



The God Story!

“All scripture is god-breathed and is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work!”

- 2 Timothy 3:16,17

The Bible is God’s love letter to humanity.

LISTEN TO THE [DEEPER IN THE GOD STORY VIDEO HERE.](#)



God's Story and My Life!

How has God revealed Himself to you through His story?

In what ways has God's Word shielded you?

In what ways do you feel that the Spirit has empowered you to understand His Word?

How does discipline impact the strength of the Word in your life?

Record the answer that is either least true (1 & 2), or most true (3 & 4) about you...

1 2 3 4 I frequently consult God and His Word when I have a decision to make.

1 2 3 4 I am confident in my working knowledge of the Story of God (the Bible).

1 2 3 4 The years are finding me faithful to continue to search God's Word with distinct regularity.

1 2 3 4 God's Word is honored in my home.

1 2 3 4 I share Jesus' life with others.

1 2 3 4 I am often excited about God's Word.

1 2 3 4 When I have a choice between leisure time and God's Word, I often choose to pursue a deeper understanding of God's Story.

If God's Word is not my priority can I truly say that I am focused on becoming a man or woman of God?!

Reading the God Story!

Reading by itself can be tedious and even boring. Encountering God is never boring, it is life-changing! Meditating on the Scriptures involves placing yourself right into the Story. Once you have taken the time (Encounter) and considered what it meant to the people involved as well as the original hearers (Expose) it is time to apply the truth of the Story to our lives (Enlighten)!

ENCOUNTER the Reference

*What does the text reveal?
Take the time and have a plan.*

EXPOSE the Meaning

*What did it mean to the
principle characters?
Formulate conclusions about
God and man!*

ENLIGHTEN your Heart!

*What does it mean to me?
Pray and expect the Word to
change your heart!*

Meditating in the Scriptures is a mind, heart, and soul interaction with the Living God through His Son Jesus Christ! It is more than mere intellectual study and so much more than exposure to “right thinking.” Christ wants to be engaged in every part of our hearts and minds!

As we encounter the reference, expose the meaning, and enlighten our hearts we grow in our listening relationship with the eternal Living God!



LISTEN TO THE GOD STORY ONE VIDEO HERE.

It is an exciting thing to understand how God thinks! The person who searches the story of God will understand the mind of God, and the person who understands the mind of God will understand the will of God! The following paragraphs help tell the story and illustrate the spiritual principles of the Big Picture of the Old Testament! Refer to the graph on the following Old Testament chart to help you to understand and keep a grip on the Big Picture of God's Word to men.

THE BEGINNINGS

Note the location of these first books on the chart. Genesis explains to us the **Origins** of God's dealings with mankind. It also describes the reasons and the events concerning why God chose the Hebrew people as caretakers of the testimony of His Word! There are four important persons listed who are called the four patriarchs (name them), and there are four critical events (name them) that explain foundational understandings about where we come from and why the world exists as it does. As you read notice how imperfect these spiritual patriarchs were. The book of Job is very old and teaches us about the plan of God being worked through one individual, and how through the difficulties and trials of life, that man Job could recognize the purpose for **Sovereign Suffering**.

THE CHOSEN RACE

The chosen race (the Hebrew or Jewish Nation) was delivered out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh (you've probably seen the movie). This is the account of the book of Exodus. It was through God's power and Moses' leadership that the Jews would find their **Exit** from a 420 year bondage in the land of Egypt. Someone has said that it took a short period of time to get the Jews out of Egypt, but a lot longer to get Egypt out of the Jewish people. This was the purpose of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy: to help get Egypt out of the people! In Leviticus this newly delivered people were to learn what it meant to **Worship** the Lord God. In the book of Numbers we see the **Wanderings** of an entire nation. They chose to grumble and complain rather than to walk. In fact, a journey that should have taken about forty days ended up taking forty years! And all of the people that chose to grumble and complain died before Israel ever entered the promised land...except Joshua and Caleb, two of twelve spies that forty years earlier were not afraid to enter the land. Deuteronomy, as with the rest of the first five books, was recorded by Moses. If these people were to experience spiritual deliverance, they would need spiritual **Standards!** The ten commandments were given in Exodus (the tablets were broken by Moses) and given again in Deuteronomy.



