

A Review of the Historical Books: Genesis — Esther

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Introduction

1. Why do we have the Bible? Prov.22:19-21; Rom.15:4; Matt. 4:4; 2Tim.3:15-17.

2. How true is the Bible? Titus 1:2; Ps. 12:6; 18:30.

3. Why do we still need the Old Testament Scripture? 2 Tim.3:16,17; 2 Pet.1:20-21, 3:15,16; Luke 24:44; Rev.22:18,19; Deut.4:2, 12:32; Prov.30:6.

4. The Old Testament is arranged by subject matter:
 - Historical:** Genesis through Esther (17 books)
 - Poetical:** Job through Song of Solomon (5 books)
 - Prophetical:** Isaiah through Malachi (17 books)

5. The Bible has a reasonable structure — we can understand it!

Poetical Books

Job						Psalms	Proverbs Ecclesiastes Songs			
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Historical Books

Genesis	Exodus Leviticus	Numbers Deuteronomy	Joshua	Judges Ruth	1 Samuel	1 Chronicles 2 Samuel	2 Chronicles 1 Kings	2 Kings		Ezra Nehemiah Esther
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Prophetical Books

								Pre-Exilic To Israel: Hosea Amos To Judah: Habakkuk Isaiah Jeremiah Micah Zephaniah Lamentations To Assyria: Jonah Nahum To Edom: Obadiah	Exilic Ezekiel Daniel	Post-Exilic Haggai Zechariah Malachi Joel

What does the sheer number of pre-exilic prophets tell us about the nature of our God?

Genesis

1. The book of "beginnings." It contains the story of creation, the fall, the flood, the nations, and the beginning of God's chosen people. The main characters are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.
2. How did God create the heavens and earth? By the word of his power out of nothing (Gen. 1:1; Heb. 11:3), in 6 days (Ex. 20:11), and all very good (Gen. 1:31). How great and powerful is his word!
3. God makes man the crown of his creation — his image bearer (Gen. 1:26,27).
4. What led to man's fall into sin? (Gen. 3:1-5).
5. God blots out worldwide evil with a flood (Gen. 6:5-9). He preserves the righteous by a covenant (Gen. 9:8-13).
6. God's covenant established with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-5, 17:1-14). God's covenant gives hope to man's "genesis" (beginning) that it will proceed to a happy and healthy destiny, even to a "new covenant" with Christ.

Exodus

1. The name "Exodus" means "going out." This book reveals Israel's deliverance out of bondage in Egypt, their receiving of God's law and the building of the tabernacle. The main character is Moses.
2. The exodus from bondage (sin) is only made possible by God's gracious redemption/deliverance (Ex. 3:7,8, 6:6, 12:27,51; 15:13-16; 20:2). Remember God's redemption has a family emphasis (Ex.12:3).
3. Where in the Bible will we find a listing of the 10 commandments?

Leviticus

1. In the book of Exodus, the worship facility of the wilderness church is constructed. In Leviticus, the legislation needed to carry on this worship is provided.
2. Leviticus reveals how a sinful people can approach and maintain fellowship with a holy God.
3. The key words of Leviticus: Holiness (87 times), sin and uncleanness (194 times), and sprinkling of blood (89 times).
4. Leviticus reveals a God who hates, despises, and loathes sin. He will destroy all who do not revere him as holy (Lev. 10:1-3; 19:2). It is foolish to think that dealing with sin is unimportant.

Numbers

1. This book reveals Israel's movement from the wilderness to Sinai to the region of Moab, which borders the Promised Land. They were organized into tribes and prepared for promised land entrance but instead wandered in the wilderness for 40 years because of their unbelief (Heb.3:19).
2. Their "numbering" involved their registration for service (1:1-2; 26:1-2). Everyone was considered a minister/soldier with something to do for the Lord.
3. In Genesis, man is created and ruined; in Exodus he is redeemed; in Leviticus he is taught the proper worship of God; and in Numbers he is taught to serve God in every area of life.

