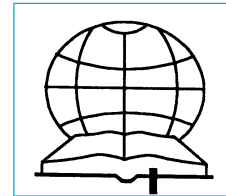


DIVISIONS OF THE BIBLE

66 Great Books from God—“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16)



THE BIBLE is really one book, whose author is the Lord God. ‘The Good Book’, as it has been called, is God’s Guide Book to Life—for all to read. Without it, we shall wander aimlessly through life, to the grave. With it, we can know what God has in store for the earth, and how we can share in His glorious purpose, centred in the Lord Jesus Christ. The twin themes of both Old and New Testaments (see Acts 8:12) are:

- The Kingdom of God
- Jesus Christ

Old Testament

History

- 1 Genesis
- 2 Exodus
- 3 Leviticus
- 4 Numbers
- 5 Deuteronomy
- 6 Joshua
- 7 Judges
- 8 Ruth



Every part of the Bible matters. The wonderful links between these 66 Books become apparent when you read from all sections of God’s Word, humbly and prayerfully.

Poetry

- 9 1 Samuel
- 10 2 Samuel
- 11 1 Kings
- 12 2 Kings
- 13 1 Chronicles
- 14 2 Chronicles
- 15 Ezra
- 16 Nehemiah
- 17 Esther
- 18 Job
- 19 Psalms
- 20 Proverbs
- 21 Ecclesiastes
- 22 Song of Solomon
- 23 Isaiah
- 24 Jeremiah
- 25 Lamentations
- 26 Ezekiel
- 27 Daniel
- 28 Hosea
- 29 Joel
- 30 Amos
- 31 Obadiah
- 32 Jonah
- 33 Micah
- 34 Nahum
- 35 Habakkuk
- 36 Zephaniah
- 37 Haggai
- 38 Zechariah
- 39 Malachi

Prophecy

New Testament

Gospels and Acts

- 40 Matthew
- 41 Mark
- 42 Luke
- 43 John
- 44 Acts of the Apostles

Letters

- 45 Romans
- 46 1 Corinthians
- 47 2 Corinthians
- 48 Galatians
- 49 Ephesians
- 50 Philippians
- 51 Colossians
- 52 1 Thessalonians
- 53 2 Thessalonians
- 54 1 Timothy
- 55 2 Timothy
- 56 Titus
- 57 Philemon
- 58 Hebrews
- 59 James
- 60 1 Peter
- 61 2 Peter
- 62 1 John
- 63 2 John
- 64 3 John
- 65 Jude
- 66 Revelation

Prophecy

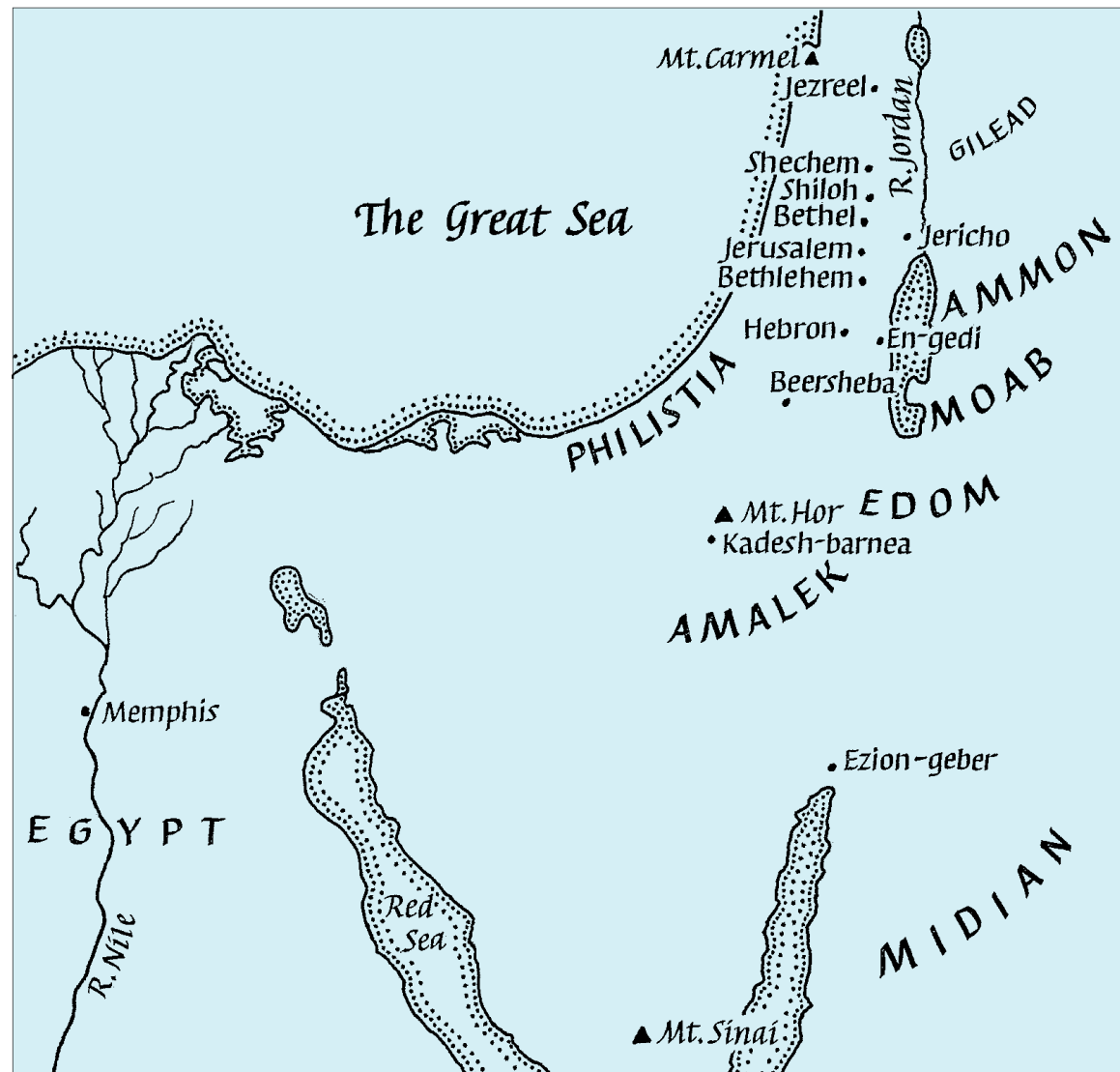
Map of Old Testament Times

Some of the places and peoples associated with the history of Israel and God's purpose.

For the following, see maps on the pages indicated:

The Migration of Abraham	5
The Exodus	6
The Conquest of Canaan	10
The Judges	11
The Reign of David	14
The Ministry of Elijah	15
The Rebuilding of Jerusalem	20
The Persian Empire	21

(Other maps specific to the prophets are featured on pages 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48)



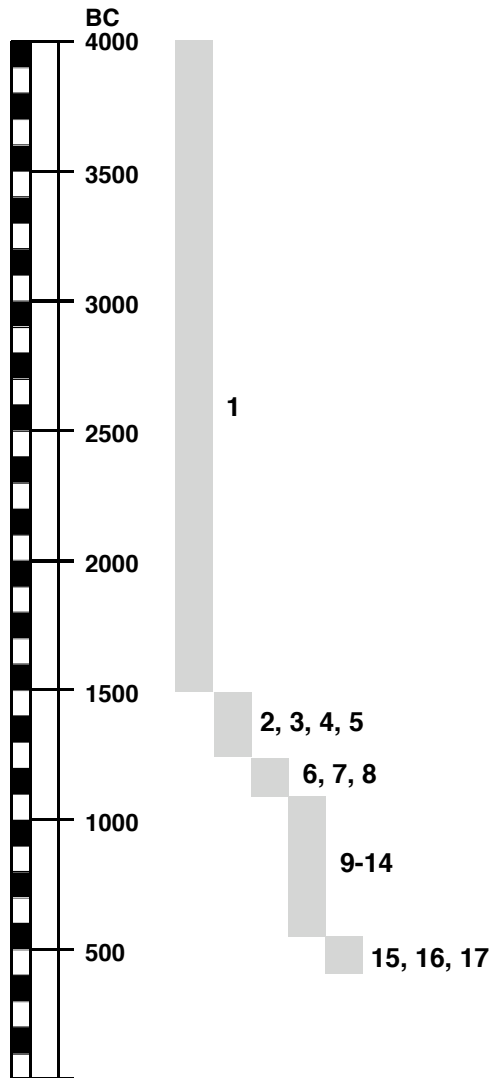
HISTORY SECTION

*“He made known his ways unto Moses,
His acts unto the children of Israel.”*

(Psalm 103:7)

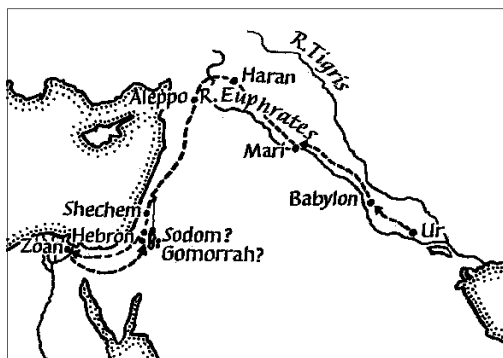
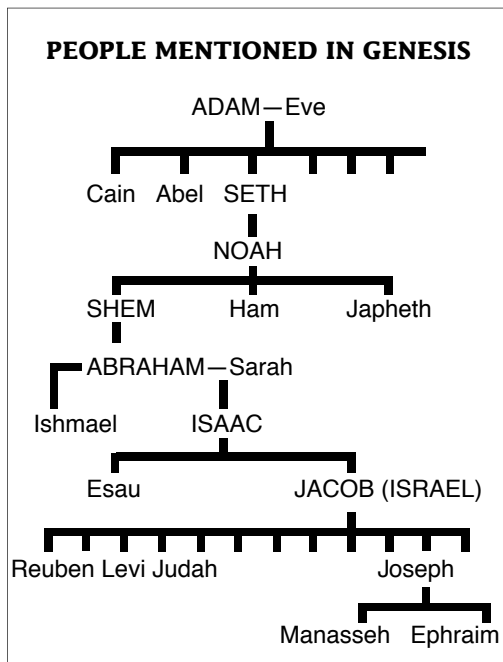
Books 1-17

Introduction to the HISTORY SECTION



No.	Book	Contents
1 2 3 4 5	Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	THE PENTATEUCH (5 BOOKS) A history of God's dealings with early man, His promises to Abraham and His work with Israel, the people He brought out from Egypt
6 7 8	Joshua Judges Ruth	THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF ISRAEL IN THE PROMISED LAND
9 10 11 12 13 14	1 Samuel 2 Samuel 1 Kings 2 Kings 1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles	THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN ISRAEL A history of the Kings and Prophets in God's Kingdom, from the time of Samuel until the overthrow of Jerusalem and the captivity of the Jews in Babylon
15 16 17	Ezra Nehemiah Esther	AFTER THE CAPTIVITY

GENESIS



Abraham's Journeys

The name “Genesis” means ‘birth’ or ‘beginning’. In this book we learn about very important beginnings in God’s plan for the Earth.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (1:1). The opening words of the Bible teach that God is the Creator of the universe, which He made with a plan and a purpose.

