
Calvary Church: Coordinated Curriculum 2007-2008
Romans: The Transforming Power of the Righteousness of God

Old Testament Survey

Two options

Option 1 Standard Survey

In this lesson I am providing notes and a PowerPoint presentation that surveys the Old Testament structure and message.

This lesson is appropriate for classes where people are not well versed or comfortable with the flow of the Old Testament. It will help refocus people on God's working with Israel.

Option 2 Mission Focused Survey

The second option is a look at three significant passages which reveal God's plan not only for Israel, but to use Israel to show the glory of God among the nations.

This lesson is appropriate for any class that needs to learn or be reminded that a global perspective is not only a New Testament concern; God has always had a plan for the whole world.

I have provided very little material, but have included a wonderful article that summarizes the issues well.

Stephen C. Kilgore

A Survey of the Bible

An Adventure Down Route 66

Introduction

A survey of the Old Testament in one easy lesson! Most likely a review for most of you—but a good introduction to Romans 9-11.

Purpose

Our goal is to overview the **whole** Bible, to seek to understand the **flow**, the unique **structure** and some of the **connections**. *We do this because we want to know God better.*

My hope is also to help motivate you to read through the Bible, give you a framework/skeleton on which to put what you read and to give you suggestions for what to look for as you read.

But let me see if my assumption is correct: How many of you have read through the Bible more than 5 times, 10 times, more? Wonderful!

(Disclaimer, this is my summary, not everyone will agree with how I summarize, but I hope you will be Bereans, those who will read and study the Word for yourselves.)

Incremental Revelation

Let me start with *presupposition*. While not technically part of a survey of the Bible, it is necessary.

I have two fundamental presuppositions: God exists and He revealed Himself through the Bible. This self-revelation is done progressively or, better yet, *incrementally*. Therefore we must understand the whole of His revelation and its sequence. The Bible was not given as a systematic theology or as isolated stories, but as an incremental revelation of God's dealing with humanity. The Bible contains actual, reliable records of people and events in history.

Route 66

The Bible covers the whole span of history from the creation of the heavens and earth, to the re-creation of the heavens and the earth. The writing of the Bible occurred over:

1. 1,500 years
2. 66 books
3. 40 generations
4. more than 40 authors
5. 3 languages (Hebrew, some Aramaic, and Koine Greek—common languages, by which God's revelation can be understood by men.)
6. 3 continents (Asia, Africa, Europe)

With such great diversity, the Bible still possesses:

7. 1 message
8. 1 God
9. 1 Lord

The Old Testament looks forward to Him

The New Testament reveals Him and looks backward and forward to Him

The Bible was written by real people, for real people, containing actual events and reliable truths.

Message of the Bible

But if the Bible has **one** message, what is it?

What is the message of the Bible?

How would you summarize the message of the Bible?

Most would say the Bible is about redemption, salvation, history, God's love for mankind. These are truth themes, but the Bible is about God.

**God desires to glorify Himself by blessing man
Man can experience God's blessing by trusting and obeying God**

If we approach the Bible from the perspective of God's purpose--putting the focus on God--it helps prevent us from elevating ourselves beyond our own importance. As we read the Bible, we find a Sovereign God who has a plan. (*So as you read, look for that plan.*)

God has a Plan

The plan comes out of His character—loving, merciful, and gracious, but also holy, just, and perfect.

Man has a need

The need comes out of his character
The Bible provides the story for how God's plan meets man's need for God's glory, through the central figure who is Christ.

How to proceed?

There are many ways to attempt a survey of the Bible:

We could simply trace how God brings glory to Himself by blessing man. As a matter of fact, if you look at the beginning and the end of this book, you will see that where we start—man in full communion with God—is where we end.

Genesis 1, 2, and 3 all represent Man as created in the image of God and in relationship with God. The punishment of the curse, as a result of the fall (Adam and Eve's sin)—must be seen primarily as the breaking of the relationship with God. While sin brought death, the greater consequence was separation from God. The rest of the story (to use Paul Harvey's words) is God's plan to restore that relationship.

