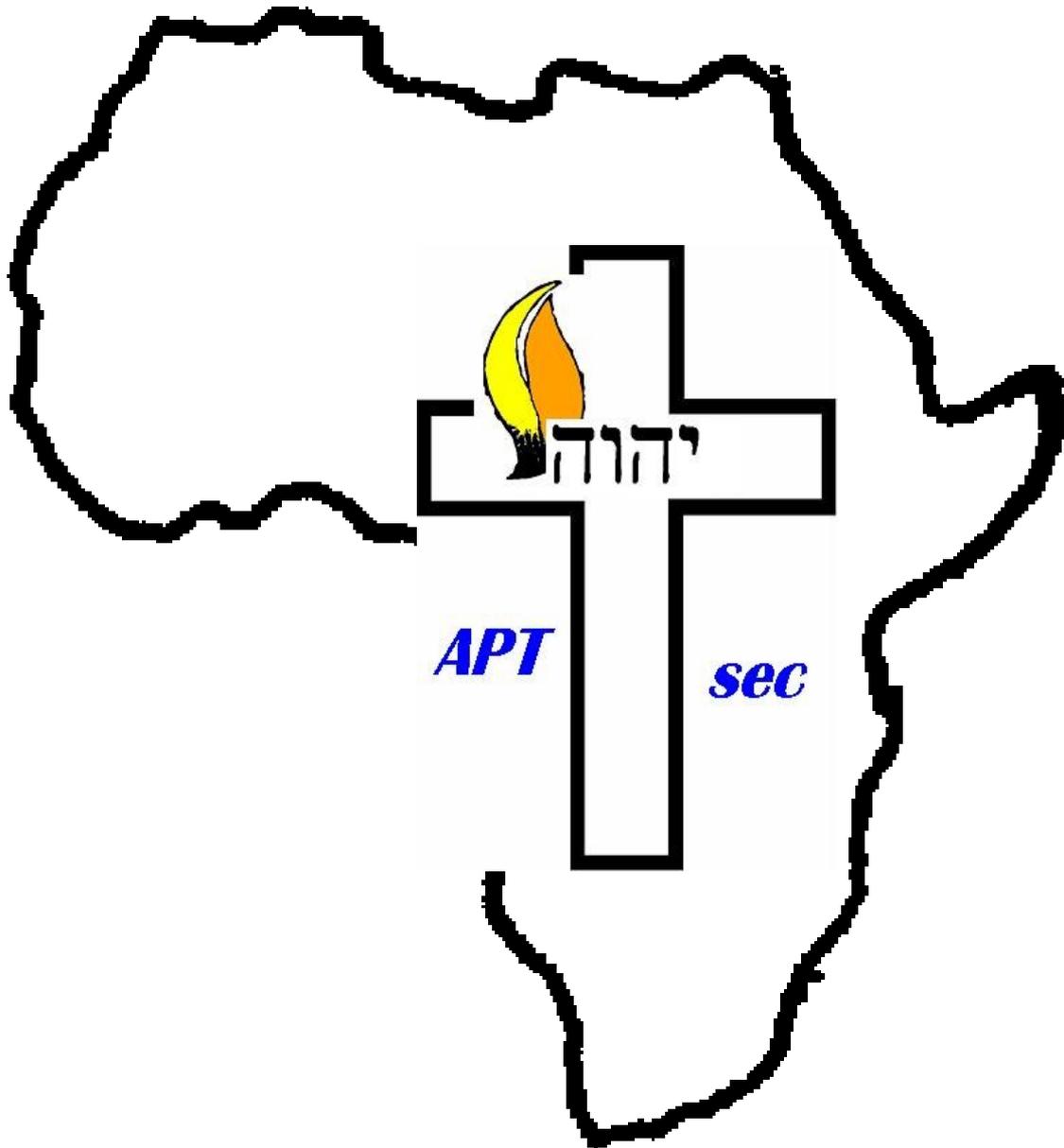


# ***An APTsec Theology***



## ***Part 1: God Revealed***

**An APTSEC Theology  
Part 1: God Revealed**

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**TO COLLEEN**

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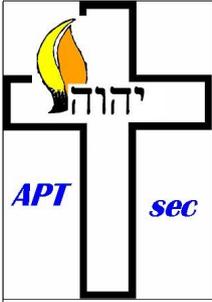
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**Rod Adamson** ministers at George Presbyterian Church, Western Cape. His B.Theol degree (UDW) specialised in Biblical Studies, Doctrine and Pastoring, Missions and Religions. He was ordained in 1986 in Mutare, Zimbabwe. While teaching inner city school in Johannesburg 1989-1996 he completed HED (UNISA) and continued BA studies in English, Economics and Religious Studies, and co-founded UNITED CHURCH SCHOOL, Yeoville (25th anniversary in 2015). Rod returned to full-time pastoring in 1996 with a wider discipling (educational) specialisation. He married Colleen in 1999, a maths and music teacher who brings in her own life, Christian faith, ministry, and educational perspectives. They have one daughter.

One modern secular trend writes off all religion as myth to leave out Jesus' Resurrection. Even the Protestant Reformation is written out of Western history to exalt the largely elitist Renaissance humanism as fountain of democracy and progress in the West, yet lay-voting majoritarian Protestant churches had led real gathering of modern people into the democratic way. Rod shares Jesus' burden for real non-myth faith in modern globalist Africans if lasting progress in individual faith, democratic development and prosperity is to emerge, believing that evangelical 'don't-do-myth' Christian theology is essential part. Building God's African Church by breaking through similar 'blindsighted' humanisms to enable God's insights to lead, remains God's plan.



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## ***APTsec – Apostolic Protestant Theology Sector***

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.  
Acts 2.42*

**APTsec**, the Apostolic Protestant Theology Sector, applies critical rigour equally to apostolic or sceptical secular claims of New Testament authorship, and retains apostolic authorship as critical academic balance.

**APTsec is a canonical and creedal theological testimony and not a campaign, crusade or denomination. For diligent Christian belief in the modern proliferation of denominations, cults, schisms and secularisation, a short summary is given:**

- **Apostolic Authorship Balance:** Mark records Peter's eyewitness preaching: John, 1,2,3 John, Revelation are John's eyewitness preaching: letters Romans to Philemon are Paul's works: letters 1,2 Peter are Peter's works: Matthew, sourced on Mark, is Matthew's work: Luke-Acts, Luke sourced on Mark and Acts on Paul, is Luke's work: Wider apostolicity - James and Jude are Jesus' brothers, Hebrews unknown (Priscilla/Aquila).
