

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE

Part 1

Today, I thought I would do something a little different. I am going to give you an overview the entire Bible which will take 4 lessons to do. This morning we will look at the O.T. from Genesis to Song of Solomon, and this evening we will examine the 5 major prophets, the 12 minor prophets, and take a brief look at the time between the testaments. Then next Sunday, I will give you an overview of the N.T.

The Bible covers a time period from approximately 4000 B.C. to A.D. 100. It consists of 66 books, 39 in the O.T. and 27 in the N.T., and it was written over a 1600 year span by about 40 different authors writing in different languages on three different continents, yet each book harmonies with each other, which proves that it is inspired by God because if man had written it from his own knowledge, it would be full of contradictions and errors. But the Bible has stood the test of time in its historical and scientific accuracy.

The Bible can be divided up in the following way:

1. The books of the Pentateuch, or the books of the Law, which are the first 5 books of the Bible – Genesis – Deuteronomy.
2. The books about the history of Israel consisting of 12 books – Joshua – Esther.
3. The books of poetry or wisdom consisting of 5 books – Job – Song of Solomon.
4. The books of the major prophets consisting of 5 books – Isaiah – Daniel.
5. The books of the minor prophets consisting of 12 books – Hosea – Malachi.
6. The Gospels consisting of 4 books – Matthew – John.
7. The history of the early church – Acts.
8. The letters or epistles consisting of 21 books – Romans – Jude.
9. The prophetic book – Revelation.

Let us begin with the Pentateuch, which was written by Moses around 1500 B.C. The first book of the Bible is Genesis and it is the book of beginnings as:

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

This great book records the creation of mankind and the fall of mankind. The events in Genesis cover about 2500 years, which is known as the patriarchal dispensation. It starts out with God creating everything including a man and woman who was named Adam and Eve. They ate from the forbidden tree, which caused mankind to be separated from God, but God had a plan in place that would save mankind through His Son Jesus. The first prophecy of this comes from:

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

As time went on and mankind multiplied, they became wicked and God destroyed all mankind except for the family of Noah. Later, God called Abram out of his country so

that he could become the father of God's chosen people, and he would show him the promise land that would become their land. Through Jacob, the 12 tribes of Israel were born. One of his sons, Joseph, would end up being betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery, which led to him becoming 2nd in command over Egypt. All of this happened by the providence of God so that His chosen people would survive the great famine that lasted for 7 years. God's chosen people end up living in Egypt for awhile.

Exodus, which means departure or going out covers about a 200-year period from the death of Joseph to the building of the tabernacle in the wilderness. It records the birth of Moses and how the children of Israel were slaves in Egypt. When Moses was 80, God commands him to go to the Pharaoh to free his people. Of course the Pharaoh would not listen at first, but 10 plagues later with the last one being the death of the first born male child caused the Pharaoh to let them go. It did not take long for the Pharaoh to go after the children of Israel and Moses parted the Red Sea and the children of Israel went across on dry land, and the Pharaoh tried to follow, but the sea drowned them.

Moses and the children of Israel made their way Mount Sinai where Moses received the 10 commandments. While he was on the mountain with God, the children of Israel began to sin. When Moses saw what they had done, he broke the tablets containing the 10 commandments and destroyed the golden calf they made, then he went back on the mountain and received a new set of tablets of the 10 commandments. Instructions about building various items for the tabernacle are given, and the Sabbath day was kept. Even though God provided manna for his people they continued to murmur and complain.

The book of Leviticus contains over 600 ceremonial laws that regulated priesthood, tabernacle worship, sacrifices, feast days and many other things. The main thought behind this book can be found in:

Leviticus 11:44 'For I *am* the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I *am* holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth. ⁴⁵ 'For I *am* the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I *am* holy.

This book and its laws was a call for the children of Israel to be holy.

The book of Numbers gets its name from the fact the children of Israel were numbered after their exodus from Egypt and at the end of the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. The main message of this book has to do with the wandering of the children of Israel. This book records how the children of Israel prepared for war, but when they made it to the border of Canaan, 10 out of 12 spies came back and said there was no way they could defeat the people of that land because they were giants. Only Joshua and Caleb said they could defeat their enemy because God was on their side. The majority listened to the 10 spies and because of their lack of faith, they would have wander in the wilderness for about 38 more years and only Caleb and Joshua would get to enter the promise land of all the men over 20 years old at that time. Many things happen to the

children of Israel during their wandering and the continual murmuring. They had to face the fiery serpents, they were fed a massive amount of quail that God said would run out their nose, and they saw the earth swallow people up. We also learn about Balaam and his talking donkey.