THE CONQUEST

We then enter the events that took place during the conquest and first years in the land. The book of Joshua tells us about a great general who led the Jews into a **Conquest** of the Land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey that God had promised to Abraham long before Jacob went down into the 420 years of bondage in Egypt. The book of Judges records the disobedience of the people in their newfound land as they chose eight **Cycles** of sin rather than to obey the voice of God. Each time God would give them new opportunities to be delivered and each time they chose bondage. Samuel is the last Judge and leads us into the period of Israel's kings. Ruth is the account of a bright spot during the dark time of the Judges where "every man did what was right in his own sight". God's message through this Gentile (non-Jewish) woman is one of **Love's Redemption**. This means that God loved Ruth enough (even though she wasn't a part of the chosen nation) to give her a place of Salvation in Israel.

THE KINGS OF ISRAEL

The people of Israel had grumbled against Moses, sinned under Joshua, and failed miserably under the Judges. They felt if they only had a king like the other nations obedience to God could be ensured. Samuel reluctantly anoints Israel's first King, Saul. 1 Samuel is the account of the **People's King**. 2 Samuel is the unfolding story of **God's King**, David. 1 Kings reviews the **Solomon/Split**. The first half of the book considers Solomon, son of David and Bathsheba; the second half of the book reviews the split of the united kingdom into a divided kingdom.

For a deep and significant spiritual message remember this simple formula: SAUL HAD NO HEART...DAVID HAD A WHOLE HEART...AND SOLOMON HAD HALF OF A HEART. This reflects one of three choices that will summarize every person's choices in life! The book of 2 Kings accounts for the **Exile/Scatter** of God's chosen people. This came about because the people sinned and would not change their lives as a nation. Notice that the division in the kingdom occurred in 931BC into Israel (the Northern 10 tribes) and Judah (the Southern two tribes). 1 Chronicles (**Throne Secured**) and 2 Chronicles (**Temple Revered**) were assembled later and are a similar accounting of the kings of the united and divided period but with a specific purpose of bringing the people back from captivity (see the Return below).

The writings of these prominent Kings reflect the spiritual lessons of their lives. Psalms speaks primarily of David's experiences of **Prayer & Praise**. Proverbs pours out Solomon's knowledge of **Wisdom from Above**. Ecclesiastes is his reflection on the impact and futility of life apart from God or **Vanity Below**. Song of Solomon reviews his remembrances of the wife of his youth, and lifts up the virtues of godly marriage and **Intimate Love** (unfortunately he didn't follow his own advice!).

THE CAPTIVITY

God uses two nations to punish the chosen people and to place them into captivity. Judah watches as Israel (the sinning sister) is taken into captivity to Assyria in 722 BC. In 586 BC Judah (and Jerusalem) follows her sister by being taken into captivity to Babylon. Through obedience or disobedience God will continue to accomplish His Word through the Jews!

THE PROPHETS

The prophets were God's instruments to attempt to bring Israel and the rest of the nations to repentance.



Isaiah spoke to them concerning **Jehovah's Salvation**. Jeremiah communicated **Sin's Condemnation**, and wept over Jerusalem's fall in Lamentations, **Weeping Prophet**. Ezekiel and Daniel spoke specifically to the captives in Babylon. Ezekiel explained how the Exiles were **Ruined and Restored**. Daniel spoke of **Future Things** and the deliverance that God would bring. He also spoke incredibly of the events of the end times. Hosea married a harlot to place in Israel's face the fact that God's Love was present even in the midst of **Israel's Apostasy**. Joel encouraged the people to **Blow the Trumpet** and to warn of the coming day of the Lord! Amos was a farmer who revealed the **Roaring Punishment** of God against Israel's sin. Obadiah explained that Edom would be Cut Off because of the way she had treated her brother, Israel. Edom was comprised of the descendants of Esau (remember Jacob and Esau!?).

Jonah's message was reserved for the capital of Babylon: Nineveh. He was **Compassion's Voice** to this nation (even though he didn't like it one bit!) Micah spoke of God's **Unchanging Love** toward Israel, and Nahum returns to the subject of **Nineveh's Doom** 100 years after the preaching of Jonah. Habakkuk is concerned with the **Just** before God **Rejoicing** even in these difficult times of judgment, and Zephaniah warns of Israel's **Last Chance** to repent before captivity.

