

Old Testament Survey

Teaching given by Peter Warren at FGPC, October – December 2015

1. Introduction

How Do You View The Old Testament?

Like A Jigsaw Puzzle?

- Jigsaw puzzles can be very hard work
 - hundreds of small pieces
 - confusing and frustrating
- This is the way a lot of Christians feel about the Old Testament
 - knowing lots of small individual pieces – Noah's ark, Daniel in the lions etc.
 - not sure how they all fit together, or if they even do.
 - this leads us to view the Old Testament as a confusing part of the Bible which we do our best to avoid.

Matthew 5.17-18 - “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled”

destroy – dissolve or do away with

fulfil (vs17) – *pleroo* (Gk.) – to verify, perfect, complete

fulfilled (v18) – *ginomai* (Gk.) – to bring to pass fully

Jesus did not come to do away with the Old Testament – His coming was to bring it to pass, to fulfil it and perfect it.

Paul writes that the Old Testament is there as an example to us – to teach us and gives us hope.

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope” Romans 15.4

Our Approach to Study

In this survey of the Old Testament we are going to look at the major themes and events and fit them together to try and take the confusion out of it

The way we will approach this will be like taking a scenic flight in a small plane over a spectacular landscape or like staying on the hop-on hop-off tourist buses – we will see the main features but not be able to 'get off' and explore in detail.

Study at home – read, meditate. This will give understanding and revelation of what it contains and how it fits together.

The Making of the Old Testament

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God..” 2 Timothy 3.16

- The Old Testament has one author – God.
 - approx 30 different writers – of these some were prophets, priests, kings, sages, scribes, women and still there were others.
 - The Scriptures were penned down by these writers over a period of about 1200-1400 years as the Holy Spirit moved on them.
- The Old Testament was continually used, quoted and referred to by Jesus and the apostles e.g. Paul and Peter
 - The Old Testament books were the only Scriptures they had.
 - Paul mentions that the Holy Scriptures are able to make us wise to salvation (through faith in Jesus) (2 Timothy 3.15) - he was referring to the Old Testament which points us to Jesus
- There are 39 books in the Old Testament (+27 in the New Testament making a total of 66)
 - The Law – 5 books: Genesis to Deuteronomy
 - The History books – 12 books: Joshua to Esther
 - The Wisdom/Poetry books – 5 books: Job to Song of Solomon
 - The Prophets – 17 books
 - Major Prophets – 5 books: Isaiah to Daniel
 - Minor Prophets – 12 books: Hosea to Malachi

2. The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

Genesis 1-11

The Good

Genesis 1 has a few recurring words or phrases that are key to the whole of the Old Testament.

- GOD SAID - mentioned 10 times (+ another 5 times God called / saying)
- GOOD - mentioned 6 times
- EVENING & MORNING - mentioned 6 times

These expressions teach us about the way God acts and His treatment of man.

God Said - God's word is a prominent feature of the way God acts. There is power in His word to create, sustain life ([Deuteronomy 8.3](#); [Psalm 119.50](#); [Psalm 107.20](#)) and to keep us ([Hebrews 1.3](#)).

Good - God is good and everything He does is good and for our good ([Psalm 119.68](#); [Psalm 25.8](#)). The created world was good and perfect in every way ([Genesis 1.31](#))

Evening and Morning - God was (and is) very methodical. In creation, first He separated all the different compartments of creation (land, sea, air) and then filled each compartment with life (animals, fish, birds, moon and stars)

God is a God of order. **There is no haphazardness with God.** He is not the author of confusion but order ([1 Corinthians 14.33](#)). We see patterns elsewhere in Scripture e.g. the way Noah was instructed to build the ark ([Genesis 6.14-22](#)), Moses was given a strict pattern for the Tabernacle ([Exodus 26.30](#)).

[Psalm 37.23](#); [Philippians 1.6](#)

Man has a special place in the plan of God – this is a key theme of the Old Testament and worthy of noting as we will refer to it many times. He was created in the image and likeness of God. Man was given dominion and power over all of creation.

All of God's dealings with mankind are for their benefit and blessing. Man was created to be God's representative on earth, placed to care for the creation and to enjoy fellowship with God.

The Bad

As Genesis begins to unfold we see that God's good creation is tainted with sin. Genesis 3 records the 'fall of man'

[“Then the Lord God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us'”](#) [Genesis 3.22](#)

What was their sin?

It wasn't so much about the fruit that they had eaten, even though God had forbidden them to eat of it. It did have something to do with '*knowing good and evil*'

Genesis 3.3

Man already had the ability to choose between right and wrong. He knew the consequences of disobedience and making wrong choices. After eating the fruit his 'eyes were opened' ([v7](#)) and he now saw things that were previously concealed i.e. his nakedness. He now has a new level of moral perception. This sin was a direct rebellion of the created order of authority. Before this sinful act the order was God-man-animals, but now the order had become reversed. The rebellion starts with the animal who prompts man to usurp the place of God.

Genesis 3.5

The essence of their sin is a desire to become like God. Their sin is not necessarily about breaking a rule or some test of obedience, they are trying to take the place of God. They reject God's authority and His plan of what is good and right for them and have rebelled under the guise of "*we know what's best for us*"

It was this very same sin that had satan thrown out of heaven – [Isaiah 14.12-14](#)

Most people believe that sin is just breaking rules – whereas it is denying the way God has made things, rejecting His authority and trying to put ourselves in the place of God.

Creation is now no longer perfect – man is outside of God's plan and no longer enjoys or has fellowship with Him. Man is driven out of the Garden, the blessed life that he had is now just a memory. Sin has caused a giant wedge to come between God and man, the Creator and the creation.

Man is now engaged in a struggle with nature, with each other and with God. Even at one of life's most beautiful and treasured moments, the birth of a child, there is now pain and anguish.

All because man thought that he knew better than God.

The Ugly

Over the course of the next few chapters we see things getting really ugly. Sin is progressively getting worse, there's:

- Murder
- Incest
- Violence
- Deceit
- Corruption

to name just a few..

Genesis 6.5-6

["Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and *that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.*"](#)

Even though there is this increase in the level of sin in the world, yet we can still see the signs that God is at work blessing His creation.

In the midst of the judgement of sin by means of a flood, we see the grace of God in action. God finds in Noah a man who is prepared to trust Him; God uses him and saves him and his household. God blesses Noah with very similar words that He spoke to Adam ([Genesis 9.1-7](#)).

After the flood things degenerate once again and by the time we reach chapter 11 we see once again that man is trying to ascend into heaven – to be God. Here God steps in to disrupt the plan by confusing their languages.

However, on the whole, here we make an exciting discovery about God. We are seeing God's commitment to His creation. God is faithfully working to reverse the effects of the Fall, even though man is continually and repeatedly unfaithful.

The whole of the Old Testament reveals how God is working towards this.

3. Promises, Promises

Genesis 12-50

The Old Testament started off so well, but because of Adam's rebellion creation went out of control and into a cycle of sin and punishment. God practically destroys everything and starts again with Noah. By the time we reach Genesis 11 and the Tower of Babel, creation once again has degenerated to the point where man tries to force his way into heaven. Creation is rotten to the core yet again. So how is God going to deal with it? Will He destroy it once more and start again or try and fix it?

He does it in accordance with His method – God said. He makes promises...

Genesis 12.1-4

God makes Abram some great promises

God promises

- That Abram's descendants will increase and become a great nation. As a guarantee (surety) God changes his name to Abraham ([Genesis 17.4-5](#)) which means 'father of many nations'
- To give Abraham's descendants their own land to live in
- To bless His descendants and in turn they would also bring blessing to all families

Genesis 15.1-6

God repeats His promises to Abraham but this time adds another to it

Abraham's heir would be one born from his own body, not his chief slave as the culture allowed and permitted (it was given that the head slave became heir to childless couples). This was Isaac – the son of promise.

