

King James Bible - Old Testament Book Notes

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Author/Context

The King James' Bible is an English translation of the Bible from the original languages, including Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek. The Old Testament originally existed as an oral tradition. The dates for the first written copy of this tradition are constantly debated. The written text had gone through several revisions by the accepted date of the birth of Jesus Christ (1 Common Era). The New Testament was composed in the decades and centuries following the death of Christ and the rise of the new Christian Church. With the stratification of the Church, the Bible became more uniform, yet there were always books whose origin and authenticity were called into question.

From the split of Christianity into the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox traditions, versions of the Bible were polarized along Latin and Greek lines. In Europe, the Latin Vulgate, prepared originally in the 4th century by St. Jerome was the universal edition. This edition was used by the Catholic Church as the basis of religious and philosophical praise to the Deity. It was not until the Protestant Reformation that translations became common. Martin Luther made one of the first translations into German. In Switzerland, Calvinists, an early Protestant sect, made the first widely read English translation of the Bible.

England did not follow Germany into the Reformation. Henry VIII, in order to secure a divorce, ceded from the Catholic Church and made himself the head of the Anglican Church, or the Church of England. Since theology was not his main concern, this early version of the church did not stray much from Roman Catholicism. Subsequent rulers, however, made more of an impact on the Church. Queen Elizabeth helped solidify the dogma of this institution with a series of laws and proclamations. When Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, her nephew, James VI of Scotland became James I of England. Although derided for his sickly physical attributes, James became renowned as a 'scholar-king.' He knew Greek, Latin and French and was very concerned with theological debate.

The Puritans were the strongest religious force in England beside the church itself. For years they had embraced the Geneva Bible as a translation. When James I suggested that a translation may be in order, it was embraced by John Rainolds, a Puritan leader. In 1604, James' aides began gathering scholars to work on this translation. About fifty scholars worked for the next 5 years. Unlike other translations at the time, this was made from the original tongues rather than St. Jerome's Latin Vulgate. The translations were worked together and edited for uniformity. It was published in 1610/11 with a lengthy dedication to the King of England and God.

The influence of this translation has been far-reaching. Prior to its conception, Christianity was primarily locked away in dead languages. The common people had little access to the document that was the cornerstone of their religious belief. An array of the most able scholars and poets of the time made the translation. From its inception, the King James' Bible was intended to be a masterpiece. It has influenced generations of



English speaking peoples from commoners to scholars to kings. Perhaps this is why Cleland Boyd McAfee calls it the "Greatest English Classic."

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Plot Summary

Genesis tells the story of the creation of the world. God made the world in seven days and set man and woman in the Garden of Eden. After disobeying His laws, they were expelled. Their descendants came to rule over the whole earth. This multitude, however, became sinful and God despised them. He sent a flood over the earth to exterminate them. He saved one family because the father, Noah, was righteous. Noah built a large Ark and saved his sons, their wives, and a breeding pair of every species. From this line descended Abraham. God loved Abraham and decided to bless him and his descendants. Abraham's son, Isaac, had two sons, Jacob and Esau. God loved Jacob who had twelve sons. Joseph, one of his sons ended up in Egypt. He saved the country from famine and brought his brothers and father into the land. Jacob was renamed Israel and his sons fathered the twelve tribes of Israel.

Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy tell the tale of the Israelites' flight from Egypt and their settlement in the Promised Land. At first, the ruler of Egypt would not release them, but after many plagues from God, he relented. The Israelites fled and wandered in the desert for forty years. During this time, Moses received the initial Ten Commandments from God. In addition to this, he received another set of rules governing nearly every aspect of life. The Israelites made a covenant with God: they would keep His laws and He would make them prosperous. Moses died and left Joshua in charge.

Joshua tells of the settlement of Canaan. The Israelites fought for this land and expelled its inhabitants. The books of Samuel tell of Saul and David, the first two kings of Israel and David's son Solomon, the wise one. These kings represented a golden age when the people kept the commandments of God. They were very prosperous, and victorious in war. As a result they became very wealthy. After these kings, however, as told in the books of Kings and Chronicles, there were many wicked rulers. The nation of Israel was split into Israel and Judah. The people fell into ruin and the commandments were no longer kept. Subsequent books tell of this fall from grace. The Israelites were overcome in war. Invaders from Babylon destroyed the Great Temple built by Solomon. The people themselves were taken into captivity. The rise of the Persian Empire freed the Israelites and allowed them to begin rebuilding their Temple. Ezra tells of the return of the laws of Moses and the gathering of the scattered Israelites. Esther offers a vignette of the experience of the Jews in an extended and aristocratic empire.

Job tells the story of God testing one of His faithful servants. God afflicts Job to prove to Satan that His followers are loyal not out of obligation for the prosperity they have been given, but out of faith. The books of Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and Proverbs are books of poetry and wisdom. They extol the glory of God and offer bits of wisdom for life and spirituality.

The last books of the Bible are prophetic. They state that the people of Israel have sinned against God. For these sins, God will destroy the people and reforge the world. After this destruction, the new world will be a paradise.



Major Characters

God: The omnipotent and omniscient being who created the world. He destroyed it later because the people were wicked but preserved the animals and some people. He took some of these people as His chosen people and led them out of captivity. He made a covenant with them. They were to keep certain laws and He would make them prosper. When they did not keep up their part of the bargain, God punished them.

Adam: The first man, he was given the Garden of Eden and told to enjoy everything. God also gave him a wife, Eve. God told Adam not to eat from one particular tree in the Garden, the Tree of Knowledge. A serpent tricked Eve into persuading Adam to eat the fruit. For this, they were both expelled from Eden.

Eve: The first woman, God created Eve as a companion to Adam from one of Adam's ribs. She was also told not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. A serpent, however, convinced her to eat the fruit and give one to her husband. They were both expelled from the kingdom. For her sin, God cursed all women with pain in childbirth.

Noah: The only righteous man at the time of the flood. God decided to preserve Noah and his sons. He told Noah to build an Ark to save them all from the flood. Noah built this and came to land over 40 days after the waters first fell.

Abraham (Abram): A descendant of Noah, he had no sons by his wife Sarah so he had sexual relations with her handmaiden, Hagar. His first son was Ishmael. God made a covenant with Abraham and decided to give him another son. His second son, by the long-barren Sarah, was Isaac. God tested Abraham's faith by asking him to sacrifice Isaac. Abraham almost did it but God stopped him just in time.

Moses: A son of the house of Levi, Moses was raised by a daughter of the Pharaoh. He came to talk with God and decided he must lead his people from Egypt. He took them out of Egypt into the desert. In the desert he received God's commandments and made the covenant. He made the Ark of the Covenant and led the people to their new land. He died on a mountain before they entered it.

Joshua: The sixth book of the Old Testament is named after him. Joshua appears first in Deuteronomy as an assistant to Moses. When Moses dies, he leaves Joshua the task of clearing Canaan of its present inhabitants. Joshua leads the Israelites to victory over many other nations and helps them establish their new cities.

Samuel: A prophet who arose in the land of Israel to judge and lead the people. He was given the power to anoint the first king, Saul. When the first king turned from the ways of God, he anointed the next king, David, and heralded in another era.

David: The second king of Israel, David killed Goliath when he was a young man. He refused to fight with Saul and did not become king until the earlier king, Saul, killed



himself. He ruled for many years and fathered Solomon. He sinned in the eyes of God when he impregnated the wife of another man.

Solomon: The son of David. God asked him what he wished for and he wished for wisdom. This made God happy, so He granted this wish. Solomon became renowned for his wisdom and ruled Israel well for many years.

Minor Characters

Serpent: The creature that convinces Eve to eat from the Tree of Knowledge.

Cain: The son of Adam and Eve who kills his brother Abel because God loved Abel's sacrifice more.

Abel: The other son of Adam and Eve who is killed by his brother because God loved his sacrifice more.

Canaan: Ham's son, Noah's grandson.

Shem, Ham and Japeth: The three sons of Noah. Ham's descendants became the Canaanites who were cursed to serve their relatives.

Lot: A relation to Abraham. He split with Abraham and ended up in Sodom and Gomorrah where he was one of the only righteous men. His wife looked back on the destruction as they walked away and was turned into a pillar of salt.

Sarah: Abraham's wife, she bore Isaac at an old age.

Ishmael: Abraham's son by Hagar. Esau married women from this family.

Isaac: The son of Abraham who was almost sacrificed by his father. He was borne to his parents in their old age.

Rebekah: Isaac's wife from Mesopotamia.

Jacob: Jacob counterfeited his brother's position and was given rule over Esau as well as all of the inheritance. He became God's favorite and was eventually renamed Israel. His sons fathered the twelve tribes of Israel.

Esau: The hunter son whom Isaac loved more. His children became the Edomites. God did not bless these descendants.

Laban: Rebekah's relation. Jacob goes to him to get a wife and is tricked into working for 14 years and marrying two of his daughters.

Rachel: The younger daughter of Laban that Jacob actually wanted to marry.

Leah: Laban's older daughter who was given to Jacob by deception.



Reuben: One of the 12 sons of Jacob who fathered one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Simeon: One of the 12 sons of Jacob who fathered one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Joseph kept him in Egypt for some time.

Levi: One of the 12 sons of Jacob who fathered one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Aaron and Moses descend from the house of Levi and all members of this house were dedicated to God after the second covenant.

Judah: One of the 12 sons of Jacob who fathered one of the twelve tribes of Israel. This also became the name of the second Kingdom of the Jews, which was ruled by the house of David.

Joseph: One of the 12 sons of Jacob who fathered one of the twelve tribes of Israel. He was given a beautiful coat by his father and sold into slavery by his brothers. In slavery he became very powerful and ended up helping his family in a time of great famine.

Benjamin: One of the 12 sons of Jacob who fathered one of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Manasseh, Dan, Gad, Ephraim: Some of the 12 sons of Jacob who fathered some of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Aaron: Moses' brother who serves as a priest for the children of Israel and helps lead them out of Egypt.

Jethro: Moses' father in law.

Korah: The man who raised man against Moses but was swallowed up by the earth.

Phinehas: Grandson of Aaron and son of Eleazar, he served as a head priest of Israel.

Caleb: A leader of Israel, prominent in Judges.

Othniel: A nephew of Caleb who becomes a leader of the Israelites as they continue to struggle for supremacy in the land.

Deborah: A judge who helps the Israelites follow the ways of God.

Barak: A victorious general who serves with Deborah.

Gideon: The Israelite who defeats the Midianites and others with his three hundred trumpet blowers.

Baal: The Samarian/Babylonian Goddess of lust worshiped by many instead of God.

Abimelech: A rebellious son of Gideon who challenged the rightful heir to the throne of Israel.



Jephthah: A judge of Israel who defeated the children of Ammon and the rebellious Ephraim.

Samson: A judge of Israel whose strength was rooted in his hair.

Delilah: The woman who found out Samson's weakness and had his head shaved.

Elkhanah: Father of Samuel.

Hannah: Wife of Elkhanah who does not bear children until she praises God. She then bears Samuel.

Peninnah: The other wife of Elkhanah.

Elimelech: The father of the son who marries Ruth.

Naomi: Ruth's mother-in-law. She takes Ruth back with her to Bethlehem and encourages her to be closer to Boaz.

Ruth: The Moabite woman who marries into the families of Israel and becomes the great-grandmother of King David.

Boaz: The wealthy man that Ruth marries. A relative of Elimelech, her father-in-law.

Eli: The head priest of Israel before Samuel who died when he saw the Ark of the Covenant taken by the Philistines.

Saul: The first king of Israel, he led his people to many victories. He disobeyed the word of God and a replacement was selected. David came to be loved by the people and in response to this love, Saul alienated him. In the end, Saul took his own life.

Jonathan: Saul's son who loves David.

Jesse: David's father.

Goliath: The giant warrior of the Philistines who is killed by David as a young boy.

Abigail: The wife of David.

Abner: A captain who named Ish-bosheth as king instead of David.

Ish-bosheth: A son of Saul who was used as a puppet king by Abner.

Nathan: A prophet who told David to build a temple.

Bath-Sheba: The woman David wrongly impregnated. Her second child was Solomon.

Joab: The leader of David's army.



