



The Eleven Chronological Old Testament Books

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A writing for a class at Tyndale Bible Seminary

*“O Lord, what is man, that thou dost take knowledge of him?
Or the son of man, that Thou dost think of him?” Psalm 144:3*

This verse came to me as I ended my prayer before beginning this study: “Read Psalm 144:3.” O Lord, I am humbled in Your awesome presence. While gathering the sources needed for this paper, I pulled from our shelves a book that has meant much to our family over the years and opened it to the heading: *Humility before God*. Jerry Bridges writes in *The Practice of Godliness* that “*humility toward God is akin to the fear of God: it begins with a high view of God’s person*”.¹ Having studied the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity this week from Paul Enns, *The Handbook of Biblical Theology*, I am overwhelmed by the magnitude of utter magnificence that holy, holy, holy God our Father: rich in mercy, grace, and love; God the Son: our Brother who laid down His life for us to take the punishment we deserve from Our Father for our sins Who is now interceding for us – sitting beside our Father; and God the Holy Spirit: our Helper, Teacher, Comforter, and Friend – knows me; knows you; knows all who have been washed in the precious Blood of Jesus, our Savior. I join the angel chorus crying “Glory to God in the highest!”

Jerry Bridges goes on to say:

“In every occasion in the Scriptures in which man was privileged to view God in his glory, he was brought low or humbled in the presence of God.

¹ Jerry Bridges, *The Practice of Godliness*, p. 91.

Moses bowed to the ground and worshiped; Isaiah cried, 'Woe is me!'; Ezekiel fell face down; John fell at his feet as though dead. Even the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders in heaven of Revelation fell down before the throne of the glorified Lamb." ²

The study of Prolegomena and the Survey of the Bible are building upon the foundation laid over the course of my life by my mother and siblings, Sunday School teachers, pastors, a Messianic Jewish rabbi, a missionary from Africa, my husband, children, grandchildren, and the Holy Spirit. Sitting at the feet of a man of God who has written the primary source to be used for this work, we begin: "Overview the narrative of the eleven chronological Old Testament Books" by Dr. Chris Cone, *The Promises of God: A Bible Survey*.

My non-believing older brother stopped me in mid-sentence years ago while we were discussing the Old Testament and asked, "Who wrote the book of Genesis?" I have thanked the Holy Spirit for giving me the right answer because at that point, I was guessing. My reply was more like, "Moses?" rather than, "Moses!" In fact, Moses is referred to in the Old and New Testament Scriptures as having written the five books of the Law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." II Timothy 3:16-17

God inspired the Word and the Holy Spirit of God moved upon the hearts of forty chosen men over a period of 1500 years located in different locals to write the message of the Sacred Scriptures intended for mankind that His glory might be revealed. The redemption story, used for this purpose, begins with the eleven chronological books of the Old Testament as we know them, along with their Hebrew names where available: **Genesis**, *bereshiyt*; **Exodus**, *w'ele sh'mot*; **Numbers**, *b'mid'bar*; **Joshua**, **Judges**, *shophetim*; **I & II Samuel**, **I & II Kings**, *meleki'im*; **Ezra**, and **Nehemiah**.³

They are considered the foundational books on which the other books rely, covering a period of 3600 chronological years of Old Testament history.⁴

² Jerry Bridges, *The Practice of Godliness*, p.91

³ Christopher Cone, *The Promises of God*, p.17

⁴ *ibid*, p. 9.

Genesis covers the period of 4004-1800 BC. The name is taken from *bereshiyt*, Hebrew for the first word which means “in the beginning”. In Genesis 1-11 God relates to man in a general way by speaking creation into being and forming man and woman. God made His first promise to man⁵ in Genesis 2:16-17:

“And the Lord God commanded the man saying, ‘From any tree of the garden you may eat freely but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in that day that you eat from it you shall surely die.’”

The man and woman had a perfect relationship with God in a perfect environment. The yielding to temptation that caused Satan to fall (Isaiah 14:13-14 and Ezekiel 28:16 & 17) was repeated by man: *“I will make myself like the Most High.”* The moment they sinned they died spiritually; returning to dust, in the due course of time. They were immediately aware of their nakedness and hid from God to cover their shame. God replaced their fig leaves covering their loins by making the first blood sacrifice of an animal in order to take its coat to provide a covering for them.