These promises to Abraham are majestic acts of the grace of God – through them God commits Himself to reversing the effects of the Fall.

God had created Adam and his wife and had placed them in a 'land' of their own, a garden full of blessing. God's promises to Abraham are about creating a new nation, dwelling in their very own land, whom God would be able to bless abundantly beyond measure. All this would come through a child born to Abraham.

These promises are of great importance – Genesis 15 is probably the greatest chapter in the Old Testament because hereafter everything that happens in the Old Testament has these promises as a backdrop. As we progress with these studies we will discover

that God is at work to fulfil His promises to Abraham – however we will also see the unfaithfulness of man who continually rebels against the plan of God.

“And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness” Genesis 15.6

This verse is the key to the chapter and to the whole of the Old Testament. Abraham believed (trusted in, adhered to, to cling on to) God's promises. Even when the circumstances were against him, he did not waver at these promises but trusted God to bring them to pass ([Romans 4.20-21](#))

Abraham is the key figure of the Old Testament, and the New Testament acknowledges this. The New Testament also shows us that Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of all God's promises ([2 Corinthians 1.20](#)) and we can see similarities and links to the way God deals with those of us who are in Christ.

- Faith in God's promises (word)
- Justification through faith
- Saved by (faith in) the incorruptible Word of God.

[Galatians 3.1-29](#)

We enter into the promises that God made to Abraham because we are in Christ, we too become the seed of Abraham and heirs of the promises ([v29](#))

The remainder of Genesis traces the stories of the next few generations of the family of Abraham – Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

God's promises continue through Isaac, then Jacob and finishing in the events of Joseph's life.

4. The Great Escape

Exodus - Deuteronomy

Exodus

Exodus is an important book in the Old Testament. If we fail to understand what is taking place in it then we will not fully appreciate what happens in the rest of the Bible, including the death and resurrection of Jesus.

As the book of Exodus opens we see some of God's promises to Abraham already starting to come to pass. God's people are growing and have become very numerous although there is still a long way to go before they get to the place where all of those promises are fulfilled

[Exodus 12.1-41](#)

Exodus records the start of the Jewish nation and outlines the start of their journey to the land of their own – the Promised Land, promised to Abraham. This journey begins with a miraculous escape from Egypt. This great escape is the focal point for everything that is to come, and every Jew identifies themselves with this event, even today. The Exodus also marked the start of the Jewish calendar (see [vs 2](#))

There are certain characteristics of the events leading up to the moment where Pharaoh finally lets the people go.

- **Lamb is sacrificed** – God instructs His people to kill a lamb and apply the blood to the doorposts and lintels of their homes. On the night of the Passover, when God saw the blood on the doors of the houses He passed over their homes and did not allow the destroyer to enter. The death of the innocent lamb took the place of the death of their own firstborn.
- **God did it** – The nation of Israel came into existence not through struggling to achieve greatness, nor through winning a war with Egypt. Israel was set free because God did it.
- **From slavery to freedom** – For approx 400 years Israel had been in Egypt and they had become oppressed and enslaved. God heard their cry and remembered His promise to Abraham. When God set them free, they were free indeed, the shackles of slavery were broken.
- **From poverty to riches** – The Exodus also meant going from a state of poverty to great riches. The Israelites didn't just get out with what they were wearing, as is often the case when people escape from oppressive regimes. They left with the treasures of Egypt which the Egyptians willingly gave to them.

Already we can see the Old Testament pointing towards Jesus and the pattern that God establishes for salvation.

Exodus 19.3-8

After God's people had been freed from the bondage of Egypt, God gathers them at Mount Sinai and gives them His plans for them. He says that He is going to make them into a holy nation, a nation that is peculiar [separated] to Him. In response to His promise they agree to be obedient to His commandments.

God also gives them certain laws relating to their life and conduct. As you skim through the next few books of the Bible you will see that the Israelites fail to keep their promises, but God remains faithful to them.

Exodus 24-40

The next few chapters of Exodus deal with God's plan for the construction of the Tabernacle – this is a portable tent in which God would dwell and meet with His people as they journey to and into the Promised Land

Leviticus

God's laws carry on through Leviticus as Moses teaches the people of God how to stand in proper awe of His mercy and holiness. There are a number of things which they must observe if they are to be a theocratic nation with God as their King.

Numbers

In Numbers we see that God's people leave Sinai and move to the fringes of the Promised Land. In chapters 13 & 14 we read Moses sends 12 spies into the land to survey it and plan the invasion but they return with a bad report – only two Joshua and Caleb believe they can enter and possess the land. But God's people listen to the ten spies and refuse to enter into what God said belonged to them – don't forget this land was promised to Abraham and his descendants.

This refusal is basically an act of unbelief and mistrust in God. As an act of punishment they were made to wander in the wilderness for forty years. During this period, although their sin is judged, still we see God remains faithful to them – He provided food, drink, shoes and clothes that did not wear out.

At the end of these forty years Israel gathers once more at the edge of the Promised Land for a second attempt at entering – Moses dies and Joshua leads God's people.

Deuteronomy is made up of three appeals that Moses gives the people of God just prior to this.

Deuteronomy 7.7-9

In these verses we see why God is doing all that He does. He is a God who is faithful to His covenant. He wants to keep the oath that He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Deuteronomy 6.4-15

Here we read what the response of God's people should be. They are instructed to continually talk over God's promises so as to remind themselves of what God was doing for them and to remember where they had come from, so that they did not chase after other Gods or forget the Lord. They are to keep God's words right at the heart of their lives.

Deuteronomy 7.1-4

They were not to enter into covenant with an enemy or show them mercy. They were not to marry or give their daughters in marriage with these people from other nations, as these heathen nations would turn their hearts from following after God.

Deuteronomy 30.15-20

Moses gives the Israelites the option to choose between life and death, blessing or cursing, good or evil. Even after Adam's bad choices, God still gives His people the option to serve Him or not. They still have freedom of choice.

What do these books teach us about Jesus?

By using the four characteristics of the Exodus we see that:

- *Lamb is sacrificed* – The whole of the Levitical system of offerings, cleansing and atonement were based on a blood sacrifice. Jesus is the Lamb of God and He was sacrificed to take away the sins of the world.
- *God did it* – We are saved not because of any works or merit on our part. We do not buy or earn salvation. We didn't struggle with God and overcome and receive it that way. We are saved by God's doing – His grace. All we have to do on our part is accept what He has done and believe, and receive it by faith.
- *From slavery to freedom* – We are no longer slaves to sin because Jesus died to pay the ransom price for our freedom. Sin no longer has any dominion or hold over us. The shackles and yoke of slavery have been broken by Christ and we are not in debt to the devil.
- *From poverty to riches* – We now have exceeding riches in glory which are ours in Christ Jesus. We are blessed with every spiritual blessing and belong to a family which own the wealth in every mine

5. The Desert House

Introduction

Last study we very quickly covered the moment from when God's people came up out of Egypt and journeyed to the Promised Land. We just mentioned and glossed over a very significant part of Exodus in that session which we are going to back-pedal a bit in this study and look at - The Tabernacle.

As we look at this we can only give a brief overview of the structure and symbolism – a full study would take many weeks to complete. But it is significant for our understanding of the Old Testament.

The Tabernacle was a tent-like structure which was dedicated to God for His presence. It was comprised of three parts – The Outer Courtyard, The Holy Place, and The Most Holy Place (or Holy of Holies as it sometimes referred to). God gave Moses specific instructions (a pattern) for its construction and the furnishings it contained. God is a God of order and pattern.

Exodus 25.8-9

The Tabernacle was to be the place where God dwelt and met with His people. Hence it is referred to by its full name The Tabernacle of Meeting. The word tabernacle literally means a residence – this was God's dwelling place among men. The tabernacle was situated in the midst of the camp with three tribes of Israel camped on each of its four sides – God truly dwelling in the heart of His people.

