

# *Mount Pisgah A.M.E Church*

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**Bible Study, Wednesday, March 25, 2015**

**Survey of the Bible**

**Lesson 41: Old Testament Overview**

## **The History of The Early World**

- God's acts of creation (Gen 1,2)
- Humanity's Fall (Gen 3)
- The spread of sin (Gen 4-9)
- The flood (Gen 6-9)
- The Spread of Nations (Gen 10-11)
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*Principle: Righteousness is creative, but sin is destructive. (Gen 2:17; Romans 6:23)*

Genesis 1-11, the prologue not only to Genesis, but to the entire Bible, begins with the ordered and life-giving activity of the holy Creator. The fall of humanity and the consequential spread of sin stand in contrast to the work of God and illustrate the disorder and death that always accompanies disobedience against the purposes of God. God is not mocked; in a moral and spiritual universe, sin must be judged.

Read Romans 3:21-26. What must you do, in order to escape the condemnation of your Creator?

## **The Patriarchs and Spiritual Decline (Gen. 12-50)**

- 1st Generation : Abraham is chosen by God - Man of faith, believed God
- 2nd Generation: Isaac - Called on God, believed God. (Ishmael - not son of promise)
- 3rd Generation: Jacob - Compromised at first, later turned to The Lord. (Esau: unspiritual, little faith)
- 4th Generation: Joseph - Demonstrated faith, 11 Brothers - treachery, immorality, not separated

*Principle: The destructiveness of sin is overcome by a faith that takes God at His word in spite of appearances and circumstances to the contrary (Gen 15:6, Hebrews 11:8-22).*

Beginning in Genesis 12, God drew forth a man who would become the father of the people from whom Messiah would come. Abraham became a friend of God through faith. In spite of appearances to the contrary, he went to the land he had not seen, believed God's promise of a son, and offered up that son at the same area where God's own Son would be crucified. Because he believed God, his faith was accounted to him for righteousness. Trusting God's means of salvation credits us with God's righteousness

## **Liberation, Law and The Land (Exodus - Ruth)**

- The descendents of the One who God chose become objects of Egyptian Slavery
- God calls Moses and redeems God's people (Exodus 1-15)
- God gives the Law (Exodus-Deuteronomy)
- God's people inherit the Land of Promise (Joshua, Judges, Ruth)

*Principle: Revelation demands obedience, and obedience brings blessing (Deut. 6:1-15, Joshua 1:8; John 15:12-17)*

After redeeming God's people from bondage, the Lord spoke to them in power and glory at Sinai. The revelation of the Law required a response of obedience. The Law was given to instruct the people about the person and the ways of their Redeemer so that they could be set apart to a life of holiness and obedience. Their success as individuals and as a nation would depend on the degree to which they conformed to God's moral, civil, and ceremonial law. Likewise, disobedience would lead to disaster (e.g., wilderness wandering and oppression during the time of the Judges.) As believers in Christ, our success is measured by the degree of our conformity to God's character.

How has conforming your life to God's Word blessed your life?

### **Kings and Kingdoms (1 Samuel - 2 Chronicles)**

- God calls his final Judge, Samuel
- Samuel anoints Saul as King
- Saul fails, Samuel anoints David as King
- David struggles to consolidate the Kingdom
- David plans to build a house for God and God's promise to David (2 Samuel 7)
- David's moral failure and consequent family drama
- Solomon's ascent and construction of the Temple
- Solomon's failure and the divided kingdom (Israel and Judah)
- Israel's succession of kings and eventual fall to Assyria
- Judah's succession of kings and eventual fall to Babylon
- The rise of national prophets: Elijah and Elisha

*Principle: Obedience grows out of a heart for God (Deuteronomy 6:5; 1 Sam 13:14). Disobedience creates separation and dispersion.*

Saul and David are a study in contrasts. The key to Saul's failure was his lack of a heart for God; the key to David's greatness was his obvious love for the Lord. David's relationship with God became the standard by which all the kings of Judah and Israel would be measured. To know God is to love God, and to love God is to desire to obey God. Disobedience creates separation from God. Psalm 23 is a model of a man who was intimate with God.

What are the things that may be hindering your growth in the knowledge of God?