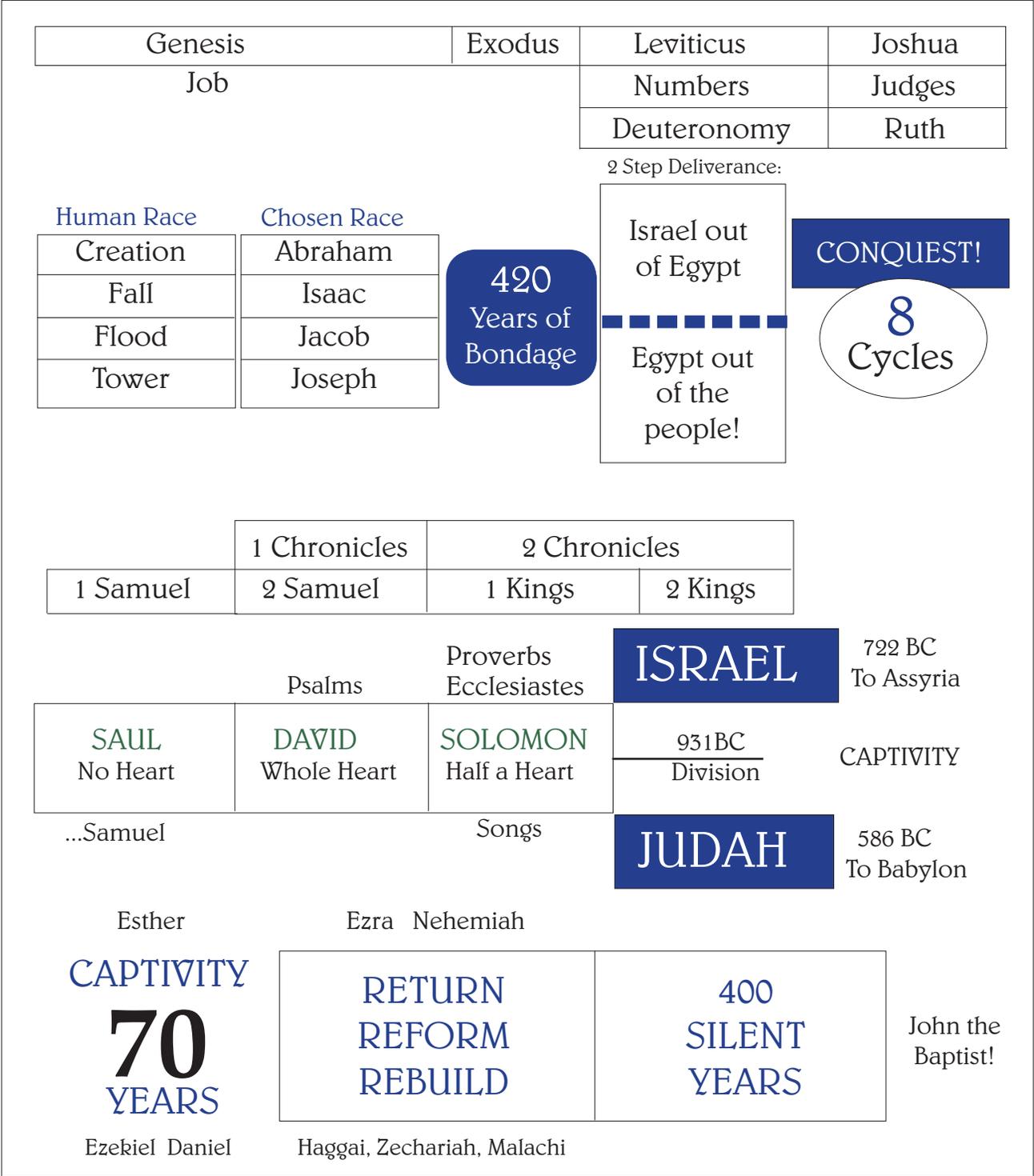
THE RETURN

After about 70 years of captivity it was time to return to Israel. God used Cyrus the King of Persia to effect this return, and the book of Ezra calls the captive Jews to **Return/Reform the Temple** and consequently the worship of their lives. The book of Nehemiah is the account of the rebuilding of the broken down walls of Jerusalem and encourages the people to **Renew/Rebuild the Walls** of the spiritual community of Israel! Two prophets are given to stimulate this work: Haggai encourages Obedient Building and asks that the Jews rebuild the Temple and the walls as a higher priority than building their own houses and personal kingdoms. Zechariah focuses the people on the majestic **Lord of Hosts** and promotes worship as the basis for spiritual success. Malachi records **Sin's Dialogue** as God addresses the excuses of His people for not doing their spiritual jobs after returning to