God’s second promise was made to Satan and gave Messianic hope for humanity:

“And I will put enmity between you [the serpent] and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise Him on the heel.” (3:15)

The scientific fact that woman was not given “seed” but eggs for reproduction; as her Creator, God would have to give a woman the Seed who would be a God-Man to bruise the serpent [Satan] on the head (Revelation 12:9; 20:2). There was hope that one day mankind would have the fellowship experienced before the fall restored. Adam and Eve were turned out of the paradise to face their future in unfamiliar territory, bearing the consequences of their sin.

The horrible death of Abel, whose offering to God required the shedding of blood making his more acceptable than Cain’s offering, is recorded in chapter 4; God in His mercy and grace makes another promise in verse 15, specifically to Cain, offering protection (15).

⁵ *ibid*, p. 19

The descendants of Adam to Noah are listed in chapter 5 which shows the progression of sin: mankind becoming worse and worse in his walk away from God and His goodness. Genesis 6 reveals the heart of God in His heartache over the gross sins of the inhabitants of the earth and His desire to wipe them off the face of the earth; however, He had made a promise to Satan in the garden which meant that He would see it to fruition for *“it is impossible for God to lie”* (Hebrews 6:18).

There was a man who “found grace in the eyes of the Lord God” (6:8): Noah who walked before Him was used to be a vessel through whom His promise would be carried to future generations. God sent a judgment of a flood upon the earth, destroying all life that was not inside the ark: built to His specifications; sealed by His hand. God made another promise to Noah that we refer to as the Noahic Covenant (8:21b-22 and 9:17); the sign of which we always anticipate after a storm: the rainbow.

Genesis 10 gives the account of Shem, Ham and Japheth, sons of Noah. Genesis 11 tells of the decision by man to reach God by building a tower to Him and God said, *“...they are one people, and they all have the same language...nothing that they purpose to do shall be impossible for them”* (10: 6). Language was confused and man scattered over the face of the earth (11:9).

God chose a people from the descendants of Noah’s son Shem to carry His promises. Genesis 12:1-3 records The Abrahamic Covenant promising to Abraham and His offspring (later revealed – through Sarah) that He would make him a great nation, bless him, make his name great, make him a blessing, bless those who bless him; curse those who curse him, and *“all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”* God gave Abraham a promised people, a promised land, and a promised kingdom. The sign of the covenant was male circumcision (17:10-11)

God tells Abraham to honor his end of the covenant by leaving the place where he was and going forth; Abraham goes forth. The rest of the responsibility within the covenant rests on God. From chapters 12-25 God leads him to the point of Abraham putting complete trust in God to raise the dead through being obedient to Him by being willing to sacrifice his only son by Sarah: the promise carrier. Christopher Cone explains that “The Angel of the Lord (the preincarnate Christ, Himself) stops him, and shows him a ram in the thicket

that would take Isaac's place."⁶ The Father shows a perfect illustration for the sacrifice of His only Son, Jesus Christ: the Promise.

Genesis 15 God tells Abraham about the 400 years of Egyptian exile of his descendants. He gives him the Land Covenant giving specific boundaries for the nation of Israel (18-21). Although the nation has never occupied all of the land named, one day The Promise will be established. Genesis 17 records the promise for Isaac; Genesis 28, for Jacob; and the sons of Jacob: the patriarchs, in Genesis 49. The blessing upon Judah in verse 10 promises: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah..." Hope for royalty honoring God's promises is established forever....one day.

Exodus is the second chronological book; w'ele sh'mot taken from the first phrase meaning "these are the names of"; the English transliteration of the Greek word *exodus*, meaning "a way out".⁷

God appears to Moses and tells him of the promises and the covenants He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Genesis 15 account of the 400 years of Egyptian exile is now time to end and Moses is summoned to carry the promises and covenants to the next generation by leading His people out to the Promised Land with signs and wonders. Exodus 12:40 says they were in Egypt a total of 430 years.

The judgment against Pharaoh and the Egyptians and the protection offered the Hebrews is again the sign of a blood sacrifice. God promised in Exodus 12:12-13 "when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt."