A Book of Beginnings

- The beginning of life on earth (chs 1-2)
- The origin of sin and death and the promise of a Saviour (ch 3)
- The Flood: a new beginning with Noah’s family, saved in the ark (chs 6-10)
- Babel: the origin of languages and races of mankind (ch 11)
- The beginnings of Israel (chs 12-32)

God called Abraham and his family to leave Ur, in Mesopotamia, to migrate to “a land that I will show thee” (12:1)—Canaan, the future land of promise. Lot, his nephew, settled near Sodom and Gomorrah, and had to be rescued when those evil cities were destroyed.

God’s Promises through Abraham

God promised Abraham: **(a)** a “seed” (Jesus Christ)—Isaac was a child of promise in the short term, but the “seed” promised to Abraham (22:17; Galatians 3:16) was Christ; **(b)** a nation—God’s people, in the first place Israel (17:7-8), but extended to those who are “in Christ”

(Galatians 3:29); **(c)** inheritance of the promised land of Israel by the faithful; **(d)** blessings for all nations—“In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (12:3).

Abraham’s faith was tested when God asked him to slay Isaac. He had the knife poised but his hand was stayed, and “in a figure” Abraham received his son back from the dead (Hebrews 11:17-19). The promises were repeated to Isaac (26:3) and Jacob (28:13), whose name was changed to Israel. Jacob had twelve sons, heads of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Jacob’s sons sell Joseph into Egypt as a slave, but he is promoted to be Pharaoh’s prime minister! Jacob and his family join Joseph in Egypt, but Jacob (47:30) and Joseph (50:24,25) both ask to be buried in the promised land of Israel.



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:	Compared with:
a) Genesis 2:7	a) 1 Corinthians 15:45
b) Genesis 2:24	b) Matthew 19:4,5
c) Genesis 13:15	c) Galatians 3:16-29
d) Genesis 15:7	d) Acts 7:5

2

EXODUS

The record of how the Israelites were saved out of Egypt, led through the Sinai Desert for 40 years and brought to the borders of Canaan.

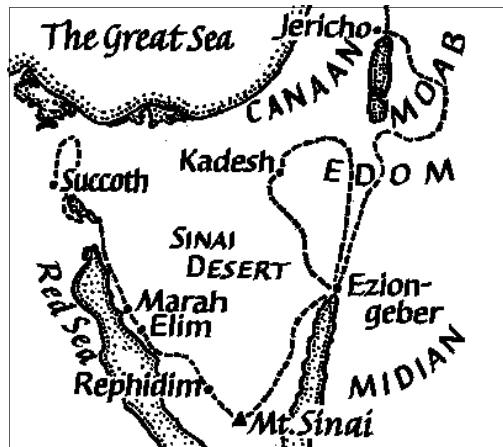
A Way Out

The word “Exodus” means ‘a going out’. The first part of the Book of Exodus contains the record of how God made a way out for His people Israel. He chose Moses to be their leader. Then, after ten mighty plagues against Egypt and its gods, and other miracles such as the drying up of the sea to let them cross, He took them out of the slavery of Egypt, to go to the Promised Land. The rest of the Book of Exodus records their journeyings

Great Events

Among the great miraculous events recorded in Exodus are:

1. The Burning Bush—ch 3
2. The 10 Plagues—chs 7-12
3. The Passover—chs 12-13
4. Crossing the Red Sea—chs 13-15
5. Bread from Heaven—ch 16
6. Water from the Rock—ch 17
7. Israel at Mount Sinai—ch 19
8. The giving of the Law (including the ten commandments)—chs 20-31
9. Incident of the Golden Calf—ch 32
10. Making and erecting the Tabernacle, where God’s glory came to dwell (see plan)—chs 25-40



in the Sinai desert
The Wilderness Wanderings

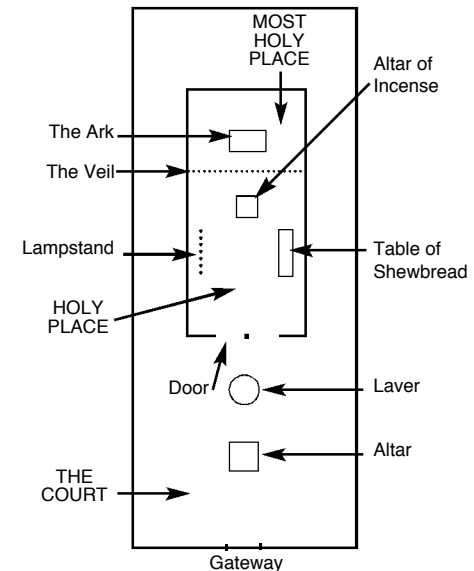


Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>For example:</i> | <i>Compared with:</i> |
| a) Exodus 19:6 | a) 1 Peter 2:9 |
| b) Exodus 28:29 | b) Hebrews 2:17 |
| c) Exodus 34:33-35 | c) 2 Corinthians 3:7-14 |

PLAGUES AND EGYPTIAN GODS

<i>Plague</i>	<i>Directed Against</i>
Nile turned to Blood	Hapi, Khnum, Osiris (gods of the Nile)
Cattle Plague	Hathor (cow goddess), Mnevis and Apis (sacred bulls)
Darkness	Ra, Aten, Atmu (sun gods)



The Tabernacle (Exodus 32-40)

3

LEVITICUS

God's laws given to Israel at Sinai: details of the sacrifices and the personal and collective life of holiness required of Israel.

FEAST DAYS AND THEIR PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE		
MONTHS	FEASTS	FUTURE
1 APR	Passover	Death of Jesus
2 MAY		
3 JUN	Firstfruits (start of harvest)	Christ and his followers
4 JUL		
5 AUG		
6 SEP	Trumpets	Return of Israel
7 OCT	Atonement	Repentance of Israel
8 NOV	Tabernacles (harvest complete)	Kingdom Age
9 DEC		
10 JAN		
11 FEB		
12 MAR		

Priesthood

Aaron (of the tribe of Levi) was Israel's first High Priest. His sons and descendants continued the priesthood over the next eight centuries. Though the Levitical priesthood failed, through disobedience, God would later provide a "better priesthood": Jesus Christ (of the tribe of Judah) is the only priest today, a mediator between God and men (1 Timothy 2:5).

Christ and the Offerings

Jesus Christ perfectly fulfilled all that was intended in the various offerings. His total dedication and sinlessness made him the perfect offering for those who look in faith to God for atonement (see Hebrews 10).

OFFERINGS UNDER THE LAW

Offering	Ref.	Meaning
BURNT	ch 1	Giving self to God
MEAL	ch 2	Thanks to God
PEACE	ch 3	Peace with God
SIN	ch 4	Sinful nature
TRESPASS	ch 5	Personal sins
ATONEMENT	ch 16	National cleansing



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>For example:</i> | <i>Compared with:</i> |
| a) Leviticus 10:3 | a) Isaiah 52:11;
1 Peter 1:15,16 |
| b) Leviticus 17:11 | b) Hebrews 9:22 |
| c) Leviticus 23:39,40 | c) Hosea 12:9;
Zechariah 14:16 |



The High Priest

4

NUMBERS

Incidents in the wilderness, following Israel's faithless failure, which prevented their entry into the Promised Land.

The Book of Numbers is so called because it records two censuses or 'numberings' of the Israelites:

- 1 At Sinai—1:1-3
- 2 Near to Canaan—ch 26

Forty Long Years

The 12 spies sent to reconnoitre in the Promised Land (ch 13) reported that the Canaanite cities were highly fortified and their armies powerful. Presented with this news, Israel lost faith in God's promise to give them the Land.

So for another 38 years they had to wander in the deserts. Their journeyings, especially during the final years, are related in chs 21-36. All the generation which left Egypt (from 20 years old and upwards) died in the desert, except some of the faithful Levites, and Joshua and Caleb, the only two spies who showed faith in God.

