session 13	Between the Testaments 440 - 63 B.C.	Apocrypha

SESSION 1 - *An Introduction to the Old Testament*

I. The Nature of Scripture

- A. Scripture is primarily about God and only secondarily about us.
- B. Scripture is not "user-friendly" or inclusive; it is evangelistic.
- C. Scripture was given not so much to speak to the world, but to re-create it.
- D. Scripture has a high tolerance for ambiguity.
- E. Scripture produces conflicts and collisions.

II. Revelation

- A. The identity of the Revealer
- B. What is revealed
- C. The means of revelation
- D. The receipt of revelation
- E. The recipient of revelation

III. Inspiration of Scripture - Literally, "breathed into" or "in-spirited." Whereas revelation is God's self-disclosing activity, inspiration is the impulse to preserve it and hand it on.

- A. Mechanical (or plenary verbal, or dictation) theory
- B. Dynamical theory
- C. Naturalistic theory

IV. How the Old Testament Came to Be

- A. Oral transmission to literary form

B. The Documentary Hypothesis

1. J = Yahwistic tradition
2. E = Elohist tradition
3. D = Deuteronomistic tradition
4. P = Priestly tradition

C. The Old Testament Text

1. Language
2. Material
3. Reproduction
4. Translation

V. The Geography of the Old Testament

A. Mesopotamia

B. Asia Minor (Armenia)

C. Egypt

D. Syro-Phoenicia

E. Palestine (Canaan/Israel)

1. Coastal Plain
 - a. Plain of Philistia
 - b. Plain of Sharon
 - c. Plain of Acre
2. Central Hill Country
3. Jordan Rift
4. Transjordan Plateau

F. Major Roads

1. The Way of the Philistines (The Way of the Sea)
2. The King's Highway

SESSION 2 - *The Prehistorical Period*

Genesis 1-11

I. Characteristics of Genesis 1-11

- A. Primarily theological (history or parable?)
- B. Retrospectives by the covenant community
- C. Universal overtones
- D. Prehistorical

II. A Picture of God - Four Cycles of Judgment and Grace

- A. The woman, the man, and the serpent (Genesis 1-3)

TWO CREATION STORIES:

*** Priestly Account of Creation (1:1 - 2:4a)**

- Probably put together in its final form by priests in the sixth century B.C.
 - Orderly, systematic
 - Refers to God as “Elohim” (God)
- The crown of God’s creation is “adam” (humankind), not named as individuals.
 - Human beings are created last out of nothing (i.e., by God’s word).
 - Human beings are made in the image of God, male and female.
 - The precedent for the Sabbath is established in creation.
 - God is transcendent, above the creative process.

*** Yahwistic Account of Creation (2:4b - 25)**

- Older than the priestly account.
- Not as orderly, more of a narrative
- Refers to God as “Yahweh Elohim” (the LORD God)
 - The creation of the world is already assumed.
- Human beings are created out of dust and the “breath” of the LORD God.
- Animals are created after human beings, also out of dust; then woman out of man.
- The LORD God is immanent, personal, approachable; spoken of in anthropomorphic language.

GOD’S FIRST QUESTION: “Where are you?” (Genesis 3:9)

1. Judgment against the serpent, the woman, and the man; the significance of the fall
2. Grace - garments of skins to clothe the man and the woman

- B. Cain and Abel (Genesis 4)

GOD'S SECOND QUESTION: "Where is your brother?" (Genesis 4:9)

1. Judgment - Cain condemned to a life of wandering
2. Grace - a protective mark

C. Noah (Genesis 5-10)

INTERLUDE

***The Birth of the Nephilim (6:1-4)**

- This story indicates the depths of human sinfulness which resulted from the fall.
- Even members of the heavenly court were corrupted.

1. Judgment - the flood
2. Grace - the covenant with Noah (the rainbow)

INTERLUDE

***The Table of Nations (10:1-32)**

- This section demonstrates that the human family was a unity growing out of its descent from Noah.
- This section suggests the existence of several different languages.

D. Tower of Babel (Genesis 11)

1. Judgment - confusion, scattering of peoples
2. Grace - the covenant in two parts (the rest of the Bible):
 - a. the covenant with Israel (Abraham and his descendants), by whom all the nations might be blessed. This covenant begins with the call/election of Abraham in Genesis 12 and is renewed with each successive generation. The rest of the Old Testament is the working out of that covenant.
 - b. the new covenant with the church (the new Israel) established by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, by whom the image of God is restored in sinful humankind.

III. A Theological Introduction to the Bible - The first eleven chapters of Genesis sets the theological stage for everything that follows in the Old and New Testaments. They tell us everything we need to know about God and ourselves. They show us a picture of God, who is both judgmental and gracious; and they show us who we are as sinners subject to God's judgment and in need of God's grace.

SESSION 3 - *The Patriarchal Period*

Genesis 12-50

c. 1800-1700 B.C.

I. Introduction to the Patriarchal Period

A. "Patriarch" (male head of a long family line) - the patriarchs of Israel were Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. They were semi-nomadic people, and were first called "Hebrews" in Genesis 14:13. At that time, the term referred to a class of people (i.e., second-class citizens who owned no land). Eventually, however, the term came to refer to a race of people (i.e., the Israelites).

B. Dating the Patriarchs

1. Excavations at Nuzi reflect similar laws/customs (16th/15th centuries, B.C.).
2. The Pharaoh under whom Joseph rose to power was a Hyksos king (1700-1570 B.C.).
3. The movement of the Amorites from Mesopotamia to Palestine (19th/18th centuries B.C.)

