

More than a Good Book

Putting in all in context:

The Books of History

Joshua – Esther

December 5/12

History of Israel

<u>Period</u>	<u>Judges</u>	<u>Kings</u>	<u>Exile</u>
Time (BCE)	1200-1000	1020-587	587-539
Key Events	Conquest of Canaan	Anointing of Saul Reign of David Solomon and temple Division of kingdom (922 BCE) Destruction of Israel by Assyria 721 BCE Prophetic Ministries	Defeat of Judah by Babylon 587 BCE Persian defeat of Babylon Jews allowed to return home to rebuild Jerusalem
Primary history	Joshua, Judges, Ruth	1&2Samuel, 1&2Kings	1&2Kings
2ndary history	1Chronicles 1-9	1Chronicles 10-29, 2Chr	Ezra-Nehemiah
Prophets		Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Hezekiah, Josiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel	

Transition to Judges: Book of Joshua

- Joshua – Moses successor
- Conquest of the Promised Land
 - Jericho – God’s deliverance
 - Battles for the rest of the land
 - Ch 10 – the day the sun stood still
- Fulfillment of God’s Promise to Abraham
 - God has integrity, can be trusted to keep promises
- Consequences of sin – death and destruction to the Canaanites

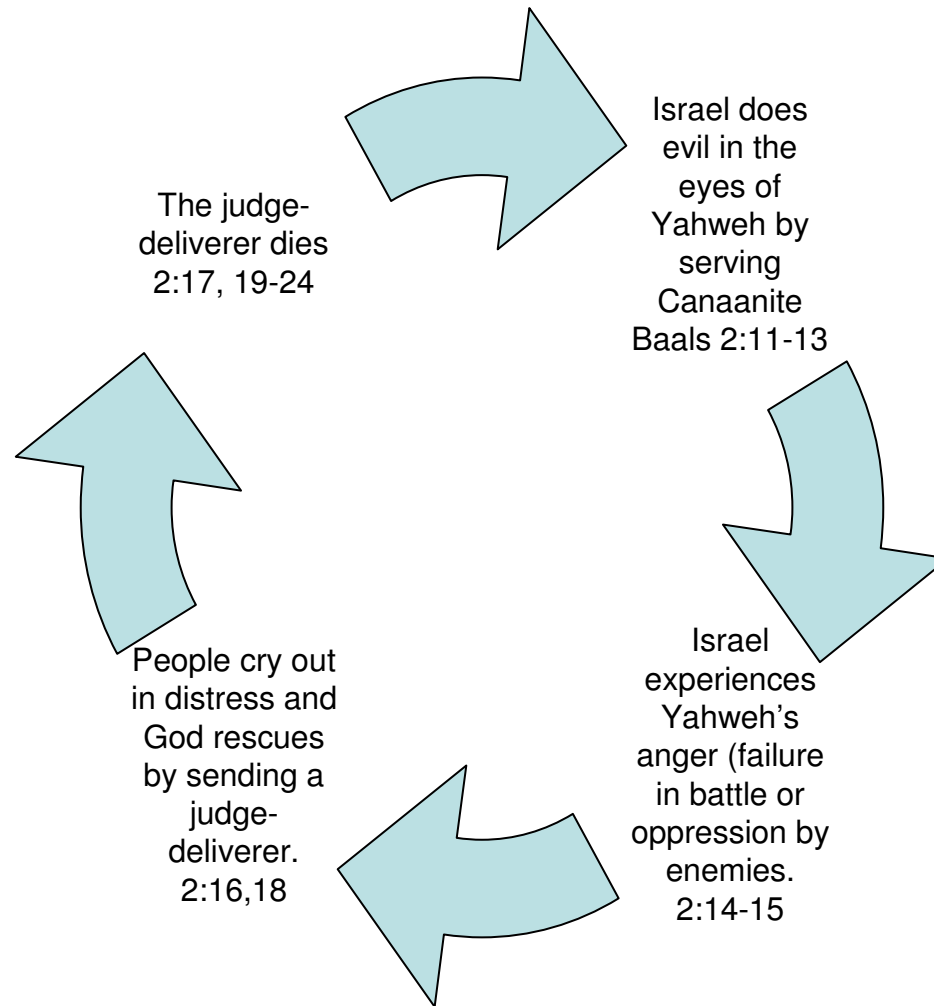
Transition to Judges: Book of Joshua

- Joshua's farewell address (Ch 23)
 - Follow everything Moses wrote in the Law(v6)
 - Do not associate with those remaining in the land (v7)
 - Do not even mention the names of their gods, much less swear by them or serve them or worship them. (v7)
 - If you turn away from God, and cling to the customs of the survivors of these nations, and if you intermarry with them, then know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive them out of your land. Instead they will be a snare and a trap to you...(v12-13)
- Renewal of Covenant (Ch 24)
 - So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly (v1)
 - Choose today who you will serve....as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (v 15)