We see this again with the building of the Tabernacle—God's physical dwelling place with His people, Israel (Exodus 24; Numbers 2). Once it was constructed and the glory of the Lord dwelt in the Tabernacle, the nation's life revolved around it. The tribes were located around the Tabernacle, as a visual reminder of their relationship with and dependence on God

In the New Testament, Jesus become that for us.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt (tabernacled) among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. (NASB95)

And the image at the end of the Bible is the same.

Revelation 21:1-4 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, 4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." (NASB95)

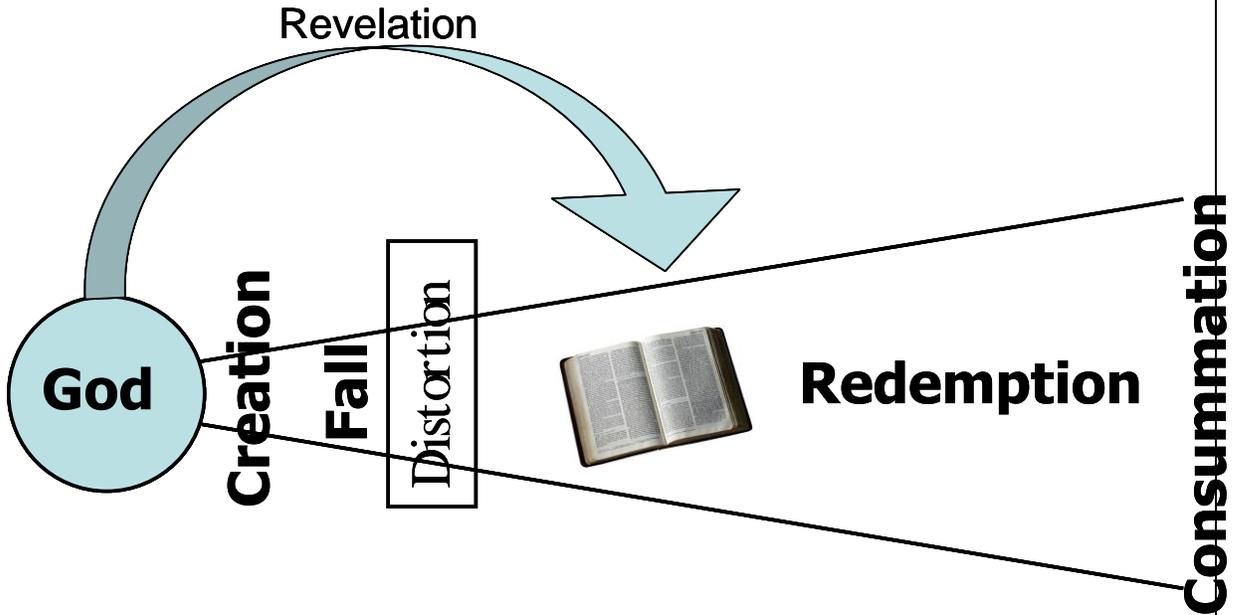
So we were created for communion with God, and we learn about God and how to have communion with Him through His Word.

Teachers you may want to skip this

But there is a problem.

As we begin to trace the story of redemption from the beginning, we see a theme of Creation, Fall, Redemption. Both the Old and New Testaments have this focus.

Creation—Fall—Redemption



Adapted from Gary T. Meadors, Decision Making God's Way

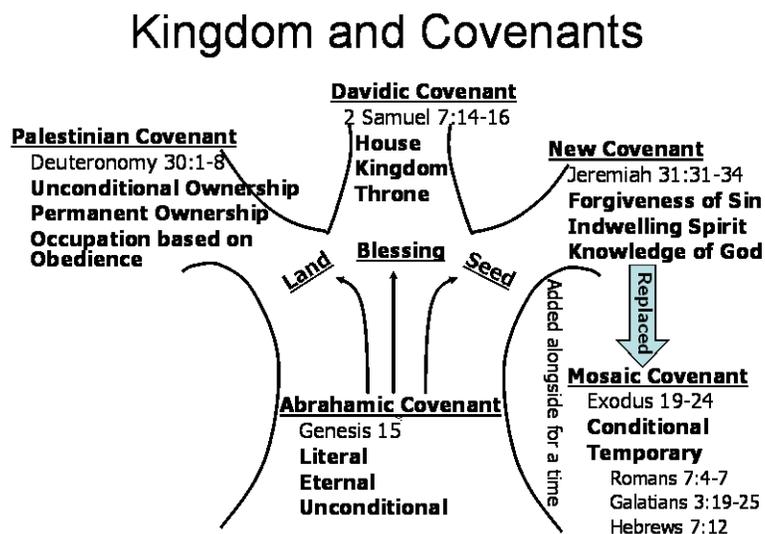
The distortion caused by sin can only be corrected through the Cross and the Word.
One more theme that helps us understand the big picture.