II. God's Covenant with Abram (Genesis 12-25)

A. God's Sovereign Election and Abram's "Free" Will

B. God's Initiative and Promise

1. A Land to Call Home
2. Descendants

C. Faith is more than intellectual assent ("Abram went . . ." - 12:4).

D. The call of God is not just TO Abram, but also THROUGH Abram to the world.

E. Conflict and Covenant (13-16)

F. Covenant and Circumcision (17)

G. The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (18-19)

H. The Birth of Isaac and the Promise to Isaac and Ishmael (21)

I. The Testing of Abraham's Faith (22)

III. God's Covenant with Isaac (25-28) - "the hyphen between Abraham and Jacob"

IV. God's Covenant with Jacob (25-49)

A. The rivalry between Jacob and Esau

B. The twelve sons of Jacob (in order)

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Reuben (by Leah) | 7. Gad ((by Zilpah, Leah's handmaid) |
| 2. Simeon (by Leah) | 8. Asher (by Zilpah, Leah's handmaid) |
| 3. Levi (by Leah) | 9. Issachar (by Leah) |
| 4. Judah (by Leah) | 10. Zebulun (by Leah) |
| 5. Dan (by Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid) | 11. Joseph (by Rachel) |
| 6. Naphtali (by Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid) | 12. Benjamin (by Rachel) |

The twelve tribes of Israel that later participated in the conquest of Canaan traced their ancestry back to the twelve sons of Jacob. The tribe of Simeon seems to have dropped out of this number at an early date (Deuteronomy 33:6-25). Its place was filled, however, by the creation of two Joseph tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim (Genesis 46:20).

C. Pivotal Experiences in Jacob's Life

1. The dream at Bethel (28:10-22)
2. The wrestling match at Peniel that left Jacob with a blessing and a limp (32:22-32)
3. The reunion with Esau (33:1-11)

V. God's Covenant with Joseph (30-50)

A. The sibling rivalry between Joseph and his brothers

B. Joseph in Egypt

C. The reunion between Joseph, his brothers and father

D. The providence of God (50:20)

SESSION 4 - *From Egypt to the Promised Land*
c. 1700 - 1240 B.C.

Exodus - Deuteronomy

I. The Historical Setting

- A. The death of Joseph (c. 1700 - 1550 B.C.)
- B. The privileged status of Joseph's descendants under the rule of the Hyksos
- C. The book of Exodus picks up hundreds of years later (c. 1300 B.C.) - See Exodus 1:8.
- D. The new king (Seti I ? - 1308 - 1290 B.C.) enslaved the people of Israel for building projects at the cities of Pithom and Raamses.
- E. The stage is set for the most crucial and formative event in the history of Israel: the exodus.

II. Moses

- A. Early Life (Exodus 1:15 - 2:10)
- B. A murderer and a fugitive (Exodus 2:11-25)
- C. The commissioning of Moses
 - 1. The call of God at the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-10)
 - 2. Moses' objections and God's replies (Exodus 3:11 - 4:17)

THE NAME OF GOD REVEALED: "I AM WHO I AM" (EXODUS 3:14)

III. The Exodus from Egypt (1280 B.C.)

A. The ten plagues

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Pollution of the Nile | 6. Painful boils on people and animals |
| 2. Frogs | 7. Hail and thunderstorm |
| 3. Gnats, mosquitos | 8. Locusts (grasshoppers) |
| 4. Flies | 9. Thick darkness |
| 5. Cattle disease | 10. Killing of first-born Egyptian children and cattle |

- B. The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh (Exodus 4:21; 7:3; 7:19; 10:1; 11:10)

- C. The establishment of the Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread (Exodus 12:1-28)
- D. The carrying out of the final plague (Exodus 12:29-32) - “the LORD smote all the first-born . . .”
- E. The Crucial Event: The Exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12:33-50) - 1280 B.C.
 - 1. During the reign of Rameses (1290 - 1224 B.C.)
 - 2. The departure (Exodus 12:33-51)
 - 3. The consecration of the first-born (Exodus 13:1-16)
 - 4. The parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:1-31)
 - 5. Two ancient songs of praise
 - a. The song of Moses (Exodus 15:1-18)
 - b. The song of Miriam (Exodus 15:21)

IV. Experiences in the Wilderness (1280 - 1240 B.C.)

- A. Obstacles and Provisions from the Red Sea to Sinai (Exodus 15:22 - 18:27)
- B. The Giving of the Law at Sinai (Exodus 19:1 - 20:17)
- C. The Law Codes and the Journey toward the Promised Land
 - 1. The Covenant Code (Exodus 20:22 - 23:33)
 - 2. The Priestly Code
 - a. Worship (Exodus 25-31)
 - b. Priesthood (Exodus 28-29; Leviticus)
 - 3. The Deuteronomic Code (Deuteronomy)
 - 4. The Wanderings in the Wilderness (Numbers)

SESSION 5 - *Conquest of Canaan and the Tribal Confederation*

c. 1240 - 1020 B.C.

Joshua - 1 Samuel 10

I. The Conquest of Canaan (Joshua) - 1240 - 1200 B.C.

A. The LORD Commands Joshua to Conquer the Land (1:1-9)

B. Joshua Addresses the People (1:10-18)

C. The Spies and Rahab in Jericho (2:1-24)

D. The Miraculous Crossing of the Jordan (3:1ff)

E. The Conquest of Canaan Beginning with the Siege of Jericho (6:1 - 12:24)

F. Distribution of the Land of Canaan Among the Twelve Tribes (13:1 - 24:33)

II. Canaanite Religion

A. Polytheistic

1. El - Father of Canaanite Religion (literally “god” - also called “father of man,” “father of years,” “father bull,” or “god of fresh water”)

2. Asherah - Mother of Canaanite Religion (a nude prostitute sometimes called “Holiness” - also called “mother earth,” or “goddess of salt water”)

El and Asherah have three children:

a. Baal - most important male deity (“god of heaven and storm” - giver of fertility to soil, human beings, and animals.)