Tamar: The sister raped by Ammon.

Absalom: The brother of Tamar who avenged his sister by killing David's other sons.

Ammon: The son of David who raped Tamar.

Sheba: A Benjaminite who tried to fight against David.

Adonijah: David's son who tries to wrest rule from Solomon.

Jeroboam: The ruler to follow David. Under him, Judah and Israel were split.

Ahab: The evil king of Israel who died fighting the Syrians.

Elijah: A prophet that God instructed to move against Ahab.

Obadiah: One of Ahab's assistants.

Jezebel: Ahab's evil wife who is torn apart by dogs.

Jehu: The man God tells Elijah to anoint as king.

Ahaziah: Ahab's evil son who worships Baal.

Elisha: A prophet who replaces Elijah and works against the house of Ahab.

Joram: A king of Israel who was sinful.

Hezekiah: A king of Judah who was good.

Josiah: A young king of Judah. While Isaiah helped him, he was a good king.

Isaiah: A prophet in Israel who helps Josiah.

Nebuchadnezzar: The king of Babylon who overcomes the people of Judah and takes the Israelites into slavery.

Cyrus: The semi-historical, legendary king of Persia. He started out with a kingdom in Asia Minor and extended it all the way to India and south through the Middle East into Babylon. This is recorded by the Greek historian Herodotus.

Darius: Not to be confused with the historical Darius II who lost the Persian Empire to Alexander the Great, Darius I was an earlier king of Persia who extended and solidified the Empire.

Ezra: The young priest who comes from Babylon already versed in the laws of Moses. He attempts to reunite the Israelites and teach them the commandments.



Artaxerxes: The Persian king between Cyrus and Darius. He halted the building of the Temple.

Nehemiah: An Israelite who led the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls. He also helped bring Ezra to Jerusalem to teach the ways and laws of Moses to the scattered people.

Ahasuerus: The Persian king who married Esther.

Mordecai: A servant to the king and father of Esther, he set the day of Purim as a holiday to be observed.

Esther: The woman who was married to Ahasuerus as the most modest and beautiful in the land. She had him stop the genocide begun by his servant, Haman.

Haman: A prince of Persia who initiates a slaughter of the Israelites because Mordecai would not bow to him.

Job: The man of faith who was tortured by God to prove that he was loyal out of faith, not good fortune.

Satan: Allegedly a fallen angel, his existence is more prominent in the New Testament.

Isaiah: A prophet who first heralded the downfall of Jerusalem and foretold a savior from the house of David.

Jeremiah: Another prophet who foretold the downfall of Judah.

Ezekiel: A prophet who foretold the downfall of Israel and the coming of a messiah.

Daniel: A prophet who began his days in Babylon with Nebuchadnezzar. He achieved his fame as a dream interpreter, like Joseph.

Hosea: A prophet at God's bidding he took a harlot as a wife. He pleaded with the people so they would stop worshiping other gods.

Jezreel: The son of Jezebel.

Joel: A prophet and book in the Old Testament. He told the people that Israel had fallen to pests.

Amos: A prophet and book in the Old Testament. He used the parable of the plumb line to describe the way in which God would rebuild the kingdom.

Obadiah: A prophet and book in the Old Testament. He foresaw the fall of the Edomites.

Jonah: A reluctant prophet who is consumed by a large fish and prayed to God for release.



Micah: A prophet and book in the Old Testament. He ministered in the days of Hezekiah.

Nahum: A prophet who prophesied about Ninevah and the fall of sinners.

Habakkuk: A prophet and book in the Old Testament. He predicted that God would use Chaldea to punish the Israelites.

Zephaniah: A prophet and a book in the Old Testament, who foresaw doom and rebirth for Israel.

Haggai: A prophet and a book in the Old Testament. He ministered in the time of Darius and foretold drought and death.

Zechariah: A prophet and a book in the Old Testament. Also a prophet in the time of Darius, he had multiple visions of God.

Malachi: A prophet and a book in the Old Testament. God told him that he hated the descendants of Esau and loved the descendants of Jacob.



Objects/Places

Eden: The original paradise meant for man by God. Adam and Eve were expelled from here when they ate from the Tree of Knowledge. The prophetic books, especially, look forward to a return to this sort of paradise after the day of Judgement.

Tree of Knowledge: A tree in the Garden of Eden that Adam and Eve were not to eat from. Fruit eaten from it would 'bless' the consumer with the knowledge of good and evil.

Ark: Noah built the original ark for his family and animals to weather the destructive flood of God.

Covenant: An agreement made between man and God. There were three important covenants made with God by Noah, Abraham and Moses.

gentiles: Non-Jews.

Egypt: The nation centered on the Nile valley and the mouth of the river. Known for its fertility, it was the only land that did not suffer in 7 years of famine.

Pharaoh: The ruler of the Egyptians.

Jordan: A region north of the land God meant for Abraham, Jacob and Moses.

Goshen: The region in Egypt given by the good Pharaoh to the sons of Israel to farm.

Passover: The portion of the year that was to be kept in remembrance of the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt. Israelites were to eat no leavened bread for seven days.

Sinai : A mountain in the Middle East that Moses ascended to receive the Commandments of God.

Ark of the Covenant: The Ark that was built by Moses and Aaron after God led the Israelites out of Egypt. It was constructed to hold the tablets bearing the contract between God and man. In the book of Joshua, the Ark is used as a weapon. It is captured by the Philistines but later returned.

Moab: A land near Canaan where the Israelites camped during their forty-year journey. Also the region in which Ruth lived.

Philistines: Neighboring tribes with whom the Israelites were often in conflict.

Bethlehem : The city of King David's birth. It is the birthplace of Jesus in the New Testament.

Gilgal: The city where David was anointed.



Tyre: A city off the coast of Lebanon. It was a powerful merchant city until the time of Alexander the Great when it was utterly destroyed.

Israel: The land or country settled by the children of Israel.

Damascus: A city in Syria where Elijah took refuge. Its destruction was prophesied many times by Nehemiah and Isaiah.

Babylon: A great city that was located in modern-day Iraq. It also was the site of the tower of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar brought the Israelites here in captivity. It also happens to be the site of Alexander the Great's death.

Jerusalem: The chief city of Judah and seat of the house of David. Jerusalem is a chief city in modern Israel and a site of contention between Israelis and Palestinians.

Seraphim: A type of angel.

Palestine: A kingdom near Israel.

Chaldeans: The people who lived in Chaldea, the region south of Babylon in modern day Iraq.

Sodom and Gomorrah: The wicked cities destroyed by God. Lot fled from them and lost his wife when she turned to look back.

Grecia: Greece.

plumb line: A tool used by carpenters to make straight lines.

Ninevah: A city on the Tigris River north of Babylon.

Edomites: The descendants of Esau. God tells the Israelites not to hate them.



Quotes

Quote 1: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Genesis, 1:1

Quote 2: "And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife." Genesis, 20:12

Quote 3: "And in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand." Genesis, 40: 10-11

Quote 4: "The LORD is my strength...." Exodus, 15:2

Quote 5: "Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat. Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divided not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the coney....And the hare....And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean unto you." Leviticus, 11:3-7

Quote 6: "love thy neighbor as thyself...." Leviticus, 19:18

Quote 7: "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." Deuteronomy, 19:21

Quote 8: "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face...." Deuteronomy, 34:10

Quote 9: "smite the Midianites as one man." Judges, 6:16

Quote 10: "And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said one to another, What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets? And one of the same place answered and said, But who is their father? There it came to be a proverb, Is Saul also among the prophets?" 1 Samuel, 10:11-12

Quote 11: "hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness." 2 Samuel, 17:29

Quote 12: "and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people, which thou has chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered or counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" 1 Kings, 3:7-9

Quote 13: "there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." 1 Kings: 17:1



Quote 14: "And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel....And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her." 2 Kings, 9: 7, 10

Quote 15: "Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, to be king for the LORD thy GOD: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgement and justice." 2 Chronicles, 9: 7-8

Quote 16: "All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up." 2 Chronicles, 36:23

Quote 17: "Oh that I might have my request; and that God would grant me the thing that I long for! Even that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off! Then should I yet have comfort; yea, I would harden myself in sorrow: let him not spare; for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One. What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?" Job, 6:8-11

Quote 18: "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up....A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace....every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God." Ecclesiastes, 3:1-3, 8, 13

Quote 19: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward." Isaiah, 1:3-4

Quote 20: "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun...." Isaiah, 30:26

Quote 21: "Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return saith the LORD." Jeremiah, 32:44

Quote 22: "Thou shalt be for fuel to the fire; they blood shall be in the midst of the land; thou shalt be no more remembered: for I the LORD have spoken it." Ezekiel, 21:32

Quote 23: "And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them



all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall rise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise." Daniel, 2:38-40

Quote 24: "Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days he will revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea: 6:1-3

Quote 25: "The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth." Nahum, 1:3-4



Topic Tracking: Contracts

Genesis

Contracts 1: This is one of the many covenants made in the Old Testament. There are two major contractual transactions between God and man. Man sacrifices and God blesses family, crops, and the like. This is the more basic relationship. In the covenants, God makes promises of prosperity in exchange for certain behavior from men. Noah makes a covenant with God, understanding that he and his descendants are never to be as wicked as those men who were destroyed.

Contracts 2: Abram goes out of Canaan with the understanding that God will make him great. When God promises to give him a son, even in his old age, he makes a new covenant. All of his male relatives and servants will be circumcised. God rewards Abram for his pious behavior in sacrifice and demeanor. God promises Jacob the land upon which he sleeps in the future. These are the fields of Israel.

Contracts 3: An agreement is made between the children of Israel and the pharaoh. He grants them the rights to fertile land with the understanding that they will give a fifth of their crop to him as taxes. They agree to this and are prosperous during this pharaoh's life but the next pharaoh is not as kind.

Exodus

Contracts 4: God makes His greatest of all contracts with the Israelites. Mirroring the covenant of Abraham, the Israelites are to keep certain laws and God will watch over them. Now they must keep three feasts and a very specific series of laws. In exchange God not only promises that He will watch over them, but He also promises them prosperity.

Leviticus

Contracts 5: God lays out a very elaborate and lengthy series of rules for the behavior of His chosen people. These rules cover everything from nudity to murder, from diet to taxes. The penalty for not following these commandments is also clear. A man may sacrifice to atone for lesser sins, but if all of the people turn from the covenant, God will destroy them.

Deuteronomy

Contracts 6: The 'deal' with God becomes more and more intricate. God gives clear laws for almost everything and declares that no new laws shall be added to these. He gives the people a place to settle and promises that if they keep His commandments they will prosper here. On the other hand, it is very clear that not following these commandments will result in death.

Judges



Contracts 7: After the fall of Moses and Joshua, the tribe of Israel undergoes a long series of wandering from the contract. Each time they wander, they suffer terribly and are led back by a good judge. Each time a judge dies, they do wrong again and must be punished by God for not keeping up their end of the contract.

1 Samuel

Contracts 8: God accepts certain leaders with the understanding that they will follow His laws and make the Israelites keep the covenant. Whenever a leader fails in this task, God replaces him. Saul was made the first king of Israel and became very powerful, but as soon as he acted against the command of God, a replacement was readied. David was made king with the same task as given to Saul.

1 Kings

Contracts 9: Kings are successful or not depending on how well they maintain the covenant with God. Most of the kings are not successful and those who are need a prophet like Samuel, Nathan or Elijah to direct them. Even when they keep the covenant, they often stray and this prompts God to seek new rulers.

2 Kings

Contracts 10: The covenant is broken again and again with God, but He gives his people many more chances. Slowly, however, the benevolence fades. God lets Israel and then Judah slip into the hands of their enemies as the people continue to worship Baal and false idols.

Ezra

Contracts 11: The people of Israel were scattered from their lands because they did not keep the covenant with God. When they finally came back it was clear that they were still not keeping this covenant. Ezra knew that they had been expelled because they did not keep these laws and he made a new covenant with the hope that his people would endure and become prosperous again.