- **The Bible:** The Old Testament (Hebrew canon) and New Testament (Greek non-Apocrypha, non-Pseudepigrapha canon) are prophetic and apostolic of historical source as supreme witness to the revelation of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour in trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God.
- **The Gospel:** According to God's purpose, Jesus Christ was born to minister and be crucified for our forgiveness, resurrected for our eternal victory, and to give baptism in the Holy Spirit, as the Saviour of the Jews and the nations. He is vindicated by resurrection as the only one by whom humans can be fully reconciled to God.
- **The Church Mission:** Jesus commissioned his disciples to preach the gospel of repentance and the kingdom of heaven in all nations, and to win adults and children into personal belief and into discipleship of Jesus in fellowship in his Church and in gospel mission and service.
- **The Church Faithful:** The Bible Canon and the Nicene and Apostles' creeds are the catholic and historic standards of the Church upholding Christian belief, with subsequent derived creeds and confessions and orders measuring variations of faith stance and practice which do not compromise apostolic witness, but which human denominationalism from time to time discerns.
- **The Resurrected Saviour Returns for Resurrection Day:** Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father and will come again to judge the living and the dead, giving resurrection of the body and the life of the world to come.

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# 1. THE YAHWEH COVENANT

*"The time is coming," declares the Lord, "When I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them." declares the Lord.*

*"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbour or a man his brother, saying "Know the Lord," because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the Lord.*

*"For I will forgive their wickedness and remember their sins no more."  
(Jeremiah 31.31-34)*

## 1. GOD AND COVENANT

The finite limits of human existence are birth and death. But the life so limited has always held there is more purpose to life than a chance birth in order to die. Abraham, Moses and David, and Jesus are the beginning, the legalising and royal lineage, and the perfecting figures in a process which defined the purpose of life. They received covenant with the only One who is full life and existence. God initiated, developed and perfected the Yahweh Covenant.