(“goddess of love”)

love, and war” - a tomboy - seduced by Baal, thus Baal’s sister and lover)

b. Astarte - beauty queen

c. Anat(h) or Ashtaroth (“a virgin goddess of passion, sex,

- B. Based on cycles of nature
- C. Involved sex and fertility
- D. Involved nature worship
- E. Gods could be bribed.
- F. Sacrifices
- G. Worship

III. Tribal Confederation (Judges - 1 Samuel 10) - 1200 - 1020 B.C.

A. Amphictyony - a tribal league, loose confederation of tribes united in worship of one God)

B. The Book of Judges

1. Theme verse: Judges 21:25 (moral relativism)

2. Recurring cycle (the picture of God again as judgmental and gracious)

a. Apostasy (i.e., the people did what was evil in the sight of the LORD)

b. Enslavement (i.e., the LORD disciplines by foreign oppression)

c. Repentance (i.e., the people acknowledged their sin and cried out for mercy)

d. Deliverance (i.e., the LORD raised up a charismatic deliverer (judge) who proves his/her giftedness by leading and winning in a battle, thereby earning the right to be settle the people's disputes)

C. The Story of Ruth (setting: period of the judges; probably composed centuries later)

IV. The Inevitability of the Monarchy (1 Samuel 1-10)

A. Israel's Lack of Inter-Responsibility

B. Influence of Canaanite Religion

C. Increasing Influence of the "Sea Peoples" (Philistines)

D. The Transitional Role of Samuel

SESSION 6 - *The United Monarchy*

1 Samuel 11 - 1 Kings 11

1020 - 922 B.C.

1 Chronicles 1 - 2 Chronicles 9

I. Saul (1 Samuel 9-31) - 1020 - 1000 B.C.

A. Israel's First Real King

B. Charismatic

1. Anointed by the prophet Samuel
2. Proved by his military victory over Ammon

C. Leaves tribal organization in place; no bureaucracy

D. Tall, handsome, physically able, a born leader, a Benjaminite whose entire reign was spent at war

E. Emotionally unstable, volatile temperament, renounced by Samuel

II. David (1 Samuel 16 - 1 Kings 2:12; 1 Chronicles) - 1000 - 960 B.C.

A. Two accounts of the reign of David:

1. 1 Samuel 16 - 1 Kings 2
2. 1 Chronicles

B. Skilled musician (harpist) and shepherd boy from Bethlehem

C. Married Saul's daughter (Michal) and close friends with Saul's son (Jonathan)

D. Charismatic

1. Anointed by the prophet Samuel
2. Proved by military defeat of Philistines (including Goliath)

E. Forced by Saul to flee Judah

F. First became king of Judah in Hebron; then became king of all Israel in Jerusalem (1000 B.C.)

G. By subduing the Philistines, David led the Israelites to control more territory than any other king.

H. Accomplishments

1. Established capital city in Jerusalem
2. Initiated taxation, census, draft, corvee (forced labor without pay), bureaucracy

3. Retrieved ark of covenant and built new tabernacle to house the ark

I. God's Covenant with David (2 Samuel 7:11-16)

J. David's Flaws, Sins, and Failures

K. David's Influence on the Psalms

III. Solomon (1 Kings 2:13 - 11:43; 2 Chronicles 1-9) - 960 - 922 B.C.

A. A Charismatic Leader (in an unusual way)

1. Anointed by Zadok the priest

2. Proved not by his military skill, but by his wisdom

B. The First Dynastic King (the son of David)

C. Accomplishments

1. The domestic economy boomed.

2. The nation's military capability increased.

3. Taxes were raised (except in Judah).

4. The draft was strengthened.

5. Forced labor was increased.

6. Chariot bases in the flat country were begun.

7. Solomon spent thirteen years building an elaborate palace for himself

8. Solomon spent seven years building a temple for the LORD.

9. Solomon also built the House of the Forest of Lebanon, used as an armory and bank.

10. The bureaucracy increased.

11. A diplomat rather than a warrior

12. Left his mark on the wisdom literature of Israel

D. Just as Israel's empire grew overnight, so it fell overnight at the death of Solomon, never to rise again.

SESSION 7 - *The Divided Monarchy: The Northern Kingdom*

922 - 722 B.C.

1 Kings 12 - 2 Kings 25; Amos; Hosea

I. The End of the United Kingdom

- A. Israel (North) - ten tribes, ruled by Jeroboam I, stronger, but unstable government
- B. Judah (South) - two tribes (Judah and Benjamin), ruled by Rehoboam, dynastic government

