

Session 1: Overview of OT

Intro and overview of our 6 sessions

YOUTUBE CLIP

1st one of 2 overviews – this one takes a chronological perspective – so thinks like us modern people – we like to arrange things on a timeline – it shows what happens when and how it all fits into a calendar <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmgDU20Q50U>

EXERCISE

Groups to pin pre-prepared cards of biblical events to OT chronology board Pinboard titles. Encouraged to look up some of the references and see what you find:

Early history to Patriarchs(?? – c1900); Eden (Gen1-2), Noah (Gen6-9), Babel (Gen11), Abram/Abraham (Gen12-25), Sodom & Gomorrah (Gen18-19), Isaac & Jacob (Gen21, 24,26-8, 29+&46), Joseph – technicolour coat, sold into slavery, rises to prominence in Egypt – Gen37-50)

Egypt & Exodus(c1900-1400); Egypt – from a place of rescue to a place of slavery (Ex1), Moses – birth, burning bush, God’s promise of deliverance, Plagues x 10. Passover (Ex12), Red sea (Ex13), manna, quail & water (Ex16-17), Sinai & commandments (E19-20), seeing God (E24.9-12) (*mini-point – God with his feet on ‘water’ – gods of most aNE nations walked on water ... Mmmm Mt14, Mk6 Jn6 !, Tabernacle and Ark (Ex25-40), Golden calf (Ex32), Glory of the Lord (E40)).*

Joshua to Saul, Rahab & Jericho (Jo1-5) (*minipoint – 2.18 – red is always about deliverance throughout scripture*) Conquering the land (Josh6-20), Covenant renewed (Josh 5&8); King Eglon’s assassination (Jd 3.17,21-22), Deborah Jd 4-5, Gideon Jd 6-8, Samson Jd 13-16. Ruth (see R1.1 for era), Samuel (1Sam1&3), Philistines capture the Ark (1Sam4-6), Saul chosen, anointed and appointed king (1Sam8-10), God rejects Saul (1Sam15), Samuel anoints David (1Sam16)

David & Solomon (c1400-931); David & Goliath (1Sam17), Saul, David & Jonathan(1Sam1-20), ‘the cave’ 1Sam24, Saul’s death (1Sam31), David becomes king (2Sam5 & 1Chr11), David restores the Ark (2Sam6 & 1Chr13-15), God’s covenant with David (1 Chr 17 & 2Sam7 esp v12-13), military victories (2Sam8-10 & 1 Ch 18), David & Bathsheba (2Sam11), David plans the temple (1Ch22), Solomon (1K2-3), Solomon asks for wisdom (1Kgs3 & 2Chr1), the judgement over the 2 women and baby (1Kgs3), Building the Temple (1Kgs5-6, 2Ch2-8), Queen of Sheba (2Chr9), the roots of where it all goes wrong for Solomon (1Kgs6.38 & 1Kgs7.1)

Divided kingdom, Kings and defeat: 931 – 722 BC(N, Israel)- 597(S, Judah); Civil war in Israel & divided kingdom (1Chr10-12), 19 kings of Israel and 19 kings of Judah (1Kgs11 onwards & 2Kgs), Elijah mount Carmel 1Kgs1822, Elijah’s chariot of fire (2Kgs2), Elisha miracles (2K4), Naaman’s healing (2Kgs5), Assyrians defeat Israel 722BC (2Kgs17), Josiah’s renewal of the covenant (2Kgs23),

Jerusalem falls to Babylon 597BC (2Kgs25). Early parts of Ezekiel (to 33.21). Most of Isaiah (1-39 740-700BC?). Micah, Habbakuk, Zephaniah, Nahum (Judah - S). Jonah, Hosea, Amos (Israel – N). Early parts of Jeremiah.

Exile, return and silence (586-537/457/444)

Later Ezekiel, later Jeremiah, Daniel, Haggai/Zechariaiah/Joel. '2nd Isaiah' (chs 40-55; 580s-540s BC ?), ..'3rd Isaiah' (chs 56-66; after 538BC). Israel (N) 'redistributed' throughout Assyria 722BC.