God makes a covenant with the nation of Israel, not individuals, in Exodus 20, referred to as The Mosaic Covenant, given to Moses on Mt. Sinai, which includes the Ten Commandments and hundreds of laws for their culture which if obeyed will result in blessings to remain in the Promised Land; disobedience, curses of expulsion. It is interesting that God is not dealing with an individual's sins; rather, the nation as a whole. This covenant is later called the Old Covenant when Jeremiah 31: 27-40 announces the New Covenant of Messianic hope:

⁶ Christopher Cone, *The Promisess of God*, p. 17.

⁷ *ibid*, p. 39.

*“Behold days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the **seed** of man... ‘...everyone will die for his own iniquity... ‘Behold, days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them, ‘ declares the LORD, ‘But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,’ declares the LORD, ‘I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people; ‘And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,’ declares the LORD, ‘for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”*

The sign of the New Covenant was the cross on Golgatha, outside the city of Jerusalem, when Jesus of Nazareth: The Promise of Genesis 3:15, the manifested Christ of the Old Testament writings of Moses, the prophets, and the Book of Psalm, was nailed to a cross and lifted up as a substitutionary death for all the world; for all time.

God promises Israel in the Jeremiah passage that the only way the New Covenant can be broken is “if the fixed order of heaven and earth departs; if the heavens can be measured, and “the foundations of the earth searched out below” only then, would the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before Him. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

The Mosaic Covenant was for an intended period of time to serve the purpose for which God ordained: to show the Hebrews that they must realize that their works would always fall short of keeping their part of the covenant and that a redeemer was necessary.⁸ Mal Couch, author of *An Introduction to Classical Evangelical Hermeneutics*, says:

“The purpose of the Mosaic covenant is important to note. The Law was given to Israel and not to the church or mankind in general. God entered into this covenant with the Jews whom He had ‘brought out...of the land of Egypt’ (Exod. 0:2). It was Israel’s constitution, given to guide the people through life (31:12-17).”⁹

⁸ Christopher Cone, *The Promises of God*, p. 41.

⁹ Mal Couch, *An Introduction to Classical Evangelical Hermeneutics*, p. 141.

The sign of their failure was the poor among them since part of the covenant states: "...there shall be no poor among you..." Deuteronomy 15:4. Paul, a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin - schooled in Old Testament hermeneutics, tells us later in Galatians 3:24 the purpose for the Mosaic Covenant:

"Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith."

The need for a substitutionary work by the Lamb of God: the Promise of Genesis 3:15 had been carried out when Paul wrote these words. Satan's end will come after the Lord's Second Advent at the close of His Millennial reign (Revelation 19:20).

Numbers follows Exodus in chronological order: 1440 – 1400 BC. The Hebrew name is *b'mid'bar*, meaning "in the wilderness". The Latin *arithmoi*, is translated numbers in English.¹⁰ Moses says there is a numbering of the Hebrew people at the beginning of the book in the wilderness as they attempt to enter the Promised Land yet there are three major rebellions resulting in 40 years of wandering in the desert.¹¹ At the close of the book, another numbering occurs before going into the Promised Land. The time period is from 1440 - 1400 BC.

God makes another promise in Numbers 14:22-35 because all of the spies except Joshua and Caleb who checked out the first city in the Promised Land for 40 days and came back bringing a bad report which put doubt and fear in the minds of the people. God judges the generation by having them to wander in the wilderness for 40 years – waiting for all of the numbered men to die where they chose to remain rather than trusting God to take them into the land He promised. God prepares Joshua and Caleb to be ready to march at the close of the wandering period.

Joshua, the writer of the book covering the history of Israel 1400-1370 BC, is credited with all but the final portion which tells of his death and was probably finished by Ezra.

In Joshua 1:8-9, he records the commands given to him by God:

"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have

¹⁰ Christopher Cone, *The Promises of God*, p. 52.

¹¹ *ibid*, p. 52.

success. 9 'Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.'