### **Return and Redevelopment (Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther)**

- God sends a nation (Persia) to conquer the oppressor (Babylon)
- God raises up a liberator (who typifies in the natural what Messiah will do in the spiritual) - Cyrus
- God allows the people to return to their homeland in 3 waves
  - 538 BC - Zerubbabel - to rebuild the temple
  - 457 BC - Ezra - to reestablish the faith
  - 444 BC - Nehemiah - to rebuild the wall

### **Poetry and Wisdom (Job-Song of Solomon)**

- Job teaches of God's sovereignty
- Psalms teaches of bringing one's whole self to God for worship
- Proverbs teaches that God's Word is practical for wisdom
- Ecclesiastes teaches that all other pursuits besides that of God Godself are in vain
- Song of Solomon teaches about the holiness of marriage and how it typifies God's passion for God's people

*Principle: To have a heart for God is to approach life from God's perspective (Job 42:1-6, Psalm 1; Proverbs 2:1-9; Romans 12:1-3)*

The poetic books record the struggles of men like Job, David, Solomon, Asaph, and others to a divine perspective on their lives and circumstances. As they learned to set their minds on the person, powers and perfections of God, their wills and emotions came into alignment with God's truth. True wisdom is seeing life from God's side, and is rooted in setting our minds (meditating) on things above (Colossians 3:1-3). How have you applied God's wisdom to a situation rather than doing things your way? What were the results?

### **The Prophets and The Remnant (Isaiah-Malachi)**

Isaiah	Pre Exile	Judah	Twofold message of condemnation and consolation. God's judgment on the sins of Judah, the surrounding nations, and the world, followed by future salvation and restoration
Jeremiah	Pre Exile	Judah	Judah's Last Hour. Declaration of certain judgment, promise of a new covenant
Lamentation	Pre-Exile	Judah	Lament for the destruction of Judah (Jerusalem)
Ezekiel	Exile	Jews In Babylon	Ministry before and during the destruction of Jerusalem. The fate of Judah's foes and a vision of Judah's future
Daniel	Exile	Jews In Babylon	Outline's God's plan for the Gentile nations, and portrays God's prophetic plan for Israel
Hosea	Pre-Exile	Israel	The story of Hosea and his faithless wife illustrates the loyal love of God and the spiritual adultery of God's people
Joel	Pre-Exile	Judah	A natural disaster illustrates "the Day of The Lord," a far more terrifying day. God appeals to the people to repent to avert disaster.
Amos	Pre-Exile	Israel	In eight pronouncements of judgment, Amos spirals around the surrounding countries and lands on Israel. Injustice and immorality call for repentance
Obadiah	Pre-Exile	Edom	Condemnation of Edom (Esau) for refusing to act as a "brother" nation during Israel's (Jacob's) trials
Jonah	Pre-Exile	Nineveh	A reluctant prophet preaches a one line message to Nineveh (capital of Assyria) and they repent...at least for now
Micah	Pre-Exile	Judah	In spite of divine retribution against the corruption of Israel and Judah, God's covenant with them will be fulfilled in Messiah's future kingdom.
Nahum	Pre-Exile	Nineveh	About 125 years after they repented after Jonah, Nahum preaches and unrelenting message of destruction. They are past help.

Habakkuk	Pre-Exile	Judah	Live by faith: Troubled with God's plan to use the Babylonians as a rod of punishment on Judah, Habakkuk praises the Lord after waiting on God and gaining a better perspective
Zephaniah	Pre-Exile	Judah	The coming day of the Lord will be an awesome time of judgment followed by great blessing. Judah stands condemned, but God will restore the fortunes of the remnant
Haggai	Post-Exile	Remnant	After returning deliverance, put God first and finish God's Temple that they had begun so they can enjoy the blessing of God
Zechariah	Post-Exile	Remnant	Complete the temple in preparation for coming Messiah
Malachi	Post-Exile	Remnant	Return backsliders: The spiritual climate of the people had grown cold. Malachi rebukes them for their spiritual compromise. Return to God with sincere hearts, they will be blessed

*Principle: God's disciplines are designed to restore a heart for Godself (Jeremiah 17:5; Joel 2:12)*

God had to discipline God's own people because of their moral and spiritual rebellion and their refusal to heed the warnings of God's prophets. reproof is designed to bring repentance and repentance brings restoration. The same prophets who pronounced the condemnation of God also announced the consolation of God. Similarly, because God loves us, God must sometimes chasten us as God's children to train us in the ways of righteousness.

How do we respond to God's chastening? Are we teachable or incorrigible?

### **Ancient Empires Regarded in the Old Testament**

Assyria (750-612)

Babylon (612-539)

Persia (538-331)

Greece (331-146)

Rome (146 BC - 476 AD)

The Old Testament prepares the way for the coming of Messiah by telling the story of a people whom God chose to exemplify the futility of attempting to overcome sin and fulfill God's plan in human strength. The books tell off the need for a Savior - they point forward to One who will bring justice and righteousness. It is a story crying out for completion.