The period of the Judges

- Judges – leaders God raised up to rescue Israel and call them back to covenant obedience → faithful occupation of the promised land.
 - NOTE: they were never leaders over all Israel – they were tribal leaders, so were not relevant to the rest of Israel, or else overlapped with other judges

Cycle in Judges



The period of the Judges

- Cycle of 12 leaders – 6 major and 6 minor
 - Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah (ch 4), Gideon (ch 8), then Abimelech (the anti-judge – ch 9); period of decline (including Samson)
- Downward spiral – early leaders are more ideal (Othniel to Gideon), later leaders not good (Samson)
- Failure of Israel under the Judges
 - In those days, Israel had no king...all the people did what was right in their own eyes.
 - Spiritual and social chaos
 - Idolatry, syncretism, social injustice, intertribal rivalry, sexual immorality

An exception in Period of Judges: Ruth

- Bethlehem was an exception during the period of the Judges – faithfulness of the citizens
 - Boaz, Naomi and Ruth shown as characters who have great fidelity to the Lord and the covenant
 - Not surprising, Ruth and Boaz are included in the lineage of King David and therefore Christ!

The period of Judges

- What does it tell us about God?
- What does it tell us about his mission?
- What does it tell us about what it means to be his people?

The Period of the Kings

- Transition from last Judge – Samuel (who was Levite, judge and prophet)
- United Kingdom
 - Saul (1020-1000) – a sort of judge/king
 - David (1000-962)
 - Solomon (961-922)
- Division of kingdom
 - North – Israel – Rehoboam (922-915)
 - Typically shown as apostate; the righteous people went to Judah to escape Rehoboam's wickedness
 - South – Judah – Jeroboam (922-901)
 - Typically shown as faithful remnant – until Ahaz

Period of the Kings

- The threat of the Philistines (bit of a superpower!)
- 1&2 Samuel – follow the transitions
 - Judges → Monarchy
 - Typical NE King (Saul) → king who is loyal to YHWH (David)
 - Decentralized worship → new center in Jerusalem
- Constant tension between monarchy and covenant loyalty – the question is not whether Israel should have a king, but what kind of king will they have?
- 1&2Kings – central: was each king loyal to YHWH?

Period of the Kings

- Where does Chronicles fit it?
 - Retelling of the Israel's history from creation to exile
 - Written during/after exile (they no longer have a king)
 - Concentration on ideals for the people for how to live without a king, and what constitutes proper worship
 - Have to read overlapping with corresponding accounts in other Histories.

King David

- David under King Saul (1 Samuel)
 - Initially good, as David played music to sooth Saul in his court
 - David's victory over Goliath (ch 17) made Saul very jealous (ch 18)
 - Saul kept trying to kill David (ch 18-19)
 - Jonathan, Saul's son, loved David, and helped him to escape
 - Jonathan and Saul killed in battle (ch 31)
 - David eventually became King (2 Sam 1)

King David

- King David (2Samuel)
 - Anointed by God
 - Moved capital to Jerusalem (5:6-16) and brought ark (6:1-15)
 - God made eternal covenant with David (7:1-29) – points to nature of God's plan for a future son and King, Jesus!
 - Mistake!! Bathsheba (11:1-5) and Uriah (11:6-27)
 - God, through Nathan, confronted David with his sin (12:1-12), and although David repented and God forgave him, the child conceived in the affair died (12:13-23)
 - David remained God's chosen King (12:24-31)
 - Troubles escalate for David – consequences of his sin (13-20)
 - David intervenes before God on behalf of the nation (ch 21, 24)
 - Builds altar in Jerusalem (24:18-25)

Period of the Kings

- What does it tell us about God?
- What does it tell us about his mission?
- What does it tell us about what it means to be the people of God?

Exile (605-539 BCE)

- PRINCIPLE: God is the hero – God ordained it all – exile and return.
- Israel lived among the superpowers of the Ancient Near East – Babylonian, Persia, Egypt
- Poorly documented – no running historical narrative
 - Scattered accounts in 2Chronicles, Jeremiah, Ezekial, Daniel and Esther
 - Lamentations written during exile from Jerusalem (poor left behind to take care of the land)
 - Psalm 137
 - Babylonian Chronicle (tables from 745-100BC)

1 & 2 Kings

- Covers the monarch from Solomon through the division of the kingdom and to exile first in the North (Israel) and then in the South (Judah)
- Watch for the king, his reign, his religious policy
- Watch for the superpowers growing around Israel – God’s use of them in his judgment against Israel.

Exile (605-539 BCE)

- Historical Setting
 - Nebuchadnezzar: King of Babylon
 - Invaded Judah 605-586BC
 - Jerusalem fell in 586 BC
 - Most Israelites slaughtered (2Chr 36:17-20)
 - Skilled workers taken into captivity (exile)
 - 2Ki 25:8-12; Dan 1:1-5
 - The land was given its Sabbath rest (2Chr 36:21) – for all of the Sabbaths of which it had been deprived – abuse of land matters too.