II. History of the Northern Kingdom

- A. Jeroboam I (922-901) - set up worship centers at Dan and Bethel, used golden calves
- B. Nadab (901-900) - son of Jeroboam I, murdered and succeeded by Baasha
- C. Baasha (900-877) - murdered the rest of Jeroboam's family, successful military leader, died naturally
- D. Elah (877-876) - son of Baasha, murdered and succeeded by Zimri
- E. Zimri (876) - provoked by an attack by Omri to burn the palace down on himself
- F. Omri (876-869)
 - 1. Sealed alliance with Phoenicia by the marriage of his son, Ahab, to Jezebel
 - 2. Established extensive building programs
 - 3. Moved the capital from Tirzah to the hill of Samaria
 - 4. Established the longest dynasty in the history of the Northern Kingdom
- G. Ahab (869-850) - son of Omri
 - 1. Married Jezebel, daughter of the king of Tyre, an ardent worshiper of Baal.
 - 2. Built altars to Baal and made an idol to represent Asherah
 - 3. In his court, he had 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah.
 - 4. The prophet Elijah and the contest on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18)
- H. Ahaziah (850-849) - son of Ahab
 - 1. The "sons of the prophets"
 - 2. Elijah succeeded by the prophet Elisha, more of a public figure and political activist
- I. Jehoram / Joram (849-842) - the last of Omri's dynasty
- J. Jehu (842-815) - chosen by Elisha to be the king; instituted a "bloody purge" of Canaanite religion
- K. Jehoahaz (815-801) - son of Jehu; a weak leader taken advantage of by the Syrians
- L. Jehoash (801-786) - son of Jehoahaz; Elisha died during his reign
- M. Jeroboam II (786-746) - son of Jehoash, a gifted military leader and civil administrator

1. Israel's last burst of prosperity; but Amos and Hosea warned that it would not last.
2. Borders extended to the limits achieved during David and Solomon's reigns.

N. Zechariah (746-745) - son of Jeroboam II, assassinated within six months by Shallum

O. Shallum (745) - assassinated by Menahem after only one month; Assyrian empire begins to expand

P. Menahem (745-738) - surrendered and paid bribe to Assyria to keep Assyria from destroying Israel

Q. Pekahiah (738-737) - son of Menahem, assassinated and succeeded by Pekah

R. Pekah (737-732) - assassinated and succeeded by Hoshea; Assyrian empire strikes Israel

S. Hoshea (732-722) - Assyrian empire destroys Israel

III. Amos

A. The man - shepherd from Judah, poor and illiterate, uncompromising, not a professional prophet

B. Historical Background - prophesied from Bethel around 750 B.C. (during the reign of Jeroboam II)

C. The book - the message in a nutshell: God's justice

1. Oracles against Israel's neighbors and Israel (1-2) - see 2:6-8
2. Israel's sinfulness and God's punishment (3-6) - see 5:18-27 and 6:4-7
3. Visions of Israel's doom and restoration (7-9) - see 7:7-9 and 9:11-15

IV. Hosea

A. The man - a citizen of the North, whose personal life was an incarnation of the LORD's relationship with Israel

B. Historical Background (750-735) - when peace and prosperity turned to chaos and virtual anarchy

C. The book - the message in a nutshell: steadfast love

1. Hosea's personal life (1-3)
2. Prophetic oracles of doom and hope (4-14) - see 4:1 and 11:1ff - the triumph of God's love

SESSION 8 - *The Divided Monarchy: The Southern Kingdom*

922 - 587 B.C.

2 Chronicles 10-36; Isaiah 1-39; Micah; Nahum; Habakkuk

Jeremiah; Zephaniah

I. Introduction - Judah's insignificant territory and lack of material assets - in Israel's shadow

II. The History of the Southern Kingdom

- A. Rehoboam (922-915) - son of Solomon, unsuccessful reign
- B. Abijam (915-913) - son of Rehoboam, enjoyed military success over Jeroboam I of Israel
- C. Asa (913-873) - brother of Abijam, war with Israel continued, tried to abolish pagan religions
- D. Jehoshaphat (873-849) - son of Asa, a good king, made peace with Israel, purified religious practices
- E. Jehoram (849-842) - son of Jehoshaphat, reigned while Jehoram / Joram reigned in Israel
- F. Ahaziah (842) - son of Jehoram, killed during the bloody purge of Jehu along with Joram of Israel
- G. Athaliah (842-837) - mother of Ahaziah, wife of Jehoram, only woman, tried to kill all heirs to throne
- H. Joash (837-800) - son of Ahaziah, long and peaceful reign until his assassination
- I. Amaziah (800-783) - son of Joash, war between Israel and Judah again, captured by Israel's army
- J. Uzziah / Azariah (783-742) - son of Amaziah, reigned during the same time as Jeroboam II of Israel
 - 1. Brought to Judah unparalleled prosperity and peace with Israel.
 - 2. Conquered Philistine territory and established Judah's control of the coastal highway.
 - 3. Expanded Judah's boundaries to the south.
 - 4. Fortified Jerusalem and other cities.
 - 5. Promoted agriculture and modernized the army.
 - 6. Became a leper and was ostracized from society.
 - 7. Son, Jotham, carried out his duties until Uzziah died - when Isaiah was called to be a prophet.
- K. Jotham (742-735) - son of Uzziah, fortified Judah, "did what was right"
- L. Ahaz (735-715) - son of Jotham; constructs an Assyrian altar and Judah becomes an Assyrian tributary
- M. Hezekiah (715-687) - son of Ahaz
 - 1. Successful in curbing influence of Canaanite religion and other forms of idolatry
 - 2. Judah prospered materially and enlarged its kingdom
 - 3. Agriculture and trade were increased.
 - 4. Advised and counseled by Isaiah during the Ashdod Rebellion and Sennacherib's invasion
 - 5. He trusted in the LORD and there was none like him (2 Kings 18:5).
- N. Manasseh (687-642) son of Hezekiah, evil, pagan religions increased, practiced human sacrifice
- O. Amon (642 - 640) - son of Manasseh, tried to continue Manasseh's policies, but was assassinated
- P. Josiah (640-609) - son of Amon, eight years old when he became king
 - 1. Hilkiah, the priest, reigned until Josiah was old enough to assume his responsibilities.
 - 2. Pleas'd the LORD by extinguishing pagan religions
 - 3. Before Josiah's reforms, Jeremiah condemned Judah for its paganism and ingratitude
 - 4. During his reign, Zephaniah prophesied
 - 5. The temple repaired and the scroll found
 - 6. Ordered the celebration of a great passover
 - 7. Centralized worship in the Jerusalem temple
 - 8. Prophet Nahum announced that God's wrath would be poured out on Assyria
 - 9. Assyrian empire begins to weaken
- Q. Jehoahaz / Shallum (609) - son of Josiah, taken captive by Egypt, Judah becomes tributary to Egypt
- R. Jehoiakim (609-598) - son of Josiah, puppet of Egyptians, condemned by Jeremiah