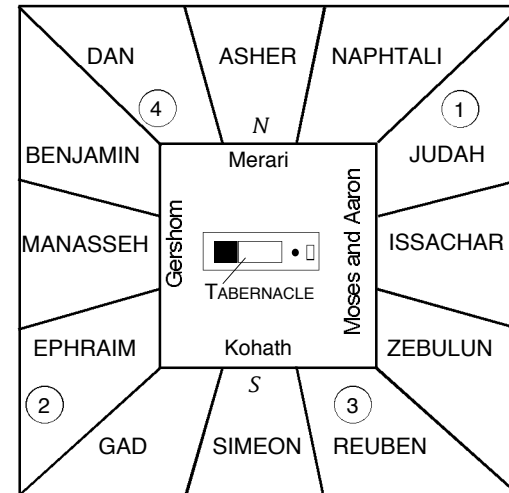
Chapter Summary

1st Census	ch 1
The Camp	ch 2
Levites	ch 4
Nazarites	ch 6
Princes	ch 8
Order of marching	ch 10
Taberah	ch 11
Miriam's revolt	ch 12
Spies' report	ch 13
Korah's revolt	ch 16
Water from the rock	ch 20
Fiery Serpents	ch 21
Balaam's prophecies	chs 22-24
2nd Census	ch 26
Various laws and feasts	chs 28-30
List of journeys	chs 33-34

LACK OF FAITH

Numbers (ch 1) according to Tribe (Men over 20 and excluding Levi)

Reuben46,500	Ephraim40,500
Simeon59,300	Manasseh32,200
Gad45,650	Benjamin35,400
Judah74,600	Dan62,700
Issachar54,400	Asher41,500
Zebulun57,400	Naphtali53,400
Total 603,550	



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) Numbers 14:21
- b) Numbers 21:8-9
- c) Numbers 24:17

Compared with:

- a) Isaiah 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14
- b) John 3:14-15; 2 Corinthians 5:21
- c) Genesis 49:10; Psalm 110:2



The 12 tribes (4 standards) encamped around the Tabernacle and its priesthood, during the wilderness journeyings (Numbers 2). For explanation of the standards, see page 58 (Mark)

DEUTERONOMY

5



Phylactery

The Jews—God's Chosen People

“The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.”

Deuteronomy 7:7,8

A new generation of Israelites, journeying in the wilderness, had God's laws repeated to them as they neared the borders of the Promised Land.

A New Generation

Forty years had passed since God brought Israel out from Egypt by a series of great miracles. He had since wonderfully provided for them during their wanderings in the Sinai peninsula.

In Deuteronomy (which means ‘repeating the Law’) we read how God reminded the new generation of His acts as they now stood near the borders of the Promised Land. God pleads with them to be more faithful than their fathers had been.

Remember the Days of Old

Chs 1-10 contain a review of what God had already done for His people, from Egypt onwards. They were exhorted to learn from the lessons of the past. We too should learn that these things are written for our eternal benefit (see Romans 15:4).

In the Mind

In later years, Jews sometimes wore little boxes containing Scripture texts on parchment, called ‘phylacteries’, which they fastened on their foreheads or arms. What really matters, is to have the Word of God in our minds (see Deuteronomy 6:6; Matthew 23:5; Hebrews 8:10).

Remember God's Word

There is an emphasis in Deuteronomy on the need to remember (see 4:9; 6:12; 8:2,11,18; 9:7; 11:18; 32:7).

Jesus remembered God's Word; it was deeply impressed on his mind. Thus he was strengthened against the temptations which arose from within. When, in the wilderness, three such temptations came (Matthew 4:1-10), they were quickly rebuffed with words from God's Book—all three were met with quotations remembered from Deuteronomy (8:3; 6:16; 10:20)! In the same way God's Word in our minds can help us overcome temptation.



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

a) Deuteronomy 4:2

b) Deuteronomy 6:4

c) Deuteronomy 18:18

Compared with:

a) Proverbs 30:6
Revelation 22:
18,19

b) 1 Corinthians 8:6
1 Timothy 2:5

c) Acts 3:22,23;
7:37

6

JOSHUA

The Divine record of the conquest of Canaan under Joshua, and the subsequent division of the Land among the twelve tribes of Israel.

The Lord's Servant

Joshua had been a captain of Israel's army (Exodus 17:9,10) and a personal servant to Moses (Exodus 24:13). After the death of Moses, God chose Joshua to lead His people into the Promised Land. Now, as God's servant, he must be "strong and very courageous" (1:1-9).

Preparing the Way

Two spies were sent ahead to the Canaanite fortress of Jericho (ch 2). Then, by a miracle, the River Jordan—which was in flood—was parted so that the Israelites could cross over (ch 3).

On the West Bank, Israel encamped at Gilgal which became a temporary headquarters during the campaigns which

followed. The Passover was kept (ch 5) and the people prepared for battle.

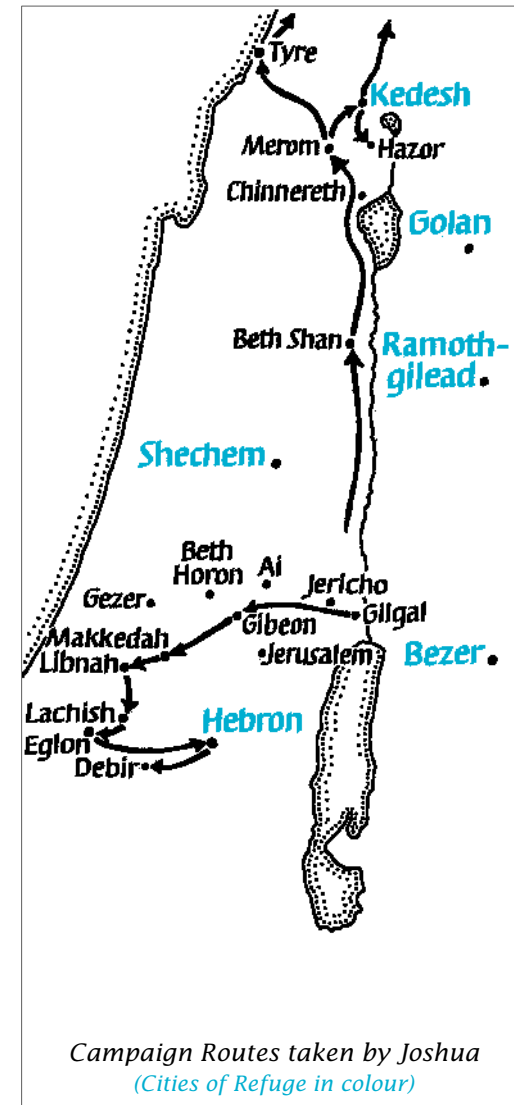
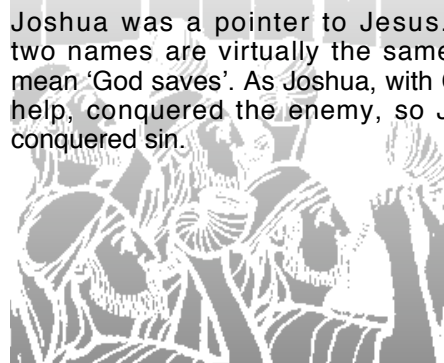
Early Conquests


The overthrow of Jericho by Divine power (ch 6) was followed by the conquest of Ai (ch 8), cities in the South (ch 10) and cities in the North (ch 11) (see campaign routes on map).

After 7 years the occupation of the Land was complete. The 12 tribes were given their portions and the Levites and Priests were allotted 48 cities throughout the country. Six "cities of refuge" were appointed to which those who had accidentally committed manslaughter could flee (ch 20; see Numbers 35:9-34).

Joshua and Jesus

Joshua was a pointer to Jesus. The two names are virtually the same and mean 'God saves'. As Joshua, with God's help, conquered the enemy, so Jesus conquered sin.



 **Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible**

<i>For example:</i>	<i>Compared with:</i>
a) Joshua 1:6	a) Genesis 15:18-21; 26:3
b) Joshua 2:1; 6:17-23	b) Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25
c) Joshua 18:1	c) Jeremiah 7:12; Acts 7:45

7

JUDGES

A history of the period during which God saved the largely disobedient Israel from surrounding nations, by the hand of certain tribal leaders called 'judges'

No King in Israel

The Book of Judges covers the period from the death of Joshua to the time of Samuel (see chart and Acts 13:20).

During this time Israel often failed to look to God as their Ruler—hence the repeated comment: “In those days there was no king in Israel” (18:1; 19:1; 21:25).

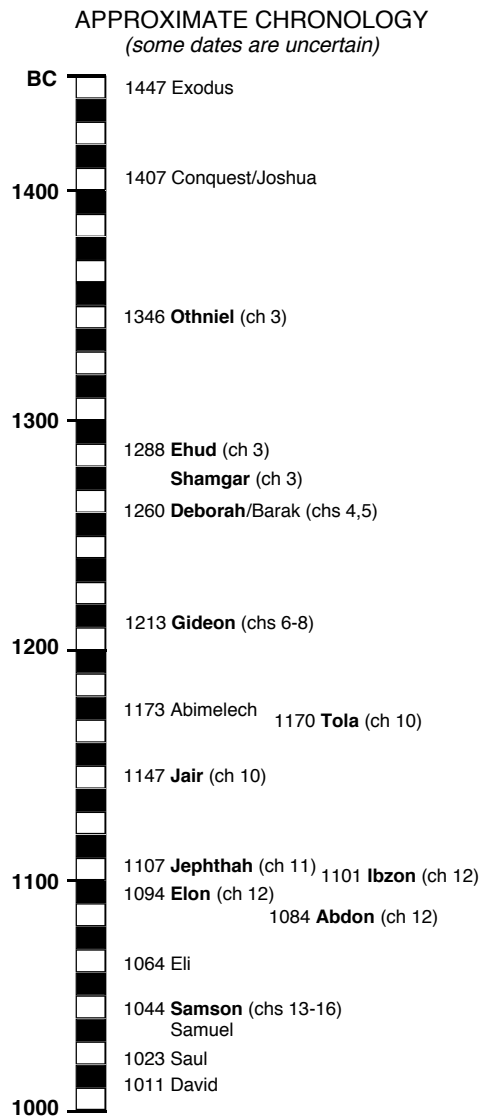
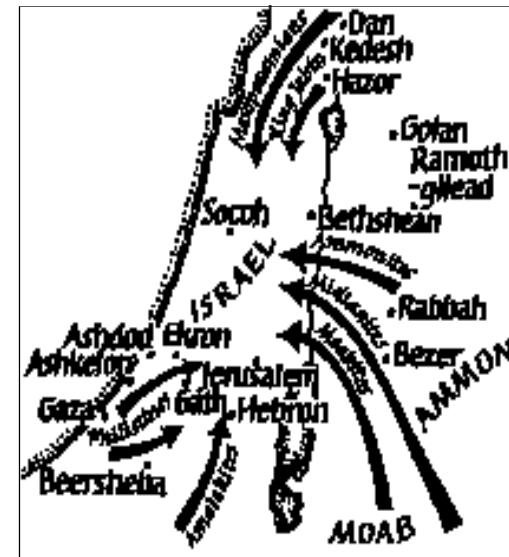
The Judges

Many times during this period surrounding nations were able to invade Israel (see map). However, from time to time, God gave Israel deliverers—the judges—who, with His help, overcame those enemies and ruled God’s people.