Actually, it's a combination of two themes that helps unfold the story: God's great covenants with man and God's kingdom.

(See Chart)

The Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 15), God's great covenantal promise to bless man through one man, family, nation, becomes the foundation for four other key covenants: One conditional and temporal, the other three unconditional and permanent.

God's covenant with Abraham was to
 Give him a land
 further developed in Deuteronomy 30
 Give him a seed
 further developed in 2 Samuel 7
 Make him a blessing to all
 further developed in Jeremiah 31



God's Kingdom program is the outworking of His eternal and unconditional covenant, in which God fulfills His plan to establish a kingdom on earth over which His Son rules as King.¹

God manifests His sovereign will in creation, not because He needed us, but to demonstrate His glory. He created mankind in His image and delegates to man the authority to rule as His representative.

“The prohibition against eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil {in Genesis 1 and 2} was given to test man's recognition of and subjection to the authority of God. Man was not to assume that, because he had been given delegated authority to rule as God's administrator in the theocracy, he was independent of God or not responsible to God's law. Those who are in the kingdom must obey the rule of the King. Obedience to that rule became a test as to whether one is in the kingdom.”

Therefore, God's desire to glorify Himself by blessing man, has as its application, that man can experience God's blessing by trusting and obeying.

Because of man's failure to obey, the Fall brought about separation from God and the need for redemption. See Genesis 3:15.

Teachers you will probably need to skip this

One of the amazing elements of the story is God's mercy amidst man's failure. Notice that even in establishing the curse for sin in Genesis 3, God is merciful.

Genesis 3:21-24 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. 22 Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”— 23 therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. 24 So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life. (NASB95)

To prevent Adam from living eternally separated from God, God mercifully expels Adam and Eve from the garden so that they would not eat from the tree of life and live forever in their sin cursed

¹ See J. D. Pentecost, *Thy Kingdom Come*, (Wheaton: Victor, 1990).

condition.

- The story of the Bible from here on is of God’s mercy and grace toward mankind to provide the means for man to have a relationship with Him. A relationship in which God is Sovereign and we are the subjects of His Kingdom.
- It would be wonderful to continue the story step by step, character by character, plot by plot—observing the conflicts, resolution, climaxes, pivots, and all the other wonderful elements of a good story that are woven into the Bible. However, our goal is to step back from the trees and see the forest.