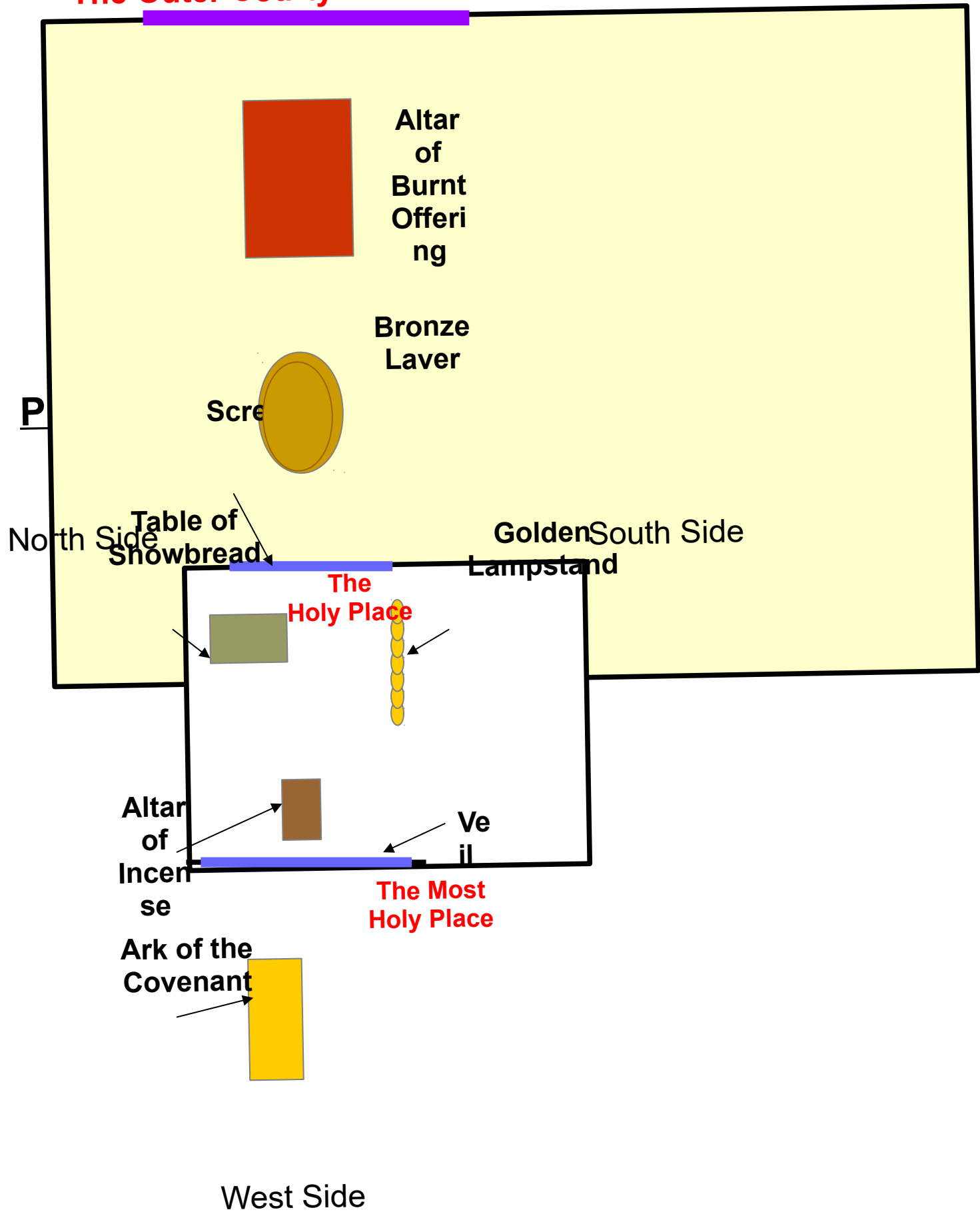
The Tabernacle speaks to us of:

Heaven - God dwells in Heaven

Jesus Christ - God dwelt among men in the person of Jesus ([John 1.14](#))

Church - God by His Spirit dwells in the Church – His people ([1 Corinthians 6.19](#))

The Outer Courtyard Gate (faced East)



Plan of the Tabernacle – on the previous page is a plan of the Tabernacle which you should constantly refer to as you study these notes and the Scriptures that go with them.

The pattern of the Tabernacle and its symbolism all point to Jesus.. As you look at the plan from above you will notice that even the furniture is laid out in the shape of the cross.

In the image (below) you can see what The Tabernacle structure probably would have looked like.



THE OUTER COURTYARD

Exodus 27.9-19

The courtyard was 100 cubits long by 50 cubits wide (a cubit is usually understood to be about 18 inches = 1½ feet = 0.45 metres). It had no external covering and the desert sand was its floor. Around the perimeter stood 60 bronze pillars – 20 each for the north and south sides and 10 each for the east and west sides. Between each pillar there were 5 cubits of fine twined white linen.

The Hangings (Curtains) of the Court

These were made of fine white twined linen. The Bible identifies white linen as a symbol of righteousness. In the Tabernacle it represents the righteousness of God and also the righteousness of the saints.

The curtains also had the practical effect of dividing between those on the inside and those outside – the righteous and the unrighteous. Every person in the world occupies one of two positions either 'saved' or 'lost', 'in Christ' or 'without Christ'. In Christ we have a security – knowing the love of God, knowing that nothing or nobody can separate us from God's love.

The Pillars of the Court

The 60 pillars that stood on the perimeter, to which the curtains were hung, formed a complete unbroken wall (except for the entrance gate). This symbolises the Body of Christ, the Church, made up of many members but one complete united body.

The pins and cords that supported the pillars and kept them upright are symbolic of the promises of God (pins) and faith that lays hold of the promises (cords).

The pillars did not stand directly on the desert sand but in bronze sockets. This teaches us that we do not stand on our own but on Jesus Christ the foundation stone. God's word is the foundation of the church and there is nothing that can prevail against it – not even hell ([Matthew 16.17-18](#)). These sockets, pins and cords provided stability.

The Gate of the Court

The only way into the Tabernacle courtyard was through the one gate on the eastern side. This is great symbol of Jesus the Door ([John 10.9](#)). Any Israelite wanting to approach God had to come through the gate, so with us, we can only have access to God the Father through Jesus the Door ([John 14.6](#)).

The Gate was four times long as it was high, it was suspended on four pillars and displayed four colours. Four is the universal number, this shows us that the Gospel of Christ is universal, open to all. It is not limited by race, colour, class or religion. All can come to God but through the one way - Jesus Christ.

The four colours woven into the fabric of the Gate were purple, blue, scarlet and white and show us four truths about Jesus.

- *Purple* – the royal colour. It represents Jesus as the King of Kings.
- *Blue* – speaks of heaven and the deity of Jesus. Jesus is God ([John 1.1](#))
- *Scarlet* – speaks to us of the humility of Jesus, especially His obedience to the cross. The red colour reminds us of Jesus blood that was shed for us.
- *White* – represents righteousness. Jesus is our righteousness and in Him we are made the righteousness of God.

Exodus 27.1-8

The Altar of Burnt Offering

As you came through the Gate into the Courtyard you are faced with the Altar of Burnt Offering or Altar of Sacrifice. The Altar of Offering was the basis of the entire Levitical system. It was the place of sacrifice, millions of animals were slain, rivers of blood flowed as sacrifices were made for sin. It speaks to us of the cross where Jesus was slain, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world ([John 1.29](#)). This is the basis of our faith in God.

Exodus 30.17-21

The Bronze Laver

Between the Altar of Burnt Offering and the main structure of the Tabernacle was the Bronze Laver. No specifications for the construction of this piece of furniture are given in the Bible except that it was to be made of bronze. It contained water for the priests to cleanse themselves before entering The Holy Place. It speaks to us of a daily cleansing from the defilement of sin arising from our daily walk. The psalmist asks the question 'Who can stand in His holy place?' (Psalm 24.3-4), only he that has clean hands and a pure heart – those who have been cleansed from sin.