1. Assyrian empire defeated by the Babylonian empire in 605 B.C.
 2. Habakkuk prophesies that the Babylonians would overtake Judah with force
- S. Jehoiachin / Jeconiah (598-597) - son of Jehoiakim, Jerusalem captured, first deportation (Ezekiel)
- T. Zedekiah / Mattaniah (597-587) - son of Josiah, brother of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim
1. Put on the throne by the Babylonians
 2. Allegiance torn between Babylonians and the people who wanted him to appeal to Egypt
 3. Advised by Jeremiah to be loyal subjects of Nebuchadnezzar (king of Babylon)
 4. Forced to watch the slaughter of his sons and officials before his eyes were punched out
 5. Jerusalem and the temple destroyed in 587, Judah ceases to exist, second deportation
 6. Gedaliah, an official of Zedekiah, appointed by Babylonians as a governor, but was killed
 7. Third deportation including Jeremiah

III. Isaiah

A. The man - married with at least two children, probably from Jerusalem, probably from the upper classes of society, had access to the king that few people (especially prophets) had

B. Historical Background - prophesied between 742 and at least 700 B.C. (maybe even later), the time when Israel crumbled and fell to the Assyrians and Judah lived uneasily in its shadow as a tributary

C. The book

1. Believed to be the work of more than one author for three reasons:
 - a. Internal evidence of the book itself
 - * Chapters 1-39: reflect historical circumstances of eighth-century Judah
 - * Chapters 40-66: reflect the historical circumstances of sixth-century Judah
 - b. Literary style
 - * Chapters 1-39: colloquial, native-spoken narrative, typical prophetic oracles
 - * Chapters 40-66: formal, grammatically elaborate poetry written later
 - c. Theological emphases
 - * Chapters 1-39: focuses on the coming of a kingly messiah
 - * Chapters 40-66: focuses on the coming of a suffering servant
2. Themes of Isaiah 1-39
 - a. Judgment on Judah's superficiality - see 1:12-21
 - b. The holiness and majesty of God - see 6:1ff
 - c. The coming of a kingly messiah - see 9:2-7 and 11:1-3
 - d. A remnant will return - see 10:20-23

IV. Micah

A. The man - from Moresheth (Judah), rural background, not involved with kings

B. Historical background - prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, contemporary with Isaiah

C. The book - typical prophetic style of doom and hope

1. Micah condemns capital cities of Israel and Judah because of their corruption (1-3).
2. Micah looks forward to a day of peace when the Davidic line would be restored (4-5).
3. The LORD brings charges against His people through Micah (6-7).
4. The people will not always be oppressed by their enemies (7-8).

V. **Zephaniah**

A. The man - a descendant of king Hezekiah

B. Historical Background - prophesied during the reign of Josiah (around 627 B.C.)

C. The book - message in a nutshell: the day of the LORD is coming, and it will not be pleasant

1. Doom on Judah for its religious syncretism (1)
2. Divine judgment pronounced on other nations as well (2)
3. Hope and comfort for those who wait on the LORD (3) - see 3:8-20

VI. **Nahum**

A. The man - almost nothing is known about him except that he was from Elkosh (location uncertain)

B. Historical Background - prophesied during the reign of Josiah

C. The book - message in a nutshell: God's wrath will be poured out on Assyria. The LORD is the avenger of cruelty and immorality. Militarism and brutality are to no avail ultimately. Because Ninevah had so long oppressed God's people, Nineveh, too, would fall.

VII. **Habakkuk**

A. The man - almost nothing is known. There is no information to synchronize him with any king. No mention is made of birthplace or family. All we have is the prophecy itself.

B. Historical Background - probably prophesied during the reign of Jehoiakim (609-598)

C. The book - message in a nutshell: the righteous will live by faith

1. A dialogue in two cycles (1:1 - 2:5)
 - a. Question (1:2) and answer (1:5)
 - b. Question (1:12-13) and answer (2:3-4)
2. Five woes against any nation that plunders peoples and is violent and idolatrous (2:6-20)
3. A hymn of trust in God's mighty redemptive power (3:1-19) - see 3:16-19

VIII. Jeremiah

A. The man - from priestly family (but not a priest), never married, did not want to bring his children into a doomed society, called as a teenager, chosen before his birth, had a secretary and close friend whose name was Baruch, tender, emotional, intense, insecure, torn between his personal desires and his divine calling, courageous and steadfast, deeply troubled, very lonely, harshly wounded by the people's rejection

B. Historical Background - prophesied between 627 and 580 B.C. (see 1:1-3)

C. The book (not arranged chronologically, but topically) - message in a nutshell: covenant

1. Themes

- a. Rewards will be given to the faithful, punishment to the disobedient.
- b. Condemnation of pagan religion
- c. The LORD's covenant people must return to Him.
- d. Doom: Jerusalem will fall to Babylon.
- e. Hope: A new and more enduring relationship with the LORD will come.