the land. This begins 400 silent years that will not be broken until the voice of the one crying in the wilderness, John the Baptist, proclaims and prepares the way for THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world! This is called "the fulness of times" by the prophets.



THE BIG PICTURE ON THE “OLD” TESTAMENT!

Men call the Old and New Testaments “old” and “new.” The Scriptures do not. There is only “One Testament.” Before the events of Genesis 1 the Son had always existed. The so-called “Old Testament” is a preparation for the coming of Christ. He would invade time, give Himself for the sins of the world, and bring those who believed in Him to eternal life. This is what “the Testament” is all about.



What do you see?

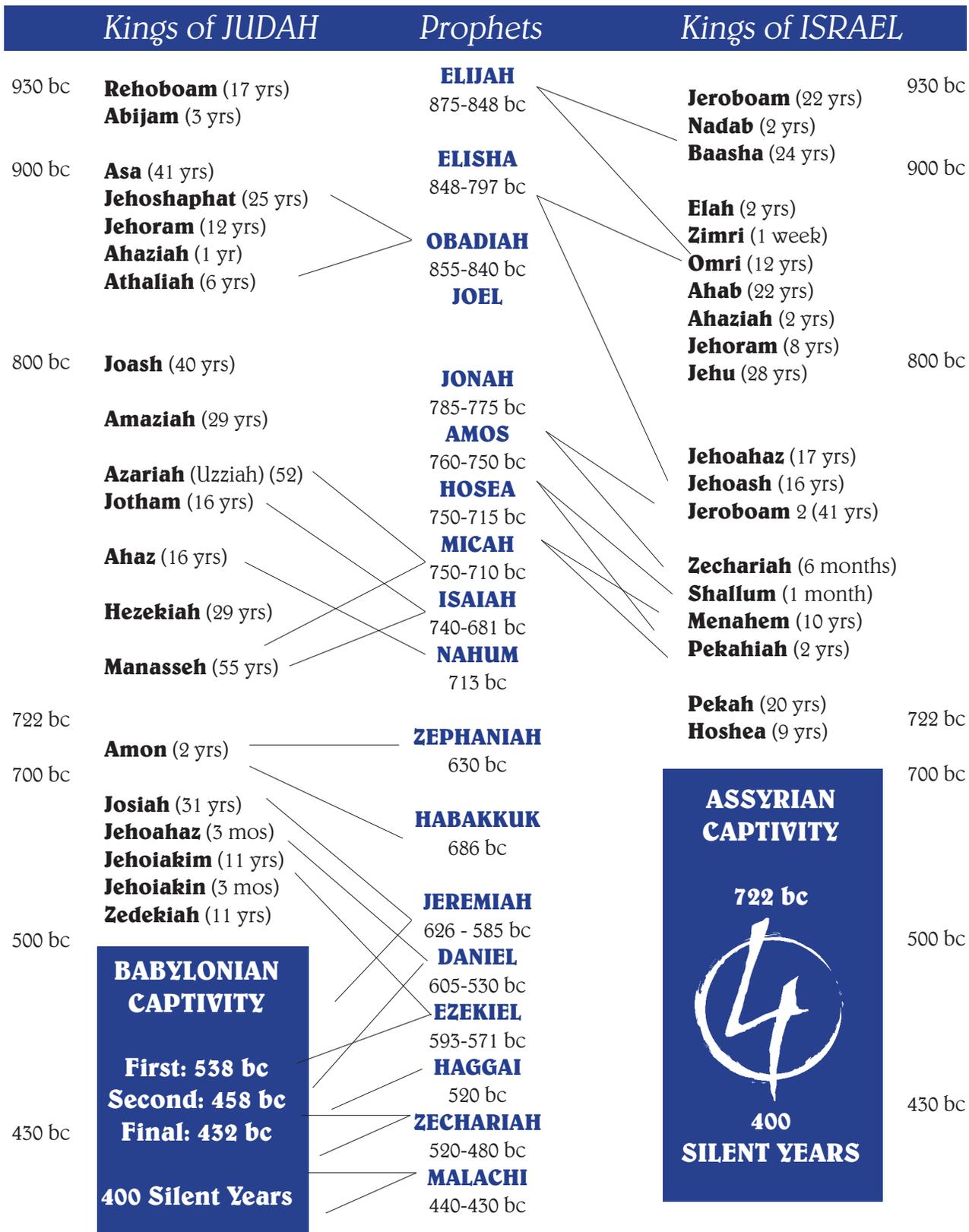
Look up the key verse for each book and highlight them in your bible! Also write the theme at the beginning of each book in your bible. You will be glad you did!