The book of Deuteronomy, which means second law, is not a new law, but a restatement of the Law of Moses. This was necessary because this was a new generation that needed to be reminded of the laws once again. Altogether God gave the Jews 613 commandments, 763 you shalls, and 207 you shall nots pertaining to foods, diseases, purification, marriage, etc. Moses gives his farewell address to the children of Israel in which he reminds them of God's love and care, but also of God's wrath on the previous generation for being disobedient to His will. This book reminds the people that obedience = blessing and disobedience = wrath. At the end, Joshua is chosen as the new leader and Moses dies.

Now let's take a look at the twelve books of history. These books (Joshua to Ezra) cover about 1000 years from 1450 B.C. to 400 B.C.

The book of Joshua is so named because it covers about a 50 year period of Joshua leading the children of Israel to victory over the promise land. The book starts out with Joshua stepping up and taking the place of Moses. God gives him these great instructions:

Joshua 1:5 "No man shall *be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.* ⁶ "Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ "Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸ "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. ⁹ "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you wherever you go."

After that, Joshua and his people crossed the Jordan and carried out three major military campaigns involving more than 30 enemy armies. They learned that their victories only came by keeping sin out of their camp and by having an obedient faith to God. Then the promise land was divided up among the 12 tribes of Israel. The tribe of Ruben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh chose to make their homes on the other side of the Jordan.

The book of Judges covers about 300 years and shows what happens when good leadership is gone. After Joshua's death, the children of Israel's devotion to God went downhill. The following verse describes what the problem was:

Judges 17:6 In those days *there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

This book covers seven cycles of sin, which led to seven heathen nations oppressing the children of Israel. It also records how God delivered them seven times from the enemies through 13 different judges ranging from Othniel through Samson. I like to call this book the yo-yo book because the children of Israel would start living a sinful life and God would allow their enemy to oppress them, then they would repent and God would deliver them. This cycle continues throughout the book of Judges.

The book of Ruth is a story of love that happened during the time of Judges and it covers about 10 years. Because there was a great famine in the land Naomi and her family left Bethlehem and lived in Moab where her two sons married two Moabite women. Her husband and her sons die, and Naomi decides to go back home but Ruth her daughter-in-law chooses to go with her.

Ruth 1:16 But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, *Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God.* ¹⁷ *Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me."*

They go together to Bethlehem. Ruth catches the eye of Boaz and Naomi instructs Ruth on what to do to win him over. Because of her faithfulness and willingness to make Naomi's God her God, she got married to Boaz and became part of the lineage of Christ as she was the great-grandmother of David.

The books 1 and 2 Samuel used to be one book in the Hebrew Bible and covers a time period of 1171 B.C. to 1015 B.C. 1 Samuel covers the history of the judge/priests Eli and Samuel and the first anointing of the first king of Israel Saul. It also records David's defeat of Goliath and many other enemies, his anointing to be the next king, his friendship with Jonathan, and Saul's jealousy of David. It also records Saul's failure to keep God's Word and the death of Saul and Jonathan.

Second Samuel covers the reign of David and how he enlarged the kingdom. It also covers his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband and the consequences of those sins and other sins. It also tells us of the sins of his children and the rebellion and death of his son Absalom.

The books 1 and 2 Kings used to be one book in the Hebrew Bible and continues recording the history of the Jews from 1 and 2 Samuel. These books cover a time period from David's death 1015 B.C. to the fall of Jerusalem around 586 B.C. 1 Kings records David making Solomon king and records all that Solomon did in expanding the kingdom, building the house of the Lord, and shows the great wisdom he had been given by God. It also records his downfall as his heart was turned by his 700 wives and 300 concubines.

When Solomon's son Rehoboam became king and decided to oppress the people more, it caused the children of Israel to be divided into two kingdoms. Ten tribes broke off from Judah under the leadership of Jeroboam and relocated in the northern part of the promise land and they set up idols to worship at Dan and Bethel. They would be called Israel and the tribes that remained behind would be called Judah. 1 Kings continues recording the history of the kings and the events that took place in these two divided kingdoms.