Joshua is poised to become God's man for the work since Moses is dead. God's plan is for Israel to take the land by force driving out the inhabitants who are idol worshipers and destroy the idols and their sacred sites. He warns that if they do not follow through with His plan, the people will become a snare to them. The Central Conquest begins at Jericho with two spies who encounter Rahab who is used by God to protect them and send them out another way (2). Joshua leads Israel across the Jordan as the waters part for them (3-4). Just as Abraham had circumcised the Hebrew men as a sign of the covenant, Joshua circumcises the men for the same reason (5). They pray and ask God for the plan to take Jericho and they see the walls fall down as a result (6). Sin is committed by Achan and the army fails at Ai (7). After the judgment of Achan, Ai is taken (8). The inhabitants of Gibeon deceive Israel out of fear and Israel signs a treaty with them against God's instructions (9). In 10:1-15 Israel defends Gibeon.

Chapter 10: 16-43 tells of the Southern Conquest; chapter 11, the Northern Conquest. The list of defeated kings is given in chapter 12. In 13 - 21, the land is divided between Jacob's sons' tribes with Joseph's two sons' tribes and Caleb. In chapter 20 the six Cities of Refuge are assigned; in 21, the Levitical priests receive forty-eight cities for their families.

Joshua gives a word of commendation and instruction for godly living to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh who requested land on the east side of the Jordan yet helped the other tribes take their land. They return to their homeland and build an altar which is questioned harshly by the other tribes out of fear of them falling into idolatry and suffering the consequences from God. The tribes of Reuben and Gad explain that it will only serve as a witness for the generations to come that they are one with those living on the west side of the Jordan (22:10-34).

Joshua summons all of the tribes of Israel and reviews the history all the way back to Abraham's father and gives them a charge which includes the famous quote: "As for me and my house we will serve the LORD", (24:15). Joshua passes away having failed at following God's command to rout out the inhabitants and rid the land of idolatry.

Judges covers 380 years of the history of Israel from 1370-1050 BC. The English translations of both the Hebrew, *shophetim*, and Greek, *kitai*, are translated “judges”. It was written by Samuel, according to the Talmud.¹²

God warned Israel that they were to claim the Promised Land in Exodus 23:31-33 taking it from the Canaanites and driving them out of the land. Their failures are mentioned in Judges 1:27 – 2:23 and the cycle of Israel continued for 300 years: repenting and crying out to God for deliverance; God raises up a judge to deliver Israel; Israel becomes unfaithful; God raises up a foreign nation to oppress Israel as judgment against their sin. Failure to drive out the idol worshipers caused them to be entangled by the sin which broke the Mosaic Covenant bringing God’s judgment upon them. The problem continued into the time of the kings of Israel.

I Samuel and II Samuel are considered as one book in the Hebrew Scriptures covering 1100 – 975 BC. Samuel is credited for I Samuel 1-24; Nathan the prophet and Gad, the seer for I Samuel 25 - II Samuel.¹³ I Samuel ends in 1011 BC.

Samuel is a gift of promise born to Hannah who dedicates him to God (1:1-2:10). God personally calls Samuel and announces the judgment coming to Eli and his sons. (3) All of Israel knows that Samuel is a prophet of God (3:20). The Philistines rise up against Israel and take the Ark of the Covenant that had caused the people to rejoice earlier; Eli’s sons die. The Philistines realize the power of the Ark is against their god Dagon and themselves causing confusion, plagues, and death (5). The Ark is returned to Israel (6).

W. Graham Scroggie, author of *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*, explains that the Ark of the Covenant was given with exact details for construction during the time of Moses for the tabernacle worship in Exodus. It eventually was placed in the Holy of Holies in the Temple of Solomon (I Kings 8:1-9). It was taken from the Temple when Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 by Nebuchadnezzar and has never been found; however, John mentions it in Revelation 11:19.¹⁴

The people of Israel are delivered from the Philistines all the days of Samuel (7:13).

Samuel was both a judge and a prophet and tied the period of the judges with the monarchy period of Israel’s history (7:15). Israel begins to cry out that they

¹² Christopher Cone, *The Promises of God*, p. 65.

¹³ Christopher Cone, *The Promises of God*, p. 74

¹⁴ W. Graham Scroggie, *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*, p. 259.

want an earthly king like other nations (8). Saul of the tribe of Benjamin is chosen king of Israel and is successful in leadership (9- 11). Samuel addresses Israel and charges them reminding them of their history and urging them to be faithful (12). Saul leads the army of Israel against the Philistines and acts as a priest in offering a burnt offering (13).