Biblical Exile Accounts

2 Kings 25:8-12

8 On the seventh day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard, an official of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. 9 He set fire to the temple of the LORD, the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem. Every important building he burned down. 10 The whole Babylonian army under the commander of the imperial guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem. 11 Nebuzaradan the commander of the guard carried into exile the people who remained in the city, along with the rest of the populace and those who had deserted to the king of Babylon. 12 But the commander left behind some of the poorest people of the land to work the vineyards and fields.

Exile (605-539 BCE)

Psalm 137

- 1 By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept
when we remembered Zion.
- 2 There on the poplars
we hung our harps,
- 3 for there our captors asked us for songs,
our tormentors demanded songs of joy;
they said, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"
- 4 How can we sing the songs of the LORD
while in a foreign land?
- 5 If I forget you, Jerusalem,
may my right hand forget its skill.
- 6 May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth
if I do not remember you,
if I do not consider Jerusalem
my highest joy.
- 7 Remember, LORD, what the Edomites did
on the day Jerusalem fell.
"Tear it down," they cried,
"tear it down to its foundations!"
- 8 Daughter Babylon, doomed to destruction,
happy are those who repay you
according to what you have done to us.
- 9 Happy are those who seize your infants
and dash them against the rocks.

Exile (605-539 BCE)

- Great disaster and despair for Israel
 - their identity was based on being God's people, whom he would protect and care for
 - search for a new national identity – return to Sinai – living the Law (Canon starts to be written down)
- Was a covenantal and theological lesson
 - People of Israel were to experience judgment, due to their covenantal unfaithfulness
 - Think of the circle of disobedience, wrath, repentance, and return in Judges.
 - Their humiliation lead to repentance, restoration and hope

Return from Exile

- Historical Setting

- Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon in 539BCE
 - Issued decree allowing Jews to return to Judea to rebuild their temple; he returned religious artifacts so they could worship again
 - part of his foreign policy toward captives
- This was foretold by Jeremiah!

2Chronicles 36:

- 22 In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and also to put it in writing:
- 23 “This is what Cyrus king of Persia says:
- ““The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Any of his people among you—may the LORD their God be with them, and let them go up.””

Return from Exile

Jeremiah's Prophecy

- Chapter 25:11-12

This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

“But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt,” declares the LORD, “and will make it desolate forever.

- Chapter 29:10

This is what the LORD says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place.

Return from Exile

- Ezra records:
 - building of 2nd temple (538/7-516BC)
 - rebuilding of religious community
- Nehemiah records:
 - rebuilding of the walls – not just to keep unwanted people out, but to set boundaries and identify the people.
 - Covenantal renewal ceremony (Ch 8-10)
 - Reinstitution of the Feast of the Tabernacles (8:13-18)
 - Great National confession (ch 9)
- Both books concerned with purity of faith – keeping commandments; “Book of the Law”

Return from Exile

- The Return was a disappointment on all counts:
 - 2nd Temple was just a shadow of the first
 - Not everyone returned from exile
 - They were still under foreign rule (Persia) – not free, not possessing the Promised Land
 - Messianic expectations continued to build – for a conquering Savior to free them, restore Jerusalem to its full glory.
 - Those who returned, could not agree on how to be God's people in this new context; “Who constitutes the true remnant of the people of God?”

Who are the people of God?

- This is the focus of Judaism in the final centuries BCE.
- This is the Judaism that Jesus was born into!
- Jesus was going to answer that question in a radically unexpected way!!!

The Book of Luke: The Christmas Story

- Notes about Luke
 - A narrative about the long-awaited activity of God to accomplish his promised purpose.
 - Written to grow understanding about Jesus, and to invite a response from the audience.

OVERALL INVITATION: recognize and serve the salvific aim of God (bring salvation to all people)

Luke answers the question: Who is Jesus?

- The Lord (1:17, 43)
- From line of David (1:27)
- King (1:32-33)
- Son of God (1:32, 35)
- Savior/Messiah (2:11, 26)

Salvation

- Jesus' name
- Mary's song
- Zechariah's song
- Angel's message to shepherds
- Simeon
- Anna

Holy Spirit

- John – filled with the Holy spirit
- Mary – Holy Spirit came upon her
- Elizabeth – filled with the Holy Spirit
- Zechariah – prophesized under the Spirit
- Simeon – Holy Spirit was on him, moved by the Spirit

God's mission

- Angel's message to Zechariah
 - Angel's message to Mary
 - Zechariah's song
 - Simeon's prophecy
-
- ➔ status-reversal (deconstruct worldly systems and values at odds with God's purposes).
 - ➔ Coming of the kingdom of God
 - ➔ Membership in the new community is available to all! Answer the Question – Who are the People of God?



*Merry
Christmas!*