2 Kings continues the history and the demise of the children of Israel because of their rebellion against God. The kingdom of Israel had one bad king after another and they were destroyed and captured by Assyrians around 721 B.C. The kingdom of Judah had some good kings, but overall their wickedness led to their final captivity by the Babylonians around 586 B.C. Some of the prominent prophets during this time were Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah and Jeremiah.

1 and 2 Chronicles also used to be one book in the Hebrew Bible and they are primarily a supplement that gives additional information of the history of the Jews from 1 Samuel – 2 Kings. 1 Chronicles gives us a brief history from Adam to Solomon through genealogy so that the Jews would be able to know who belonged to what tribe when they resettled Judah after 70 years of Babylonian captivity. It supplements 1 and 2 Samuel.

2 Chronicles is a supplement for 1 and 2 Kings. However, it mainly focuses on the history of Judah and ends with the decree made by King Cyrus who granted the Jews freedom and allowed them to return back to Judah.

The book of Ezra records the history of the return of the Jews to Jerusalem, which covers about 80 years 536 – 456 B.C. The first return was led by Zerubbabel who brought back about 30,000 Jews. The second return was led by Ezra, who brought back about 2000 Jews in 457 B.C. It also tells us about the process of rebuilding the walls and the temple and how Ezra got the people to start observing the law, which included the Jews having to send away their foreign wives and children.

The book of Nehemiah covers about a 13-year period when Nehemiah the cupbearer for the king makes a bold decision to go to Jerusalem because the Jews had still not finished rebuilding the walls. He goes there with a full military escort and rekindles the Jews' faith in God and they finish rebuilding the walls, and they get back to following God until Nehemiah leaves, then they go back to their old ways, but Nehemiah comes back and leads them back to a righteous path. This book brings us to the end of recorded O.T. history found in the Bible, which is around 425 B.C.

The book of Esther is about how a Jewish maiden becomes the queen of Persia and saves the Jews from being destroyed due to the wicked plot of Haman who convinced the king that the Jews needed to be killed all because Mordecai would not bow down to him. While this decree could not be canceled by the law of Persia, Ezra had the king make another law that Jews could defend themselves on the day of slaughter. These events happened between the first return of the Jews to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel and the second return under Ezra.

Now we are going to look at the 5 books of poetry or wisdom. These five books consist of poetry, drama, wise sayings, songs, praises to God, prayers, rules of life and many other topics.

The book of Job's timeframe is unknown, but since the Law of Moses is not mentioned at all, most believe he lived around the time of Abraham and it may be one of the first books written in the Bible. This book starts out with Job being blessed by God and respected by his neighbors, but God allow Satan to test Job. Even when Satan takes away his children and his possessions he does not curse God, but keeps his faith in Him. Even after Satan was allowed to strike him down with a disease and his wife told him to curse God, and after his supposed friends did nothing but accuse him of sinning he still kept his faith in God, but not perfectly. In the end God speaks out to show how insignificant man's wisdom is compared to His, and he speaks of how He created all things. In the end, Job repents and God restores him with twice as much as he had before.

The book of Psalms is a collection of 150 songs and prophecies. Most of the Psalms were written during a 300 year period from David's time to Hezekiah's time. The Psalms cover a whole host of topics from history, prayer, praise, prophecies about Christ, worship, etc.. Psalm 23 is the most well known Psalm, and Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible in which the Word of God is exalted.

The book of Proverbs is a book of wise sayings. Most of these proverbs were written by Solomon, but we only have part of his wise saying because 1 Kings 4:32 tells that Solomon wrote 3000 proverbs. The purpose of the book is to instruct and give wisdom to the young (Prov. 1:2-6). The reason this is important is found in:

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, *But* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

This insightful book covers many topics that will help you live a life that others will respect and that will cause you to be pleasing to God.

The book of Ecclesiastes gets its name from a Greek word meaning preacher. Solomon is the author and writes from the perspective of what it is like living your life without God. From that perspective, he says things like, there is nothing new under the sun and that all of life is vanity. The message is that happiness does not come through worldliness or through relying on yourself, it comes from obeying God and serving him. That is the conclusion he comes to at the end of the book:

Ecclesiastes 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.

Song of Solomon is just one out the 1005 songs that Solomon wrote (1 Kings 4:32). It is a story of a shepherdess that is wooed by the king. The book can be divided into three parts. First, it records what happens before her marriage. Second, it records her marriage.