Deuteronomy

1. The name means "second law" or "repetition of the law." The same law of God given through Moses to the first generation of redeemed Israelites is now given again to the second generation since the former people passed away because of their disobedience.
 2. Deuteronomy contains the last sermons of Moses to prepare the new generation to follow God's law in their possession of the Promised Land (4:1-2,31,35; 6:4; 10:17; 11:26-28; 29:10-13).
 3. The great responsibility of continuing to teach God's law is with the _____ for all future generations (6:4-9). Life depends on obedience (4:1,2).
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Joshua

1. The name means "Yahweh saves." The book completes the salvation story begun in Exodus. Redemption has two parts: 1) being brought out (i.e. out of Egypt/old life) and 2) being brought in (i.e. into the Promised land/new life).
2. The book contains the conquest and division of Canaan (the Promised Land), the crossing of the Jordan, the fall of Jericho, the victories and defeats of battle, the sun made to stand still, and Joshua's farewell address to the tribes of Israel left to subdue the remaining foreigners in the Promised Land.
3. What was the essence of Joshua's counsel? (24:14,15).

Judges

1. This book covers the first 350 years of Israel in the Promised Land after the death of Joshua and prior to the ascension of Saul as King of the nation. Israel was still separated into tribes.
2. What is the key theme? (17:6; 21:25).
3. Judges reveals seven cycles of sin, servitude, and salvation. When Israel turned to God in repentance, God raised up Judges to lead God's people in deliverance: Othneil, Ehud, and Shamgar (3); Deborah and Barak (4-5); Gideon (6-8); Tola and Jair (10); Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon (12); Samson (13-16).

Ruth

1. Ruth finds its setting during the time of the Judges demonstrating faithfulness to God and God's redemption.
2. The principle characters are Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz.

1 Samuel

1. Samuel and Kings record the rise, glory, and fall of the nation of Israel as a monarchy (c.1095 - 586B.C.).
2. 1 Samuel presents about 115 years of the life of Israel beginning with the birth of Samuel, a judge, a priest, and prophet. Eli and Samuel were the last two judges. After Samuel's leadership expires, Israel becomes a monarchy under King Saul who is succeeded by King David. 1 Samuel reveals Saul's kingdom and introduces us to David, a leader and Goliath killer (17:37; 44-47).

2 Samuel

1. This book contains the history of Israel from the beginning of the reign of David to the close of his life. He was given the distinction of "a man after God's own heart" (Acts 13:22).
2. The reason for David's great success: 2 Samuel 5:10.

1 and 2 Kings

1. The Book of Kings was divided into two books because of the limited length of ancient scrolls. It narrates the kings of Israel and their deeds from the death of king David until the death of king Nebuchadnezzar.
 2. The reign of Solomon (1 Kings 1-11). Solomon's biggest problem was his failure to repent.
 3. The divided kingdom (1 Kings 12 - 2 Kings 17). The division occurred in 931 B.C. The Northern kingdom (Israel) was conquered by Assyria in 722 B.C. and the Southern kingdom (Judah) was conquered by Babylon in 586 B.C.
 4. The last days of Judah (2 Kings 18-25).
 5. The times of Elijah (1 Kings 15-22) and Elisha (2 Kings 1-11).
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1 and 2 Chronicles

1. These books, originally one unit, provide an historical survey of God's people from Adam through the fall of both Israel and Judah into exile. The survey is written from a priestly perspective to prepare God's people to return to Jerusalem by the decree of Cyrus to rebuild God's temple.
2. Chronicles was not written to supply what was omitted from Kings. Rather, to teach how God rewards fidelity to his covenant with happiness and blessing; and faithless defection with punitive judgments.

Ezra and Nehemiah

1. These books, originally one unit, continue the narrative of 2 Chronicles describing the return of a Jewish remnant to Jerusalem, the rebuilding of the temple, restoration of the law, rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and the restoration of civil authority.
2. Cyrus of Persia issued the decree for the first return of a Jewish remnant in 538 B.C.

Esther

1. This book tells the story of Esther, a Jewish girl, how she became queen of Persia through the providence of God to deliver the Jews from destruction who did not return to Jerusalem.
2. This story fits historically between chapters 6 and 7 of Ezra.