Jesus the Judge

When reading this book, it is profitable to look for comparisons with Jesus Christ—the One sent by God to save His people from sin and death, who will come again

to Israel as Judge, Deliverer and King (see Interesting Links below).



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) Judges 5:12
- b) Judges 8:23
- c) Judges 11:27

Compared with:

- a) Psalm 68:18; Ephesians 4:8
- b) John 6:15
- c) Genesis 18:25; Matthew 25:34; Acts 17:30,31

8

RUTH

The record of the Moabitess who turned to Israel's God, married Boaz of Bethlehem and became an ancestor of Jesus Christ!

Time of the Judges

The events in this lovely little book, only four chapters long, took place in the time of the Judges (see Ruth 1:1); it forms a link between the days when “there was no king in Israel” (Judges 21:25) and the time of King David, who sat on “the throne of the LORD”, in Jerusalem.

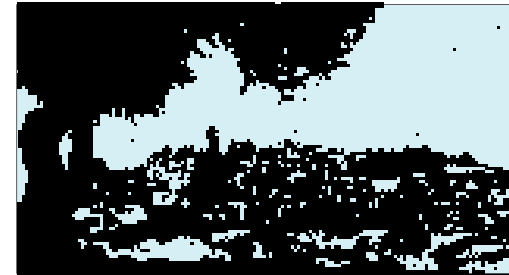
The story starts in Moab: Naomi and her husband Elimelech had moved there, seeking relief from the famine in Judea. Elimelech died in Moab; their two sons also died, leaving Naomi with her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth. Orpah chose to stay in Moab, but—when the famine was over—Ruth accompanied Naomi back to Judea. Ruth the Moabitess learned from Naomi about the God of Israel, in whom she came to trust (2:12). In Bethlehem, Naomi's home town, an elderly relation, Boaz, showed kindness to

them both. Eventually he married Ruth and the happy result was the birth of a son, Obed, who was the grandfather of King David. Some 1,000 years later, Mary the mother of Jesus was born of this family line (see family tree).

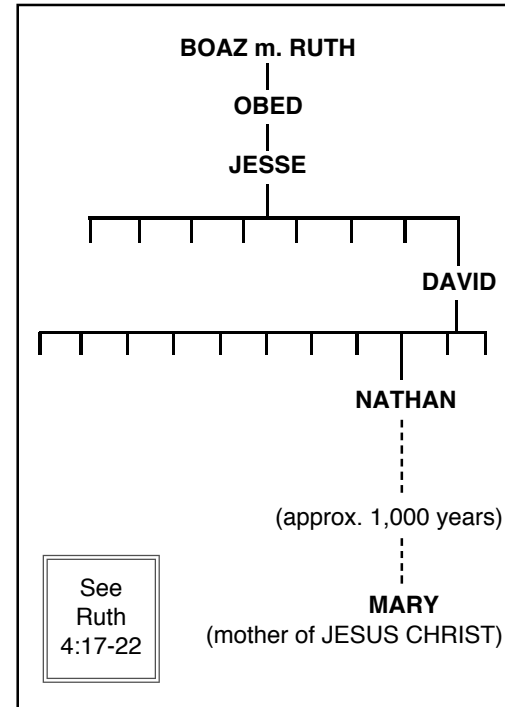
God's Harvest

Ruth came to Bethlehem (the ‘house of bread’!) at the time of barley harvest. At first she was allowed to glean corn dropped in the field which belonged to Boaz. Later she was invited to share the meals he provided for his servants.

God is preparing a people for His coming Kingdom, where believers from all down the ages will eat and drink with Jesus, the first-fruits of that final harvest! (Luke 22:30; 1 Corinthians 15:23).



Bethlehem



The Family Tree of Boaz and Ruth



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) Ruth 1:6
- b) Ruth 2:12
- c) Ruth 4:17-22

Compared with:

- a) Exodus 4:31; Luke 1:68
- b) Psalm 17:8; Matthew 23:37
- c) Matthew 1:3-6; Luke 1:30-32; 3:31-33

1 SAMUEL

9

Events at the time of Samuel the prophet: the reign of King Saul over Israel; God's choice of David to be the King of His people, instead of Saul.



David and Goliath

In the days of Eli, Hannah—a Godly but childless woman—prays for a son. Samuel is born and she devotes him to the Lord's service. Samuel's life is then spent restoring Israel's worship—and being a Kingmaker.

Perhaps the best known event in this book is in ch 17. With a single stone from his sling, David the shepherd-boy defeated the great Philistine champion, Goliath. This showed God was on David's side.

Jesus and the Gentiles

This incident is a remarkable foretaste of how Jesus (the "Son of David") will overthrow the kingdoms of men and all Gentile

domination, when he returns to re-establish God's Kingdom in Israel (compare the prophecy of Daniel 2).

Samuel the Prophet (40 years)

- The ark (from the Tabernacle) was captured by the Philistines (ch 4) but later returned (ch 5).
- Israel asked for a king (ch 8), though their God was their King!
- Samuel was told by God to anoint Saul as king (ch 9).

King Saul (40 years)

- Saul disobeyed God (chs 13 & 15), so God rejected him and told Samuel to anoint David, "a man after God's own heart".
- Saul envied David and often tried to kill him (chs 18-31).

King David (40 years)

- After the death of Saul, David became king, first in Hebron (7 years), then in Jerusalem (33 years). (The record continues into 2 Samuel.)



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

a) 1 Samuel 15:22

b) 1 Samuel 17:49

c) 1 Samuel 18:5,
14,30

Compared with:

a) Micah 6:6-8

b) Daniel 2:34,44,45

c) Luke 2:52

*"The LORD seeth not as man seeth;
for man looketh on the outward appearance,
but the LORD looketh on the heart"
(16:7)*

10

2 SAMUEL

The reign of King David over God's Kingdom in Israel. Jerusalem is made capital city. David's sin and the troubles which followed.

Two Main Sections

This Book has two parts, covering the period when David was King:

First, after the death of King Saul, David became King in Hebron (7 years) and later in Jerusalem (33 years). With God's help, surrounding enemy nations were subdued. David brought back the ark of God up to Jerusalem (ch 6).

David had built himself a house of cedar-wood, and wanted to provide a more permanent resting-place for the ark of God—a centre for Israel's worship to take the place of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. Through the prophet Nathan, God told David that "thy seed after thee ...

shall build an house for my name" (7:12,13): that was to be Solomon. But the prophecy was not limited to Solomon. God promised David that, although he would not have the privilege of building God's house, "the LORD will make *thee* an house"; moreover, speaking of his "seed" (offspring or descendant), "I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever" (7:11-13). This greater "Son of David" is Jesus Christ (see Luke 1:32,33; 18:38).

David's Sin

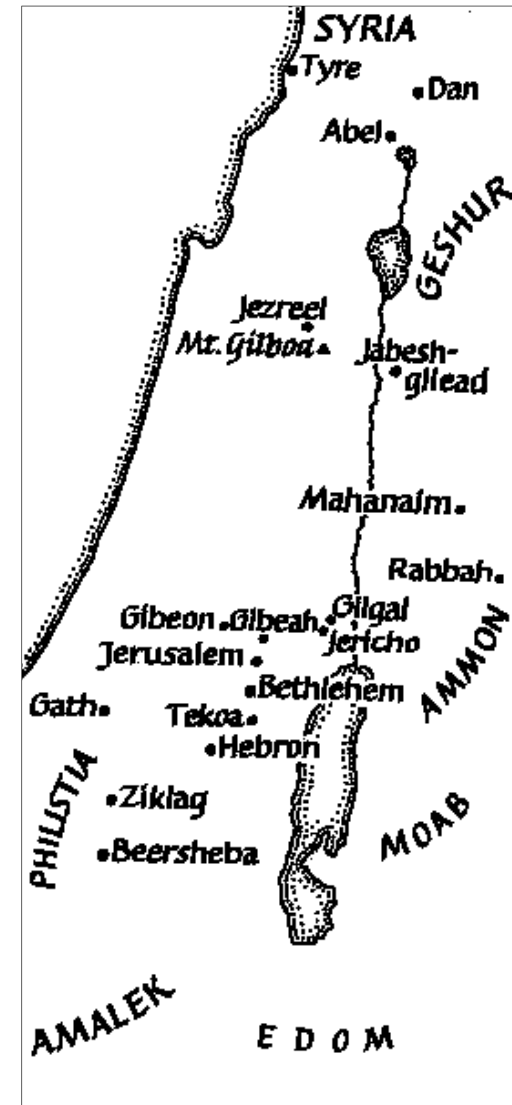
The second section begins in ch 11 with David's great sin in taking Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. Bathsheba bore a baby son, who in spite of David's prayers, died; but then Bathsheba bore Solomon, who was to succeed David.