### 1.2 COVENANT SUMMARY

God began his covenant with Abraham in Mesopotamia (Iraq). Abraham's experiences with God in Mesopotamia, Palestine and Egypt founded the Hebrew people. The experiences of the Hebrews with Yahweh at the time of Moses and the Judges, the Davidic Kingdom and Prophets, and ultimately in Jesus showed Yahweh was not just the God of their clan or tribe. From Jesus' time anyone who wanted to could belong to the Yahweh Covenant God had set in motion and standardised in Jesus.

God's interaction with Covenant individuals and the Covenant people in their strivings among the nations also revealed his nature as the only true God, God of all nations, and Lord of all the earth and universe. They revealed his character in terms like Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And they revealed what the purpose of life is for humans, and what purpose in history the nations and nature have.

### 1.3 RECEIVED COVENANT NORMS

This presentation will reflect the truth of God's relationship with humans according to the limits set in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are the supreme record of the history between men and God. It will uphold a scriptural view of the Church as God's agency for the Covenant on earth and of the Kingdom of God on earth, and it will uphold a Covenant lifestyle as the most successful there is.

It will thus not pander to false academic whims. Christian leadership training is first about leaders who can role-model, serve and carry out the call of ministry. Much current theological training generates a 'modern scolasticism' which stresses knowing comparative readings between various 'professor experts.' It is often apathetic towards developing proper use of God's history to aid ministry, and is in favour of scepticism.

It will also not pander to a 'messianising humanism' which exalts any national or global 'liberty, equality and fraternity' as the political arrival of the kingdom of heaven among humans. God's Covenant Church has two milleniums' experience against partnering such pretensions.

In upholding a Covenant lifestyle as the most successful there is, and the proper interaction in working out the human relationship with God, it will prioritise this above the value of political correctness. Constitutional human rights are cute laws, not a lifestyle.

## **1.4 GOD'S COVENANT IN THE GLOBAL CITY**

### **1.4.1 The Covenant and Human Identity:**

This Covenant understanding has always been politically incorrect, more so in the present day. In our 'one world' global city human identity and self-doubt has become a multi-billion dollar industry. Academics churn out thousands of books in human and natural sciences, billions of hours and currency are spent with psychologists and therapists and gurus, and billions practice 'common sincere religious experience' yet human identity turmoil avalanches ahead. The Yahweh Covenant holds that the right relationship with the one true God is the key to human identity.

### **1.4.2 The Covenant and Global Religiosity:**

'Globalists' work in the world of religion and Biblical Studies too. Huge economic and political correctness pressure insists that a 'common sincere religious experience' will build religious bridges and be globally uniting. The truth of religious claims, in this case the truth claims of the Yahweh Covenant, only receive relative recognition as one expression of the 'common sincere religious experience'. What doesn't bridge to global unity versions is labelled invalid, intolerant, fanatical. A belief must offer global universalism because global market stability and universal peace demands it. BUT

The Yahweh Covenant has never been a matter of humans manufacturing religiosity, nor has it been a 'non-global' or exclusivist covenant. It has always been an unfolding relationship between humans and God which God initiated and sustains. In the history of this relationship unfolding, God has revealed himself not as our political or economic correctness would have him to be, but as He in his sovereignty is.

### **1.4.3 The Covenant and Global Power:**

From earliest historic times, wealth and power have remained concentrated in the control of elites at whatever local, regional, national or continental level economic markets functioned. Our one world economy retains the pattern consistently. Wealth, income and power continue to pyramidise and concentrate in the control of the emerging new world order elite. To muscle and money, the power fields of the past, we must now add the microchip power field. The power concentration focussed by the processing, managing and presenting of information in the digital age has dramatically changed the future

economic and political power relationships of the globe. The way of God's Covenant in this new world order also needs study.

## **1.5 ONE GOD, ONE BAPTISM, ONE WORSHIP**

Those who want to live responsibly and progressively, those who want to lead responsibly and progressively, will not find much help in people's confused ideas about God and life. Fortunately God has known about the confusion from the beginning. He has revealed himself to all people in such a way that those who do want to know his way, who are called to be leaders in his way, can clear their confusion and join his covenant, well described as that of ONE GOD, ONE BAPTISM, ONE WORSHIP

Christians need help to life success by Bible standards, thus this presentation as a suggested outline of what should be getting across. Great reformer and Bible scholar Martin Luther said: "O that God should desire that my interpretation and that of all teachers should disappear, and each Christian should come straight to the scripture alone and to the pure word of God!" and "Go to the Bible itself, dear Christians, and let my expositions and those of all scholars be no more than a tool with which to build aright, so that we can understand, taste and abide in the pure word of God; for God dwells alone in Zion." (1)