2. Categories

- a. Oracles (poetry and prose)
- b. Confession (poetry and prose)
- c. Biographical, autobiographical, and historical materials (chapters 37-44, 52)

SESSION 9 - *The Exile* (597 - 539 B.C.) Lamentations, Ezekiel, Isaiah 40-66

I. The Historical Situation

A. Three deportations to Babylon

1. 597 - Jehoiachin the king, Ezekiel the prophet, and many others - see 2 Kings 24
2. 587-86 - the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, many others were taken, leaving behind Gedaliah as a governor and Jeremiah the prophet
3. 585-82 - Babylon cleaned house of all leadership - see 2 Kings 25

B. Some went to Egypt (2 Kings 25:22-26)

C. Life in Judah (587-539) - only illiterate peasants remained to work the land, no religious leadership, no justice, no organization, soil was badly harmed, surroundings devastated, exploited by other nations around Palestine (such as Edom who took advantage of Judah during its most vulnerable time), the people were forced to re-think their faith

D. Exile in Babylon

1. The Jews taken captive were the most affluent and educated, but were given menial jobs.
2. The Jews lived together in small communities (see Ezekiel), and continued to educate themselves. It is likely that many of them even prospered.
3. Forced to learn a new language (Aramaic), though they retained Hebrew.
4. Conditions were tolerable.
5. During the exile, they were first called “Jews” (short for Judeans).

E. Reassessment

1. Cut off from the Promised Land
2. Disruption of religious institutions
3. Re-evaluation of faith - see Psalm 137
 - a. They began to re-emphasize the Torah (the written word).
 - b. The synagogue probably developed during this time.
 - c. They began to re-emphasize particular laws that emphasized their distinctiveness.
 - d. They began to cling to the prophets’ messages of hope.
 - e. They began to struggle with the tension between being holy and evangelistic.

II. Lamentations - funeral songs for a dead city

- A. A small psalter of communal laments over Jerusalem, following its destruction in 587.
- B. Traditionally associated with Jeremiah; but the style is not Jeremiah's, and the author is unknown.
- C. Common themes raised same questions after the fact that Habakkuk did before the fact.
- D. Literary style (poetry, acrostic)

III. Ezekiel

- A. The man - a priest before he became a prophet, taken to Babylon during the first deportation in 597, married but his wife died, no children, a strange highly-developed mystic who was able to use channels of communication not normally available to others.
- B. Historical Background - prophesied between 592 and 563. His prophecy overlapped with Jeremiah's. All his prophecy took place in Babylon.
- C. The book - message in a nutshell: the abiding presence of God
 - 1. Two phases to Ezekiel's prophecy
 - a. Before the fall of Jerusalem, a message of doom, 592-587 (1-24)
 - b. After the fall of Jerusalem, a message of hope, 587-571 (25-48)
 - 2. Devices used by Ezekiel
 - a. Visions (1-3, 8-11, 37, 40-48)
 - b. Signs (4, 5, 12, 24, 37)
 - c. Allegories (15, 17, 19, 24, 16, 23)
 - 3. Other emphases
 - a. son of man
 - b. personal responsibility

IV. Isaiah 40-66 (Deutero-Isaiah)

- A. Authorship - perhaps a disciple of Isaiah, probably among the exiles
- B. The Book of Consolation (40-55), containing four Servant Songs - setting: Babylon
 - 1. 42:1-4
 - 2. 49:1-7
 - 3. 50:4-9
 - 4. 52:13 - 53:12
- C. Chapters 56-66, sometimes called "Third Isaiah," addresses the restored community in Jerusalem

V. From the Exile to the Rebuilding of the Temple

- A. The Persian Empire and the Edict of Cyrus

B. Four stages to the return

1. A return under Cyrus in 539 B.C. led by Sheshbazzar (a son of Jehoiachin)
2. A return under Darius I (521 - 485 B.C.) led by Zerubbabel (a grandson of Jehoiachin)
 - a. The Prophecy of Haggai (August-December, 520 B.C.)
 - * Four major oracles urging the rebuilding of the temple
 - b. The Prophecy of Zechariah (520 - 518 B.C.) - Chapters 1-8
 - *Prophetic visions urging the completion of the rebuilding of the temple

[With the prophetic impetus of Haggai and Zechariah, and the leadership of Jeshua and Zerubbabel, **the temple was rebuilt and dedicated in 515 B.C.**, and the people of God seemed to be making a comeback.]

[A time of silence: 515 - 460 B.C.]

3. A return under Ezra - Ezra led a group of immigrants from Babylon to Jerusalem “in the seventh year of Artaxerses (see Ezra 7:7). But which Artaxerses? Artaxerses I reigned from 465 - 424 B.C., and Artaxerses II reigned from 404 - 358 B.C.).
4. A return under Nehemiah - Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem in the twentieth year of Artaxerses I.

So, who came first? Ezra or Nehemiah?

VI. The Work of Ezra-Nehemiah

A. The books of Ezra-Nehemiah are parts of a four-unit series of books:

1. 1 Esdras
2. Ezra
3. Nehemiah
4. 2 Esdras

B. The Work of Ezra

1. Commissioned by Artaxerses to lead a group from Babylon to Jerusalem to:
 - a. define their law for them.
 - b. set up a judicial system based on that law.
2. Ezra brought with him experts on the Torah and other intellectuals.
3. Ezra spent two months in preparation, then set up his system by implementing three public policies. Through the implementation of these policies, he came to be

known as the “Father of Judaism,” and perhaps more than any other figure, was responsible for establishing once and for all the religious institutions of Judaism and making the Jewish people a distinct people.