Although David repented of his sin (see his plea for God's mercy and lovingkindness in Psalm 51), and God forgave him, he suffered thereafter at the hands of his own family. His son Absalom rebelled, taking the throne temporarily, and David had to flee. Later he was able to return to Jerusalem. Chs 22-23 contain prophecies of Christ's future reign.



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:	Compared with:
a) 2 Samuel 7:12	a) Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:32,33
b) 2 Samuel 12:13	b) Psalm 32:1; Acts 2:38
c) 2 Samuel 23:3-5	c) Isaiah 32:1; Zechariah 9:9

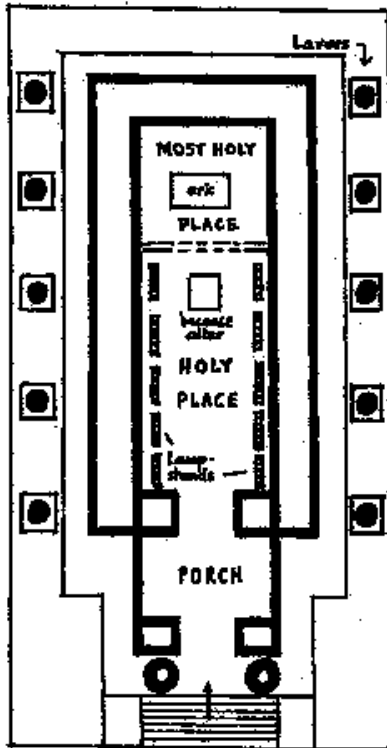


Places named in 2 Samuel

1 KINGS

11

The reign of King Solomon (40 years) and the first 85 years of the divided Kingdom. The spread of idolatry in the North, in spite of the work of the prophet Elijah.



The Kingdom of God

The two Books of Kings record the history of the 'Kingdom of God' in the past with its capital, Jerusalem. King David (ch 1) and Solomon (chs 2-11) ruled a united kingdom, but decay set in following Solomon's turning to idolatry (ch 11).

The kingdom was divided in the reign of Solomon's son, Rehoboam. Various wicked kings ruled the Northern section, whilst descendants of David continued to rule in Jerusalem.

The Temple of God

The temple built by Solomon (chs 5-8) was similar in design to the Tabernacle, though the sizes of the two main rooms were doubled and the number of lampstands and washing places (lavers) were now ten.

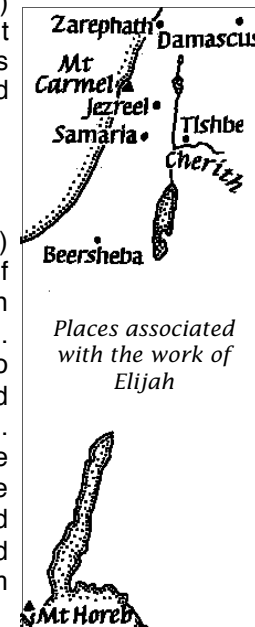
Built in a time of peace, this temple pointed forward to a future one, when the Kingdom of God will be restored in Israel – at a time of peace, with Jesus Christ as King! (Zechariah 6:13).

King Solomon

This great monarch was famed for his wisdom and wealth. The Queen of Sheba (southern Arabia) paid a state visit (ch 10). Solomon's ships brought gold from afar.

Elijah the Prophet

Elijah (chs 17-22) was a prophet of God to the Northern Kingdom (Israel). He showed who was the true God when, on Mt. Carmel, and in the sight of all the false prophets, he called on God to send down fire from heaven.



'Ships of Tarshish' (1 Kings 10:22)



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) 1 Kings 13:18
- b) 1 Kings 18:21
- c) 1 Kings 22:24

Compared with:

- a) Galatians 1:8
- b) Isaiah 44:6; John 17:3
- c) Micah 5:1; Matthew 26:67

12

2 KINGS

A record of the divided Kingdom until the overthrow of Israel by Assyria in 722 BC and of Judah 136 years later, by Babylon.

Two Kingdoms Topple

Disobedience of God’s Word, and idolatry in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, resulted in the downfall of that kingdom in 722 BC.

The Southern Kingdom of Judah, which had a few better kings (shown by an asterisk on the chart) was finally overthrown by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, in 586 BC. Many of the Jews were taken into captivity in Babylon.

The Prophet Elisha

After he had seen Elijah taken away (ch 2), Elisha became the next great prophet to Israel. He asked Elijah for “a double portion of thy spirit” (v 9), and the number and nature of the miracles Elisha

performed—e.g. healing the waters of a spring (2 Kings 2:19), increasing the widow’s oil (4:1), bringing the Shunammite’s son back to life (4:34), causing an axe-head to float to the surface (6:1) etc.—suggest that God granted the request. One miracle with a specially significant spiritual lesson was the cleansing from leprosy of Naaman, the Syrian commander-in-chief (ch 5). By humbling himself and being willing to wash in the waters of the river Jordan, Naaman pre-figured the act of baptism which Jesus commanded, which can cleanse a sinner and give him or her a new life: a ‘burial’ in water followed by a ‘resurrection’ to a new way of life.



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

<i>For example:</i>	<i>Compared with:</i>
a) 2 Kings 5:1-14	a) Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16
b) 2 Kings 11:12	b) Psalm 2:6; Zechariah 14:9
c) 2 Kings 20:1	c) Isaiah 38:1,18; Ecclesiastes 9:5



The Divided Kingdom

JUDAH **ISRAEL**

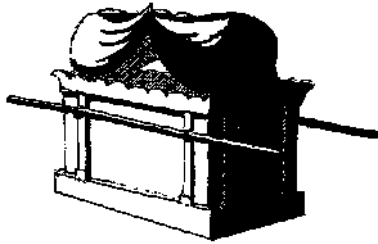
(Chapter nos. in brackets)

	B.C.	
	900	Ahaziah (1)
Jehoshaphat (3)*		Joram (3)
Jehoram (8)		Jehu (9-10)
Ahaziah (8)		Jehoahaz (10)
Queen Athaliah (11)		Jehoash (13)
Joash (12)*		Jeroboam II (14)
Amaziah (14)		
Uzziah (14-15)*	800	Zachariah (14)
		Shallum (15)
		Menahem (15)
Jotham (15)		Pekahiah (15)
Ahaz (16)		Pekah (15)
		Hoshea (17)
Hezekiah (18-20)*		722—Fall of Samaria
Manasseh (21)		
Amon (21)		
Josiah (22-23)*		
Jehoahaz (23)		
Jehoiakim (23)		
Jehoiachin (24)		
Zedekiah (24-25)	600	

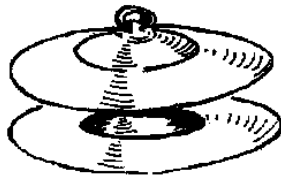


1 CHRONICLES

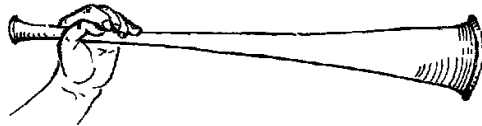
13



The wings of the cherubim in the Most Holy Place were fully outstretched—symbolic of the world-wide worship of the future age (2 Chronicles 3:11-13; Zechariah 14:9)



Cymbals (see 16:5)



A silver trumpet as used by the priests (see 15:24; 16:6)

God's dealings with Judah in the days of David; the "mighty men", the priesthood and servants involved in the praise and worship of God during David's reign and in preparation for Solomon's reign.

Jerusalem Journals

The Hebrew name for the two Books of Chronicles means 'the Acts of the Days'. In the Septuagint, the Chronicles are referred to by a Greek word which means 'the things omitted'—suggesting that it was viewed as a supplement to the other historical writings. They are journals or records of events in God's ancient Kingdom centred in Jerusalem, when David and subsequent kings sat on "the throne of the Lord".

1 Chronicles commences with several chapters of genealogies—reminding God's people of their ancestry and heritage, and particularly of their function as witnesses to God among the nations. Later chapters cover the same ground as the end of 1 Samuel, much of 2 Samuel and the start of 1 Kings; but this book emphasises spiritual themes. There is much in these divinely inspired books which looks forward to the restoration of God's Kingdom in Israel, under Jesus Christ. Even now, true servants of God can learn how to worship in the "beauty of holiness" (or 'holy attire'), being clad with the "righteousness of Christ" through belief, baptism and obedience (see

Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:24).

Preparations for the Temple

David himself was not allowed to build a temple for God: "God said unto me, Thou shalt not build a house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war" (28:3). David did, however, prepare the materials needed to build the temple, and prayed that God would "give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments ... and to build the palace (temple), for the which I have made provision" (29:19).

So David died, "full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead" (29:28).



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- a) 1 Chronicles 16:29
- b) 1 Chronicles 17:11-14
- c) 1 Chronicles 28:5; 29:23

Compared with:

- a) Psalm 96:9-10; Psalm 110:3
- b) Isaiah 9:6,7; Luke 1:32-33
- c) 2 Chronicles 13:8; Acts 1:6

14

2 CHRONICLES

The reigns of Solomon, and of the later kings in Judah, emphasise the blessings received when the Jews gave glory to God and were faithful.

The Nation Needs God

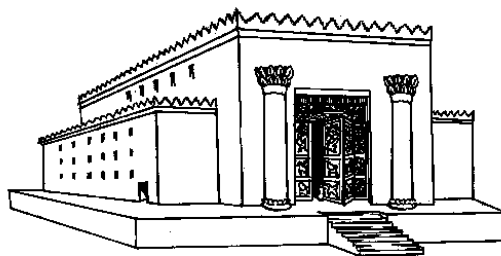
The Second Book of Chronicles, which parallels much of 1 & 2 Kings, continues the theme of the First Book, showing how the Jews found their greatest blessings when they worshipped God truly and tried to obey His laws.