Job

Contracts 12: The book of Job is one of the most troubling books in the bible. Job has honored his covenant with God to the furthest extent but because of Satan's challenge God tortures him. God destroyed all of Sodom and Gomorrah but saved Lot because he was righteous. The treatment of Job disrupts the divine balance of the covenant. Although men have broken the covenant on multiple occasions, this is the first time God breaks it completely. The Book of Job addresses the question "why do bad things happen to good people?" with only a spiritual answer.

Isaiah



Contracts 13: The prophetic books of the Old Testament all voice the same concern and prediction: the children of Israel have sinned, punishment is coming. They herald the fulfillment of the covenant that was made with God. God promised that if the covenant were broken they would suffer. At the end of the book, Isaiah asks God why He made them so that they would sin. It seems that the prophet is questioning God in a way that Job did not. Job did not sin, he was righteous. Isaiah wonders if people are able to stop sinning.



Topic Tracking: Violence

Genesis

Violence 1: Violence between relatives and nations is a theme that recurs in the Bible. Cain and Abel are the first instance of fraternal strife but they are by no means the last. Cain kills Abel because his sacrifice is loved more by God. Because of this deed, he is thrown out of the land of his parents in much the same way they were expelled from Eden. His children, however, escape the curse of their father to a limited degree.

Violence 2: The situation between Jacob and Esau could have ended up in violence if not for the wise decision of Rebekah. Jacob cheated his brother for the same reason that Cain killed his: jealousy. The brothers do not resort to the same means, however. Although both Isaac and Esau are incensed by the deception, they resign themselves to its outcome.

Violence 3: Joseph has problems with his brothers in a manner similar to Esau and Abel. His brothers attack him in envy and sell him into slavery. This outcome, however, turns out to be to all of their benefit because he ends up in a position to save Egypt and his family from a deadly famine. Joseph forgives his brothers.

Exodus

Violence 4: The Israelites were put into slavery by the Egyptians and in return God sent many plagues upon them, the worst of which being the death of all the first-born sons. The armies of Egypt perished in the Red Sea. While killing was against the new commandments of God, the Israelites used deadly force to punish those of their own who worshiped a golden cow.

Numbers

Violence 5: Violence continues to serve as a tool for enforcing the contract between man and God. Men are punished for moving against Moses and for sleeping with whores. When it comes time for the Israelites to face other nations, God wields these powers in their favor and makes them triumphant over other peoples.

Joshua

Violence 6: Before the Israelites can settle in the land God intended for them, they must exterminate its current inhabitants. In a mixture of set battles and sieges they rid the land of these peoples. God helps them by giving them the magic of the Ark and advising Joshua when to execute a ruse and take a city by trickery.

1 Samuel

Violence 7: The natural state of this era is warfare. Invaders from all sides constantly beset the Israelites just as they beset the Canaanites. Every year they must fight the



Philistines. Saul uses violence against David out of jealousy. He does not actually hate David, but he envies his position with the people and with God.

1 Kings

Violence 8: Violence with outsiders continues to be the normal state of affairs for the children of Israel. This violence is joined by strife between the tribes as the Kingdom is split into two king-ships for the first time since Joshua. This halts the war between separate ruling houses but now each kingdom must fight different adversaries.

Esther

Violence 9: This is the first example of large-scale ethnic violence done against the Jews by a ruling government. One man who felt that Mordecai slighted his honor began this violence. While the Israelites had waged such warfare against people under their power before when they cleansed the land of people following Baal, this is the first time they suffer the same violence. Their captivity in Babylon began many years of suffering for the Israelites.

Isaiah

Violence 10: Violence is constantly threatened as punishment for sins. This punishment comes in two ways: either directly from God or indirectly. Directly, God promises to cause them permanent physical pain. Indirectly, Isaiah warns them that if they are not loyal to God their cities will fall and they will be defeated in war and possibly enslaved.



Topic Tracking: Women

Genesis

Women 1: Women occupy a precarious place in the Old Testament. Eve's eating from the Tree of Knowledge gave birth to centuries of religious-based misogyny. She was convinced by the serpent, a creature created by God. She corrupted her husband by giving him the fruit. This sort of relationship between women and sin is sustained throughout the Old Testament.

Women 2: In Egypt, Abram pretends that Sarah is his sister. He does this because he knows that the powerful Egyptians will have their way with her one way or another. This way, they won't kill him first. Because she cannot conceive, Sarah tells Abram to have sex with her maid Hagar and have children. It is important foremost that Abram have offspring not that Sarah does. Lot's wife is the one who looks back at Sodom and Gomorrah and turns to a pillar of salt. Jacob also has children with his wives' handmaidens. Fertility is of great importance to women in the Old Testament. Their greatest addition to their husband's wealth is a male heir.

Exodus

Women 3: Women often figure into the Ten Commandments and God's other orders to Moses. The law of adultery is specifically aimed at creating sexual exclusivity and clear lines of providing an heir to each man. The law forcing men to marry the women they sleep with provides social support for women. Without a man at this time, a woman and her child would starve.

Leviticus

Women 4: Laws concerning women are very prominent in this book. They are unclean during menstruation and after giving birth. A woman who is a whore and the child of a priest is to be put to death by burning. A woman's 'uncleanness' may be contracted during sexual intercourse and the man is considered unclean for seven subsequent days.

Numbers

Women 5: In the law, women are put in a precarious position. While they were given the benefit of inheritance in lieu of the fact that many women were ending up in severe poverty as a result of deaths in their family, they do not have true legal autonomy. A woman's vow may be considered legal only if her husband supports it.

Deuteronomy

Women 6: More laws are given concerning women. These also mainly cover sexual transaction and exclusivity. A woman may be brought into the tribes from another if she mourns and converts. A woman may also marry again if she is divorced. If she has no



child with her husband before he dies, she is to marry his brother. If a woman is married to a man as a virgin and it turns out that she is not one, she may be stoned.

Judges

Women 7: Women continue to be a source of problems in Judges. Samson gets into trouble because of the women he loves; one of them betrays him. The tribe of Benjamin is alienated because they side with a people who allowed the rape of a traveler. The raped woman was killed and cut into pieces by her wronged husband.

Ruth

Women 8: Originally, Israelites were commanded not to take wives from foreign tribes. When Naomi and her family move into Moab, her sons take foreign wives. Ruth, with the death of her husband, returns to Bethlehem and toils with the other women there. Boaz finds her acceptable and takes her as his wife. Her line bears the second king of Israel.

1 Kings

Women 9: The role of women continues to be difficult. The house of David is put into turmoil after the rape of Tamar. Both David and Solomon get themselves into trouble because of lust for women. Jezebel is the epitome of the evil women. She carries out her husband's evil deeds and secretly worships Baal. Jehosaphat's mother also worships Baal.

Ezra

Women 10: Women must have fared badly in the exodus from their lands. They were taken into captivity. One of the things that Ezra sees as the worst transgression against God is intermarriage. In order for the people to be cleansed, Ezra demands that the Israelite men with foreign wives turn their women away. They do.

Esther

Women 11: The story of Esther presents two sides of the treatment of women. The first queen is deposed because she would not behave as the king wished. Esther is chosen as the new queen because she exhibits certain qualities that the king values. She used this position to get justice for her people when they are hunted. When the king gives her all the money from Haman's house, she gives it all to her father.

Job

Women 12: Women are only briefly present in the book of Job but their absence is important. The only action taken by a woman in this book is by Job's wife. She tells him to curse God and stop living when he has lost everything. Not only does she not share in Job's immeasurable faith, she also does not comfort him or speak with him in the way his male friends do.



Isaiah

Women 13: Though tersely mentioned, women are objects of sins or sinners. On the day of judgement, women who are not of the tribes of Israel would be turned away. Women are specifically chastised for owning jewelry and fine goods because the children of Israel are collectively warned not to value possessions too much.

Lamentations

Women 14: Increasingly, in the prophetic works, women become the comparative part of metaphor and simile. Israel has been a harlot, she is like a woman who has been treacherous to her husband. In the words of the prophets, Israel's covenant is like a marriage agreement. By worshiping other gods, the people have engaged in congress outside of the marriage. In Jeremiah's Lamentations, the woman is not even married, she is just filthy.



Genesis

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Genesis, 1.1 Then He made light and called it day. In the waters He made land which He called earth; this was the third day. On the fourth, He made the stars, planets and the sun and the moon. On the fifth, He made living creatures and on the sixth He made all the mammals with men to rule over them. On the seventh day He rested. All of the plants grew without rain. God planted a garden in Eden and set a river running through it. After placing a man in the garden, He instructed him to watch over it and name everything. God named the man Adam and created a woman, named Eve, from his rib. He forbid them to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. A serpent convinced Eve to eat the fruit and offer some to Adam. After they had eaten the fruit they realized they were naked and covered themselves with vegetation. God appeared and asked what happened. Eve told God that the serpent manipulated her. He cursed the serpent and damned women to painful childbirth and submission to their husbands. He cast them out of Eden with the burden of growing their own food.

Topic Tracking: Women 1

Eve bore Cain and Abel. God enjoyed the sacrifice of the shepherd Abel more than that of his brother, the farmer. Out of jealousy, Cain killed Abel. God cursed Cain and made him leave his parents to the land east of Eden. Cain's son's name was Enoch. Enoch had a great-great grandson named Lamech, who had two wives. Lamech's most famous child was Noah.

Topic Tracking: Violence 1

Seth was Adam's third son. Adam lived 930 years and Seth lived 905. Their descendants also lived many years.

In the time of Noah, many men were wicked and the world was crowded. God decided to destroy them. Because Noah was virtuous, God warned him and told him to build an Ark for himself, his wife, his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japeth, and their wives. He was also to fill it with a breeding pair of every species as well as plenty of food and water. It rained for forty days and forty nights. The waters rose until the whole earth was covered. The waters began to roll back after 150 days. Noah sent out a dove but she came back with nothing. A week later he sent the bird again. It returned with an olive twig, meaning land was nearby. The waters receded and the inhabitants of the ark returned to dry land. Noah made an altar and sacrificed to God. God made a covenant with Noah and his descendants that He would shower them with fortune. He promised that there would be no more floods and gave the rainbow as a token of this pledge.

Topic Tracking: Contracts 1

Noah raised a vineyard and got drunk. Ham saw him naked but his other brothers closed their eyes and covered their father. Noah cursed Ham's son Canaan to be a



servant to his kin. Japeth's line became gentiles. All the earth shared the same language but in the plain of Shinar (Babylon) the united people tried to build a tower to heaven. God descended and scattered the people of the world giving them different languages. From Shem's line descended Abram. Abram went with Lot to live in Canaan.

God told Abram to leave Canaan and promised him a great kingdom. Abram left for the plain of Moreh near Bethel where God directed him. During famine, they went to Egypt and Abram told his wife Sarah to pretend that she was his sister so that the Egyptians would not kill him. The Pharaoh took her as his own but God plagued the Egyptians and Abram departed with Sarah. There was strife between the herdsmen of Lot and Abram so they parted. Abram went back to Canaan and Lot went to Jordan. God gave Abraham more land.

There were many wars and the Jordanian cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Lot was taken into slavery. In a dream, Abram asked for a child and God promised him many descendants who will suffer for many years. Sarah told Abram to have children with her handmaid Hagar. Hagar conceived a child, which made Sarah jealous. She hated Hagar and asked Abram to send Hagar and her son away. Hagar's son was named Ishmael. God came to Abram and told him that he was to change his name to Abraham as the father of many nations. As a covenant, every male child should be circumcised. Sarah was to bear a son named Isaac.

God said that He was going to judge Sodom and Gomorrah hoping to find at least ten righteous men in the city. Angels arrived in the city and stayed with Lot but the city's inhabitants demanded that he reveal his guests to them. The Angels smote the inhabitants and allowed Lot to find his righteous relatives. As they left the city, they were warned not to look back. Lot's wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt. Lot took his daughters to a place called Zoar. They planned to get him drunk so that they might conceive children with him.

Abraham went south and a king there demanded to have sex with Sarah, but God came to the king and made him give her back. Abraham said "And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife." Genesis, 20:12. The king gave riches to Abraham and Sarah. Sarah bore Isaac at an old age and asked Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael away. The king made an alliance with Abraham.