Judah taken captive to Babylon (597 BC). Esther. Life in exile in Babylon (eg Psalm 137), 3 waves of return from exile (Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah) 538BC Cyrus' decree permitting Jews to return

King Nebuchadnezzar Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace. Daniel in the lion's den.

A few interesting bits to consider (we can do as many as time allows):

- Gods walking on water – Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian (show pictures of statues/freezes of gods walking on water) Pharaoh Khafre (Egyptians, 3000BC), Marduk walking over water to get to Tiamat (Babylonians – date disputed, 1800-1100BC), Baal au foudre (Ugarit, NW Syria c1300BC), Sun god Shamash (Sippar, Sth Iraq c900BC) – deities had dominance over the sea – had the sea 'under their feet'. ... God/Yahweh/Elohim in Exodus 24 And then Matt 14, Mk 6 & Jn 6 suddenly take on a new meaning – Jesus walking on water was a sign for all civilisations that Jesus was/is God !
- Rahab's cord being red – of course it had to be! - the colour of redemption – maybe show other examples throughout scripture – eg the blood on the doorposts in Egypt, animal sacrifices to assuage sin. 47 mentions of 'red' in Old Testament.
- Eglon's assassination (by the Judge Ehud) – shows idioms in other languages – to be understood rather than seen literally (eg 'raining cats and dogs', 'pins and needles' – idioms, not literal).
 - Idiom 1 – the assassins sword went into Eglon 'up to the elbow' (Judges 3.22) The 'elbow' was not the assassin's elbow, it was a euphemism / idiom for the hilt of the sword
 - Idiom 2 – also v 22 – NIV 'his bowels discharged', KJV 'his entrails came out', ESV 'the dung came out', NASV 'the refuse came out', American Standard Version – phrase missed out all together as it is too rude for Americans! (The Message misses it out too, as do several other versions). RSV 'the dirt came out' – which is a literal word for word translation.
 - Idiom 3 – 'perhaps he's 'covering his feet' (Judges 3.24) – same expression as Saul going into the cave in 1Sam24.3. What 'covering his feet' means is uncertain – but there are 2 credible possibilities: (1) relieving himself (2) having a rest/nap. Note King James version and Original American Standard Version translate literally 'covering his feet', NIV says 'relieve himself', NASB said 'Saul went into the cave to go to the bathroom', but after much ridicule, that was changed in 1995 to 'relieve himself'. IF, alternatively, 'covering his feet' meant to take a nap ... would 'uncover his feet' mean 'wake him up'?- see Ruth – that's what the text says she did to Boaz. This can lead to mention of other idioms – eg Jews often avoided any mention of any

matter concerned with sex (more prudish than the Victorians!). The Jews sometimes used 'feet' as a euphemism for genitals ... eg Isaiah 7.20 (again some translations sidestep it, but 'shave your feet' is the word for word phrase It was saying that the Assyrians would be so powerful that Israel fighting them would be like young pre-pubescent boys fighting grown men – hence 'shave your feet' means that the Jews would be powerless to match them in battle) So ... when Ruth lay at Boaz 'feet' – was it actual feet or euphemistic feet? We'll never know, but this may not be quite the innocent story we tell our children in Sunday school. We see in other Jewish literature that they used the word 'foot' and 'shoe' to differentiate male and female genitalia, but would not mention the non-euphemistic words as that would have been considered rude.

- Dagon's capitulation to the Ark – the ark was only a representation of the presence of God – it wasn't God Remember this for when we look at Genesis (Image and Likeness Gen 1.26-7).
- The importance of David – politically, militarily and spiritually - both his prominence of following God, recovery from failings and Ps51.11 as a 'prototype' of how the Spirit will operate in the future – differently from how he did at that time (eg Ex31 Bezeal, Joshua Num 27.18, Othniel Jdg3.10, Gideon Jdg 6.34, Samson Jdg 13.25, 14.6, Saul 1Sam10,9-10),
- Bathsheeba's suspicious bathing – bathing where she could be seen – was she an innocent victim or maybe less than innocent?
- Solomon's downfall (to be explored in a later session) 1 Kings 6.38 compared with the next verse 1 Kings 7.1 Bear in mind that the chapters and verses came many years later These 2 would have followed on.
- Circumcision was a reminder that sex was more than just a marital activity and mere procreation – it was part of the fulfilment of Gods promise to Abraham – one of his descendants would be the Messiah to rescue the world and restore the relationship with God..... and there will be no descendants without sex !
- Dan 3 has execution by fire, Dan 6 by lions – showing the change of religion in Babylon as Zoroastrianism was accepted, where fire is sacred, therefore not suitable for execution.
- Any others that come to mind and as we'll probably run out of time, any not explored can be saved for the session where that era is covered.