Instances are highlighted in which the religious zeal of the king, or the people, resulted in victories and in a period of peace, whereas wickedness led only to defeat and trouble. By such means God sought to teach His nation (see, for example, 20:22; 26:5; 30:9).

The Temple

The early chapters provide details of the small but perfect Temple, built to Divine plans, which was erected in the reign of Solomon and lasted 430 years—the period covered by 2 Chronicles.

When it was first built, the Temple was temporarily filled with the “glory of God” (7:1-3). This remarkable event pointed forward to the future Kingdom of God, when his “glory” will fill the whole earth (Numbers 14:21). When there is “glory to God” then, too, there will be “peace on earth” (Luke 2:14).



Solomon's Temple

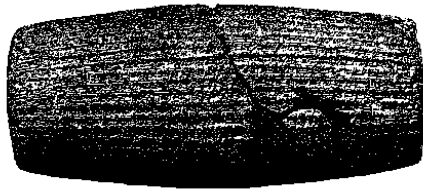
“Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on his throne, to be king for the LORD thy God” (words of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, 9:8)



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>For example:</i> | <i>Compared with:</i> |
| a) 2 Chronicles 7:1-2 | a) Ezekiel 43:4,5; Isaiah 11:9 |
| b) 2 Chronicles 20:17 | b) Exodus 14:13; Psalm 46:10 |
| c) 2 Chronicles 36:16 | c) Jeremiah 25:3,4; Matthew 23:34-39 |

King	Years	Type	See 2 Chronicles
Rehoboam	17	Bad	12:1-2
Abijah	3	GOOD	13:10-12
Asa	41	GOOD	15:15-17
Jehoshaphat	25	GOOD	17:3-6
Jehoram	8	Bad	21:12-15
Ahaziah	1	Bad	22:2-7
Q. Athaliah	6	Bad	23:12-15
Joash	40	GOOD	24:8-10
Amaziah	29	Bad	25:14-16
Uzziah	52	GOOD	26:3-15
Jotham	16	Bad	27:2-6
Ahaz	16	Bad	28:1-5
Hezekiah	29	GOOD	31:20-21
Manasseh	55	Bad	33:9-11
Amon	2	Bad	33:21-24
Josiah	31	GOOD	34:1-7
Jehoahaz	3m	Bad	36:1-3
Jehoiakim	11	Bad	36:5-6
Jehoiachin	3m	Bad	36:9-10
Zedekiah	11	Bad	36:11-17



The Cylinder of Cyrus

EZRA

15

The return of the Jews from captivity in Babylon, led first by Zerubbabel and Joshua and later by Ezra the Scribe. The Temple was rebuilt in spite of opposition from adversaries living in the land.

Kings of the Medes and Persians		
B.C.		
540	Cyrus (1:1)	<i>Zerubbabel and Joshua</i>
530	Cambyses (4:6) Smerdis (4:7)	
520	Darius I (4:24)	<i>Haggai and Zechariah</i>
510		
500		
490	Xerxes I	
480	(Esther 1:1)	
470	Artaxerxes I (7:1)	
460		<i>Ezra</i>
450		
440		<i>Nehemiah</i>

The Cylinder of Cyrus

The Persian monarch, Cyrus I, recorded his exploits on a clay cylinder, now in the British Museum. The inscriptions on it include his decree made in 536 BC, which allowed the Jews who were in exile in Babylonia and Persia to return to Israel.

This fulfilled God’s promise, made through the prophet Jeremiah, that the Jews would be able to come back from Babylon after 70 years of captivity (see Jeremiah 29:10).

Enemies of Israel

A small number of Jews returned under the initial decree of Cyrus (ch 2). These were led by Zerubbabel (a prince of the royal tribe of Judah) and Joshua (the High Priest).

Adversaries interfered with the rebuilding of the Temple (ch 4) having cunningly obtained a decree from the new Persian king, Smerdis (‘Artaxerxes’, ch 4:7), forbidding the Jewish activities.

However, God’s prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the Jews to resume the work, and the next Persian king, Darius I, supported them (chs 5-6).

Ezra the Scribe

Ezra, a priest and scribe of the Law, led a second wave of Jews, about 70 years after the initial return. From ch 7 onwards, we learn of this and of Ezra’s efforts to reform the nation. He taught them the Word of God and showed them their need for total separation from the false worship and ways of the nations round about them. In ch 9 is recorded his moving prayer of repentance on behalf of the people: “And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments ... Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve” (9:10-13).



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| <i>For example:</i> | <i>Compared with:</i> |
| a) Ezra 5:1,2 | a) Haggai 1:1; Zechariah 1:1 |
| b) Ezra 5:5 | b) Psalm 33:18; 34:15; 1 Peter 3:12 |
| c) Ezra 9:14 | c) 2 Corinthians 6:17; Revelation 18:4 |

16

NEHEMIAH

Nehemiah, a Jewish cup bearer to the King of Persia, becomes Governor in Jerusalem and encourages the rebuilding of the city walls, in the face of opposition.

The Cup Bearer

Nehemiah was a Jewish exile who served as a cup bearer to the Persian monarch, Artaxerxes, about 446 BC. Following the decree of Cyrus in 536 BC some of the Jews had returned to the land of Israel. However, adversaries had succeeded in slowing down the work of restoration. Now, some 90 years later, the walls of Jerusalem were in a state of disrepair. Nehemiah prayed to God about it (1:4).

Sorrow for Jerusalem

Nehemiah's sorrow for the state of Jerusalem showed in his face. Artaxerxes demanded to know the reason for Nehemiah's fallen countenance. A quick prayer to God by Nehemiah (2:4) was immediately answered. Artaxerxes gave Nehemiah authority to go to Jerusalem and personally take charge of the rebuilding work.

The wall is finished

Despite further opposition from "Arabians, Ammonites and Ashdodites", and others, the wall was completed in a mere 52 days (6:15)!

Ezra the scribe had returned to Jerusalem some 11 years earlier (Ezra 7)

and for a while had been able to instruct and encourage the Jews in the ways of God. Now, with Nehemiah as Governor of the Land, opposition was kept at bay, though the Jews themselves needed further reform.

The Reading of God's Word

The people were helped most when Ezra and his assistant priests read daily to them from God's Word, when they assembled with their families in the streets of Jerusalem. They saw the need to change their ways. All were in need, including some religious leaders—who were among the worst offenders (13:29).



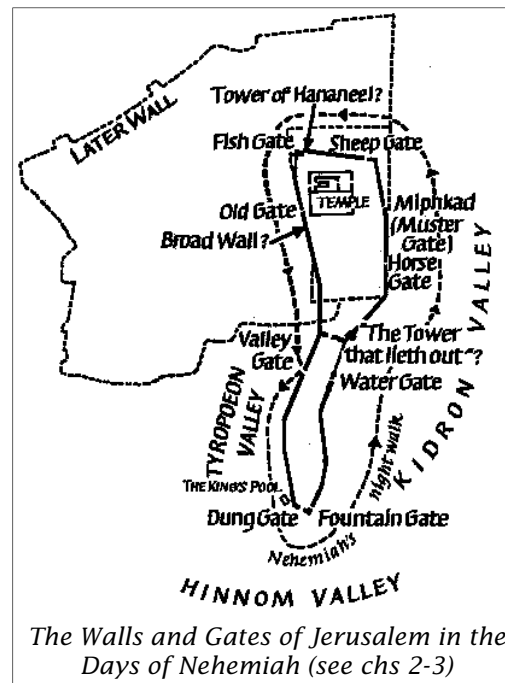
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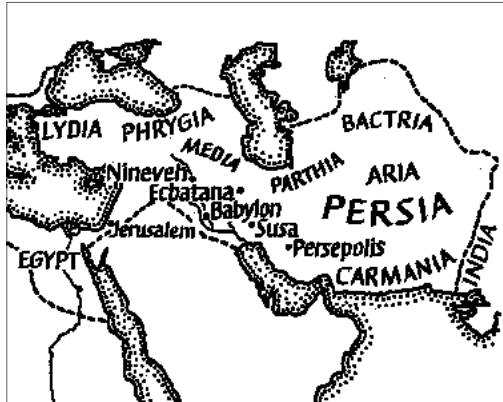
- a) Nehemiah 1:5; 9:32
- b) Nehemiah 1:4; 2:4
- c) Nehemiah 13:29

Compared with:

- a) Exodus 20:6; Daniel 9:4
- b) Daniel 9:3-23; Psalm 34:15
- c) Malachi 2:4,7,11; 1 Peter 2:5



ESTHER



A Divine Record of an attempted massacre of the Jews throughout the Persian Empire. The providential intervention of Esther, a Jewess.

The World Empire of Persia

The Persian Empire spread over much of the civilised world and consisted of 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia (1:1). Many Jews were still scattered throughout the Empire (4:3; 8:9,17) during the time of Esther and King Xerxes (485-464 BC).

An attempt to annihilate the Jews was thwarted by God, who has an on-going purpose with this nation.

The Conquest of the Enemy

There are three main sections:

King Ahasuerus (Xerxes) rejected Queen Vashti and chose a new queen, whom he named Esther. She had been brought up by Mordecai, her cousin, who was also Jewish. Haman was a wicked Amalekite, of a tribe long opposed to Israel and to God (see Exodus 17:8-16; Numbers 24:20). He was jealous of Mordecai and planned to destroy him and all Jews on a date decided

by casting 'lots' (Purim) (3:7,13).


Mordecai persuaded Esther to plead with the King for her people. So she began by inviting the King and Haman to a banquet. At a second banquet she told the King of Haman's plot to massacre the Jews. The King commanded that Haman should be hung on the 50 cubits (75 ft) high 'tree' which Haman had prepared for the hanging of Mordecai (5:14; 7:10).

The King then issued a decree permitting all Jews to defend themselves on the appointed day. This deliverance is commemorated by the Jews every year at the Feast of Purim (9:27,28).