Third, it records what happens after her marriage. It may be a historical account of King Solomon's attempt to win this girl to his harem or it may be an allegory in which the King is God/Christ and the maiden in is His bride, the kingdom of Jerusalem/church. The overall message is that happiness comes only through a genuine love for God and faithfulness to Him. It also shows us how much passion and love God wants us to have in our marriages.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BIBLE

Part 2

This morning we began an overview of the entire Bible and we made it through Genesis – Song of Solomon. Tonight we will finish up the O.T. along with the time between the O.T. and N.T.

Tonight we will begin by examining the 5 books of the major prophets also known as the books of prophecy. The only reason they are called major is because of the size of their books, which is the same reason the 12 minor prophets are given their name. These prophets were the spokesman for God. They appeared at times of crisis as the champions of righteousness.

The Book of Isaiah is one of the longest and most important books in the Old Testament. It covers the life of Isaiah and what he said and did as prophet of God. It is sometimes called a miniature Bible because it has 66 chapters and two major divisions. The first division is the first 39 chapters, just like the OT has 39 books. The first 39 chapters emphasize God's judgment on immoral and idolatrous men. The second division is the last 27 chapters, just like there are 27 books in the NT. These last chapters teach us about the return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity, and it teaches about the grace of God through the promised Messiah concluding with the final judgment. These last chapters are similar to the N.T. in that they offer a message of hope through our redeemer Jesus.

Isaiah began prophesying around 759 B.C. and while his main message was to Judah, he also asked Israel to repent of their idolatry as well. He continued to pronounce God's judgment on several heathen nations as well, but one thing Isaiah is famous for is his many predictions of the coming Christ. One of the most well known prophecies of Christ comes from Isa. 53, which talks about the suffering servant.

The book of Jeremiah records how God made this young man into a prophet though he was reluctant at first. He lived about 100 years after Isaiah and he prophesied for about 60 years from 626 B.C. – 566 B.C. He is known as the weeping prophet. He foretold and witnessed the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple. He warned his people that they would be taken into captivity because of their backsliding and idolatry. Even though no one seemed to listen to him, he kept preaching God's message anyway. He also foretold of the return of the Jews after their 70 years of bondage. He also foretold that a new covenant would be made in the future:

Jeremiah 31:33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

The book of Lamentations is a collection of 5 poems that express grief over the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of the Jews. These poems read like eulogy at a funeral, but they do express hope because of God's compassion. So, the message is that sin brings misery and punishment, but God still loves us and will show us compassion when we repent.

The Book of Ezekiel covers the prophecies made by Ezekiel. Ezekiel had been carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar around 597 B.C. and he started prophesying 5 years later. He preached among the exiles the same message as Jeremiah did in Jerusalem that Judah would be captured and then later return. The majority of his prophecy was made known through visions, symbols, allegories that are similar to the style found in the book of Revelation. I have even heard people say that Ezekiel is the sci-fi book of the O.T.

The book of Daniel is about the life of Daniel and the dreams he interpreted. Daniel was part of the first group of Jews taken into captivity around 606 B.C. He was a young man that was chosen to serve the king and determined in his heart that he would abide by God's laws so he would not eat the king's delicacies. He and three companions were blessed by God and in Daniel 2, he interpreted the king's dream which showed the rise and fall of 4 kingdoms, which included Babylon, Persian Empire, Grecian Empire, and the Roman Empire. During the Roman Empire the kingdom of God would be established speaking of the church. Daniel is well-known for how Meshach, Shadrach, Abed-Nego would not bow down before the gold image and how God protected them from fiery furnace that was made 7 times hotter than usually. Of course, it includes how Daniel would not stop praying to God, which got him thrown into the lion's den, but God would not allow the lions to eat him. This book is also known for the prophecy about the 70 weeks in Daniel 9.

Now let's examine the 12 minor prophets. The 12 minor prophets are not any less important than the 5 major prophets. Again, they are called minor prophets because their books are smaller.

The book of Hosea is about the prophet Hosea. He preached his message to Israel from about 786 B.C. to 726 B.C. while Isaiah and Micah were preaching to Judah. He pictured Israel as God's adulterous bride and rebuked them for their idolatry. He foretold of their fall and captivity. The main thought is God's persistent love for His people in contrast with their unfaithfulness.