God asked Abraham to make a great journey and sacrifice his son Isaac to Him. When Abraham got to the altar and took out a knife to kill his son God stopped him. He said He was only testing him. He blessed Abraham and all his descendants. Sarah died and Abraham asked for a burial ground. He bought the land and made a place in the corner of a field. Abraham asked his servant to find a woman of his people for Isaac to marry. The servant went as far as Mesopotamia and met a maiden named Rebekah. She went with him willingly and was married to Isaac. When Abraham died he left everything to Isaac. Despite this, Isaac and Ishmael buried their father together.



Rebekah bore two sons Jacob and Esau. Esau was a hunter and favored by his father. Rebekah loved Jacob more. Jacob extorted Esau's birthright (his inheritance) when his brother needed food. Esau took a wife and Isaac went blind. Isaac told Rebekah to have Esau come to him with venison and receive a blessing. Rebekah got Jacob to bring lamb and wear wool on his arms to imitate his brother's hairy arms. Because of this, Isaac blessed Jacob instead of Esau. When Esau returned and Isaac realized what had happened, Rebekah sent Jacob to stay with her brother to avoid any conflict.

Topic Tracking: Violence 2

Isaac sent Jacob to get a wife and Esau took another wife from the line of Ishmael, Abraham's son by Hagar. On his journey, Jacob fell asleep and God came to him and told him that He would give him the land on which he was sleeping. Jacob swore to build a house there some day and till the land. He went to the house of Laban. He wanted to marry Laban's younger daughter Rachel. He worked for seven years and at the end Laban held a marriage banquet. The next morning, Jacob woke next to Leah, Laban's older daughter. When confronted, Laban explained that it was against his people's laws to wed the younger daughter before the older. Jacob agreed to work another seven years for Rachel. Jacob hated Leah, but she conceived a child while Rachel could not. She had four sons Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah. Rachel had Jacob impregnate her handmaidens and Jacob also had two sons with Leah's handmaiden. Leah had two more sons and a daughter, and Rachel finally bore a son named Joseph.

Topic Tracking: Contracts 2

Topic Tracking: Women 2

Jacob asked to leave Laban with a part of the flock he had raised. Laban specified he could have certain colored sheep and Jacob bred the sheep differently to increase his portion of the sheep. Laban was angered by this and, in a dream, God told Jacob to flee. Laban followed him and eventually they make a pile of stones as a border that neither would cross. Jacob arrived home and sent men asking for his brother's mercy. Esau came towards him with many men and Jacob prayed to God. An angel came to him and told him that his name was from now on to be Israel. Esau arrived and embraced his brother. Jacob bought a field and raised an altar to God. Dinah, Jacob's daughter, was raped. The assailant's father asked for her to be married to his son and Jacob's sons demanded that he and his family be circumcised. They agreed and the day after, Simeon and Levi killed everyone in their town while the men were sore from their 'surgery.'

God told Jacob to go to Bethel. Rachel died in childbirth bearing their youngest son, Benjamin. Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his sons and gave him a coat of many colors. He sent Joseph to join his brothers, not knowing that they hated him. They threw him into a well and left him. Later, Judah thought that they should sell him and Joseph was sent to Egypt. They took Joseph's coat to Jacob soaked in blood.



Joseph came to be a slave in the house of a wealthy man. He became the overseer of all the slaves and the master's wife wanted to have sex with him. When he wouldn't she told her husband that Joseph had tried to have sex with her. Joseph was put into prison. The Pharaoh's servants were sent to prison and met Joseph. One of them dreamed of a vine.

"And in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand." Genesis, 40: 10-11

Joseph told them that this meant they would be recalled by the Pharaoh in three days. He interpreted many dreams in the prison and asked to be mentioned to the Pharaoh. After two years, Pharaoh had a dream of seven ill cows eating seven healthy cows. Joseph told him that this meant there would be seven years of plenty and seven subsequent years of famine. The Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of preparing for the famine and storing corn. When the famine came, Egypt was the only country that had food.

Jacob sent ten of his sons to purchase grain in Egypt. They bowed to Joseph, not recognizing him. He accused them of being spies and told them to send him their youngest brother. They gave him Simeon. He wept and had their sacks loaded with corn. When they arrived home they found that their money had also been returned. The famine got worse and Israel/Jacob sent his sons back to Egypt to buy more grain. Joseph had them brought to his house for dinner and reunited them with Simeon. He filled their sacks and sent them on their way. While they were traveling some Egyptian stewards stopped them and found a silver cup Joseph had planted in Benjamin's sack. They confessed this to Joseph and admitted that they were missing one brother when he asked them. He wept and revealed himself and his belief that God had sent him there to do good and save lives. He forgave his brothers and gave them gifts.

Joseph called for his father and brothers to come to Egypt and seek relief from the famine. They all came with their families and asked for the Pharaoh's leave to settle in fertile Goshen. The famine worsened and money became worthless. Only cattle or sheep were accepted as currency. The children of Israel were given seed and told to farm and give a fifth of their crop to Pharaoh. They all did well in Egypt. When Israel died he asked to be carried home (land now known as Israel) to be buried. He called his sons to him and blessed them, promising each generation would be greater than the preceding. He blessed Manasseh, Ephraim, Dan, Gad and Joseph foremost. He asked to be buried near his father and mother. They traveled out of Egypt to bury him and then returned. Israel was 110 when he died.

Topic Tracking: Violence 3

Topic Tracking: Contracts 3



Exodus

A new king came to rule over Egypt who enslaved the descendants of Israel and asked the midwives to kill all the male children. In the house of Levi, a son was born and after three months he was sent down the river to escape death. He was found by the Pharaoh's daughter and named Moses. When he was older he killed an Egyptian who was beating a Jew. He fled and had a son. While tending his flock, Moses was visited by an angel of God who revealed that He was the God of Abraham and intended Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. He gave Moses a divine rod so that he may prove his claims to others. The rod made lepers clean, turned into a serpent and helped Moses make river water turn into blood. God told Moses to tell Pharaoh that he would be slain if he did not free the children of Israel.

Aaron (Moses' brother) met Moses as he came in from the desert. The Pharaoh did not believe the words of Moses and he made life harder for the children of Israel. He withdrew their portion of straw and demanded that they make bricks anyway (straw and mud are necessary for brick making). Moses gathered the heads of the 12 families and took them to plead with the Egyptian ruler. God had Aaron wave his rod and foul the waters of the land. They approached the ruler again and when he refused, frogs overcame the Nile region. Pharaoh relented but soon returned to his evil ways. God sent a plague of lice, then flies. After Pharaoh refused again, all the Egyptian cattle died. Subsequently, all the animals and men of Egypt were blighted with boils. Hail fell all over the land except on the properties owned and farmed by children of Israel. After the ruler's next refusal, a plague of locusts smote the land and Moses brought a darkness for three days.

Pharaoh still refused to release the Israelites and God told Moses that all first-born sons in the country were to die. To survive, the Israelites were to slaughter a first-born male lamb and put its blood on the door. When the spirit of God came over Egypt to slay all of the first-born males, it passed over the houses with lamb's blood on the door. For seven days after this, the Israelites were not to eat leavened bread. Pharaoh relented and allowed the Israelites to leave. Moses reminded the people to remember the Passover each year. They traveled near the Red Sea and God was with them as a pillar of fire every night.

God warned Moses that Pharaoh was coming after them with an army. He told Moses to raise his staff and the sea would part for them. The Israelites crossed the sea but the waters closed on the pursuing Egyptian hordes. Moses prayed "The LORD is my strength..." Exodus, 15:2. He praised God as the women sang and danced. The water was bitter, but God made it sweet with a native tree. Near Sinai they feared starvation but Moses told them that God would rain down bread in the morning and flesh at night. The food would only last for one day except on the Sabbath when it lasted for an extra day so that they would not have to work. When they came to a place without water, Moses struck a rock with his staff and water rushed forth.



Everyone came to Moses with their troubles and his father-in-law Jethro told him that he could not keep judging everyone alone. They portioned out the tribes by thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. To each number they gave lieutenant judges. God told Moses that his people would be the chosen people and He asked that a new covenant be made. Moses went up to Mount Sinai and returned with the Ten Commandments. The chosen people were not to have any other gods, make graven images or take God's name in vain. In addition, they were to remember the Sabbath, honor their parents, not kill, commit adultery, steal, bear false witness or covet. Moses also received other instructions. Jewish servants were to be kept for only seven years. A man who sleeps with a woman must marry her or be punished. Punishments were to be even retribution: an eye for an eye. The people were to keep three feasts: Passover; the harvest feast; and the end of the year. For this, God promised to watch over them and make them prosper.

Moses built an altar and made sacrifices. He was on Mount Sinai for forty days. God instructed them to make an Ark in which to keep the covenant (the tablets of the rules given by God). He also instructed them on how to build a sanctuary: the wood to use and when to use precious metals. Aaron was to be the priest and God described his holy raiment. All of Aaron's sons, the house of Levi, were to be priests. The first sacrifices were to be rams and a young bull. Only priests were to eat of the sacrifices. Everyone was to make one sacrifice a year.

Moses went down and asked all of the women for their gold earrings. He found that some of his people were worshiping a golden cow. He called the children of Levi and at their command, 3,000 worshipers of the cow were killed. Moses raised the tabernacle of God and God descended in a pillar of cloud. He told the people to destroy other cities in the region. Moses gave all the commandments of God to the people and they built a sanctuary. They made all the clothing and candlesticks described by God. The Ark of the Covenant was put into the tabernacle. When God filled the sanctuary as a pillar of cloud, no one else could enter.

Topic Tracking: Violence 4

Topic Tracking: Women 3

Topic Tracking: Contracts 4



Leviticus

God told Moses to have his people sacrifice cattle, sheep or fowl. Aaron and his sons were to eat a portion of the meat. God described various sorts of offerings to Moses. A peace offering involved the kidneys of a cow, lamb or goat. A sin sacrifice would come from a bullock. A leader should sacrifice a goat kid and a commoner a female kid. Someone who saw a sin was to sacrifice either a male or female kid or two doves. Sin offerings were to be wholly burnt and never eaten.

A trespass offering was to be prepared in the same way. No children of Israel are to eat blood or fat for these are to be burnt to God. God told Moses to make a great sin offering for all of his people. God's fire consumed the sacrifice. Moses told the people to keep their heads covered. The priests were not to drink wine in the tabernacle. He also instructed that,

"Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat. Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divided not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the coney....And the hare....And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean unto you." Leviticus, 11:3-7

Everything in the water without fin or scales was declared unclean as well as swan, pelican, stork, bat and heron. Anyone who touched one of these beasts was made unclean. Lizards and snakes were also unclean. Women were unclean for a time after bearing children. Priests were to watch out for lepers. If a leper was healed, he was to make a sacrifice, wash all his clothing and shave his hair. A house plagued by leprosy was to be cleaned or burned. A woman was to be considered unclean while she menstruated and any man who slept with her during this time was considered unclean. Anywhere she sat during this time was also considered unclean.

The tenth day of the seventh month God commanded to be another day of rest. All animals killed by Israelites were to be killed at the tabernacle. Family members were not to see other family members naked except for husband and wife. God decreed that men should not have sex with men or beasts. God restated many of the commandments and reiterated that people should be kinder and "love they neighbor as thyself...." Leviticus, 19:18. Men could be forgiven for sleeping with servants but could have neither tattoos nor piercings. Children were forbidden to swear against their parents and incest was strictly forbidden. A priest could marry only a virgin and if his daughter turned whore she was to be burned. The corner portions of harvest were reserved for the poor. Murderers and blasphemers were to be put to death.

Every seventh year was decreed to be a year of rest and people were to return to celebrate with their families the forty-ninth year. God reviewed the commandments with Moses and promised destruction if they were not kept. One-tenth of the land was to be given to God. Moses kept these commandments for the children of Israel.



Topic Tracking: Women 4
Topic Tracking: Contract 5



Numbers

In the second year of their exile, the Israelites were counted by tribes and each man over twenty was made eligible for war. Among the twelve tribes there were 603,550. The sons of Levi were not counted because God claimed them in exchange for the first-born of every family. The Levites were split into different groups to do the various works of God. The Levites were also to be judges to the people because they were endowed with the ability to cleanse. The princes of Israel brought a great assortment of gifts to the tabernacle and Aaron the priest cleansed all the Levites. They kept the passover. God told them to make two silver trumpets to sound the orders for the Israelites.