Yet many of God's leaders aren't given solid, scripture-based input for their own faith development. They aren't helped to read the Bible as a guidebook for daily life, nor guided in passing on this use to help others. Our unique Christian way needs such input to keep getting across the fact that there is one God alone and one integrity in worship and life at the cross of Jesus. This is grounded in fact and its most important principle is Jesus, the only person with live experience of the other side and the only person who shares what God has - life irrespective of death. Jesus is the only person to experience resurrection. This focuses the past for Jesus is the fulfilment of the Hebrew Old Testament hope of the eternal kingdom of the messiah. And if death can't hold Jesus, he has eternity like God, He is God, then Jesus is the focus and standard of the future. The opinion that "*...when the time had fully come, God sent his Son ... to redeem those under law that we might receive the full rights of sons...*" (Gal 4.4) must hold Jesus as the messiah, uniquely God's Son, which is the heart of the Yahweh covenant. It is the claim at the heart of Christianity. Its meaning in leadership and life will be explored by using scripture to speak for itself in the themes of this presentation.

### **Footnotes:**

1. Quoted in Ebeling, G. Luther: An Introduction to his Thought. p 45,46.





## 2. GOD ACTS TO UPHOLD HIS COVENANT

*Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" God said to Moses "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3.13-14)*

### 2.1 THE GENESIS DEBATE

Read Genesis 1.1 - 11.32

The Bible isn't a science text book, most science opinion doesn't accept Genesis 1-11 as empirically accurate. No archeological evidence exists for Adam and Eve or the Garden of Eden, and evidence for before 'Flood' people and Noah and 'Flood' archeology and science is hotly disputed. Since archeologists have found creation and flood myths from ancient Mesopotamia, New Age biblical scholars teach that Hebrew scholars of David's kingdom took such pagan myths, removed idolatrous elements and exalted them by the Yahweh faith into Genesis 1-11. It is spiritual depth in myth, not science, so it doesn't clash. Biblicist scholars and scientists, a minority, use the Bible and the laws of science to show inconsistency in current uniformitarian geology and evolutionary biology theories. They give alternative Science-Bible creationist compatibilities, with solid roots to the covenant theology developed from Abraham. (1)

From Abraham onwards archeology upholds the general accuracy of the Bible. God revealed himself in historical acts to uphold his covenant. He focused these largely through his chosen people, through the cycle of repentance He used with the Hebrews, through the promises He gave by his leaders and prophets, and through their fulfilment in the messiah and the age of the Spirit. History confirms this timeline of the Hebrews. Evidence for personal conversations, details and miracles is mostly testimony type, so only the Bible and books and chronicles known to its authors record such things. Scepticism is easy, but unrealistic, for in the midst of God's acts and work and the individual heroics, the dark, evil side is never condoned, covered up, or edited out, not for anyone. (2)

### 2.2 THE PATRIARCHS

*...God said to him "...your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations... I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you." (Genesis 17:5-7)*

READ Genesis 12.1 - 50.26.

God first covenanted with people when he called Abraham, the first ancestor of the Hebrews. In +/-1950 BC in Ur in Mesopotamia, God told Abraham "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you" (Gen 12.1). Abraham went and many times thereafter saw God act in power. His son Isaac was born after his wife Sarah conceived in old age despite infertility. God tested Abraham in the near sacrifice of his only son Isaac, God established his covenant with Abraham and his descendants through Isaac. God said *"Because you obeyed me and did not withhold your only son, I will bless and multiply your descendants; they will defeat their enemies. Through your offspring all nations will be blessed"* (Gen 12.1-5/22.15-18/17.21). Abraham also saw God protect him and his house against hostile Egyptians, Canaanites and others, and judge Sodom and Gomorrah in upholding righteousness in his plan. (3)

Abraham's immediate descendants Isaac, Jacob (Israel), and Joseph and their extended families, saw this in acts which protected them in Palestine and internationally. In particular, Egypt was greatly enriched by Joseph's work in +/-1650 BC when the Hebrews were devastated by Palestinian drought and God used Joseph to give the Hebrews his Covenant protection and let His name be widely known there too. (4)