In the New Testament Paul writes of our cleansing by 'the washing of water by the word' (Ephesians 5.26), God's word cleanses us, this is symbolised by the water that was in the Laver.

The Laver was made of highly polished bronze that were once used as mirrors by the women (Exodus 38.8) who willingly gave them for the making of the Laver. This highlights the need for us to look into the mirror of the word of God so we can judge ourselves. God's word searches deep within us and reveals who we really are (Hebrews 4.12).

Like all the furnishings of the Tabernacle, the Laver speaks of Christ, in this case He is the Living Word.

THE SANCTUARY (MAIN BUILDING)

Exodus 26.15-30

The framework of the sanctuary of the Tabernacle was made up of 48 boards that were overlaid with gold. Each board was locked into two silver sockets by two tenons, then a series of bars held the boards in place.

The Boards

These boards are representative of the *History of God's People* and show the work of Christ for His church through redemption. The boards were cut from trees before being gathered by the feller (evangelist) and brought to the Tabernacle. They were stripped of bark and foliage, cut and overlaid with gold thus signifying what Jesus Christ did for us. He stripped us of everything that was of self and clothed us in His righteousness.

The bronze of the Tabernacle was seen by the outside, but the gold boards were only visible from inside the Tabernacle – this shows us how God sees us in Christ.

The Sockets

The sockets are representative of the *Security of God's People*. Each board stood in two silver sockets. The silver to make these sockets came from an offering – the ransom money (Exodus 30.11-16). This teaches us that the price was paid for our salvation with the precious blood of Christ Jesus. The ransom money was the same for all rich or poor, just as the blood offering of Jesus is the same for all.

The Bars

The bars represent the Unity of God's People. They connected the boards together to form the building. There were three sets of five bars, one set on each side of the sanctuary except the east side - again these were overlaid with gold. Unity is a key to blessing ([Psalm 133.1-3](#)) and is important for the Body of Christ.

There was also a middle bar ([v28](#)) which passed through the middle of the boards probably to lock them all together and form a sturdy framework. This speaks to us of the presence of Christ in the midst of His people. Jesus said that where we gathered together, united in His name, He would be in the midst of us ([Matthew 18.20](#)). Jesus in the centre is an important part of unity, this can be illustrated using a wheel with spokes, like an old cartwheel, with Jesus as the hub and the spokes as the brethren. The closer the spokes get to the hub (Jesus) the closer they get to each other.

Exodus 26.1-14

The Coverings and Curtains

The Inner Curtains (The Exaltation of Christ)

There were ten curtains in made of fine twined linen with blue, scarlet and purple threads. These colours represent the same as they did for the Gate. The curtains formed the first covering for the sanctuary and were only visible from inside. They symbolised the exalted Christ. In the temple the prophet Isaiah saw the exalted Lord, He was 'high and lifted up' ([Isaiah 6.1](#)), we too see a risen, exalted Christ because God has highly exalted Him ([Philippians 2.9](#)).

The Curtains of Goats Hair (The Substitution of Christ)

Next there were eleven curtains made from goats hair. These acted as a tent over the Tabernacle and covered the inner fine linen curtains. These curtains symbolised the Substitution of Christ, i.e. Christ died in our place. The goat was the symbol of atonement and we read in [Leviticus 16](#) that on the Day of Atonement two goats were taken, one was sacrificed and the blood sprinkled, the other was taken out of the camp to act as a scapegoat to die and bear the sins of the nation. Christ was our scapegoat – He was led out of the city and and died bearing the sins of the world.

The Curtains of Ram Skins (The Consecration of Christ)

For the final two sets of curtains no direct instructions were given to their size or how they were coupled.

On top of the curtains of goats hair were another layer of curtains. These were made from ram skins which were dyed red. They symbolise the Consecration of Christ. [Exodus 29.26](#) mentions the 'ram of consecration', the red dye points to the truth of the obedience of Jesus to the point of death ([Philippians 2.8](#)).

These curtains were completely hidden from view. Consecration is like that, it involves yielding the heart and will, both of which are unseen, and it is worked out in the secret place of the Most High God.

The Curtains of Badger Skins (The Humility of Christ)

There is some uncertainty as to what is meant by badger skins, some translations suggest goat skins, others dolphin, porpoise or even seal skin. Another possible translation was the skin of a deer or antelope. Whatever it was the curtains that were made from this leathery material provided an all weather protection for the Tabernacle.

The Bible mentions in [Numbers 4](#) that the vessels of the Tabernacle were wrapped in badger skin for transportation. The only other reference, apart from those to do with the Tabernacle, can be found in [Ezekiel 16.10](#) and it is this reference that gives us one clue to the symbolism.

“I clothed you in embroidered cloth and gave you sandals of badger skin; I clothed you with fine linen and covered you with silk.”

The 'badger skin' was a strong, durable leather suitable for shoes, perhaps the shoes that the Israelites wore coming out of Egypt were made of this for they did not wear out. This verse associates the badger skin with shoes and therefore with walking. Our walk should be one of humility, walking humbly before God ([Micah 6.8](#)). When applied to Jesus it points to His self humbling attitude ([Philippians 2.5-6](#)).

[Exodus 26.36-37](#)

The Screen / The Door

The screen which acted as the door of the Tabernacle was woven of fine linen with blue, purple and scarlet thread (the symbolism is the same as in the Gate, and we will see again in the Veil).

There was only one way into the presence of God and this is represented by the three entrances in a straight line from the east side of the curtains of the Outer Courtyard. - The Gate, then the Screen/Door, then finally the Veil.

These three entrances teach us of the grace that is ministered to us through Jesus and in particular three things we have in Him according to [Romans 5.1-2](#)

- **PEACE** - “therefore being justified by faith we have [peace](#) with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” - symbolised by *The Gate*. Our peace is with God, we have been cleansed from our sins and that gives us right standing with Him
- **PRIVILEGE** - “through whom also we have [access](#) by faith into this grace in which we stand” symbolised by *The Screen*. Our privilege is that of access we can come to the Father in Jesus name.
- **PROSPECT** - “and rejoice in [hope](#) of the glory of God” symbolised by *The Veil*. Our prospect is one of hope, we can come within the veil to the mercy seat and find grace to help in times of need.

THE HOLY PLACE

This was part of the Tabernacle that only the priests could go. The Israelite was confined to the Outer Courtyard. We can rejoice today that we have been made priests and kings to God ([Revelation 1.5-6](#)) and have been brought near by His blood thus giving us access to God ([Ephesians 2.13](#))

[Exodus 25.23-30](#)

The Table of Showbread

The Table of Showbread was placed on the north side of the Holy Place. It was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold and also had a gold moulding. All the utensils associated with it were also made of pure gold. These two materials, wood and gold, represent the dual-nature of Jesus. He is very God and very man

More significantly is what was on the table rather than the actual table itself. Every Sabbath the priests would place twelve loaves of unleavened bread, baked of fine flour and placed in two rows of six ([Leviticus 24.5-9](#))

The bread speaks of the Person of Christ –

- He is the Bread of Life ([John 6.35](#))
- the fine flour represents His spotless, perfect life.
- The baking of the bread meant it had to pass through the fire – a symbol of the suffering and death of Jesus
- The twelve loaves show us that Jesus is our representative to the Father – He is our Advocate, our Great High Priest, Our Intercessor. The number twelve in Scripture is a representative number i.e. the twelve tribes represented the whole of God's people; the twelve apostles represent the church. The word 'showbread' literally means *bread of faces* and shows us that Jesus is presenting His face before the Father on our behalf.