They raised the Ark of the Covenant and began to journey again. Complaints displeased God and He began to burn those who complained until Moses made them stop. There was only bread from heaven and no meat but God promised that they would eat meat. Some of the men began to slaughter the flocks. The next day the land was covered in quail. God told Moses to send men ahead to search. One man went from every tribe. They returned in forty days and reported that the land was inhabited by strong peoples. Some of the men reported that there were giants and others spoke out for Moses to return to Egypt. Joshua tried to calm them but some of the men called for a stoning. God became enraged and warned that they would wander for forty years if they did not follow Joshua. There was a plague and some people died. The next day they had to fight many adversaries. God demanded that they sacrifice again when they returned to their new land.

A man named Korah raised some men against Moses and hired a Levite to sacrifice for them. Moses prayed against the sacrifice and God appeared. He told the people that He would kill everyone but Aaron and Moses. The earth opened up and swallowed Korah, his men and their families. 14,000 people died in the subsequent plague.

God chose the Levites as His favorites and commanded that no one else was to enter the tabernacle. The Israelites entered the desert and there was no water. Moses brought water from a rock again and asked for a passage through a nearby kingdom but was refused. Aaron died on top of a mountain and was mourned for 30 days. A king took some of the Israelites captive and others spoke out against God who sent a plague of serpents after them. They continued to travel and when they were halted they fought. The Israelites overcame many cities. They camped in the land of Moab. The leading men of Moab grappled with how to deal with these nomads. God sent angels to the leaders to prevent war. God convinced one of the rulers that the Israelites would overcome anyone who attacked them.

While in the plain of Moab, some of the Israelites slept with prostitutes. God had all of these men killed. Because there were more women than men, God told Moses to make it legal for women to inherit property if their male relatives died. God reviewed the types of sacrifices with Moses. Moses spoke to the heads of the families about sworn vows. A woman's vow was to be secured by her husband who had the right to make her vows void.



The Israelites fought the Midianites and took many of them captive. They also gathered many animals and gave one tenth of everything to God. The tribe of Reuben wanted to stay in the plain because they had many cattle. God warned them that if they did not fight they would perish but if they fought they would be well rewarded. God led them to Canaan where they were to drive out the inhabitants. The land was to be divided among the tribes by Aaron's son and Joshua. On the borders they made cities of refuge and within they marked out cities for the Levites. God went over more rules for the people on inheritance and murder. All of this happened south of Jordan near Jericho.

Topic Tracking: Violence 5

Topic Tracking: Women 5



Deuteronomy

In the fortieth year of their wandering, Moses told the people to go to Canaan and be fruitful. He advised the judges to be fair and not value one man's word over another. He feared that they would turn against God and warned them not to interfere with the children of Esau. Messengers were sent out to secure a passage through Moab and Moses warned the people not to add to the commandments given to them by God. He admonished them to remember the covenant and warned that they would be consumed by fire if they did not. He also told them to love God and be good people and not to seek other gods. Marriages were not to be made among the foreign people. Moses warned them to remember that God fed them in the desert and to remember to destroy the false images of other gods. He continually reminded them of their covenant and all the things done by God. Men were to remember to make sacrifices and the Levites were always to remain priests.

Anyone who worshiped other gods or tried to corrupt the Israelites was to die. They were to eat clean animals and kill them in temples. God commanded all the feasts to be kept. Men or women who were found worshiping other gods were to be put to death by stoning. God promised to give them a king who would garner no wealth and not take multiple wives. All judgements made by the Levites were to be made "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." Deuteronomy, 19:21. God promised to fight with them and ordered them to kill every male in every city taken. If a woman was captured and a man planned to make her his wife, she was to mourn for a month and shave her head. A rebellious son could be stoned. A man who accused his wife of not being a virgin and was wrong had to pay a penalty to her father. If he was right, the woman could be stoned. If a man forced a betrothed woman to have sex he was to be stoned, if she was not betrothed he had to marry her.

God commanded the Israelites to hate neither Edomites nor Egyptians and to harbor escaped slaves. A man could divorce a wife and she could marry another. A newlywed man was free from military service for a year. A widow was to marry her husband's brother if she had no children. God commanded them to place the tablets of law in front of an altar once they crossed the river Jordan.

Moses spoke again of their great journey and miracles. He promised that everything he foresaw would come to pass and that God would always forgive them and curse their enemies. The greatest commandment, he said, was to love God. He told the assembled people that he was old and ready to die. Turning to Joshua, he told him to be strong and to teach the people the laws. Moses sang and told the people that his words would fall to them as dew. God told him to ascend the mountain to die. Moses blessed the people and exhorted the Levites to serve them. After addressing each of the twelve tribes, he climbed the mountain and died. All the tribes wept. "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face...." Deuteronomy, 34:10

Topic Tracking: Women 6
Topic Tracking: Contracts 6



Joshua

God told Joshua to lead the army over the river Jordan. Men were sent to spy and were harbored in the house of a woman who asked that her relatives be spared. The host was marshaled and the Levites marched out bearing the Ark of the Covenant. Twelve men from each tribe were picked to cross first and the water stopped flowing when the Ark was carried across. This frightened the enemy away. God told Joshua to circumcise all the children of Israel again. They besieged a city. Every day they blew the trumpets and circled the city with the Ark of the Covenant. Joshua explained that the city would be cursed, all of its inhabitants were to be killed and all the treasure was to be given to God.

A man of the house of Judah took a cursed object and as a result the Israelites lost their next battle. The man was burned at God's command. God instructed Joshua to lay an ambush for the enemy. He drew the force out of a city with a small sortie and when the army was gone, he sent the rest of his men in to plunder the city. Only the animals were left alive. The people of the region united to fight the Israelites. One tribe made a treaty with Joshua. The united armies were defeated and their cities destroyed. Joshua claimed all the land for the children of Israel.

Joshua began to get old as he distributed the land among the tribes. The existing land was divided among five of the tribes. They found more land and divided it among the remaining tribes. The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh were placed on the other side of the Jordan. Those on the other side of the Jordan raised an altar against their brethren, but Phinehas, son of Eleazar, grandson of Aaron, told them not to wage war against the other tribes. Joshua addressed all the tribes and told them to remember to serve God. He died and was buried by his people.

Topic Tracking: Violence 6



Judges

With the death of Joshua, the Israelites were not sure who should lead the fight against the Canaanites. Caleb promised his daughter's hand to any victorious chief. His nephew, Othniel won her. A foreign tribe took a valley from the family of Dan. An angel of God announced to them that some had forsaken God and worshiped others. Other tribes intermarried with Canaanites and were cursed by God. Othniel became their savior by waging successful battles. The Israelites strayed again and God strengthened Moab against them. Deborah came to judge the people and made them hearken to the ways of the Lord. With her victorious general, Barak she sang to God and made the people repent.

The Israelites did evil again and God made the Midianites masters over them. God sent them a prophet and told Gideon that He would "smite the Midianites as one man." Judges, 6:16. Gideon saw an angel and built an altar to God after casting down an altar to Baal. People who wanted to preserve the altar to Baal assailed Gideon, but he blew a trumpet with the assistance of God. Gideon proved himself by leaving a fleece out overnight and praying to God that it not be touched by morning dew. He gathered the people against the Midianites. There were too many people so he took only those who lap at water like a dog. He divided three hundred men into three companies and they blew the trumpets and shouted to the Lord. Their enemy ran away in fear. Gideon defeated other armies and nations. He built a house and had many wives.

Abimelech, one of Gideon's sons, got other relatives to support him as ruler. He killed all of his brothers except one who escaped. Some men opposed Abimelech and fought with him. Abimelech was killed by a stone thrown from above by a woman. The Israelites did evil under the next rulers and were made servants of the Philistines. They languished for 18 years until God forgave them. The children of Ammon made war against Israel and Jephthah led the Israelites to repulse the invaders. His daughter disgraced him by losing her virginity. She was his only child. The tribe of Ephraim attacked Jephthah's city but they were defeated.

After Jephthah died there were other judges, but the children of Israel continued to do evil. A barren woman bore a child named Samson. This child was blessed by God. He wanted to take a Philistine wife but saw a lion corpse riddled with bees and honey. When he asked a question of his bride-to-be's family, they threatened him. He killed them and left the woman with a friend. He tied firebrands to the tails of 300 foxes to scare away his enemies. They killed his wife but he killed many with the jawbone of an ass. He thanked God and became a judge of Israel.

Samson fell in love with a girl named Delilah who tried to find his weakness. He told her one answer but it was a lie. He did this three times. Finally, he admitted to her that if his head were shaved he would have no strength. She cut his hair and imprisoned him. He killed many but was also killed. The children of Israel went astray again and began to worship other gods. A Levite was traveling home with a concubine and was given shelter by an old man. Some townspeople raped the woman. The Levite killed her and



cut her into little pieces. He retold the rape to the tribes of Israel and they went out against these people. The tribe of Benjamin fought with the foreigners and was defeated by the other tribes and expelled. Men began to do right again.

Topic Tracking: Contracts 7

Topic Tracking: Women 7

Ruth

A man of Judah, Elimelech went to Moab with his wife Naomi. Their sons married women out of the Moabites. One of these women was named Ruth. When their husbands died, Naomi told them to return to their fathers' houses. Ruth would not go home and traveled with Naomi to Bethlehem. Elimelech's kin, Boaz told her that she could stay with his maidens because she seemed virtuous. She worked in the fields and kept a part of the harvest. At Naomi's advice, she approached Boaz while he was drunk after the threshing. He gave her six measures of barley. Boaz told the council that he bought all that was Elimelech's from Naomi and intended to marry Ruth. Ruth bore a child who would be the grandfather of David.

Topic Tracking: Women 8



1 Samuel

Elkhanah had a wife named Hannah with no children, and another wife, Peninnah who had children. Hannah was very bitter that she was barren but after she prayed, she gave birth to Samuel. She pledged the child to the Lord. Samuel ministered to God. The head priest Eli was trying to get the Israelites to stop sinning when an angel of God came to him and told him that God would soon raise up a great priest. God came to Samuel and told him that He was going to turn against Eli. Samuel told Eli this and when the Israelites went out to fight the Philistines, the Ark of the Covenant was taken. Eli died of shock.

The Philistines set the Ark near their god but the statue kept falling over. Eventually, after seven months, the Philistines sent the Ark back because it caused too much trouble. Samuel told the Israelites to pray only to God. The children of Israel gathered and overcame the Philistines. Samuel became a judge of Israel and made his sons judges. His sons, however, were corrupt. The people asked for a king to reign over them and Samuel responded that a king would request all the honors due to God. A man named Saul was born and God told Samuel that Saul was honorable. Saul came seeking Samuel as a seer and the next day Samuel anointed him and told him to wait for him in Gilgal.

"And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he prophesied among the prophets, then the people said one to another, What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets? And one of the same place answered and said, But who is their father? There it came to be a proverb, Is Saul also among the prophets?" 1 Samuel, 10:11-12

Samuel called the people together and told them that Saul would be the redeemer of their sins. Some of them wanted to make a treaty with a neighboring people, but Saul told them not to. He led them in war and they made him king in Gilgal. Samuel warned the people to fear and love the Lord. Saul waged war against the Philistines but Samuel told him that he acted foolishly because they were outnumbered. Jonathan, Saul's son, wanted to attack a Philistine garrison. They fought the Philistines for many years. Samuel directed him to attack another city and destroy everything. Saul kept the sheep and God told Samuel that this displeased Him.

Samuel warned Saul that he would not be king much longer and he repented and worshiped God. God told Samuel to stop mourning Saul and go to Bethlehem where he would find a new king among the sons of Jesse. Jesse had seven sons, but the youngest, David, was to be king. David played the harp for Saul and made his spirit clean again. They went to fight against the Philistines again, but they sent out a great warrior named Goliath who scared all of the Israelites. David returned from feeding his family's sheep to find all the soldiers fleeing from Goliath. Saul would not let him fight. David went into the battle without armor and announced that he came in the name of God. He killed Goliath with a stone from his sling.