## **2.3 MOSES, THE PASSOVER, EXODUS, THE TWELVE TRIBES AND JUDGES**

*Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Hebrews and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" God said to Moses "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Hebrews: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3.13-14)*

God's covenant bound him to act in faithfulness to the Hebrews, to bless them and through this to bless the nations. At times this was 'tough love' blessing for most significantly in the entire Old Testament, in +/-1450 BC God delivered the Hebrews from vicious slavery under a new dynasty of Pharaohs who did not know Joseph or Yahweh God. (5)

### **2.3.1 Yahweh and the Exodus**

READ Exodus 1.1 - 18.27; with 3.1-17, 5.1-9, 11.1-12.42, 14.10-31.

First God delivered Moses from genocidal pogrom against the Jews, by having him raised in the wisdom of the Egyptians. He then showed Moses his Hebrew roots which led him to banishment in Sinai, where he learnt valuable lessons of geography, culture and family for God to use in the Exodus. In Sinai God revealed his name to Moses as "YAHWEH - I AM WHO I AM". He told Moses *"The cry of the Hebrews because of their slave drivers has reached me. I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So I have come to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good land - a land flowing with milk and honey."* Moses was to return to Egypt and tell pharaoh *"Let my people go that they may serve me alone."* (Ex 5.1/7.16). (6)

In Egypt, Pharaoh's heart was hardened against God, but ten plagues swept his hatred and rejection aside. As never before, the Hebrews and the nations around them experienced God's total might. After the Passover plague finally broke Pharaoh's will but delivered the Hebrews, the Exodus began as again the one righteous God upheld covenant freedom, judged Egypt for its idolatry-based oppression and released his people.

God also parted the sea for the Hebrews' final escape, and then closed the water again to destroy Pharaoh's pursuing army. The Hebrews then proceeded into the Sinai area on the way to the promised land in Canaan. (7)

So God mocked all the so-called 'gods', 'spirits' and idols of Egypt who proved powerless to stop Him, even in their own territory, and so were shown not to be living. These are monotheism's roots, that Yahweh alone is the Living God. (8)

READ Exodus 19.1 - 24.18; 31.1-34.35

At Mount Sinai God gave the Hebrews the 10 Commandments. The mountain quaked violently and smoke and fire poured from it to confirm the power of the same Yahweh who brought the Hebrews out of slavery as He who gave the commandments. But the Hebrews soon turned back to the false gods of Egypt and elsewhere, erecting a golden calf idol which supposedly implied sexual potency, and fertility in life for worshipers. God stopped this then punished the unfaithful Hebrews with 40 years' wandering in the wilderness, though he did supply quail, manna and water in the desert. This took care of the anti-Yahweh rebels before God again parted the waters, this time of the Jordan river, and led the Hebrews into the Promised land. (9)

Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy make up the rest of the '5 Books of Moses', 'Torah' as the Jews know them, or Pentateuch. Leviticus, known as "The Priests' Manual", discusses the Sacrificial System, Inaugural Services, Cleanliness Laws, and a Holiness Code centered in the Tabernacle of Yahweh, the fold-up portable worship site. Numbers details more Covenant and Tabernacle issues at Sinai, the Wilderness Period with more laws and rites, the Move through Trans-Jordan to the Jordan crossing, the call of Joshua to succeed Moses, and the outline of the land and Covenant inheritance of the Hebrews. Deuteronomy reads as the farewell sermon of Moses to the Hebrews before his death and their conquest of Palestine. It reminds them of the journey thus far, the need to uphold the 10 commandments and the Law and the Tabernacle worship practice, some political and religious system injunctions, various laws, their call to the Yahweh Covenant, and ends describing Moses' death. (10)

*[See Appendix 1 – Concerning Old Testament Chronology and Archeology, and also Appendix 3 – Academic Analysis of the Writing and Editing of the Bible – for more detail on the academic debate about the authorship of the Torah/Pentateuch.]*

### **2.3.2 The 12 Tribes and the Judges**

READ Joshua 1.1 - 12.24; 23.1-24.33

God then handed the Canaanite cities of Palestine over to the Hebrews as He rejected the evil of the false gods of the Canaanites and Philistines who could use even the ultimate child abuse of firstborn sacrifice, with fertility immorality in worship too. The Jordan river was parted for the Hebrews' crossing, as the sea had been in Moses' time (Josh 3.14-4.14). No Canaanite city could resist God's support for the Hebrews; Jericho's walls even fell down. Once too the sun even stood still in the sky, giving 24 hour light so the Hebrews could be victorious as God fought alongside them against false gods (Josh 10.1-14). (11)