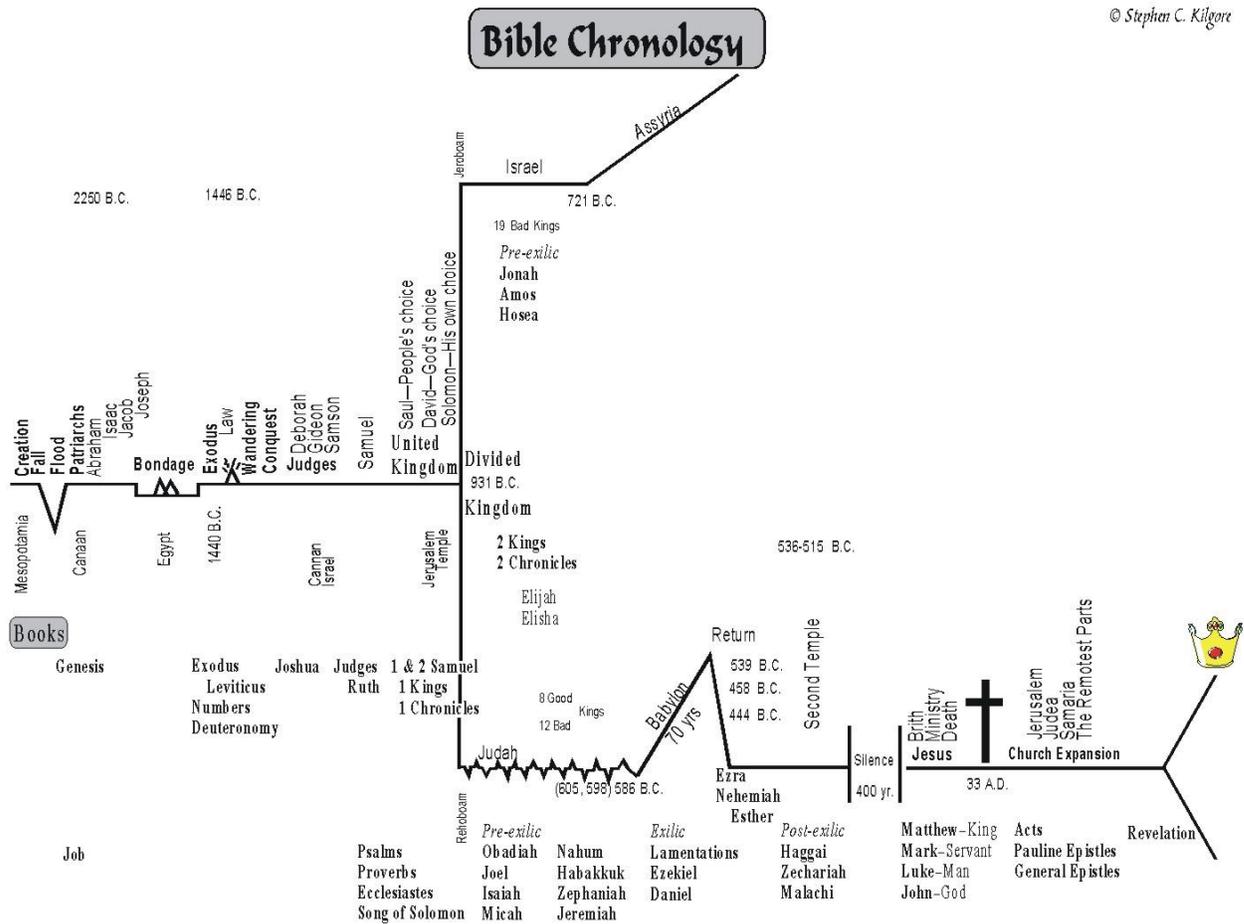
So let’s look now at how the Bible is structured.

Old Testament

Overview

On your handout you have a rough timeline that will hopefully help you as you read through the Bible.

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Key Structural Elements

Introduction

Let's start with a test. How many books in the Old Testament?

Easy way to remember. How many letters in OLD – 3, How many letters in TESTAMENT – 9. 39 Books

What are the major divisions? **Historical**, **Poetical**, **Prophets**. The Old Testament even acknowledges this division.

Jeremiah 18:18 Then they said, "Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah. Surely the **law** is not going to be lost to the priest, nor counsel to the **sage**, nor the *divine* word to the **prophet**! Come on and let us strike at him with *our* tongue, and let us give no heed to any of his words." (NASB95)

Old Testament		
(17) History	(5) Poetry	(17) Prophets
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon	Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel
Joshua Judges Ruth 1 Samuel 2 Samuel 1 Kings 2 Kings 1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther	Old Testament 39 Books New Testament 27 Books Bible 66 Books	Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi
Stories Events Movements	Songs Expressions of Emotion Mood	Sermons Expectations Messages

Historical

How many historical books? **17**

Historical books are narrative, they are the story.

The focus of the historical books is on the development of the nation of Israel as a special people with a special relationship with God.