THE OLD TESTAMENT GOD-STORY at a Glance!

| Book | Theme | Key Verse |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| 5 LAW | | |
| Genesis | Origins | 12:2 |
| Exodus | Exit | 12:51 |
| Leviticus | Worship | 11:44 |
| Numbers | Wander | 33:1 |
| Deuteronomy | Standards | 10:12 |
| 12 HISTORICAL | | |
| Joshua | Conquest | 11:23 |
| Judges | Cycles | 17:6 |
| Ruth | Love's Redemption | 2:12 |
| 1 Samuel | People's King | 8:6 |
| 2 Samuel | God's King | 5:2 |
| 1 Kings | Solomon/Split | 12:20 |
| 2 Kings | Exile/Scatter | 17:7 |
| 1 Chronicles | Throne Secured | 14:2 |
| 2 Chronicles | Temple Revered | 6:18 |
| Ezra | Return/Reform...the Temple | 7:10 |
| Nehemiah | Renew/Rebuild...the Walls | 5:16 |
| Esther | God Delivers | 4:14 |
| 5 POETS | | |
| Job | Sovereign Suffering | 1:21-22 |
| Psalms | Prayer/Praise | 100:4 |
| Proverbs | Wisdom Above | 1:7 |
| Ecclesiastes | Vanity Below | 2:11 |
| Song of Solomon | Intimate Love | 8:6 |
| 5 MAJOR PROPHETS | | |
| Isaiah | Christ is Salvation | 53:6 |
| Jeremiah | Sin's Condemnation | 6:16 |
| Lamentations | Weeping Prophet | 1:16 |
| Ezekiel | Exiles-Ruined/Restored | 21:27 |
| Daniel | Future Things | 7:27 |
| 12 MINOR PROPHETS | | |
| Hosea | Love/Apostasy | 14:4 |
| Joel | Blow the Trumpet | 2:31,32 |
| Amos | Roaring Punishment | 1:2 |
| Obadiah | Brother Violence | 1:10 |
| Jonah | Compassion's Voice | 1:3 |
| Micah | Unchanging Love | 7:18 |
| Nahum | Nineveh's Doom | 3:19 |
| Habakkuk | Just/Rejoice | 2:4 |
| Zephaniah | Last Chance | 2:3 |
| Haggai | Obedient Building | 1:4,5 |
| Zechariah | Lord of Hosts | 4:6 |
| Malachi | Sin's Dialogue | 2:2 |

OLD TESTAMENT KINGS & PROPHETS

This chart is provided to help you place the Old Testament Prophets in proper relationship to the Kings of Israel (north) and Judah (south). Scholarship differs slightly on the timespan and somewhat on the order of the prophets, but the following chart will give you a more than adequate "big picture" on their placement.



For future reference!

Between the Testaments!

Knowledge of the events between Malachi & Matthew is not necessarily vital but is desirable. The Old Testament canon was completed with Malachi in about 397 bc.