[Exodus 25.31-40](#)

The Golden Lampstand

Directly opposite the Table of Showbread stood the Golden Lampstand, this was a grand piece of craftsmanship, a seven stemmed lampstand. It was shaped out of one piece of gold weighing one talent (approx 75lbs or 34kg) – the main stem, the branches, the bowls, the ornamental knobs and flowers. The seven lamps were arranged in such a way that the light shone in front of the Lampstand.

Light has always been associated with the Word of God (see [Psalm 119.105](#); [2 Peter 1.19](#)). Jesus is also known as the Light of the World ([John 8.12](#)) – the Living Word is the Light of the World.

The oil that burnt in the lamps is symbolic of the Holy Spirit who brings revelation and illumination of God's Word to our spirit. He guides us into all the truth.

The ornamental flowers on the Lampstand, the almond shaped knobs and bowls are symbolic of the fruitfulness that the Word produces in us.

That this was hammered and shaped out of one piece of gold signifies wholeness especially where God's Word is concerned.

- The entirety of it is truth ([Psalm 119.160](#))
- ALL of it is God breathed ([2 Timothy 3.16](#))
- We must not add anything to it or take from it but leave it as it is – whole ([Revelation 22.18-19](#))

One of the important priestly ministries was to dress and tend the lamp every evening and morning. This only serves to show us the importance of feeding on the word on a daily basis.

Exodus 30.1-10

The Altar of Incense

The Altar of Incense stood directly in front of the Veil. As its name suggests it was an altar on which incense was burned. The incense was to be made according to a strict recipe ([Exodus 30.34-38](#)). It was forbidden for it to be copied or used for any other purpose. Nothing else was to be offered on this altar – no other types of incense, nor a burnt offering, drink offering nor grain offering. The incense was to burn daily once in the evening and once in the morning.

Only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest was allowed to sprinkle the blood of the sin offering on the horns of this altar before going within the Veil.

The Altar of Incense represents the worship of the Church. We are to continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God ([Hebrews 13.15](#)). The sacrifices we offer are prayer, praise and worship.

- *Prayer* – an exercise in which we are occupied with a need or petition
- *Praise* – an exercise in which we are occupied with the answer and supply of a need
- *Worship* – an exercise in which we are occupied with God Himself

The incense represents the worship of God's people which fills Heaven's throne room just like the fragrance of the incense filled the Holy Place. Our prayers are received in heaven by Jesus, our Great High Priest who in turn presents them before the throne in all the fragrance of His own most precious name.

Exodus 26.31-33

The Veil

As with the Gate and the Screen, the Veil was woven of fine white linen with blue, purple and scarlet thread.

Verse 33 tells us that the Veil served as a divider between the Most Holy Place and the Holy Place. The Veil separated the Ark of the Covenant and Mercy Seat from the rest of the Tabernacle. The Veil kept sin from the presence of God. No one was allowed to

pass beyond the Veil into the Most Holy Place except the High Priest; and then he could only do this once a year, on the Day of Atonement, bearing the blood of the sin offering. If this blood was accepted then the sins of the people were atoned for, if not then the High Priest died in the presence of God.

The Veil is representative of Christ, more significantly with His death. Jesus carried His own blood before the Father as a once for all sacrifice. At the point of His death the Veil, which was then located in the Temple, was torn in two from top to bottom opening up the way and giving access to every person into the presence of God ([Mark 15.38](#))

The rent veil signalled the cancellation of the Levitical system of sacrifice and heralded the start of a new better covenant. Notice that the Veil was torn from top to bottom – impossible when attached to a rod. This shows us that it was a work of God, and He did it.

THE MOST HOLY PLACE (or HOLY OF HOLIES)

Exodus 25.10-16

The Ark of the Covenant

The Ark of the Covenant was the first thing God told Moses to make. It was a chest made out of acacia wood and overlaid with gold. It also had gold mouldings around it. In the Ark of the Covenant were placed three items – the Tablets of the Law (Ten Commandments), Golden Pot of Manna, and Aaron's Rod that budded ([Hebrews 9.4](#)). It would appear that the Ark was made to hold these things and the Tabernacle constructed to hold the Ark.

It speaks of the Person of Jesus Christ – who He is and not so much what He has done.

The Ark had the position of chief place in the Tabernacle and shows us that Christ has the Pre-eminence in all things ([Colossians 1.18](#))

Exodus 25.17-22

The Mercy Seat and Cherubim

The Mercy Seat and Cherubim which stood at both ends of it were made out of one piece of pure gold. It formed the lid of the Ark of the Covenant and therefore was made to fit. The work of making the Mercy Seat was assigned to a skilled artisan called Bezalel ([Exodus 37.1-9](#))

We have just seen that the Ark of the Covenant represented the Person of Jesus but the Mercy Seat represents His work in the presence of God i.e. His High Priestly Ministry.

The Mercy Seat was God's throne. He was known as the God who dwelt between the Cherubim ([1 Samuel 4.4](#)). It was the meeting place between God and the High Priest when he carried the blood of atonement before the Lord.

We ought to remember that for Israel the Mercy Seat was a place, but for us the Mercy Seat is a person - Jesus

6. Great Expectations

Joshua – 1 Samuel

As we open the book of Joshua, we see Israel about to enter the land that God had promised to bring them into. This land was promised to Abraham and was included in the promises of [Genesis 12](#) and [Genesis 15](#).

At many times it seemed that Israel would never get there:

- Pharaoh prevented them from leaving Egypt on many occasions
- their first attempt to enter the land failed because of their unbelief
- a whole unbelieving generation died in the interim period

Excitement and expectation builds as Israel prepares to possess their inheritance.

Moses has died and Joshua has been raised up to lead the children of Israel into this new land.

JOSHUA

Joshua 1.6-8

God is bringing His people in to the land because of the promise He made to Abraham. He gives them the instruction as to what He expects from them:

- to be strong and courageous
- to observe the Law and not turn from it
- to meditate and keep the word of God prominent in their lives

If they followed these instructions, they would be prosperous and successful.

Joshua leads Israel into the Promised Land, they have a great victory at Jericho and more victories follow as they march through the land. Cities fall as God fights the battles for His people. Right before their eyes God is fulfilling the promises He made to Abraham – but how do they treat Him in return?

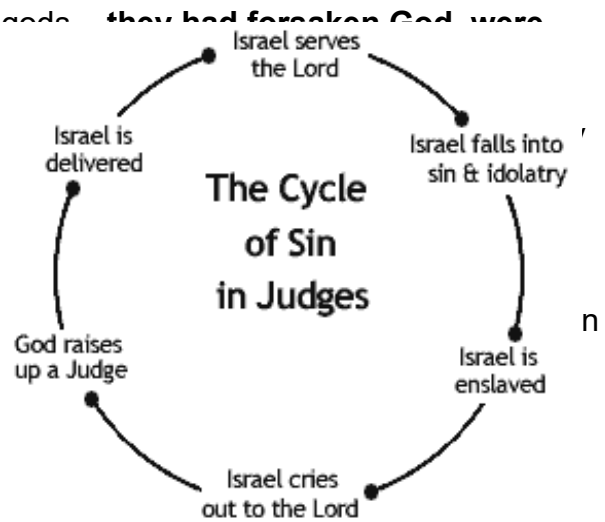
- **Joshua 7.1** Here we read that they did not follow God's instructions at Jericho – **they disobeyed and sinned**. This sin cost them the victory at Ai.
- **Joshua 9.14-15** They allowed strangers to join them and refused to seek God's mind – **they ignored Him**. They entered into covenant with their enemies against God's instruction given to them in [Deuteronomy 7.1-4](#)
- **Joshua 17.12-13** They allowed certain Caananites to stay in the land – **they disobeyed God's command**. They were told to expel all the inhabitants of the land.
- **Joshua 18.1-3** Some tribes hadn't taken possession of their allotment – **they had disregarded God's promise** and neglected to take possession of what was rightfully and already theirs.