The first five books or Pentateuch, were written primarily by Moses. They contain the story of the:

Creation of the Universe and Mankind

Creation of a special People – Israel

The Law: The First Five Books

The first five books of the Bible are sometimes called the Pentateuch which means “five books.” They are also known as the books of the law because they contain the laws and instructions given by the Lord through Moses to the people of Israel. These books were written by Moses, except for the last portion of Deuteronomy because it tells about the death of Moses. **These five books lay the foundation for the coming of Christ** in that here God chooses and brings into being the nation of Israel. **As God’s chosen people, Israel became the custodians of the Old Testament, the recipients of the covenants of promise, and the channel of Messiah** (Rom. 3:2; 9:1-5).²

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The development of the Pentateuch is as follows: Genesis 1—11 explains the rebellion of creation and the beginning of the plan to bring about blessing. Genesis 12—50 traces the development of the blessing from the election of Abraham through to the descent into Egypt where the family could develop into a great nation. Exodus 1—18 tells how God reveals His name and manifested His lordship over nature and history. Exodus 19—Numbers 10 tells how God set up His covenant with Israel, gave them instructions to live and to worship, and **ordered their existence around His presence**. Number 11—Deuteronomy 34 traces their movement through the desert to the land of promise.³

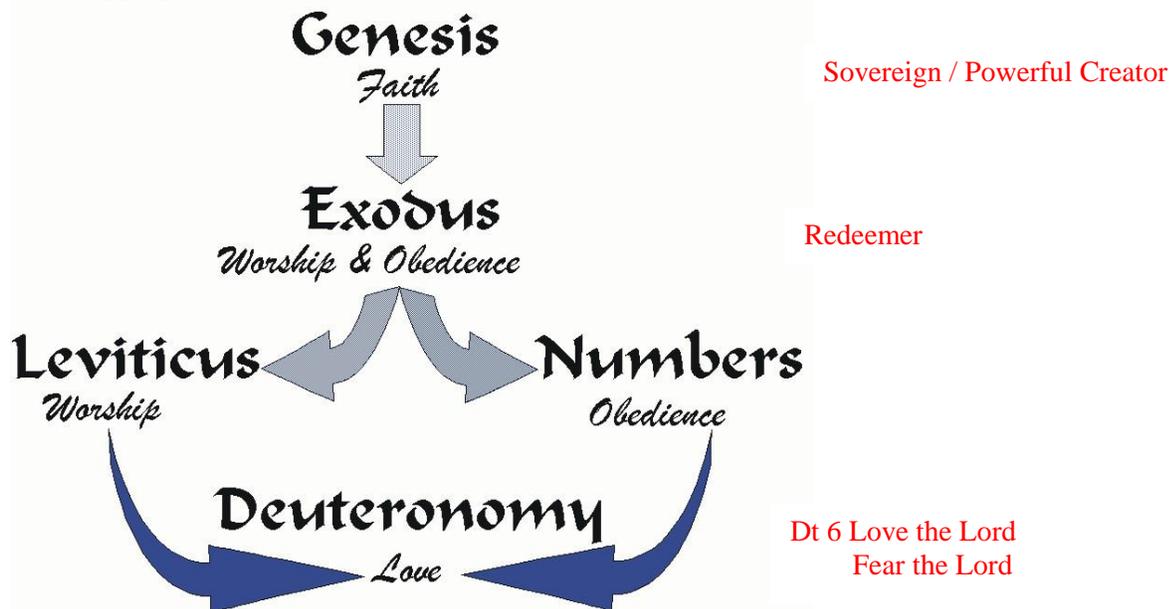
²J. Hampton Keathley III, *Concise Old Testament Survey*, Biblical Studies Press, www.bible.org, 1998

³Allen P. Ross (Unpublished Class notes, Old Testament Introduction, OT 100, DTS, Fall 1988, p 36).

Brief Summary

Book	Key Word	In relation to Israel
Genesis	Beginnings	Election of the nation
Exodus	Redemption	Redemption of the nation
Leviticus	Holiness	Sanctification of the nation
Numbers	Wandering	Direction of the nation
Deuteronomy	Review	Instruction of the Nation

Man's appropriate response to God



As you read through the Pentateuch and for that matter, the rest of the Old Testament, I would encourage you to try to summarize each book with three basic questions:

What is God's primary character trait revealed in this book?