Saul's son Jonathan proves his bravery against the Philistines (14). Saul is judged and rejected as king of Israel (14-16). David is anointed King of Israel by Samuel (16) David, son of Jesse, defeats Goliath of Gath the Philistine cutting off his head and taking his head to Jerusalem (17:4)., (A Jewish Messianic teacher in Atlanta, Georgia, teaches that David put his head on a pole with a sign reading: "Goliath of Gath, the place was Golgatha.) Saul pursues David and makes his life utter torment yet David refuses to touch God's anointed. When Saul and Jonathan are killed, David grieves (19-31). Samuel dies as a man who lived his life in faithfulness to God in chapter 25.

II Samuel covers Israel's history from 1011-971 BC. After Saul's death, David is confirmed as king of the southern tribe of Judah (2:1-7). Saul's son, Ish-Bosheth is King of Israel (2:8-11). A civil war breaks out between the Northern and the Southern kingdoms (2:12-4:12). King David is anointed King over all United Israel (5:1-5). David is victorious as King and returns the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (5-6). David desires to build a house for God and the Davidic Covenant is given (7:8-17).

God promised:

"I will make you a great name." (7:9)

"I will appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again..." (7:10)

"I will give you rest from all your enemies. (7:11)

"...the Lord will make a house for you." (7:11)

"I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom." (7:12)

"He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." (7:13)

"Your throne shall be established forever." (7:16)

The Abrahamic Covenant, the Land Covenant, and the Mosaic Covenant are again linked with God's covenant to David to fulfill His promise made to Satan and hope for mankind for a Messiah in Genesis 3:15. The unconditional covenant is all about what God will do in the due course of time.

I and II Kings are also linked as one book in the Hebrew canon of Scriptures. The monarchy period of Israel's history is covered between 971-853 BC. Based on Jewish claims, Jeremiah is given credit for the writing. The kingdom of Israel is united when David's son Solomon takes the throne upon King David's death (1-2). Solomon asked God for wisdom and became the wisest man on earth.

The people of Israel enjoyed rest from their wars and the Temple and Solomon's palace were built in Jerusalem (6-7). The Ark of the Covenant is placed in the Temple and the glory of God filled it (8:10). Solomon dedicates the Temple with a history lesson and charge for the people of Israel to obey God and enjoy His presence (8). God confirms the Davidic Covenant with Solomon (9:5) and gives him a personal warning and for the nation against idolatry (9:6-9). Solomon married many foreign women who were idol worshipers. They led him away from serving the one God of Israel (11).

The Lord who had appeared twice to Solomon was angry with him and said:

"Because you have done this, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you, and will give it to your servant. Nevertheless I will not do it in your days for the sake of your father David, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen." I Kings 11:11-13)

King Rehoboam became King of Israel following the death of Solomon (11:43). He took the advice of men rather than asking God for wisdom as his father had done (12) and became harsh. The kingdom of Israel was divided in 931 BC and only one tribe was given to Rehoboam: Judah, as God had promised Solomon (12:17). Jeroboam became King of the Northern Kingdom. There were only two righteous kings in the Southern Kingdom: Asa and Jehoshaphat; the Northern Kingdom had only evil rulers.

Elijah ministers during this time and confronts the Baal priests at Mt. Carmel (18). He flees from Jezebel, a Baal idol worshiper, who threatens him with death yet meets her own (19-21). God speaks with Elijah and gives him instructions to anoint Hazael king over Aram and Jehu, king over Israel (19). King Jehoshaphat becomes king of Judah; Ahab is in his fourth year of reign in

Israel (22). The book ends with Ahaziah becoming king over Israel and worshipping Baal, “provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger...” (22:53).

II Kings begins in 848BC and ends in 586 BC. It covers the reigns of the last twelve kings of the Northern Kingdom and the last sixteen for the Southern Kingdom. ¹⁵The Northern Kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians in 721 BC and the captives were taken to Ninevah, the capital city. The Southern Kingdom of Judah fell in 600 BC to the Babylonians. Elijah and Elisha were both prophets to the Northern Kingdom covering a period of seventy-five years warning them of turning back to God and away from idol worship. ¹⁶ The warnings God had provided to Israel in the Mosaic Covenant had been ignored by both kingdoms and judgment fell just as he had said. God proved again that a remnant who had not worshiped Baal nor other idols was preserved.