- **Joshua 24.19-24** They served other gods, they had forsaken God, were disloyal and they had broken the first

Joshua ends with a clarion call for the people to forsake any foreign gods and to serve Him faithfully (Joshua 24) and to unanimously declare to serve God and obey His commands.

Joshua was:

- **a servant** – the servant of Moses (Exodus 17) found busy around the Tabernacle (Exodus 33)
- **a soldier**– He too was an experienced warrior, led military campaigns, discipline his forces, use strategy. He fought and won a great victory over the Canaanites.
- **a spy** – one of the twelve spies sent by Moses and encouraged the people to trust God and go in and take possession (Numbers 13.16; Numbers 14.6-9)
- **a saviour** – His name means saviour. Moses, who represented the Law, brought the people of God to the borders of the Promised Land. Joshua took them into the fullness of the blessing. Jesus fully brings us into the blessing of God, it took a Saviour to bring us in, something which the Law was unable to do. The Law was only given until the Saviour came (Galatians 3.19).
- **a statesman** – he displayed an unselfish statesmanship. Once the division of the land was complete, he carried on by setting up the Tabernacle, appointing the cities of refuge, and the arrangement of the Levitical order and service.
- **a saint** – His Godly character marked him out as successor to Moses.
 - He was filled with the Spirit of God (Deuteronomy 34.9)
 - He enjoyed the presence of God (Joshua 1.5; Joshua 6.27)
 - He was indwelt by the word of God (Joshua 1.8)
 - He was obedient to the will of God (Numbers 32.12; Joshua 5.14)
 - He left Israel a great Godly legacy (Joshua 24.31; Judges 2.7-8)



7. Great Expectations II

JUDGES

The Period of the Judges

After Joshua dies, the elders he appointed rule and govern the nation. When that generation died out the children of Israel went away from serving God, and followed after the Baals and Ashteroths – so the Lord raised up judges to rule and govern.

Israel had been unfaithful to God and His commandments, instead of expelling some people they had allowed them to remain – this meant that the judges had some 'clearing out' to do. However things are not so sweet during this time.

This period of the judges (from Joshua to Samuel) lasts for about 450 years (Acts 13.20) and includes an eight year period of under the Mesopotamians before God raises up the first judge.

The judges:

1. **Othniel** (Judges 3.7-11)
2. **Ehud** (Judges 3.12-30)
3. **Shamgar** (Judges 3.31)
4. **Deborah** (Judges 4.1 - 5.31)
5. **Gideon** (Judges 6.1 - 8.35)
6. **Abimelech** (Judges 9.1-57)
7. **Tola** (Judges 10.1-2)
8. **Jair** (Judges 10.3-5)
9. **Jephthah** (Judges 10.6 - 12.7)
10. **Ibzan** (Judges 12.8-10)
11. **Elon** (Judges 12.11-12)
12. **Abdon** (Judges 12.13-15)
13. **Samson** (Judges 13.1 – 16.31)

14. Eli
15. Samuel

After the reign of each judge Israel commits evil in the sight of the Lord and return to their sinful ways. As the chart above shows, while the judge is ruling things are on a high, then when the judge dies the people drop back into their sinful ways and rebel against God. The next judge is raised up and things begin to climb back to a godly state. Israel is 'playing the harlot' with other gods, they continually chase after other gods and compromise their relationship and fellowship with God.

Even the judges themselves reflect this state of affairs. By the time we reach Samson we see he compromises his allegiance to God by repeatedly seeking out foreign women. It appears that he is only interested in saving Israel when it satisfies his 'love-life'.

The rest of the book of Judges and the the book of **Ruth** give us some indication to what life was like during this period. The book of Judges closes with every man doing what he pleases, as seems right to him with no regard for God whatsoever ([Judges 21.25](#)). Things are just the same as they were in the days of Noah before the flood. This is exemplified in the words found in [1 Samuel 3.1](#) "*the word of God was rare in these days*" – it would appear that God had left the scene. Through the judges God temporarily delivered them - what Israel needed most of all was a saviour!

1 SAMUEL

Samuel was the last of the judges and a prophet of God. His ministry was fourfold -

1. **a prophet** –
 - a) God raised up Samuel from a very young age
 - from the time of weaning he was '[lent to the Lord](#)' ([1 Samuel 1.28](#))
 - he increased in stature and favour with God and men ([1 Samuel 2.26](#)) (see [Luke 2.52](#))
 - He was chosen by God as a faithful priest to do all that was in the heart of God ([1 Samuel 2.34-36](#)) - also another prophetic word concerning Jesus
 - at the age of twelve he had his first revelation and had to speak against the house of Eli ([1 Samuel 3.11-14, 18-21](#)).
 - b) He exercised the office of prophet until his death.

2. **intercessor** – Samuel was born in answer to prayer and his name would constantly remind him of the power of prayer (the name Samuel means 'asked of God, heard of God', [1 Samuel 1.20](#))
 - a) He was a man of prayer ([1 Samuel 7.5-8](#); [8.6](#); [12.17-19](#); [15.11](#))
 - b) Samuel regarded it a sin not to pray for others ([1 Samuel 12.23](#))
 - c) Jesus is our Advocate, Intercessor, the Mediator between God and men.

3. **a priest** – Samuel was only a Levite and not a priest by descent, yet the words in [1 Samuel 2.35](#) “*I will raise up*” imply an extraordinary office.
 - a) His priestly functions are proved in the following exercises:
 1. by intercession ([1 Samuel 7.9](#))
 2. by offering sacrifices ([1 Samuel 7.9-10](#))
 3. by benediction ([1 Samuel 10.17,25](#))
 4. by anointing kings ([1 Samuel 10.1, 16.13](#))

 - b) Again he is a type of Christ in that He is our Great High Priest.

4. **a judge** – the Bible says that Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life ([1 Samuel 7.15](#)).
 - a) Even after the government changed from a theocracy to a monarchy, he still acted as a judge going from place to place giving divine judgement on moral and spiritual issues.

 - b) Even though he was a godly man, his sons weren't. He appointed them as judges but they did not walk in the ways of the Lord and it was because of this that Israel asked for a king to rule them ([1 Samuel 8.1-5](#)).

This request for a king was a sign that they had rejected God ([1 Samuel 8.7](#)). Their new king is wonderful at first but soon things go wrong. As we progress through 1 Samuel towards the end of the book

- we see Israel falling into a state of decay,
- they are fearful of their enemies – the Philistines in particular
- at the end of the book their king is dead.

What went wrong? Throughout this period in their history the main problem was this: Israel wanted all the blessings of God but none of the responsibility that went with them. They want everything on their own terms and not God's way – to a certain degree, very much like the Fall all over again.

Their only hope – God is merciful and faithful to His promise. He raises up a king for them who was “[a man after His own heart](#)” ([1 Samuel 13.13-14](#))

Once again we see that the Old Testament is pointing us toward **Jesus**, the only hope for the world. In Jesus we can look forward to someone who is a new Joshua, a new Judge, a new Samuel and a new King. He is the solution to mankind's problems and the answer to all of God's promises.

8. The Lion King

David – Solomon

At this point we are just over half-way through our studies in the Old Testament. How would you now answer the question “*What’s the Old Testament all about?*”. Is your answer different now to what it was a few weeks ago?

Most companies offer us their products or services with great promises or guarantees that what they sell is far superior to their competitors or they bring out a new improved version of their product which is 10 times better than before. For those of us who fall prey to these claims are often left disappointed when they appear to be just the same as before, or on some occasions worse.

So far we've traced God's faithfulness to the promises He gave to Abraham, but we will soon see that God is not just content to do what He promised but He goes beyond that. As His promises are being fulfilled He gives more and more and adds blessing on to blessing.

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us...” Ephesians 3.20

In our studies we begin by looking at David. Many volumes have been written about this great figure in the history of God's people – perhaps even the greatest figure in their history? To take an in-depth look at David would involve many months of intense study which we do not have the time for this time.