- a. Public reading of the Torah, which came to be accepted as the written word of God (i.e., Holy Scripture).
- b. Denunciation of mixed marriages
- c. Leading in a covenant renewal ceremony

C. The Work of Nehemiah

1. Nehemiah was an official (cupbearer) of the Persian court (i.e., a professional civil servant), and therefore, was in close contact with Artaxerses, who commissioned him to repair the city walls of Jerusalem (an effort which Artaxerses subsidized with money and materials).
 2. Began work immediately (probably around 440 B.C.), but was opposed by Sanballat (of Samaria), Tobiah (of Ammon), and an Arab named Geshem.
 3. When the walls were completed, they were dedicated; and in the thirty-second year of Artaxerses, Nehemiah returned to Persia.
 4. After some time, he returned to Jerusalem and encountered four crises:
 - a. Eliashib (high priest) allowed Tobiah (an Ammonite) a room in the temple.
 - b. Financial support had fallen off for the Levites.
 - c. The people were no longer observing the Sabbath.
 - d. The people were still engaging in mixed marriages.
- D. Ezra and Nehemiah played a vital role in preserving the religious life and culture of the Jews who returned from exile and were about to be swallowed up by their neighbors.

Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Job

I. An Introduction to Worship and Wisdom Literature - Much of the worship and wisdom literature began to be developed and compiled during and after the Babylonian exile (although much of the material originated at a much earlier time). In the second temple, wisdom literature, along with the psalms, came to be used as a part of worship.

- A. Hebrew Poetry - one-third of the Old Testament
- B. Literary Associations
- C. Categories of Wisdom Traditions
- D. Types of Material Found in the Wisdom Literature
- E. Three Elements of Wisdom
- F. The Meaning of the Term “Wisdom”
- G. Characteristics of Wisdom Literature
- H. The Opposite of Wisdom

II. Psalms - the hymnal of ancient Israel

- A. Authorship
- B. Titles (superscriptions)
- C. Importance of the Psalms to Israel’s Worship Life
- D. Response to God’s Revelation
- E. Types of Psalms
 - 1. Psalms of Praise (e.g., 100)
 - 2. Laments
 - a. Individual (e.g., 55)
 - b. Communal (e.g., 137)
 - 3. Royal Psalms (e.g., 21)
 - 4. Wisdom Psalms (e.g., 21)
- F. The Value of the Psalms - They are theocentric; yet they teach us the art of prayer, praise, protest, and confession (of faith and sin).

III. Proverbs - a diverse collection of orthodox wisdom

- A. Authorship
- B. A collection of collections
- C. Themes:
 - 1. Prosperity is the reward of moral and religious integrity.
 - 2. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom (1:7).

IV. Job

- A. Authorship
- B. Three stages of composition

1. 1:1 - 2:13, and 42:7-17 - an ancient folk tale circulated orally for hundreds of years and written in prose in the Hebrew of 1000-800 B.C.
2. 3:1 - 31:40 and 38:1 - 42:6 - a long poetic section (written in three cycles - Eliphaz | Job; Bildad | Job; Zophar | Job) inserted into the story by a poet of the sixth century B.C.
3. 32:1 - 37:24 - a poetic section added even later (probably the fourth or third century B.C., including speeches by a fourth “friend” (Elihu).

C. Messages of the book

1. Justice triumphs ultimately, but not always immediately.
2. God is sovereign.
3. Suffering often has meaning, and is not always the result of disobedience.

V. Ecclesiastes

A. Authorship

B. The skeptical, pessimistic feelings of a man who tried everything but found nothing satisfying.

C. The debate over canonicity

D. Themes

1. Nature is a closed system.
2. Life is more a search of truth than a grasping of it.
3. Life cannot be lived to its fullest without a constant reflection upon its meaning.
4. Life is a gift.
5. God is at the beginning and end of any search for meaning.
6. Traditional wisdom approach: “Fear God and keep His commandments” (12:13-14).

VI. Song of Solomon (or “Song of Songs”)

A. Authorship

B. Content - a collection of about twenty-five lyric poems or fragments of poems describing the passionate and sensuous love between a man and a woman. No explicit religious content.

C. The debate over canonicity

D. Possible interpretations

1. Allegorical (i.e., describing the relationship between God and His people [bride])
2. Dramatic (i.e., a drama in which Solomon falls in love with a Shulamite shepherdess)

539 - 63 B.C.

Zechariah 9-14, Daniel, Esther, Ruth, Jonah

I. Historical Context

II. Obadiah - A Hymn of Hate Against Edom

A. Authorship

B. Date (not certain, but probably after the destruction of Jerusalem in 587/86 B.C.)

C. Message: God's Judgment on Edom

1. An indictment against the Edomites (1-14)
2. An announcement of the day of the LORD's recompense upon the nations (15-18)
3. A proclamation of the return of Israel's exiles and their dominion over Edom (19-21)

III. Malachi - The LORD Questions The Community of Faith

A. Authorship

B. Date (probably written between the rebuilding of the temple and the work Ezra and Nehemiah)

C. Literary Style - six cycles of dialogues

1. The LORD, through the prophet, makes a statement.
2. The people or priests respond with a question.
3. The LORD, through the prophet, answers by substantiating His initial statement in detail.