Jonathan loved David. Saul got jealous because everyone respected David more, including his own son. Saul's daughter also loved David but Saul requested 100 Philistine foreskins in exchange for her hand. Saul wanted Jonathan to kill David, but Jonathan refused. David went to Bethlehem and Jonathan wanted to join him there. He refused to eat meat for a month. David fled around the land and was imprisoned in Moab. Saul killed people who helped him. Jonathan joined David and told him that he would be king. Philistines attacked and distracted Saul from seeking David. David met him and asked him to stop pursuing him. Saul wept and admitted that David was to be king. David married a woman named Abigail after God killed her first husband. His servants had gone to her husband's house to request food but he refused them. When David came himself, Abigail asked for forgiveness.

The men around Saul turned against David but David refused to kill Saul. God stopped talking to Saul so he sought help from a sinful soothsayer. Samuel returned and told Saul that Israel would fall into the hands of the Philistines. While David was fighting the Philistines another tribe took his city. He returned and took back the city. He dispersed the spoils among his men and made it known that only those who fought would get a part of the booty. The Philistines defeated Israel and Saul killed himself.

Topic Tracking: Violence 7

Topic Tracking: Contracts 8



2 Samuel

David mourned over the deaths of Jonathan and Saul. He was anointed king at Hebron, but Abner, one of the captains of his army, named Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, to be king. Abner was overthrown but the tribes of Israel split between the two kings. Ish-bosheth was frightened by the death of Abner and ended up being killed. David reunited Israel and reigned for forty years. The king of Tyre built him a house. His wife, the daughter of Saul, began to hate him and never bore a child.

God told Nathan to tell David to build a real temple for Him. David defeated many people and garnered much wealth. He searched for members of Saul's house to show them kindness. David's army defeated the Syrians. David impregnated Bath-Sheba, the wife of another man. He had his servant Joab make sure that the husband would die. God killed David's child as a punishment but his second child was Solomon. One of David's sons, Ammon, fell in love with his brother Absalom's sister, Tamar. Ammon forced her will. When she revealed this to Absalom, he told her to be quiet and wait. He arranged for all the sons of the king to be killed. David was very angry when he heard of this. Absalom planned to set up his own kingdom and many people followed him. David traveled with his people who were "hungry, and weary, and thirsty, in the wilderness." 2 Samuel, 17:29. The king counted his people and set Joab in charge of the army. They defeated Absalom, but David mourned his death.

David was old at this point and wanted to return to Bethlehem to die. A man named Sheba of the Benjamin family, rallied against David and there was more strife. His own people betrayed him. Famine came to Israel until David delivered seven of Saul's sons to an enemy he tortured. David fought the Philistines and killed many. He sang a song of praise to God. As he lay on his deathbed he remembered all the deeds of God and warned his people to keep the commandments. David counted the people for God one last time and then admitted to his previous sin against the husband of Bath-Sheba. The people sinned again and an angel of God killed many of the tribe of Dan. David built an altar to atone for his sins.



1 Kings

David grew old and his servants brought him a young virgin, but he would not sleep with her. Adonijah claimed that he would be king and snubbed Nathan. David warned Bath-Sheba to look out for Solomon's rights. He swore that Solomon would rule and had a priest anoint him with Nathan. As David neared death, he asked Solomon to keep the ways of the Lord. Adonijah angered Solomon and ended up being killed by one of his friends. God came to Solomon and asked him what he wished for. Solomon answered,

"and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people, which thou has chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered or counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" 1 Kings, 3:7-9

Pleased with this request, God granted Solomon wisdom. Harlots came to him who had both given birth at the same time. One of their children had died and now both were claiming the living child. Solomon told them to cut the child in half and he saw the real mother because she was not willing to do this. He ruled fairly over the people and planned to build a house for God. They built a great foundation. He made elaborately decorated walls. Gold candlesticks were forged. The Ark of the Covenant was brought into the Temple. Solomon repeated the laws of the covenant and prayed for God to be with them. God promised to honor his prayer if the people kept the commandments. The Pharaoh of Egypt gave Solomon his daughter. The Queen of Sheba gave him a great amount of gold and he built a navy. He loved many women and had a multitude of wives and concubines. When Solomon was old, the people began to worship other gods. God told Solomon that He would take the kingdom away from him.

Jeroboam turned against Solomon and the king died after ruling for forty years. Solomon's son wanted to be king but Jeroboam announced that the house of David had sinned in the eyes of God. He announced that Solomon's son would be king of Judah and he would rule the rest of Israel. Following Solomon there were a series of sinful kings in Israel and Judah

A man came out of Judah and collapsed at the altar speaking of a future child from the house of David. The man told Jeroboam that he had been told to neither eat nor drink. When a priest tricked the man into eating, a lion appeared and devoured him. Jeroboam reigned for twenty-two years. In his 18th year another man took over in Judah but sinned and died. A man named Asa ruled in Judah and did well in the eyes of God. Baashar ruled in Israel for many years and Jehosophat ruled in Judah.

In Asa's thirty-ninth year as king, Israel was split again by civil war, Ahab united the kingdom, but was sinful. A prophet named Elijah announced to Ahab, "there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." 1 Kings: 17:1 God led Elijah away and fed him. He asked a widow for food and drink and she was willing to share what



little she had. Her son got sick and Elijah healed him. The kingdoms of Israel and Judah continued to be ruled separately.

A drought lasted for three years and Ahab went looking for grass with Obadiah. Elijah met Obadiah and sent him to announce his coming to Ahab. Meanwhile, Elijah gathered all the prophets of Baal at Mt. Carmel and performed a test sacrifice to Baal. He asked for a sign from the god, but nothing happened. Then he built an altar to God and made a sacrifice. God's fire came down. Elijah had all the prophets of Baal killed to show the people which deity to worship. After this, God sent him against Ahab.

Ahab told his wife Jezebel what happened and she pretended to give herself up to God and abandon Baal. God sent an earthquake and then sent Elijah to raise Jehu as king. While Elijah raised support for Jehu, Ahab dealt with a new Syrian threat. He defeated Syrian hordes because they were drunk. He also defeated subsequent armies.

Ahab asked for a vineyard from another man who refused him. Jezebel told him that she would get it for him. She had the man framed for blasphemy and Ahab got the vineyard. God sent Elijah to Ahab to tell him that Jezebel was to be eaten by dogs. Ahab humbled himself before God and God gave him more time. Jehosaphat, king of Judah, still separate from Israel, allied with Ahab to fight the Syrians. Ahab received ill omens from prophets and, as a result, he sent one of them to prison. He entered the battle in disguise and died. His son, Ahaziah, followed him as ruler. Ahaziah worshiped Baal.

Topic Tracking: Women 9

Topic Tracking: Contracts 9

Topic Tracking: Violence 8



2 Kings

Moab rebelled against Israel and Ahaziah fell sick. He sent messengers to inquire of the prophets of Baal but Elijah encountered them and sent them back. Jehosaphat's son Jehoram reigned in Judah. Elijah met with Elisha and the other prophets. God smiled on Elisha and Moab rebelled against Israel again. The armies of Israel could find no water so they asked Elisha and he told them to dig ditches and rainwater filled them. Moab was defeated with the help of God. The Israelites repented from their evil ways for a short time.

Elisha helped a widow and was given hospitality by a woman who had no child. He blessed her and she had a son. The son died but Elisha came and breathed life back into him. Elisha healed a leper who was a captain in the army. Elisha's servant received the man's leprosy because he took money for his master's deeds.

Syria made war on Israel and Elisha prayed that Syrian armies would be struck with blindness. The armies were captured. The Syrians besieged Samaria and there was a famine. Some of the people resorted to cannibalism. Elisha promised that food would come. They found the Syrian camp abandoned. The women whose son Elisha revived came back to Israel and Elisha went to Damascus. He wept because he knew that the leader of the Syrians would bring about the end of Israel. He knew that this would leave Israel open to be ravished by the next king. Elisha sent a man to anoint Jehu king of Israel, telling him,

"And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel....And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her." 2 Kings, 9: 7, 10

Jehu conspired against Joram, the current ruler and member of the house of Ahab. The people overthrew all the sons of Ahab and sent their heads to Jehu. He gathered all the worshipers of Baal and slayed them. He failed to walk in the ways of God and Israel fell again into ruin. Syria overcame them.

Ahaziah's mother ruled for some time, but she was overthrown. Her supplanter ruled well but was overthrown by another. Elisha got sick but told the king to shoot arrows out the window and into the ground three times. The king overcame the Syrians in three battles. A series of evil rulers reigned in Judah. The control of the throne was up for grabs. Israel had more heathen kings and again the people began to worship idols. Hezekiah ruled in Judah and ruled well. The king of Syria moved his people against him and he went into the house of God and tore his clothing. He spoke to Isaiah who told him that God was with him. Isaiah assured Hezekiah that he would rule for fifteen years more despite his sickness, and that the king of Assyria would not enter Judah.

Hezekiah's son, who was evil, ruled for a long time. But Hezekiah's grandson, Josiah ruled well and had the people rebuild the house of God. He began ruling at age eight.



He made a new covenant with God and he rid the country of the worshipers of Baal. God remained angry with Judah, however, and decided to turn them out of the land. Josiah died and his son ruled. The next two kings were evil. Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon besieged Judah. He captured it and took everything to Babylon. The king of Judah was taken too.

Topic Tracking: Contracts 10

1 Chronicles

First and Second Chronicles revisit and retell many of the same stories told in Kings.

Chronicles begins with a long list of genealogies starting with Adam and going to the twelve tribes of Israel (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebular, Benjamin, Naphthali, Gad, Dan, Joseph and Asher). Judah was seated in Jerusalem. During the reign of the House of David, a temple was built to honor and worship God. David ruled well and repelled the Syrians. God asked him to choose between three years famine and three months of defeat in war. David chose defeat in war. After the three months, he regained all his losses.

David prepared his son to build a temple. There were many priests in the land, all of them descended from the house of Levi. David assembled the leaders of Israel and told them that Solomon was to follow him as king and he would build a house for God where the Levites would serve. He gave his son an elaborate design. He told the assembly to gather all the riches they could to pay for this. He died after ruling for forty years.



2 Chronicles

Solomon built the house of God and brought the Ark of the Covenant into it. It was built sparing little expense out of dedication to his father and God. When it was finished the children of Israel assembled and the cloud of God entered it. Solomon addressed them and reminded them of their covenant with God. They feasted and God appeared to Solomon and told him to watch over his people. Solomon regained all the lost lands and his people kept the commandments. The Queen of Sheba addressed him.

"Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, to be king for the LORD thy GOD: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgement and justice." 2 Chronicles, 9:7-8

She gave him many riches and Solomon increased the splendor of his house and the house of God. His son became king and Israel rebelled against his puritan rule. He retained only Judah for the house of David to rule. He transgressed against God and Egypt came against them. They humbled themselves before God and lost only their gold. Asa, the next king, upheld the word of God and defeated the Ethiopians. Azariah, the king of the rest of Israel, came to Asa and told him that Israel had been too long without God. Asa deposed his own mother for worshiping an idol. He made an alliance with Syria and fell out of favor with God for putting a seer in jail. His son, Jehosophat, ruled after him and there was peace. The Philistines paid tribute to them. He made a treaty with Ahab, the ruler of Israel, and they fought against Syria until Ahab died, disguised in battle.

Other tribes come to war against Judah and God made the great multitude fall dead. Jehosophat failed to expel the worshipers of Baal. His son was a good king but his wife, a daughter of Ahab, led him astray. Ahaziah became king and was wicked. He warred against the house of Ahab. There were more kings following him and people continued to worship idols. The Syrians defeated Judah. Uzziah was the next king who ruled well for many years but transgressed against God and was made a leper. His son ruled but the people remained corrupt. The next king was wicked and the people worshiped Baal. Hezekiah followed him and was good even though the people were wicked. The Levites cleansed the house of God and made many sacrifices. Hezekiah called all the leaders of Israel to come to Judah for the Passover. Many unclean men came and Hezekiah pleaded with God for them to be forgiven. He expelled the idols and restored the gifts to the priests from the people.