God rejected Saul as king and He raised up David - a new king for them who was “[a man after His own heart](#)” (1 Samuel 13.13-14).

He was a **worshipper** – a man who spent time with God, who loved God. A man who talked with Him and knew His ways.

He was a **musician** – writing many of the psalms and songs

He was a **warrior** – defeating the enemies of Israel. The women sang about his triumphs.

He was a **prophet** – he had many revelations from God and spoke/wrote about the coming of the Messiah. He is one of the most quoted by the New Testament writers.

He was a **type of Christ** – He didn't just prophesy of the Christ he resembled him in many ways.

Similarities between David and Jesus.

David	Jesus
David was born in Bethlehem	Jesus was born in Bethlehem
David was born into a humble family	Jesus was born into a humble family
David was a shepherd of sheep	Jesus is the Great Shepherd of the sheep
David was persecuted by Saul but did not retaliate	Jesus was persecuted yet opened not his mouth
David was king with an 'everlasting' kingdom	Jesus is King of Kings with an everlasting kingdom

2 Samuel 7.1-17

David is now on the throne and wants to build God a place to dwell in but God has His own plans first. He wants to bring His people into total fulfilment of His promises. At this point in their history the future of Israel looks very bright. God promises them:

- that His (David's) seed would build Him a house to dwell in (v13)
- that there would be a special bond between Himself and Israel's king
"I will be his Father and he will be My son" (vs14)
- that David's kingdom would be established forever (v16)

(vs14) Even though men may sin God promises to be merciful and faithful to them.

2 Samuel 7.18-29

When David hears these words He responds to the magnitude of God's promises by asking Him the questions - Who am I? and What have I done to deserve all this?

This shows us the extent that God will go to bless His people who love and obey Him.

However, things do go wrong! David commits sin big time – he neglects his duty as king, has an adulterous affair and commits murder. He repents of his sin and is forgiven but the consequences of this sin affect the royal family which last for generations to come. There are family feuds, rivalry, murderous desires, brother takes on brother – but with all this God springs a big surprise.

God raises up **Solomon** as king over His people. Solomon is a son of the relationship between David and Bathsheba. Under Solomon God's people enjoy a time of peace and prosperity.

God gives Solomon the opportunity to ask for anything – riches, wealth, health, mighty army to conquer his enemies, anything he wants. What would we ask for? Solomon requests wisdom to judge the people of God righteously and justly. This shows us that he has the purposes of God in mind. God grants him his request and a lot more besides, everything he could have asked for – **that's His extravagant nature again!**

Under Solomon's rule

- the Promised Land is established
- Israel becomes a world power
- He builds the Temple in Jerusalem (which replaces the Tabernacle)
- the wisdom and fame of Solomon spreads far and wide

But there are some sure signs that **things aren't quite as they should be.**

If ever there was a tragedy, it was the rule and reign of Solomon. A man who penned a thousand songs and wrote 3000 wise proverbs failed to put into practice what he preached.

Alexander Whyte described his life as 'a shipwreck' – It started off so well but hit the rocks. He was a shining type of Christ but through a series of basic errors his light went dim and was extinguished.

Deuteronomy 17.16-17

Long before Solomon, God gave very clear instructions to Moses about the behaviour of kings. These three things were to be especially avoided

- Not going back to Egypt

- Not taking many wives – lest his heart be turned away from God
- Not to multiply silver, gold and riches for himself

Solomon did not avoid these things and they caused his deterioration.

1 Kings 6.38 – 7.1

As well as building the Temple, Solomon also built himself a brand new palace. He spent much more time building his own palace (almost double the time)

1 Kings 6.2 and 1 Kings 7.2

If we compare the dimensions of the Temple and that of his own palace, we see that the king's home is a much more impressive building.

** Silver is common and is counted as nothing in his time (1 Kings 10.21, 27)

1 Kings 3.1-4

Solomon makes a treaty with Pharaoh (king of Egypt); He marries outside of his own people and brings this new wife (a Gentile 'foreigner') to the City of David. He also burns sacrifices at the high places [a pagan custom].

He takes many foreign wives (700) and has many concubines (300). These women turn his heart from the Lord (**Nehemiah 13.26**) and he falls hard into idolatry to satisfy and please them (**1 Kings 11:1-9**).

There appears to be no record that Solomon repented of his sin. Although the Scriptures tell us of his remorse, his disgust and self-contempt (**Ecclesiastes**) yet there is no penitent psalm penned like that of David his father (**Psalms 51**). This is what makes his story such a tragedy. Yet we can be encouraged to do what Solomon failed to do – keep God's commands and we will live (**Proverbs 4.4-27**)

Yet again we've seen the Old Testament pointing towards Jesus through David and Solomon

Comparison between Solomon and Jesus.

Solomon	Jesus
Solomon was the first king by birthright	Jesus is the King of Kings by right
Solomon's reign was one of wisdom	Jesus is our wisdom
Solomon was David's son	Jesus is David's Greater Son
Solomon's rule was one of greatness	Jesus' ministry was one of humility
Solomon's priorities were in himself	Jesus' priority was to fulfil His Father's will

9. North and South

Solomon – The Exile

Last time we saw that under the rule of David and Solomon things were going well for the people of God. But although things were generally good they were not perfect as Solomon soon forsakes God.

In our last study we saw that there were three things that kings were specifically told to avoid:

1. Not going back to Egypt
2. Not taking many wives – lest his heart be turned away from God
3. Not to multiply silver, gold and riches for himself

Solomon fails on all three counts and the consequences are disastrous. From here on the books of 1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles trace the decline of the once great golden kingdom of Israel.

1 Kings 11.9-13, 26-37

God is angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the Lord and says that He will tear the kingdom from his family and give it to another. However God is still faithful to His promise to David by allowing Solomon's family to keep one tribe to rule over.

Jeroboam, one of his men, rebels against the king. He met the prophet Ahijah who told him that he would become king over Israel, but Solomon's son would retain rule over the tribe of Judah. Solomon seeks to kill Jeroboam because of this.

After Solomon's death, his son **Rehoboam** becomes king – but the nation splits into two halves – the north and the south, just as God had said.

Jeroboam becomes king over the northern kingdom which retains the name 'Kingdom of Israel' with Samaria as the capital city.

The southern kingdom stays in David's family with Rehoboam as king. Jerusalem stays the capital but the kingdom is known as the 'Kingdom of Judah'

Things aren't the same – the golden age of Israel is over. The remaining chapters of 1 Kings, 2 Kings and 1&2 Chronicles continually switch between the northern and southern kingdoms which can make following what is going on difficult.

Let us briefly look at these two kingdoms:

1. The Kingdom of Israel – the northern kingdom

- Jeroboam rejects God's word, the Temple (which was located in Jerusalem in the southern kingdom) and leads God's people into idol worship.
- The kings that come after him follow the pattern that Jeroboam set and continue in idolatry, immorality and sin.
- God raises up prophets like Elijah, Elisha, Amos and Hosea who warn the people of the dangers of rejecting God, and call them to repentance.
- Things do not get any better as Israel continues in her wicked ways until it is eventually crushed by the Assyrian Empire ([2 Kings 7](#)) and taken into captivity.
- The Kingdom of Israel comes to an end and disappears from the history pages of the Bible.

1 Kings 9.10 gives us Elijah's assessment of the spiritual condition of Israel.

Hosea 4.1-3 tells us what Hosea thought about their condition

2. The Kingdom of Judah – the southern kingdom

Things aren't going any better in the south:

- Even though Judah keeps its monarch from David's family and has its worship centred on the Temple in Jerusalem they still go astray and rebel against God.
- However, there are some kings, like Josiah, who turn the hearts of the people back to God.
- The warnings of the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel seem to fall on deaf ears and Judah soon sin in the same sin as Solomon, going after other gods.
- God warned His people that if they forsook Him and turned after other gods they would be driven out of their land (**Deuteronomy 28.36-37**) – that's what happened.
- We read in **2 Kings 25** how the Babylonians came and ransacked Jerusalem and took Judah into captivity. This event is commonly referred to as 'The Exile'

see Appendix 1 – Timeline of the Kings and Prophets of the Divided Kingdom.