D. The prophecy concludes with a promise that the LORD's messenger would be sent (see 4:4-6).

IV. Joel

A. Authorship - author seems to have been closely associated with the religious organization

B. Date (probably during the Persian period [539-332 B.C.]

C. Content divided into two sections:

1. The vision of the locust plague which comes as God's judgment (1:1 - 2:27)
2. The final judgments and blessings of the "day of the LORD" (2:28 - 3:21)
 - a. a vision quoted by Peter in his Pentecost sermon (see 2:28-32 and Acts 2:14-21)
 - b. a reversal of the swords/plowshares imagery used by Isaiah and Micah (see 3:9-10)

V. Second Zechariah (9-14)

A. Authorship

B. Date (later than Zechariah, probably the fourth century B.C. - see 9:13)

C. A contrast between chapters 1-8 and 9-14

1. 1-8 reflects the historical context 520-518 B.C.; 1-9 later (see 9:13)
2. 1-8 - written in first person; 9-14 not in first person
3. 1-8 written in prose; 9-14 written in apocalyptic poetry and prose
4. 1-8 speak of a political and priestly Messiah (4:1-14); 9-14 of a kingly Messiah (9:9-10)

VI. Daniel

- A. Authorship
- B. Date (setting reflects circumstances of sixth century; but probably written in the second century)
- C. Content
 - 1. Six stories
 - 2. Four apocalyptic visions
- D. Messages
 - 1. From the six stories: The LORD shows favor to those who are obedient to the Torah.
 - 2. From the four visions: God will intervene in history and establish His kingdom in His time.

VII. Esther

- A. Authorship
- B. Date (setting: the reign of the Persian king Ahasuerus [486-465 B.C.]; time of writing: unknown)
- C. Debate over canonicity
- D. Purpose: to explain the significance and origin of the “Feast of Purim”
- E. The plot

VIII. Ruth

- A. Authorship
- B. Date (setting: the period of the Judges; composed sometime after the Babylonian exile)
- C. The plot
- D. Message: The great grandmother of Israel’s greatest king was a foreigner.

IX. Jonah

- A. Authorship
- B. Date (setting: the reign of Jeroboam II [786-746 B.C.]; written centuries later)
- C. The plot
- D. The message: God’s mercy and salvation extend beyond the chosen race to embrace all humanity.
- E. Approaches to the book
 - 1. Historical
 - 2. Allegorical
 - 3. Parabolic
- F. Used by Jesus (see Matthew 12:40 and Luke 11:30)

440 - 63 B.C.

I. The Historical Context

A. Palestine under the Persians (539 - 333 B.C.)

B. Palestine under the Greeks (333 - 167 B.C.)

1. Alexander the Great (333 - 323 B.C.) - united the empire around Greek language, culture

2. After his death, the empire was divided:

a. Ptolemy (became known as the Ptolemies) - based in Egypt

*Controlled Palestine

*Allowed Jews religious freedom giving local authority to high priest

b. Seleucus (became known as the Seleucids) - based in Syria

*Overturned Ptolemies by 200 B.C. as the power over Palestine

*Oppressed Jews under leadership of Antiochus Epiphanes

*Pushed Jews to adopt Greek culture and religion

*Interfered in selection of the high priest, making it a political appointment

*Forbade Jewish religious practices, including circumcision

*Set up an altar to Zeus in temple, and ordered Jews to sacrifice to Zeus

*Sacrificed a pig on altar in the holy of holies ("abomination of desolation")

3. By this time, Jews were divided among themselves:

a. Conservative Jews ("Hasidim") - opposed Seleucids and Greek culture

b. Liberal Jews - favored (or did not oppose) the Seleucids and Greek culture

4. The Maccabean Revolt (168-164 B.C.)

a. Led by Matathias and his five sons (including Judas Maccabeus) - the Maccabeans

b. Method: guerilla warfare, untrained armies, unsophisticated weaponry

c. Three years of civil war ended with an amazing defeat of the Seleucids

d. In December of 164 B.C., on anniversary of "abomination of desolation"

*temple cleansed and rededicated (Hanukkah)

C. Jewish Independence (shaky stability) - led by Hasmonean dynasty (descendants of Maccabees)

1. Two distinctive sects began to emerge:

a. Pharisees - a religious party whose prototype was the Hasidim

b. Sadducees - a political party whose prototype was the Hellenists

2. Civil war between these two parties (67-63 B.C.)

3. Rome steps in in 63 B.C. to bring peace and stability

D. Palestine under the Romans (63 B.C. throughout the New Testament period)

II. Intertestamental Judaism

A. Unity of Judaism

1. Beliefs
 - a. Monotheism (belief in only one God)
 - b. Nomism (belief in the Torah - i.e., the Law)
 - c. Nationalism (belief that the nation Israel was chosen by God to be God's priests)
2. Practices
 - a. Temple worship
 - b. Circumcision
 - c. Prayer
 - d. Sabbath observance
 - e. Dietary laws

B. Diversity of Judaism

1. Pharisees
2. Sadducees
3. Essenes
4. Zealots
5. Therapeutae
6. Scribes
7. Baptist sects
8. Am ha aretz ("people of the land")

III. Literature of the Intertestamental Period

A. Hebrew Canon

1. Torah (Law) - Genesis-Deuteronomy, accepted as authoritative by the time of Ezra
2. Nebi'im (Prophets) - accepted as authoritative around 200 B.C.
 - a. Former - Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings
 - b. Latter - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Book of the Twelve ("minor" prophets)
3. Kethubi'im (Writings) - accepted at the Council of Jamnia in 90 A.D. - canon closed

B. Alexandrian Canon - Greek translation of Hebrew Canon and Apocrypha

C. Pseudepigrapha - popular religious journalism written between 200 B.C. and 200 A.D.

D. Rabbinic Works (Targums, Mishnah, Midrash, Tosefta, Gemara, Talmud)

E. Sectarian Literature (Dead Sea Scrolls found in Qumran)

1. All Old Testament books except Esther
2. Pseudepigrapha (Jubilees, Enoch, Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs)
3. Commentaries (like Midrash)
4. Community Works (Manual of Discipline, War Scroll, Thanksgiving Hymns, etc.)

IV. Toward the "Fullness of Time" (The World into Which Jesus Was Born) - Galatians 4:4

A. Contributions from the Greeks

B. Contribution from the Romans

C. Contributions from the Jews