What is God's primary role?

What is man's appropriate response to character and role of God revealed in this book?

Example: Genesis

God's character: Sovereign and Powerful

God's role: Creator

Man's appropriate response: Faith (obedience)

One more key point from the Pentateuch that sets up the rest of the Old Testament

I mentioned the major covenants, starting with the Abrahamic.

The Mosaic Covenant, the Law, becomes the framework for the rest of the Old Testament.

Two key sections

Exodus 19

This is the preamble to the constitution of Israel.

God offers them a unique relationship with Him.

Exodus 19:4-6 ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself. 5 ‘Now then, **if** you will indeed **obey** My voice and keep My covenant, **then** you shall be ❶ My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to ❷ Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.” (NASB95)

The people’s response

Exodus 19:8 All the people answered together and said, “**All that the LORD has spoken we will do!**” And Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD. (NASB95)

From there we go to the **pivot passage**

Deuteronomy 28–29 The Covenant Blessings and Curses

In these chapters God sets up the “if” — “then” or the cause and effect of the covenant. If the people are faithful to God and obey Him as He has instructed them to—they will receive great blessing—prosperity and security.

Deuteronomy 28:8-11 “The LORD will command the blessing upon you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you. 9 “The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. 10 “So all the peoples of the earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will be afraid of you. 11 “The LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your beast and in the produce of your ground, in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you. (NASB95)

But if the people do not obey, the Lord, and turn their backs on their God—they will receive severe consequences or curses.

(By the way, Deuteronomy 30 gives a great promise of restoration after failure, another example of God’s mercy and grace—and faithfulness to His promises.)

Historical Books

The rest of the historical books are the evidence, or the experience, of these blessings and curses.

If the people of Israel and their leaders obeyed, there was great blessing. When they turned away from God, they experienced the consequences.

Lesson: God will accomplish His purpose and fulfill His promise, with or without us. The question is, will we receive the blessings or consequences?

Other Historical Books

The Pentateuch laid the foundation for how the nation of Israel and all people were to relate to God. The “other” historical books provide a narrative for how Israel actually related to God.

The victories and defeats, the successes and failures. And the continued desire of man to live autonomous from God. They also repeatedly experienced a demonstration of God’s grace and mercy as He provided forgiveness and restoration.

The high points in Joshua become low points in Judges.

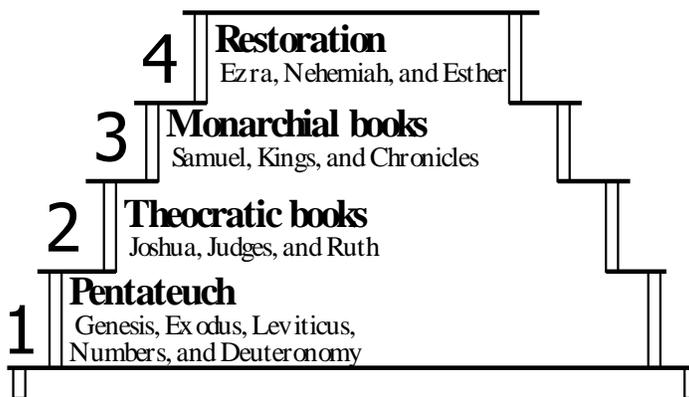
The people’s desire to have a “king fight for them” in 1 Samuel, leads to God’s placement of “a man after {His} own heart” on the throne of Israel. And though David is the ideal king, he is not perfect.

Here we are introduced to a new theme.

Up to this point in the historical books the pivotal event is the exodus—a demonstration of God’s power and care for His People. The people are continually called to “remember” (a word often used in worship) what God has done for them.

Once God makes a covenant with David (2 Samuel 7), that His seed will be on the throne forever, the nation is called to look forward to that ultimate Davidic King, who would provide real peace.

Division of the Old Testament Historical Books



Book of “maps”

As you read through these books let me suggest that you keep the maps in the back of your Bible handy. Because these books are narratives, stories written not only of real people but real places, it is helpful to have maps to visualize what is going on.