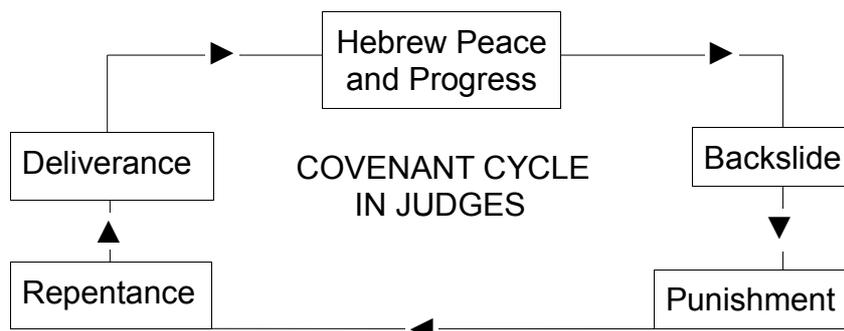
The Conquest led by Joshua was written up in scripture as the Hebrews securing their

nation on the central highlands of Palestine. The land allotments of the 12 tribes were then recognised as Joshua neared the end of his life; the Levites receiving towns all throughout the nation. The confederation of 12 Tribes was then established in Palestine as the Covenant people. (12)

READ Judges 1.1 – 21.25, with 3.5-11, 4.1-23, 6.1-7.23; 8.33

The Book of the Judges shows that the Covenant intention to settle the land in faithfulness to Yahweh was not satisfied. The Tabernacle and Ark of the Covenant stayed in the central highlands moving from Mt. Ebal, to Bethel to Shiloh. This matched the pattern of the Hebrews dominating the central highlands, but not succeeding in maintaining their influence in the plains and coastal areas, where Canaanites and Philistines retained influence. Intermarriage led the Hebrews to accept some of the gods and ways of the other peoples, so break the Yahweh Covenant and need new deliverance.

Nevertheless God supported the Hebrews during the time of the Judges. Spiritually recognised leaders like Samson, Gideon, Deborah and Samuel led the Hebrews as judges for their disputes, and roving prophetic leaders during crises of war. God held the Hebrews to the Yahweh Covenant in a cycle of repentance and deliverance. From peace, the leaders would backslide into sin and take the people with them. The Hebrews would experience God's punishment by defeat or catastrophe at the hands of evil oppressive nations, make repentance back to God and receive forgiveness, then have deliverance from the evil oppression. (13)



From the Judges to the rise of the Davidic kingdom, in fact even to the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC, the Covenant cycle worked. But the Hebrews felt leadership by Judges wasn't enough, the Hebrews showed little self-responsibility in keeping God's covenant, and asked for a king to lead them on God's behalf. (14)

## 2.4 DAVID'S KINGDOM, THE PROPHETS

*The Lord said to David, "... I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ( 2 Sam 7.12-13)*

A time of weak empires in the Fertile Crescent allowed the Hebrews to emerge as a great nation.

### **2.4.1 The Covenant with David**

READ 1 Samuel 8.1-11.15, 15.1-17.58, 2 Samuel 5.1-7.29, 1 Kings 4.29-6.38

God renewed his Covenant through David and remained faithful to it. From +/-1030 - 930 BC Saul, David and Solomon defeated the Philistines and other enemy nations, and turned the Hebrews into a strong unified kingdom. Jerusalem was its capital, and God's temple, with no idols or images in it, was built. Leaders of other nations sought trade and advice, and heard of the one true God who led the Hebrews to political success. (15)

When the Hebrews obeyed God, they prospered and were delivered from all enemies. When they turned away from God, defeat and oppression loomed, as the kings led the people in the cycle of backsliding, repentance and deliverance.

### **2.4.2 Challenges to the Covenant**

READ 1 Samuel 15.1-35, 28.1-19 & 31.1-13, 2 Samuel 11.1-12.25 and 1 Kings 11.1-13.