The king of Assyria made war against Judah and lost. Judah became very rich. Hezekiah became sick and was healed by God but he didn't properly thank Him. His son was the next king and undid all the good his father did. Josiah, his son, was a good king and he called for the Temple to be rebuilt. He studied Moses' tablets of law with the priests. He renewed the covenant and restored the priests. They began to make correct offerings again. The next king was wicked and Nebuchadnezzar overcame Israel. The



house of God was burned and the city of Jerusalem ruined. In the first year of the king of Persia Cyrus said:

"All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me: and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up." 2 Chronicles, 36:23

Ezra

Cyrus was charged with building a house for God in Jerusalem. He restored the treasures and people taken away by Nebuchadnezzar. Thousands of people and priests returned. In the second year a foundation was laid. Adversaries of Judah pleaded with Cyrus' son that the Temple not be raised because it would make Judah powerful again. He commanded that the building be stopped. During the rule of Darius the building was resumed. The governor of the region sent a letter to Darius in protest. Darius commanded that the Temple be built and the taxes of the region be used to build it. It was finished in the sixth year of Darius. All the priests were purified and the Israelites came out of captivity. Ezra came out of captivity already versed in the laws of Moses during the seventh year of Artaxerxes, the king between Cyrus and Darius. The king gave him a letter permitting priests to travel where they wanted to judge other men. Many went with Ezra from Babylon to Jerusalem bringing the candlesticks of gold and silver that were taken by Nebuchadnezzar. Ezra found the Israelites mingled with gentiles and not keeping the laws of Moses. He tore his clothing in mourning. He prayed to God for them to be forgiven and promised to make them keep the commandments. Ezra gathered the people and made a new covenant with God. He asked for them all to confess. Men who had taken strange wives were to send them away.

Topic Tracking: Contracts 11

Topic Tracking: Women 10



Nehemiah

Nehemiah asked about the Jews of captivity and begged that his brethren would keep the commandments of Moses. He was a cupbearer to the Persian king. He asked to be sent to Jerusalem to help build the Temple. He returned to the city with only a few men and tried to convince the people to rebuild the city's wall. Some doubted this wisdom. The high priest built a gate and sanctified it. Others began to build the wall. The governor was very angry and he mocked the Jews. Another tribesman told him that the walls were weak. The people continued to work but other tribes began to conspire against them. The workers wore swords as they worked. They worked night and day and other cities began to envy the rise of Jerusalem.

When the wall was completed, Nehemiah put his brother in charge and told him to keep the gates shut. Israelites began to return to the city bringing considerable wealth. They asked Ezra to teach them the laws. They feasted and rephrased the covenant. They signed a pledge to adhere to God's rules. Priests and descendants of the original settlers came back to the city. They read the laws of Moses. When Nehemiah returned, he found that the people were not keeping the Sabbath. He made the priests cleanse themselves and told them to keep the laws.



Esther

In the days of Ahasuerus a ruler of Persia, there were extravagant feasts but the queen would not come at the king's bidding. He decided to give her royal place to someone more worthy. He sent proclamations all over his empire searching for a virgin.

Mordecai, a Jew in his service, headed this search. The keeper of women thought that Mordecai's daughter, Esther, would be a good match. The king found her modest and beautiful and chose her. Mordecai told her to hide her heritage. Mordecai did not bow to Haman, a prince of Persia, and Haman asked if he may kill Jews to punish their irreverence. Mordecai wept over this and Esther also grieved. She wanted to go to the king but she was only allowed to go when called. She told her father that she would fast and that he should have all the other Jews fast also. On the third day she went to the king and asked to be present at a banquet with him and Haman. Haman was planning to have Mordecai killed. The king heard of Mordecai's coming death and remembered that Mordecai made him aware of a plot on his life. He told Haman to dress Mordecai in royal clothing. Haman was hung on the gallows prepared for Mordecai.

Ahasuerus gave the money of Haman's house to Esther and she passed this on to Mordecai. She asked the king to undo the evil begun by Haman and the king decreed that the Jews were to turn and massacre their assailants. Mordecai went out to be the enforcer of this law. The governors of the provinces supported him out of fear. Mordecai told others that the date of Haman's death and Esther's feast was to be always kept. This day is called Purim. Mordecai became great in Ahasuerus' kingdom.

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Job

Job was a wealthy man with seven sons and three daughters. He had the greatest faith but Satan told God that he was only reverent because God had blessed him. To prove him wrong, God killed all of Job's children and destroyed his wealth. Job ripped off his clothing and worshiped God. Satan told God that Job was still loyal because he had not suffered any actual pain. God smote Job with boils and his wife told him to curse God and ask to die. Job refused. His friends came to mourn with him. He opened his mouth to curse himself and lamented. He asked why his life was so miserable. Eliphaz suggested that God was less just than Men and said that He is cruel. He reaffirmed Job's faith, however. Job lamented more over his pain and the wretched spectacle of his torture:

"Oh that I might have my request; and that God would grant me the thing that I long for! Even that it would please God to destroy me; that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off! Then should I yet have comfort; yea, I would harden myself in sorrow: let him not spare; for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One. What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?" Job, 6:8-11

He begged God for forgiveness and asked how long men must live on earth. He believed that he sinned and should no longer live. Bildad told him to ask God for help and promised him that God was good. Job was weary of life and wondered if his suffering could be considered good. Zophar said that his words must be answered. He asked if men can ever find God and promised that his misery would be taken away. Job told him that he also had wisdom. He said that all good and evil was created by God. He said that he was not inferior to them but had suffered grievously. He alleged that man is always unclean and his life is brief. Eliphaz said that it was no good to speak in this way and asked Job if God could be a consolation in any way. He told Job that his words were in vain. Bildad asked if he would stop speaking in this way. He told Job that good will overcome evil and that evil is not loved by God. Job asked why they continued to reproach him and explained that he has been overthrown by God. Zophar told him that the triumph of evil may be great but the glory of God is everlasting. Job explained that he was not complaining against God but believed that evil would endure. Eliphaz told him that man's righteousness cannot be profitable to God and that God probably could not see everything. Job explained that wicked and good alike rose and fell and the work of men perished like ears of corn. Bildad asserted that God's power was endless. Job wished to be in his youth or months past when he was blessed. He told them that others mock him because God has abandoned him. He told them that he will not abandon his righteous thoughts and has nothing to confess. Everyone fell silent.

Elihu, who had been listening, was enraged because Job has not justified God. He said that old men are not always wise. He asked why Job strives against God. He told him that only those who don't strive against God are blessed. He asserted that Job spoke without true knowledge. He explained that he should fear God. He explained that no one could know the mind of God. Job asserted that he knew that God was omnipotent. He has humbled himself. God spoke and said He was angry against Eliphaz and the



others for being unrighteous. Job loved God and worshiped Him without question. He accepted Job and gave him his children and multiplied his former wealth.

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Psalms

The Psalms are a collection of spiritual poetry on virtually every subject, and as such are difficult to summarize. They are a tremendous body of work signifying a poetic dialogue between man and God.

Proverbs

Like the Psalms, Proverbs are too specific to summarize. They represent a body of sayings directed at everything from death to government to farming. The tenor of the entire section is one of contextualized faith and day-to-day living.



Ecclesiastes

This book is allegedly from a speech or sermon by a son of David. It is like a long psalm with its' main theme centering around understanding the nature of the world and the relationship between man and God. A famous quote from Ecclesiastes:

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up....A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace....every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God."
Ecclesiastes, 3:1-3, 8, 13



The Song of Solomon (Song of Songs)

The Song of Solomon is a collection of ancient love poetry. There are few outright praises of God. It is more a celebration of love. There are strong sexual overtones. It is a text of immense beauty and lasting relevance.



Isaiah

Isaiah marks the beginning of the prophetic books of the Old Testament. These books all roughly tell the same story: Israel has sinned against God; the people are to be punished terribly; after the punishment, we shall return to paradise.

The prophet Isaiah had a series of visions about the retribution coming for the sins of Israel opening with:

"The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward." Isaiah, 1:3-4

Isaiah announced that God wanted the people to change their ways; if they did this their sorrow would be undone. He predicted that the house of God would be rebuilt on a mountain and God would come down to judge the sins of the people. When God came, He would take the goods and jewels from the women and the men would fail in war. Anyone remaining in Jerusalem would be made holy.

Isaiah spoke of a vineyard. God was the keeper and Israel the vines. On judgement day, the sinners would be humbled. A Seraphim told Isaiah to speak to the people. God told him that He would send the people a sign from the house of David; a virgin would bear a son called Immanuel who would choose God. This child would choose righteousness over sin. Isaiah warned the people to be involved only with good people. The child would cleanse the dimness and sinfulness of the land. Isaiah lamented the fall of the righteous and the worship of idols. He begged God for mercy on the house of Jacob. He promised the people that they would prevail against Babylon. God would destroy Moab because of its pride. Damascus was to suffer and Africa would be plagued by famine. The Egyptians would serve Assyrians.

Isaiah predicted more. The city of David would be plagued by war. Tyre would fall and be forgotten. Isaiah reminded them that God was all-powerful. A city in Judah was to survive the destruction. The righteous would prevail. God would destroy the serpents and cleanse the sins of Jacob. He called for the people to hearken to his words and not make a covenant with death. David's home was to fall to siege. Isaiah promised to seal the words of his vision in a book.

Isaiah promised that Israel would be redeemed. Her rebellious children in other parts of the world would be called back or punished. When that day came, "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun...." Isaiah, 30:26. The people would worship God. Kings would reign justly. People would forget evil altogether. Anyone who read the book of God would survive. The wilderness would become paradise.



The king of Assyria attacked Judah and King Hezekiah. He asked him why He rebelled against the laws. Hezekiah sent some men to question Isaiah. The prophet told them to turn to God. Hezekiah praised God and was victorious over his enemies. A prince of Babylon sent Hezekiah golden gifts and Isaiah became enraged. He told him that all these things would perish and nations themselves are meaningless. The people must remember God even though they would suffer for their father's sins.

Cyrus, according to Isaiah, was a shepherd of God who would rebuild Jerusalem. Daughters of unholy nations would be spoiled. Evil would come to the other cities of the world. Isaiah told them to flee from foreign nations because God would redeem the house of Jacob and be their foundation for peace. Isaiah told them that his mouth is God's sword. He implored them to wake from their stupor and realize that God would destroy those who were unclean and uncircumcised. He told them that they should not waste their money on unnecessary things because if they acted holy their reward would be heaven. Those who were wicked would never have peace. God could save those who had sinned if they would only turn to Him. All gentiles who turned to God wouldn't perish.

Isaiah told the people that they did not need elaborate garments or expensive goods. He asked why God made them able to sin. He pleaded and announced that all the cities of the earth had gone astray. When God redeemed the world, the lion and the lamb would feed together, He said. Then He added that heaven is God's throne and earth is His footstool. Israel would bear a male child and be loved by God. Peace would extend from Israel to the gentiles. God would reforge the world and all evil would perish. After the Day of Judgement there was to be peace and people would multiply. God would make His loyal people glorious.

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Jeremiah

Jeremiah prophesied in the days of Josiah, king of Judah. God made him a prophet from birth. He told him that evil would come from the north. He wondered why Israel had strayed and killed her prophets. Judah still stood because God was merciful. Israel was like a woman who had dealt treacherously with her husband, God. Jeremiah warned them to get circumcised. God would make the land desolate. He would bring a foreign nation to rule over Israel. This nation would come out of the north. If the people would keep the commandments they would be preserved. Wealth and graven images had to be abandoned.

Jeremiah told them that He abandoned his heritage to speak the words of God. The unrighteous would be forgiven if they turned to God. Whoever did not turn to the Lord would be scattered over the earth. Fathers and sons would be turned against each other and nations would fall. Children born into this evil would suffer the sins of their fathers. God promised to make the people know His power. Jeremiah begged God to heal the people and lamented that Israel plotted against Him.

God told Jeremiah to go into the valley and proclaim everything He heard. He was to smash an earthen bottle and say that God would break the city as easily. The king of Judah asked Jeremiah whether God would help them fight Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Jeremiah said that God would help Babylon prevail. God told Jeremiah that the people acted holy but kept evil in their hearts. He planned to deliver them to Babylon and have no rule in Judah. God compared Israel to figs; He planned to save only the good ones.