Jesus Conquered Sin

Jesus, too, was hung on a 'tree' (Acts 5:30). He did so as a representative of sinful mankind. But God raised him from the dead, so giving hope to those who believe and follow him (Romans 6:4,22).

The Queen's Name is Changed



A Jewess called Hadassah (myrtle) (see Nehemiah 8:15) was chosen to be Queen of Persia. Her name was changed to 'Esther' (Venus). Christ's royal Bride is being prepared for him now (see Revelation 19:8)




Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

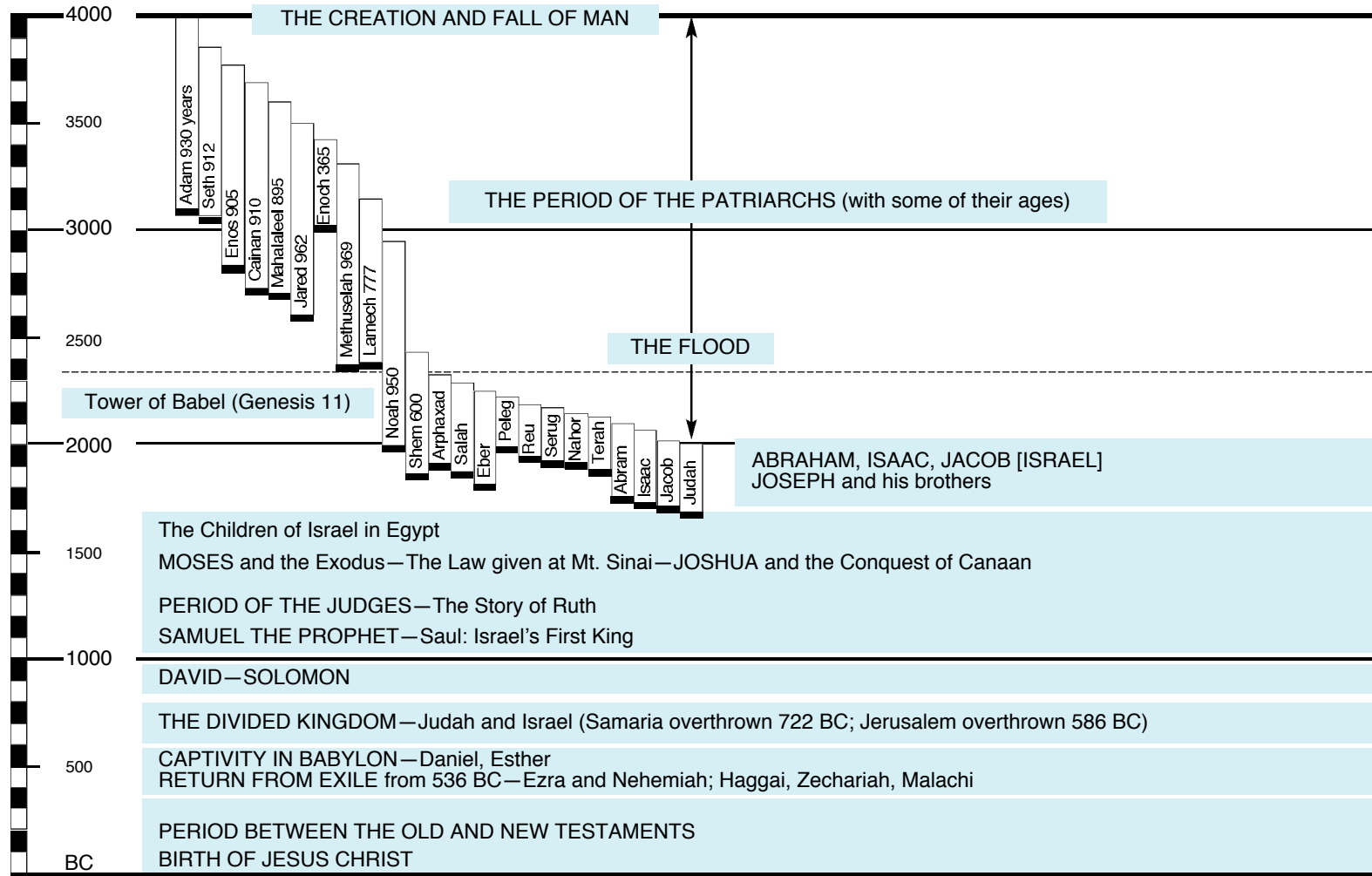
For example:

- a) Esther 2:12,17
- b) Esther 5:14; 7:10
- c) Esther 10:3

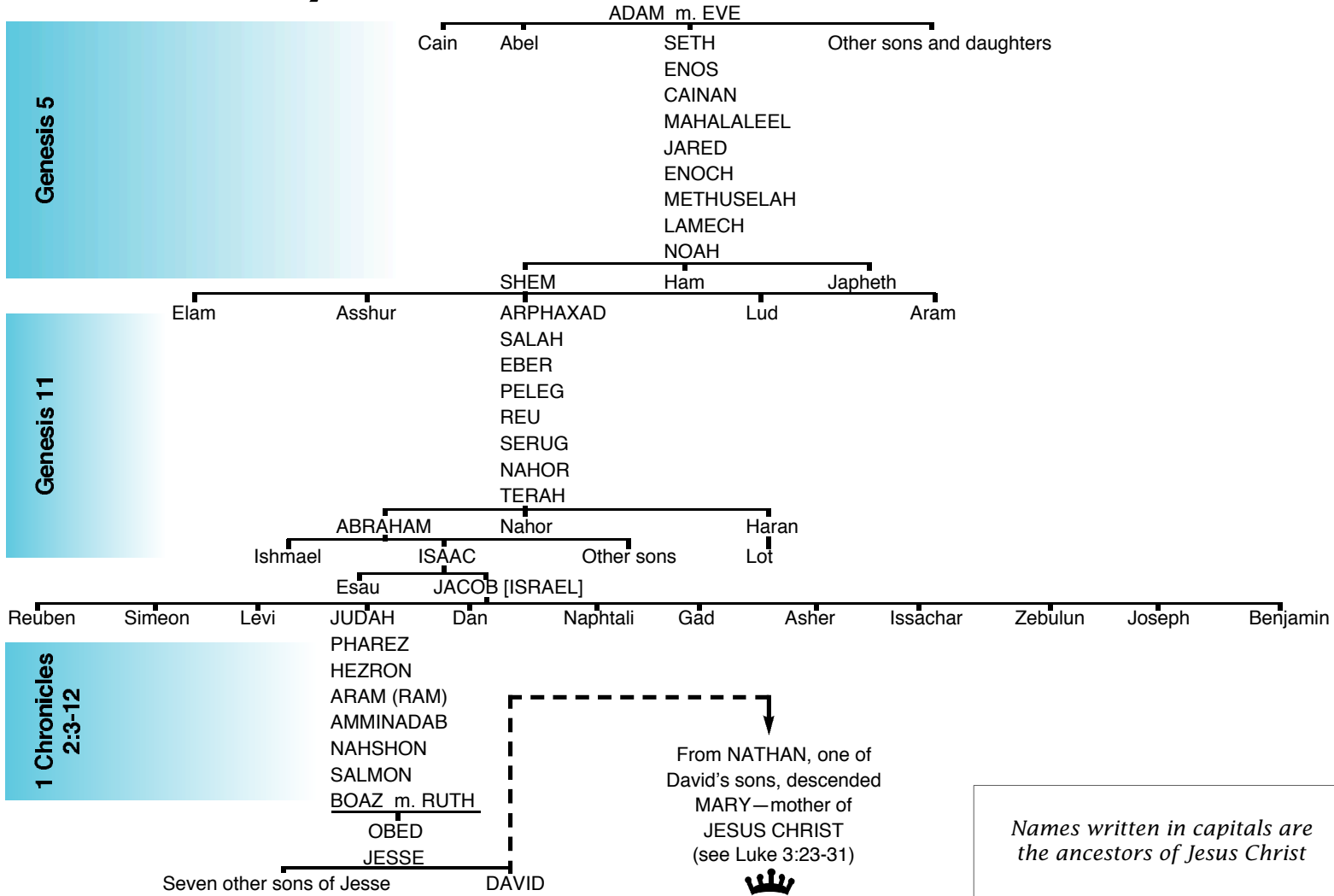
Compared with:

- a) Revelation 19:7,8; Psalm 45:10-17
- b) Acts 5:30; 10:39; Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24
- c) Genesis 41:40,43; Matthew 27:29; 28:18

Time Chart: Old Testament Events



Family Tree: From Adam to Jesus Christ



POETRY SECTION

“Praise ye the LORD.

Sing unto the LORD a new song,

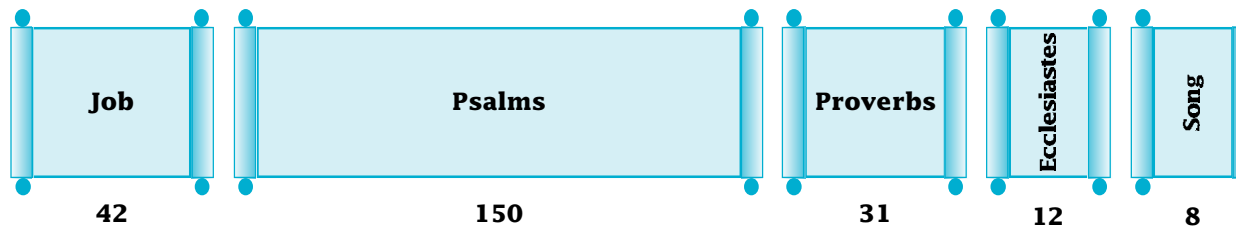
And his praise in the assembly of the saints.”