Ezra and Nehemiah were combined in the Hebrew canon of Sacred Scriptures. The Latin Vulgate separated them and the division has remained. Bernard Ramm, author of *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, says, “Ezra is considered the first of the Jewish interpreters and the ultimate founder of the Jewish, Palestinian, hyperliteralist school.” ¹⁷ He translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Aramaic for those in exile in Babylon who had ceased speaking Hebrew. Ezra, the Levitical priest author of the book, covers Israel’s history from 538-450 BC. Israel has been in exile and the first group to return under Zerubbabel occurs in 537-536 BC. A census of those returning is taken (2). The festivals and sacrifices resume (3:1-7). The Temple of Solomon is in ruins and the restoration begins (3:8-11).

Enemies of Israel stop the restoration of the Temple yet the restoration continues even under protest (4). King Darius gives approval for the Temple restoration and it is finished and dedicated (6). King Artaxerxes calls for Ezra’s return and those who were with him in exile (7); a census is taken (8). Ezra prays for God to give them a safe return (8). The sin of intermarrying with other races of people is addressed (9) and a prayer of confession of sin is lifted up by Ezra (9:5-15). In 10:2 one of the men made a proposal that they make a covenant with God to divorce their foreign mates and their children by union with them according to the law. In 10:11, Ezra calls for the people to confess their sins and follow the order. The list of offenders is recorded.

¹⁵ Henry H. Halley, *Halley’s Bible Handbook*, p. 200.

¹⁶ Henry H. Halley, *Halley’s bible Handbook*, p. 200.

¹⁷ Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, p. 45.

Nehemiah, though originally counted as one book with Ezra, was separated by the Latin Vulgate. Nehemiah who served as a governor for the exiles from 445-433 BC, authored the book (5:14). Nehemiah is grieved over the remnant left in Judah who are in great distress because the walls of Jerusalem and gates are broken and burned. He prays a prayer of adoration, confession, and petition to the “God who preserves the covenant” (1:5).

Nehemiah, as cupbearer to King Artaxerxes, enters the presence of the king with a sad countenance. (2) The king asks for Nehemiah’s request and grants it; his prayer is answered and Nehemiah returns (2:1-8). The opposition to restore the walls and temple is led by Sanballet (2:9-20). The builders take their positions and work progresses (4) yet, discouragement overcomes them because of the threats of their enemies.

Nehemiah intervenes in the usury being charged Jewish brothers and the leaders agree to return it to their brothers (5). Nehemiah leads by example. The enemies come against him with false charges trying to frighten him and the Jews yet he prays to God and lets Him know what they are doing. The wall is completed in 52 days (6).

A census is taken by genealogies of the first returned exiles (7). All of the people gather for the reading by Ezra of the Book of the Law by Moses as great honor is given from early morning until late in the evening (8:1-9). Others stand and read - translating as needed. The people wept as they heard the promises, the covenants, the law, the blessings, the curses for disobedience, the predictions of exile, etc. Nehemiah, the governor, declares the day holy unto the Lord. The Feast of Booths is restored (8).

The people confess their sins and turn back to the One True God declaring the promises, covenants, and the glory of God from of old. The people make a covenant with God (9). The signers of the covenant are listed and all of the obligations of the document are spelled out for the people (10).

The leaders of the people live in Jerusalem yet few families have moved there. A plan is set up for one-tenth of the population to move to Jerusalem (11). The priests and Levites return to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel and the wall is dedicated. The procedures for the Temple worship are with precision (12). Foreigners are excluded from the Temple and hearing the Law; the Temple is cleansed (13:1-9). The tithe is restored for the care of the Levites and the

Temple worship (13:10-14; the Sabbath is restored (13:15-22); and mixed marriages are forbidden (13:23-31).

The Bible is a miraculous work which proves repeatedly to generation after generation that only God could have orchestrated the documentation. No where is it any more clear than in the eleven chronological books of the Old Testament. God's plan to choose the redemption story to reveal His spectacular glory through His unconditional love is the perfect plan. Jesus Christ will rule and reign on the throne of David in Jerusalem, Israel for a thousand years. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

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