THE SILENT YEARS ARE ESTABLISHED...Malachi 4:4-6

Elijah is promised...The Word is lifted up...The Blessing & the Curse are restated. Note Psalm 124:9 for a relevant teaching and/or prophecy on this time period. Here is a summary of the events describing the condition of the Jewish Nation leading up to and during the 400 silent years...587 B.C. Babylonian exile...Fifty years later the Babylonian empire was overthrown by Media-Persia (Daniel's Babylonian prophecies are fulfilled)...536 B.C. Cyrus, the Persian Emperor decrees the return of the Remnant...50,000 returned with Zerubbabel...21 years later the temple is completed (515bc)...458bc Ezra returns with another remnant 57 years later, it is a small remnant, but through them law & ritual are restored...446bc Nehemiah returns (12 years later) and rebuilds the walls...The remnant is indeed just that, for the balance of the Jews choose to remain in Babylonia.

THE PERSIAN PERIOD (536-333 B.C.)

Pretty uneventful, the Jews often enjoyed favor apart from one incident of rebellion. In 721 B.C. (see 2 Kings 17:24-41 the Assyrian Emperor repopulates Samaria with foreigners. These transplants were the ones who provided most of the resistance to the returned remnant. Apparently the rival worship of these peoples was established toward the end of Persian rule (John 4:19-22) by the founding of the Samaritan temple.

THE GREEK PERIOD (333-323 B.C.)

Alexander the Great rules from age 20 to 32 and politically transforms the face of the world. He is the "horn" of Daniel 8:1-7. J. S. Baxter says: "In his Syrian campaign he marched southward on Jerusalem. Josephus tells how the high priest Jaddua...issued forth to invoke the conqueror's clemency. Alexander, who is said to have recognized in Jaddua the fulfillment of a dream, not only spared Jerusalem and offered sacrifice to Jehovah but also had the prophecies of Daniel read to him concerning the overthrow of the Persian empire by a king of Grecia; and thereafter he treated the Jews with marked preferment, according them full rights of citizenship with Greeks in his new city, Alexandria, and in other cities. This, in turn, created decidedly pro-Greek sympathies among the Jews, and, along with Alexander's spreading of the Greek language and civilization, had it's far-reaching repercussions in the Hellenistic spirit which developed among the Jews and greatly affected their mental outlook afterward."

THE EGYPTIAN PERIOD (323-204 BC)

The early death of Alexander resulted in the division of his kingdom between his four generals. These are the "notable ones" of Daniel 8:21,22. The Ptolemaic Dynasty now covered Palestine. During this period the renowned Alexandrian library and the singular Septuagint translation of the Old Testament into Greek was accomplished. The Jews were so numerous that this Greek translation was necessary. This made the availability of the Scriptures to the Gentiles complete. When Ptolemy Epiphanes took the throne at the age of five, Antiochus the Great invaded Egypt. Thus Judea came to be under Syrian control.

(Continued)

THE SYRIAN PERIOD (204-165 BC)

During this period Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Perea, and Trachonitis emerge as divided areas within Palestine. With the assuming of the throne by Antiochus Epiphanes, a reign of terror began upon the Jews. He interfered with the temple & priesthood. Baxter says "He wreaked a terrible havoc in 170 B.C.. Jerusalem was plundered, the wall torn down, the temple coarsely desecrated, and the population was subjected to monstrous cruelties. Thousands were massacred. The women and children were sold into slavery. The temple sacrifices were abolished. The Holy of Holies was rifled and its costly furniture carried away. Jewish religion was banned. Circumcision was prohibited on pain of death.

A foreign governor was appointed, a traitor made high priest, and paganism forcibly imposed on the people. A commissioner was appointed to pollute both the temple at Jerusalem and that at Samaria, and to rededicate them, respectively, to Jupiter Olympius and Jupiter Xenius. All copies of the Law which could be found were either burned or defaced with idolatrous pictures, and the owners executed. The first book of Maccabees says that many Jews apostatized, and that some even joined in the persecution. In 168 B.C. Antiochus caused a sow to be offered on the altar of sacrifice, and then, on the very altar, had a statue erected to Jupiter Olympius. In this awful decade Palestine Jewry was indeed in the valley of the shadow of death."