The book of Joel is about the prophet Joel. We do not know for sure, but some think he may have been the first prophet to preach to Judah. He predicted a time of trouble, but also said that God would drive their enemies away. He also foretold the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Joel 2:28-32, which happened on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

The book of Amos tells of how Amos, who was shepherd, preached about how Judah would not escape punishment for her sins, and they preached many other prophecies about other nations. His main message was to Israel about how they would be destroyed. He was preaching around the same time as Joel and Hosea around 786 B.C. – 726 B.C.

He also promised restoration and talked about the Messianic kingdom. The main thought is about God's righteous and holy love for His people.

The book of Obadiah is about the prophecies of the prophet Obadiah. It is believed that he preached around the time the Judah was overthrown around 586 B.C. Obadiah message was used to encourage the Jews because he foretold how Edom, one of their enemies, would be overthrown and cutoff forever, and he assured the Jews of God's blessing. Of course, the prophecies came to pass as predicted because 4 years later the Babylonians captured the Edomites. The last known remnant of the Edomites was the Herods in the N.T. time. Once they died out so did the lineage of the Edomites. Obadiah also told the Jews how they would still suffer a great deal from the nations around them.

The book of Jonah is unique in that is not full of visions, but records a small portion of the life of Jonah who was known as the reluctant missionary. We learn from 2 Kings 14:25 that Jonah preached during the time of Jeroboam II around 749 B.C. – 790 B.C. The story line is simple. Jonah is called to preach to Nineveh, he tries to run away via a ship. God shows him that he cannot hide from Him. He is swallowed by a fish where he stayed for 3 days and nights. Jesus used Jonah's fish story to teach others how long he will be in the grave before He would be resurrected. After the fish spits Jonah out, he preaches to Nineveh about how they will be overthrown in 40 days, but they repented and God canceled the judgment and Jonah was not happy about it. Jonah ended up showing more concern for a plant that was offering him shade than 120,000 gentiles that repented. The message is why God had a special relationship with his chosen people, He still had compassion and concern for other nations that were willing to repent.

The book of Micah is about the prophet Micah who preached around the time of Isaiah and Hosea around 740 B.C. – 700 B.C. He was a simple countryman that preached to Judah and Israel about God's hatred of evil and how their sins would lead to their downfall. He also spoke of how God likes to forgive those who repent. He foretold the birthplace of Jesus in Micah 5:2. Another important verse that applied then and applies now is:

Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

The book of Nahum is about the prophet Nahum and his message to Judah. He was preaching around 630 B.C. around the same time as Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah. He did not talk about the sins of the Jews or their downfall. Instead his message was about the overthrow of Nineveh. About 150 years before this time, Jonah preached to them and they repented, but they turn back to their sins and now Nahum was prophesying their doom, which happened about 20 years after he predicted it, which shows that God does not allow sin to go unpunished.

The book of Habakkuk is about the prophet Habakkuk who preached to Judah around 628 B.C. to 608 B.C. He had a complaint against God. He wanted to know why their nation should be destroyed by a more wicked nation. God let him know that He had a purpose in

letting the Chaldean's rise up and take Judah. Habakkuk complain again, however he does acknowledge that his nation deserves punishment for their sins. God answer is that the Chaldeans will be successful for now, but will be destroyed later, and God's people will fill the earth later. The message is that God reigns over all nations and the just shall live, but the unjust shall die. One verse from this book that is quoted 3 times in the NT is:

Habakkuk 2:4 ... But the just shall live by his faith. (Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38).

The book of Zephaniah is about the prophet Zephaniah who was a descendant of King Hezekiah. He prophesied during the reign of Josiah in Judah around 630 B.C. He prophesies about the destruction of the Jewish nation and all nations. His main message is the great day of the Lord. Not only does the message describe God's wrath on the nations, in the N.T. it is used to describe the final judgment day. His message is not all gloom and doom because at the end of the book it talks about God people will be rejoicing and will not have fear because God will restore them.

The book of Haggai has two chapters in which the prophet Haggai delivers a message from God to the Jews after their return to Jerusalem by the order of Cyrus around 520 B.C. Haggi was born in Babylon and had returned with Zerubbabel. He preached his message during the time the temple was being rebuilt and encouraged his people to resume the work on the temple because after they laid the foundation that stopped building for 16 years. He gave 4 messages concerning this. The first and third message was that the reason they were having trouble with their land and other things they were doing for themselves was because they neglecting the house of God. The other two messages were used to let them know that God was with them and would bless them for rebuilding the temple, and they listened to his message and rebuilt the temple by 515 B.C. The message is that materialism and laziness will hinder you from serving God.