YOUTUBE CLIP

2nd Youtube clip – also showing a summary of the OT but from a different perspective – an ancient Jewish order and explains why Kings and Chronicles exist telling roughly the same story.

Youtube clip of OT summary (12 mins) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALsluAKBZ-c&list=PLH0Szn1yYNeeVFodki9J_WEATHQCwRZ0u (theological perspective – and in the old Jewish order – ending with Chronicles)

Gods walking on water:

This is evident in the stories and theologies of multiple civilisations – Egyptian, Assyrian and, on the right, the Babylonian creator god Marduk, walking across the water to kill the evil sea demon Tiamat And he made human beings from her blood So in Babylonian ‘theology’ we are from the blood of an evil demon ... Genesis chapter 1 gives us a VERY different identity!



Execution methods in Babylon changing:

(due to the change in religion when the Medes conquered the city – see Daniel 5.30-31 – to Zoroastrianism where fire is sacred, so inappropriate for an execution)



And Make sure we finish the story ...

Daniel 3 ... AFTER going into the fiery furnace, what happened next? v26 Nebuchadnezzar recognised God as ‘the Most High God’ (an important and loaded phrase – Nebuchadnezzar recognises that God is greater therefore than Marduk, the chief Babylonian God)

AND v29 ... it became a capital offence (i.e. you would be executed) for anyone to even SAY anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego ...

AND ... Nebuchadnezzar started his own personal journey of faith which was prophesied ... the dream at the start of Daniel chapter 4 ...v 19, Daniel says to Neb ‘if only this dream applied to your enemies and not to you’ Neb went through a bout of insanity, was driven away from civilisation ... And he tells his conversion experience in v34 and chapter 4 v 34-37 are the only verses in the

Old Testament written by a non-Jew (Gentile) What an amazing honour God gave Nebuchadnezzar – to write some of the Old Testament, and the only non-Jew to do so. If Luke – the writer of the gospel and Acts was Jewish, then those verses are the only verses written by a non-Jew in the entire Bible. Luke was either a ‘Hellenised Jew’ (ie a Jew from the Greek speaking world) or a Greek Gentile (non-Jew) from the same area – he was born in what is today the city of Antakya in modern day Turkey – known as Syrian Antioch in biblical times – and Acts 11.26 – where the word ‘Christians’ was first used to describe us! An important city but declined during the Middle Ages until in 1432 it comprised of only about 300 houses. Most scholars think that his theology in Luke and Acts has so much Jewish influence that he was probably Jewish If so ... Neb was the ONLY Gentile to write part of the Bible – and it was his own testimony of finding God.

Other stories we don’t quite finish and often then miss the point:

The ‘prodigal son’ – plenty of great teaching about the prodigal – but it was told, Luke 15.11-31 in the context of Luke 15.2 The older, non-prodigal son plays the part of the Pharisees and scribes. We often finish the story at v 24 But v 25-32 is directly to his Pharisee and scribe audience!

Jonah – we often stop at chapter 2 Forgetting that this is only the half way point Ch3 v 6 the king of Nineveh repents and decrees national repentance and whilst Assyria is a classic polytheistic civilisation (they had 9 ‘great gods’ and numerous smaller, less powerful ones below them), we do have archaeological evidence that for some part the civilisation became monotheistic – they appear not to have called God Yahweh or Elohim – but their god Assur does seem to change from being a remote god outside of this world to a god who is sovereign over the whole universe yet becomes actively involved in humankind (transcendence and immanence) Strangely reminiscent of Yahweh/Elohim !