THE MACCABEAN PERIOD (165-63 BC)

To respond to the excesses of Antiochus, God raised up an old priest from Moden named Mattathias. He had five sons, and his son Judas carried on his work, and came to be known as Judas Maccabeus, from the Hebrew word for hammer. For years a faithful band resisted and defeated enemy armies from their homes in the wilderness. Their knowledge of the territory made the ensuing guerilla warfare very difficult for Antiochus and his troops. They defeated (with God's help) armies of 50, 65, and 120 thousand men. Judea was freed from alien troops about 142 B.C. and enjoyed independence under very orthodox leaders.

WHAT IT ALL MEANS:

This freedom ended in 63 BC when Pompey annexed Judea, and Judean freedom was dissolved with the emergence of Herod the Great (the usurper). Hopes focused on a new political deliverer. At the time of Christ there were over forty persons making the claim to be the promised deliverer, or Messiah. It was the responsibility of Israel's religious leaders to investigate the credentials of each.



THE BIG PICTURE ON THE NEW TESTAMENT!

The God -Story is all about Jesus. We have to decide how we feel about this Man. Here is how He spent His life. Note that His life did not end with His death. There was and is ample evidence that shows that the Son has always lived and is still alive today.

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| MATTHEW | MARK | LUKE | JOHN |
| KING COMES | SERVANT SACRIFICED | MAN SUFFERS | GOD REVEALED |
| Jews | Greeks | Romans | World |

The Gospels!

THE SACRIFICIAL SERVING MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST

BIRTH

BAPTIST

TRAINING THE TWELVE

JERUSALEM TEACHING

JERUSALEM KILLING

Acts of the Holy Spirit!

THE MINISTRY OF THE RISEN CHRIST
ACTS 1:8

JERUSALEM

JUDEA & SAMARIA

ENDS OF THE EARTH

JOURNEY 1
JOURNEY 2
JOURNEY 3
ROME

WOMEN DISCIPLES
500

JAMES HEBREWS

ROMANS 1 & 2
CORINTHIANS

GALATIANS
EPHESIANS
PHILIPPIANS
COLOSSIANS

THESSALONIANS
TIMOTHY
TITUS

PETER
JOHN
JUDE

Yet to come!

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF JESUS CHRIST

REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

THE VISION - SEALS - TRUMPETS - BOWLS

RAPTURE - MILLENNIUM - JUDGMENT - ETERNAL LIFE

Daniel's Seventieth Week (Daniel 9:24-27)

What do you see?

Look up each key verse for each book and highlight them in your bible!
 Also write the theme at the beginning of each book in your bible. You will be glad you did!

 LISTEN TO THE [GOD STORY TWO VIDEO HERE.](#)

THE NEW TESTAMENT GOD-STORY at a Glance!

| Book | Theme | Key Verse |
|---|--------------------------|-----------|
| 5 HISTORICAL | | |
| Matthew | King Comes | 4:17 |
| Mark | Servant Sacrificed | 10:45 |
| Luke | Man Suffers | 19:10 |
| John | God Revealed | 20:31 |
| Acts | Church Witnesses | 1:8 |
| 12 CHURCH LETTERS | | |
| Romans | Our Salvation | 1:16,17 |
| 1 Corinthians | Carnality's Consequences | 3:1,3 |
| 2 Corinthians | Authority's Care | 2:17 |
| Galatians | True Gospel | 3:3 |
| Ephesians | Christ's Body | 4:16 |
| Philippians | Christ's Joy | 3:1 |
| Colossians | Christ's Headship | 1:17,18 |
| 1 Thessalonians | Excel More | 4:1 |
| 2 Thessalonians | Day of the Lord | 2:1,2 |
| 5 PASTORAL & 7 GENERAL LETTERS | | |
| 1 Timothy | Church's Ministry | 3:15 |
| 2 Timothy | Church's Minister | 2:15 |
| Titus | Sound Teaching | 1:9 |
| Philemon | Forgive & Beget | 10 |
| Hebrews | Better Covenant | 8:6 |
| James | Tested Faith | 1:12 |
| 1 Peter | Trust in Trials | 4:19 |
| 2 Peter | Full Knowledge | 1:19 |
| 1 John | True Fellowship | 1:3 |
| 2 John | Wrong Hospitality | 10 |
| 3 John | Right Hospitality | 6 |
| Jude | Contend & Build | 3,20 |
| PROPHETIC | | |
| Revelation | Judge Revealed | 19:16 |