For example, in 1 Kings 18, when Elijah confronts the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, the confrontation is precipitated by the lack of precipitation. Elijah had prophesied that it would not rain for three years.

So ask yourself, if they are in the midst of a severe drought, where does all the water come from to drench Elijah’s sacrifice three times and fill the trench?

If you look at a map it will be obvious.

Poetical

While the Pentateuch establishes the Law, and the historical books demonstrate life under the law, the books of **Poetry are a heart response to the Law**—and to the Law Giver.

Poetry is a statement of reality in a way that appeals to the emotions and imagination.

Literary type

There are two basic literary types in the poetical books.

Wisdom Literature is visual language often in short, poignant nuggets of truth which are typically practical and often concerned with the consequences of a course of behavior.

Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, some Psalms

Proverbs, we could say is advice given from a wise man based on experience and observation. Or Vertical Wisdom for Horizontal Living.

As you read Proverbs, don’t rush, take time to ponder the truth.

Poetry

Psalms and Song of Solomon

The purpose of poetry was to touch the emotions and to assist retention.

The book of Psalms, is not just an isolated collection of praise poems, but it shows some evidence of structure. The first two psalms provide an introduction to the two major themes in the book of Psalms:

Psalm 1 is a *Wisdom Psalm* focused on the way to be happy, content, blessed, in life and to live according to the guidelines set down by the Lord.

Psalm 2 is a *Royal Psalm* which focuses on the need to trust God to fulfill His promises.

The book is divided into 5 books each concluding with a doxology and Psalm 150 serves as a grand concluding doxology.

As you read through the poetical books, do not rush. Don't miss the beauty and the depth.

As you read Psalms, notice that each Psalm seems to **accent one of God's attributes.**

Also,

Try to determine the central theme

What questions and answers does it give or seek?

What does the poem say about man and God?

What emotions and imagery does the poet use?

Prophetical

What is a prophet?

Deuteronomy 18:18 'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. (NASB95)

A spokesman for God

4 Things to remember

1. Difference between a priest and a prophet
 - Priests were the people's representatives to God, while prophets were God's representatives to people
2. The Prophet's ministry was both forth-telling and foretelling
 - Preaching
 - Predicting
3. The Prophet's primary message concerned human sin and God's righteousness
4. The Prophet's ministry fit into three major sections of Jewish history
 - The preexilic period
 - The exilic period
 - The postexilic period

The Prophets and the Law

Covenantal

The Prophets are prophets of the Law: The five themes of the Prophets

1. Denouncing sin based on the revealed will of God
2. Calling on the people of God to return to Him and obey His Law.
3. Warning of sure judgment if repentance is not forth coming
4. Encouraging the faithful remnant
5. Despite sin and apostasy there is the clear picture of God fulfilling His promise to Abraham to bless the nation forever.

Major Prophets and Minor Prophets

Relative size

Extent of messianic prophecies

The major prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah {Lamentation}, Ezekiel, Daniel) are longer and speak more about the coming of Christ than the minor prophets

Minor Prophets ministry

Chart

Example: Haggai

The prophets of the Law—see curse and blessing

The 400 “Silent” Years		
OT		NT
Ends ≈ 400 B.C.	Time	Begins ≈ 6-4 B.C.
Persian Empire	Government	Roman Empire
Hebrew & Aramaic	Language	Greek and Latin
Semitic (Eastern)	Culture	Hellenistic (Western)
Fertile Crescent (Mostly east of Palestine)	Geographical Center	Mediterranean (Mostly west of Palestine)

The interesting thing to ponder about the 400 years of silence is “what were the people thinking?”

Did the average Israelite still believe?

Had some of the Israelites lost hope?

Had they assumed the stories they had been told were simply legends and after awhile, only myths?

Would you assume from the history of Israel, that perhaps God finally got tired of their hard hearts (Psalm 95) and gave up on them?

And after God breaks the silence through an angel to a young Jewish girl—setting the stage for Jesus to bring hope to Israel—only to be killed by the Jews.

Would you assume that God’s mercy ran out?

That God was done with Israel?

This is where Paul enters the discussion with Romans 9-11.