Jeremiah asked the people to turn to God before they were overrun by people from the north and Babylon. All must pledge themselves to God or suffer. Another prophet spoke to the king promising that God would break the bonds of Babylon. Jeremiah retorted that this would not happen unless they revisited the covenant of their forefathers. Jeremiah was imprisoned and God promised that Judah would fall to Babylon. God told him that a man will come to him asking to buy a field. Jeremiah was to keep the evidence of the purchase. The rest of the city was to fall to the enemy.

"Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD." Jeremiah, 32:44

God's word returned to Jeremiah in prison. When the people are saved, there would be no king. God told him to have all the Jewish servants set free. God told Jeremiah to seal His words in a book. Another man wrote the words down for him. He read this book to common people and princes. A king burned it and commanded that the scribe and the prophet be seized. Josiah's son asked for Jeremiah to pray for him, but He was put into prison when He prophesied the fall of Judah.



He remained in prison and continued to prophesy. Babylon laid siege to Judah and the house of Josiah was destroyed. Jeremiah was loosed from his chains. Ishmael was sent to slay him and all the Jews He can find. Jeremiah prayed to God and was told not to enter Egypt but stay in the land. He told the loyal people to fight against Egypt. All the countries around them were to suffer. Even Babylon was destined to fall to an enemy. Beasts and men would be slain.

A great nation would come from the north and be the most powerful. The nations would fall and Judah would be ruined. The last king of Judah was taken to Babylon and made to watch his sons die. Babylon burned the house of God and destroyed the city. One of Josiah's sons lived out his days in Babylon.

Lamentations

Jeremiah lamented about all the sins of the people of Israel. He referred to Jerusalem as a filthy woman. He lamented that the Lord was made an enemy to his people. He said He saw all of the sins and was incapable of not weeping or lamenting. He cried out the plight of the people of Jerusalem and asked God to remember their suffering. He asked if God would always forgive them.

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Ezekiel

Ezekiel heard the word of God in the land of the Chaldeans. The sky opened and four men with four faces and four wings came down. All the living creatures fled from them. The noise of their wings was like terrible waters. God spoke to Ezekiel and told him that he was to be a prophet to rebellious Israel. He told him to go to the captive people and lead them back to righteousness. He told him to cut his hair and beard.

Jerusalem angered God and He promised to punish the city. The people were to lose their wealth and be judged. In the sixth year, God told Ezekiel that there were idols in His sanctuary. God was irate. He told Ezekiel to slaughter the heathens. Angels appeared again with terrible wings. Ezekiel was told to go into captivity with his people. God promised to destroy the walls of Jerusalem, despite the loyalty of a few. He explained that the people must be pruned just as a vine must be burned back. Israel had become unholy like other nations. She had become a harlot like her sister Sodom.

God gave Ezekiel the metaphor of a vineyard. He asked if it should be allowed to prosper even though it was twisted. He promised that Babylon and Egypt would fall but just men would survive. Fathers and sons would suffer for each other's sins. Israel was a healthy vine that went barren in the wilderness.

In the seventh year, God came again to Ezekiel and told him to tell the Elders to stop praying to Him and keep His laws. If they adhered to the covenant, they wouldn't have to pray to Him. They were destined to suffer and realize too late that He was the true God. He told Ezekiel to prophesy against Israel because it was wicked. He said "Thou shalt be for fuel to the fire; thy blood shall be in the midst of the land; thou shalt be no more remembered: for I the LORD have spoken it." Ezekiel, 21:32. Ezekiel was to judge the city of Jerusalem until God poured His wrath on the world. God explained that there were two sisters, Samaria and Israel. Samaria was a harlot and would be delivered into the hands of her lovers. Israel was the same.

In the ninth year, God came again to Ezekiel and told him to fill a pot with animal parts. He explained that this was what the carnage of Israel would resemble. He told him to prophesy against the surrounding peoples because they, too, would fall. Tyre would be brutalized and Ezekiel was to spread these words. In the end God would call back the loyal children of Israel and let them prosper. Africa will suffer with Egypt.

In the eleventh year, God came again and in the twelfth year as well. He told Ezekiel to tell the Egyptians that all people who think they are as strong as cedar-wood would be broken. A plague of destruction would end Egypt. The people still had the chance to flock to God's banner. After the destruction, the orchards would bear fruit again. In the meantime, the princes of Israel would go into captivity. God promised that a rebuilt Israel would be even more prosperous. The people and the land would be redeemed.

Ezekiel went to prophesy against other lands where there could be no escape. God showed him a man who told him how to watch and relay what he sees to Israel. He



measured a wall, the court, the sides and the chambers of priests. The man led Ezekiel into the court and measured everything there. At the gate Ezekiel fell on his face and God said He would dwell with the children of Israel in this house on a mountain if they right their ways. He gave him new rules for offerings. The gate is only for God. The Levites were to enter the Temple and allow only clean men in. The sacrifices and priestly portions were to be restored. A sacrifice was to be prepared every morning. They went back into the house and God measured the waters and rivers. He named one river as the border for the tribes of Israel. God laid out the rest of the land and split it among the tribes.

Daniel

Daniel was taken from Judah and given the name Belteshazzar. He would not eat the king's food because he did not want to defile himself. He could interpret dreams and was brought before Nebuchadnezzar. The king had had terrible dreams and his interpreters were not able to answer them. God revealed the answer to Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream of a creature made of different metals, a head of gold and stone feet. Daniel interpreted:

"And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall rise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise." Daniel, 2: 38-40

The stone is the last kingdom that will crumble. The king was pleased with this. He set up a golden image for his people to worship. The Jews would not worship it and he grew angry with them. He threw them into a furnace, but an angel saved them. He decided that their God was good. He had a feast and drank from vessels brought from the plundered Temple. He got sick and asked Daniel why. Daniel explained that these things were meant only for God. He explained that because of this, Babylon would fall to Darius.

Under the administration of Darius, Daniel was favored. Darius decreed that men should fear Daniel's God. Daniel wrote down a dream. He saw four beasts flying over the ocean. One had a horn with eyes and a mouth, it spoke until it was destroyed. The beasts were the four kings that would come over the earth. After the four there would be ten and the last would subdue others and sit in judgement. Later, Daniel saw a ram with two great horns pushing westward. A goat came to the ram and one horn was broken. The goat told him that in 2,300 days the sanctuary would be cleansed. An angel spoke and said the ram was the king of Persia and the goat was the king of Grecia who would overcome the Persians.

Daniel prayed to God to forgive Jerusalem, and God gave him 70 weeks to get the people to stop sinning. He promised that there would be a messiah who would be cut down and the sanctuary would be destroyed again. Daniel envisioned a man by a river and he heard his words. He told him not to fear because Grecia would defeat Persia. The kings of Persia would fight each other and help bring about their downfall. A great king would overcome them all. His name was to be Michael and he was to be righteous. God told him to spread the word of these things.



Hosea

Hosea was a prophet. God told him to take a wife from the harlots, with whom he had sons. One was Jezreel. God promised great days for this son. Hosea redeemed an adulteress. He told the people to hearken to the way of God. He called the priests to recognize the ruin of Judah.

"Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days he will revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea: 6:1-3

He called the people to repent and said he would heal them if they heeded his words. He predicted that Israel would cry out and reap the penalties of their sins. They were found like wild cattle and cultivated by God. He explained that Israel is an empty vine. The tribes have sown wickedness into the earth. God reared Israel and it turned from His ways. He led them out of Egypt but they provoked His anger. They sin by worshiping other gods. Those other gods will not save them. God would save the loyal.

Joel

Joel was told by God that the nation had been consumed by pests and God's land had been laid to waste. Everyone was to lament this. He called for a trumpet to be sounded and for darkness and fire to devour the land. The Lord promised to utter His voice and destroy. Then He would pity His people and bring about a golden era. God promised to gather the people and have them prevail in war over the gentiles. They would put down their tools and make swords. Egypt would fall to Judah and Jerusalem would prevail.

Amos

Amos was a prophet before the earthquake. God told him that He would destroy all the great nations and make their kings servants. God asked if anyone could prophesy without Him. Israel was to be punished for her sins when God raised a nation against her. Amos was shown a wall made with a plumb line and God said that we will build in this way. He showed Amos a basket of fruit and promised He would not pass by them and would make the sun rise at noon. He planned to seek out sinners and destroy their kingdoms. In the end, He would bring them out of captivity to rebuild their land.

Obadiah

Obadiah envisioned that God would rise against the stock of Esau and the house of Jacob. He planned to destroy them to make a great kingdom.



Jonah

God spoke to Jonah and told him to go to Ninevah. Jonah boarded a ship to flee from God's request because he knew that prophets were often killed. God sent a terrible storm. To survive, the sailors cast Jonah into the sea. A fish swallowed him. Inside the belly of the fish, Jonah prayed to God. After three days he was released. Jonah entered Ninevah and told them it would be overthrown in forty days. They fasted and stopped their violent ways. God decided not to destroy the city. Jonah was angry that the city wasn't destroyed. To show him the error of his ways, God gave Jonah a gourd to shelter him from the sun. A worm destroyed the gourd and Jonah was upset. God made Jonah realize he pitied a gourd for which he did not labor. God did labor for Ninevah and would not delight in its ruin.



Micah

God sent Micah words in the days of Hezekiah. Micah announced that the lands would suffer because God devised evil for their sins. God would gather them like sheep and their bleating would be tumultuous. Micah said that those who sinned would be called together. He told the people to gather in troops because a man would come to rule them and make them good. He would deliver them but tear away the sinners. God led them out of Egypt but now they would suffer starvation and pain because they did not keep His ways. Micah lamented that good men had perished and the commandments of God were no longer kept. There would be great desolation but it would be followed by renewed prosperity.

Nahum

Nahum prophesied about the downfall of Ninevah.

"The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth." Nahum, 1:3-4.

God promised to overcome Ninevah and damn the sinners. Whoever sins would be destroyed. Nahum lamented for the city because it was to suffer terribly. He warned the people to prepare for a plague and their destruction.

Habakkuk

The prophet Habakkuk said that the people had been sinful and God would raise up the Chaldeans to punish them. God told Habakkuk to write this vision down. Those who had not kept the commandments would perish. The prophet prayed to God and exalted Him because He made all good and struck down evil. Sins made the fig tree barren, but Habakkuk rejoiced in God.

Zephaniah

The word of God came to Zephaniah telling him that the land and men would be saved if the sinners were punished. He pledged to search Jerusalem and punish men who did no good. All men would walk like they were blind. He told the people to gather because all lands and people were to be destroyed. He lamented for the cities that refused to obey God. He rejoiced that the remnant of Israel would assemble before God and become holy again.

Haggai

In Darius' second year, Haggai approached the governor of Judah and told him that the drought was upon the earth because they had not glorified God. In that same year, Haggai asked all the people who remembered the house of God if they also remembered the covenant made when they came out of Egypt. God warned that He would shake the heavens and earth.



Zechariah

In the second year of Darius, God told Zechariah that He was displeased with the deeds of sons and fathers. An angel came to Zechariah who told him that God was upset with Judah. The angel had four horns. Zechariah saw a man who was going to measure Jerusalem. He predicted the fall of cities and their rebirth. Zechariah saw Joshua standing with God and Satan. Joshua had a crown on his head. He saw a woman in the midst of a sacrifice. He returned and saw four chariots with different colored horses. They went out to do the work of the Lord.

In the fourth year of Darius, God came to Zechariah and told him to speak to the people and tell them to follow His precepts. God promised to return to Jerusalem and make it prosper again. He promised to cast out the tyrants and punish other nations. He called for Israel to rejoice and knew that God would defend them. Zechariah announced that the idols were empty and the flocks had been scattered. God would gather them again. He promised to open a fountain in the house of David to cleanse the people. Then the people would turn to God. God promised to gather all the nations against Israel and be king over the earth. He would build a great house on a mountain and every house would worship Him. Heathens would be expelled.

Malachi

God told Malachi that He hated Esau and loved Jacob. Therefore, He hated Esau's descendants. Jacob's descendants, however, were not all loyal but He didn't want to destroy them. He called to the priests and told them to remember the covenant. He wanted them to keep the commandments. God promised to send a messenger who would make the deceitful and sinful suffer. All who were righteous would be judged to survive and God would send the prophet Elijah to them.