(Psalm 149:1)

Books 18-22

Introduction to the POETRY SECTION

Chapters in the Poetic Books



The Nature of Hebrew Poetry

Hebrew poetry differs from prose mainly in the rhythmic style in which it is written. Its purpose is usually to provide praise, prayer or instruction which can be sung, or accompanied by music.

Thus lines are repeated, or the ideas put another way, or the opposite is expressed, so as to serve as responses. Clear examples are to be found in the Psalms in which two groups of singers would be intended—as in Psalm 24:8:

Question put by first group: “Who is this King of Glory?”

Reply by second group: “The LORD strong and mighty”

Teaching through Poetry

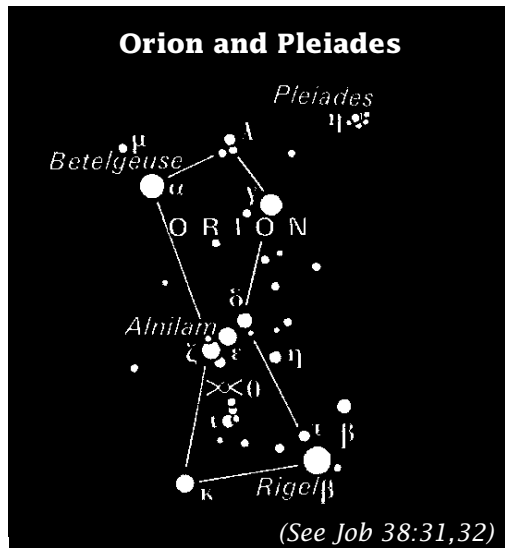
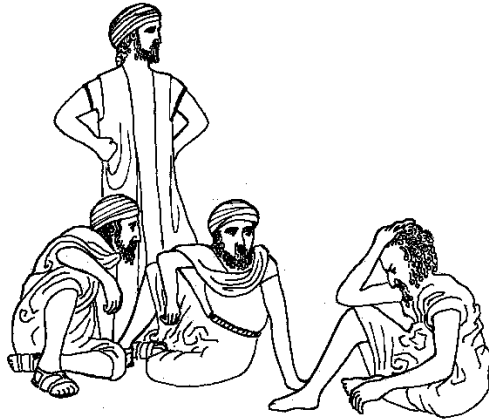
One of the most important uses to which this poetic style is put in God’s Books is to impress on us important attitudes of mind. Sometimes by repetition, sometimes by contrast (as in Proverbs) God seeks to underline both His message and what our response to it should be. The Lord Jesus Christ read the Poetic Books, as well as all the other Old Testament Scriptures, and saw how he could apply them to his own experience.

A helpful Christadelphian book which deals with the subject of poetry and music in the Bible is
Exploring the Psalms by Mark Vincent

JOB

18

The story of the sufferings of Job and the attempted explanation of these events by his friends. God's own answer is given.



The Problem of Suffering

The setting of the book is the “land of Uz”, probably Edom, at the time of the patriarchs. The theme is the age-old ‘problem of suffering’. God allowed intense suffering to afflict Job—a “good” man who was well respected by all. But Job’s friends—Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar—wrongly assumed that his sufferings were punishments for hidden sins. “Miserable comforters are ye all” (16:2) is Job’s assessment of his friends!

A fourth ‘friend’, the younger man Elihu, is introduced in ch 32. He was angry with Job, “because he justified himself rather than God” and against the three friends “because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.”

God’s Answer

But finally, in chs 38-41, we read God’s answer to the matter. He reminds Job of his true position before God the Creator. Job was brought to realise that God is right

and should be trusted. Job confesses his own unworthiness (even though people had looked upon him as good). His sufferings helped him to see this point, and he was eventually richly blessed (42:10).

If suffering brings us to a position of humility before God, it will prove to be blessing in disguise (see Isaiah 66:2).

Job’s Satan

The story of Job refers to a “satan” (a word meaning ‘adversary’). The Bible never speaks of a supernatural Devil. Job’s “satan” was someone to whom God temporarily gave the power to bring certain troubles upon Job for his good—see Job 2:6 and 42:11; in fact, the second of these verses refers to “all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him”.

God, in the end, restores the fortunes of Job and requires the three friends to offer sacrifices, “for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath” (42:7).

Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible



For example:

- a) Job 4:17; 14:10
- b) Job 19:25
- c) Job 38:31-41

Compared with:

- a) Psalm 146:3-4; Ecclesiastes 9:5; Romans 5:12
- b) Zechariah 14:4; Acts 1:11
- c) Amos 5:8; Acts 14:15; Revelation 14:7

19

PSALMS

Songs of Praise, Prayer and Prophecy, written by David, Hezekiah and others. Many are about the promised Messiah, pointing forward to his suffering, resurrection and future rule.

Five Main Sections

There are five books of Psalms. Each ends with words of praise or a final "Amen".

1-41	PSALMS OF DAVID
42-72	PSALMS OF DAVID AND OF THE SONS OF KORAH
73-89	PSALMS OF ASAPH AND OTHERS
90-106	PSALMS OF MOSES AND OTHERS
107-150	PSALMS OF DAVID, HEZEKIAH, ETC.

The Psalms and Music

The Psalms were originally sung, and accompanied by musical instruments (a number of Psalms have instructions to the musicians in their 'titles'). They were

intended for personal use as well as for congregational worship.

Christ in the Psalms

The work of Christ was foretold in the Psalms and indeed in all parts of the Old Testament (see Luke 24:44). Jesus knew the Psalms. In effect, they became his words.

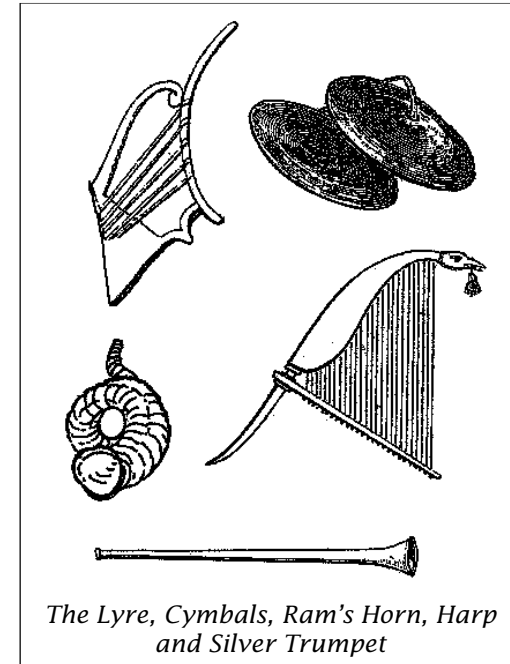
Some Psalms are obviously about him:

- CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS—
Psalms 22; 40; 109; 118
- HIS RESURRECTION—
Psalms 16; 91
- HIS FUTURE RULE—
Psalms 2; 24; 45; 72; 110; 122

Personal Treasure

Over the centuries faithful men and women have derived great personal strength and comfort from the Psalms. There are chapters suited to almost every occasion for the true believer—times of sorrow, danger or joy.

*"I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."
(16:8)*



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

- Psalm 2:8,9
- Psalm 16:10
- Psalm 72:8

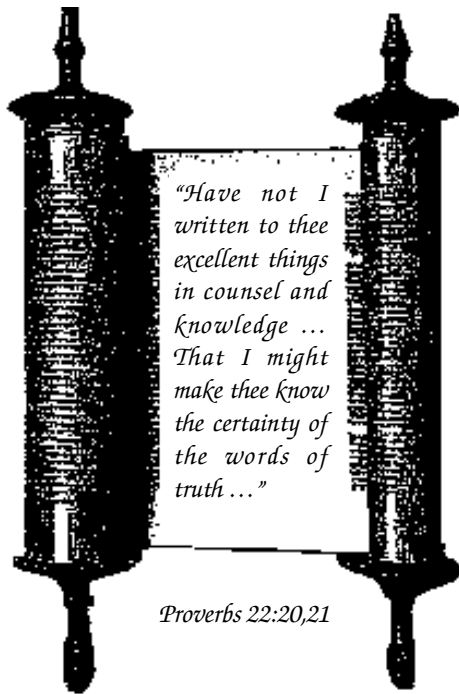
Compared with:

- Revelation 2:26,27
- Acts 2:27, 31
- Zechariah 9:10

PROVERBS

20

Wise sayings, written mainly by King Solomon, under the inspiration of God. They contain sound advice for all God's children.



Proverbs 22:20,21

"Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsel and knowledge ... That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth ..."

"Go to the ant thou sluggard ... Consider her ways and be wise ..." (6:6)



Solomon's Request

God appeared to King Solomon and said, "Ask what I shall give thee." Solomon might have desired wealth and power, but he made a surprising request: "Give me now wisdom and knowledge ... for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?" (2 Chronicles 1:7-10). "And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart" (9:23).

The Value of Wisdom

The opening chapters are addressed to "my son" (chs 1-9). Sadly, Solomon's son (Rehoboam) failed to heed the Divine instruction.

It was God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who recognised the value of his Father's Word.

For us, too, there is nothing in this world which can compare with this "wisdom which is from above", to be found in the Bible—in all God's 66 Books, including this Book of Proverbs.

Advice for Daily Life

A large section of Proverbs (chs 10-24) contains valuable advice for God's children in their day to day experiences. The

ruin which comes from sloth and the folly of ignorance are among the warnings given.

Chs 25-29 contain more proverbs of Solomon, copied out by King Hezekiah's men. The writers of Proverbs 30-31 may have been Arabian, descended from Ishmael; or "Agur" and "Lemuel" may be cryptic names for Solomon himself.

*"And he (Solomon) spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five."
(1 Kings 4:32)*



Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible

For example:

a) Proverbs 3:15; 4:7

b) Proverbs 7:19,20

c) Proverbs 22:20,21

Compared with:

a) 2 Timothy 3:15

b) Mark 13:34;
Luke 12:45

c) Luke 1:3,4