The appendix can be downloaded from our website:

www.voice-faith.com/study/Old_Testament_Survey/appendix1.pdf

10. Where Was God?

The Exile

The two words 'Exodus' and 'Exile' appear to very similar

- **Exodus** – a mass departure of people
- **Exile** – to expel from ones native land

So what are the differences?

The Exodus	The Exile
God's people want to leave Egypt	God's people want to stay in their land
Pharaoh wants them to stay	Their captors want them to leave
Their cries to God are heard	Their cries to God are unheard
Going to the Promised Land	Leaving the Promised Land
Under God's Protection	Outside of God's Protection
Under the Blessing (Obedience)	Under the Curse (Disobedience)
From slavery and oppression into freedom	From freedom into slavery and oppression

How could this have happened?

At this very crucial time in their history, God's people may have wondered where God was, maybe even if He was dead.

The book of **Lamentations** was written around the time of The Exile, its name is derived from the Hebrew word for 'how' and this is the first word of the first chapter, and is repeated many times. The people of God were asking 'How?', we too often ask these questions when we are facing hard times.

- How could this have happened?
- How could we have allowed ourselves to get in this situation?
- How could God let us down in our time of need or when we need Him most?

Suffering and hard times should direct us to God, not turn us away from Him. It is better for us to fall into the arms of mercy than into judgement. **Don't ever blame God** for problems but **repent** and **turn to Him**.

It was a time of great sadness for the captives in Exile. **Psalm 137** is a song of one of those captives. In it they recall Jerusalem, their homeland and weep because of their sin.

It was a tragic time, the only other event in their history which was worse than this was the Fall. In both cases God's special people rebel against His rule, turn their backs on Him and are exiled from their land. (see **Genesis 3.22-24**).

Where Was God? - He was there all the time!

However God hasn't given up on them – He speaks words of deliverance, restoration and blessing through the mouths of the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Isaiah, just as He had been doing since the days of Adam. Remember God speaking His word is one of the primary principles of the way He works.

Jeremiah 29.10-14 and **Ezekiel 37.21-22** are just a couple of these prophetic utterances.

As part of these prophecies God purposes and plans to raise up a new king for them – from David's family – He will rule His people in righteousness and justice (**Isaiah 11.1-5**). **Ezekiel 34.23-24; Ezekiel 37.24** tells us that this king would be David, but this cannot be David who replaced Saul as king because he died approx 300 years before Ezekiel's time. So who is this David that Ezekiel talks about? He is the one born from Jesse's stem that Isaiah prophesied about – **JESUS**.

Isaiah also prophesies that He will be a servant like figure who through suffering will bring about forgiveness (**Isaiah 52.13 – 53.12**).

During The Exile the prophets encouraged God's people to return to Him in repentance and serve Him. They were to use this time in Exile to learn from their mistakes, very similar to the years spent in the wilderness after leaving Sinai.

The Servant-King

The two figures that we have just seen mentioned – the new King like David and the suffering servant have a key role in establishing the new covenant that God wants to make with His people (**Jeremiah 31.31-34; Ezekiel 36.25-29; Ezekiel 37.23-27**). The great thing about God's plan is that **JESUS CHRIST** fulfils both these roles – He is the Messiah, God's appointed ruler who through suffering the death of the cross serves His

people. JESUS is the new DAVID, we are reminded of this as we celebrate the nativity of the Lord each year, in the words of the popular carol:

*“To you in David's town this day, is born of David's line
A Saviour which is Christ the Lord and this shall be the sign.*

*The heavenly babe you there shall find to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swaddling bands and in a manger laid”*

Nahum Tate ca.1690

As we have already seen the whole of the Old Testament points toward Jesus Christ, He is the fulfilment of all God's promises ([2 Corinthians 1.20](#)) and the patterns the Old Testament reveal about God show us how He will unveil the plan of salvation.

The Nation Returns

Nehemiah

In our first lesson in this series we noted that for the purpose of studying the chronology of the Old Testament, it begins with Creation and ends with Nehemiah.

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah record the final phases of Old Testament history, along with prophets like Zechariah and Malachi. These books describe the resettlement of Israel in their own land after the Exile.

Nehemiah 1.1-4 In these opening verses of the book we find Nehemiah still in captivity. He is a high ranking official serving in the court of King Artaxerxes I (465-424 BC). When Nehemiah hears the news concerning Jerusalem, his homeland, and the destruction of the walls and gates, he is driven to prayer.

In [Chapter 2](#) we read how he gains authority and blessing from the king to go back to Jerusalem and begin the work of rebuilding the walls and city.

[Chapters 3-6](#) deal with the work of rebuilding the city, it also shows how the people worked together in unity and the opposition that they encountered in the process. We read in [Nehemiah 6.15](#) that the work was completed in just 52 days.

By the time we get to the end of chapter 7 ([Nehemiah 7.73](#)) God's people are back in their homeland, each man in his city. God has been faithful to the promise He made to them through the prophets Jeremiah, Isaiah and Ezekiel. He had restored them to their own land.

Would they now be faithful to Him?

Things at this time are looking very promising for God's people and Nehemiah sets about making some reforms and re-establishing some Godly principles ([Nehemiah 8.1-18](#)):

- Reading of the Law
- Worship
- Re-institution of the Feast of Tabernacles (this had not been properly observed since the days of Joshua) - [Nehemiah 8.17](#)

Israel repent of their sin and make a covenant with God ([Nehemiah 9 & 10](#)). They promise to be the people that God wants them to be – faithful, obedience to His laws, holy and separated to Him.

After some years Nehemiah returns to Babylon to report to the king all that has happened. He spends a little while with the king before returning back to Jerusalem.

[Nehemiah 13.1-9](#). In his absence, the Israelites go back to their old ways. They allow some of their enemies to come and dwell among them, even making an alliance with one of the chief enemies – Tobiah, allowing him to dwell in the house of God. (Tobiah was one of those opposed to the rebuilding of Jerusalem)

[Nehemiah 13.10-12](#) we read that the tithes hadn't been paid and God's house had been neglected.

Nehemiah ends on a very sad note. All the work of rebuilding and establishing God's rule seem to be wasted as Israel failed to be faithful to God despite their covenant with Him. At the end of the book we see Nehemiah praying three times and asking God to remember his faithfulness to Him and asking for mercy and pardon ([Nehemiah 13.14, 22, 31](#)).

Summary of the Series: Old Testament Survey

- We have seen from Creation through the wilderness years, the Kingdom years up to the end of the exile the **FAITHFULNESS OF GOD**.
- During this time we have also seen how man has been continually **UNFAITHFUL**
- The great tragedy is this: All God ever wanted is to have a people for Himself, with who He could enjoy fellowship, but they just kept on rejecting Him.
- If God is going to reverse the effects of the Fall, man's sin needs to be dealt with once for all. God's next mark on the pages of history is in the form of **JESUS CHRIST**. He was born, as the prophets foretold. His death on the cross paid the full price for the atonement of sin and through Him all the promises of God right back to Abraham are fulfilled. Through Jesus there is hope of the Promised Land to come and fellowship with God.

- Through JESUS man has a completely fresh start ([2 Corinthians 5.17](#))
- Through God's spirit our lives are changed so that we actually want to do God's will in a way that the Old Testament people of God could never experience. This doesn't mean that we will never sin or that our obedience will come automatically. Until we are perfected it is going to be a struggle, it's a fight of faith ([1 Timothy 6.11-12](#)), but we have all the resources we need in Christ to face up to the challenge. If you do fall and sin make sure you do what the Israelites failed to do - **REPENT** and turn to God.

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