The book of Zechariah is about the prophet Zechariah who also came back with Zerubbabel, and he worked with Haggai. Zerubbabel had eight visions that assured the Jews of God's love and care, and he encouraged them to overcome their complacency and to complete the temple. Haggai only prophesied for 4 months and Zechariah began prophesying 2 months after Haggai began, but he prophesied for two years. Zechariah made several prophecies about the coming Messiah:

His atoning death for the removal of sin (3:8-9; 13:1)

As builder of the house of God (6:12)

His universal reign as King and Priest (6:13; 9:10)

His triumphal entry into Jerusalem (9:9)

His betrayal for 30 pieces of silver (11:12)

His Deity (12:8)

His pierced hands (12:10; 13:6)

A smitten shepherd (13:7)

The book ends with God's promise that He would establish His rule over all the earth (14:7).

The last book of the O.T. is Malachi. It talks about the prophet Malachi and his message. He was the last of the O.T. prophets who prophesied about 100 years after Haggai and Zechariah around 450 B.C. – 425 B.C. He was connected with the reform movement of Ezra and Nehemiah. After the Jews rebuilt the temple they had engaged in many different sins. Malachi rebuked them for their heathen marriages, divorce, polluted sacrifices, corruption of the Sabbath, withholding tithes, and many other sins. He also foretold the coming of the forerunner of Christ (4:1) who was John the Baptist. The message is that if they will repent and turn to God, God will bless them.

The events that take place after the OT just prior to events that happen in the N.T is known as the intertestamental period or simply between the testaments. Much of what happened during this approximate 400 year period was predicted by Daniel. At the close of the O.T., the Jews were living under the Persian empire from 430 B.C. – 332 B.C. Under that empire that had freedom to practice their religion.

Then Alexander the Great came in and defeated the Persians and began to rule in 331 B.C. He allowed the Jews to continue their religion, but he did promote the Greek culture and had the O.T. translated into Greek, which is known as the Greek Septuagint. After Alexander died, there were a series of successors, but when Antiochus Epiphanes began to rule in 167 B.C. he wanted to change things so he overthrew the rightful line of the Jewish priesthood and desecrated the temple by defiling it with unclean animals, and he set up a pagan altar for Jupiter there. He destroyed every copy of the Scriptures he could find, and would put to death anyone that tried to circumcise their children and banned temple worship. It was his goal to wipe out the Jews and their religion. This led to a revolt where Jews banded together and reclaimed Jerusalem. This period was know as the period of independence also know as the Maccabean period from 167 B.C. to 63 B.C.

In 63 B.C. the Romans conquered the land, which was the empire Daniel said that the kingdom of God would be established which happened on the Day of Pentecost. I hope you have found this overview of the O.T. and intertestament period helpful. It certainly helpful to me because it allows me to gain an overall picture of the of the events from the beginning of time to the time just before Christ. I also like knowing when the prophets preached during the timeline since some of the O.T. books are not in chronological order.

I would like to close my lesson by showing you a chart that puts the O.T. books in chronological order. Knowing this will help you know what is going on at what time when you study the O.T.

Old Testament Books

Chronological Order

The Poetical Books

(Job)
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Songs

Reveals man's inner and outer struggles as he seeks to serve God by observing the Law.

The Prophetical Books

Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah

Challenges God's people to rectify themselves according to the Law before judgment comes.

Ezekiel
Daniel
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

The Historical Books

Ruth
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Esther

JOSHUA
JUDGES
SAMUEL 1
SAMUEL 2
KINGS 1
KINGS 2
EZRA
NEHEMIAH

Exile
70 years captivity
400 BC

Conquered	Saul David Solomon	Israel (north)	Assyria
360 years	United Kingdom	Judah (south)	Babylon
	460 years		Exiles Back
			160 years

Details the spiritual growth or failure of God's people according to how they have responded to the Law.

THE LAW (Torah) (Pentateuch)

Job

GENESIS
EXODUS
LEVITICUS
NUMBERS
DEUTERONOMY

The Law legally sets up the terms on which man can come before the LORD.

Lesson adapted from "Know Your Bible" by Frank Dunn and Halley's Bible Handbook.