New-found wealth, power and mixed religious links led the kings into evil and split the nation. Saul played politics, manipulated worship, then committed the evil of calling up ancestral spirits. David arranged murder to gain Bathsheba; his sons' attempted to seize David's throne his whole reign. Solomon's many wives and concubines from other states turned him to Baal worship and turned the Hebrews to more false gods and idols. This added to the problem of continued Hebrew interaction with the Canaanite Baal religion. The Hebrew pastoralists had learnt crop-planting from the Canaanites, and picked up religious confusion between Yahweh and Baal. Baal, a name for local land spirits, was projected onto and usurped the 'El' synonymous with Yahweh, becoming the high God of a fertility pantheon. Baal worship included firstborn child sacrifice and temple prostitution linked to Ashtoreth/Ashtaroth, Baal's queen. (16)

Led by the royal house, idolatry oppression and corruption ruled widely and the Hebrew people split into two nations in Palestine - Judah in the South with Jerusalem as its capital, and Israel in the North with Samaria as capital. (17)

For 400 years the kings of Judah and Israel failed to meet the challenges of religion, politics and economics. More often than not the royalty led the Hebrews into idolatry and sin with moral, economic and political decay soon following.

### **2.4.3 Covenant Prophets oppose the Decline**

READ 1 Kings 18.1-46: 2 Kings 18.17-19.37: 1 Kings 12.20-31 & 16.21-28,  
2 Kings 14.23-25 and Hosea 8.1-14; and 2 Kings 21 and Jeremiah 15.1-9

God kept raising up prophets to call the Hebrews back to spiritual obedience to the Covenant. This was a unique phenomenon which delivered some of the most stunning yet most globally controversial opinions and literature in history.

The great prophetic example was Elijah who was sent to king Ahab with this message "*When you see which god acts, choose today to serve either God or Baal*" (1 Kings 18.21). On Mt. Carmel God sent fire on the offering on his altar after Baal's priests had miserably failed to call the same fire from Baal; Baal was no god, Yahweh was the one God. Then in

+/-770-760 BC, Amos from Tekoa in Judah prophesied to Israel in Bethel and Samaria *"Israel sells the righteous as slaves, the needy for a pair of sandals. She tramples on the poor like dust and denies justice to the oppressed, even in court. Father and son use the same woman to mock my laws; there are prostitutes at my places of worship and in my temple...Therefore an enemy will overrun the land, pull down your cities and plunder your fortresses; Israel will go into slavery again"* (Amos 2.6-8/3.11/6.7)

God spoke in the same way through many others - Isaiah, Hosea, Jeremiah and more. The prophets called the Hebrews and their kings back to true worship and justice, and even applied God's Covenant in global perspective giving blessing and judgement against the nations. And slavery did happen again when Assyria conquered Israel in 722 BC and Babylon conquered Judah in 586 BC. What he had freed them from in Egypt, he allowed them to go back to as the Hebrews were again slaves in foreign lands when God divorced his Covenant from them, reversed their sin and idolatry against them, and foretold a new Covenant to come. That the prophets were accurate led to the preservation of their writings by them and others for future learning. (18)

Controversially the prophets also linked historical, universal and eschatological perspectives as they foretold restoration and a new era after God's judgement on the Hebrews. Modern opinion is that much of this was written anachronistically with the hindsight of history, but too much still currently comes true to respect scepticism. (19)

#### **2.4.4 The Covenant Broken: Back in slavery for sin, but God shows victory again**

READ Jeremiah 2.1-6.26; Lamentations 1-5; Ezekiel 14.1-23; 18.1-32; 33.21-33; Daniel 5.1-31; Esther 1-10.

Even in exile in the foreign lands of Assyria, Babylon and Persia, God still acted to keep his Covenant alive. When the Hebrews cried out under the oppression of false gods, God's voice through the covenant prophets still spoke again: *"I am not a dead god, a gold idol that can do nothing. Who is my equal, to whom do you compare me? Turn to me and my redeemed will return to Jerusalem with singing. And I will give you a king of the line of David who will not rule corruptly, but with wisdom, mercy and justice by my own spirit"* (Is 40.25/ 44.9-11/51.11/11.1-9). In the whole crisis God's prophets of both decline and exile, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, continued to give the message of God's Covenant in Palestine, in Jeremiah's forced exile in Egypt, and Ezekiel's exile in Babylon. (20)

Leaders like Daniel and Esther also arose giving similar calls to true worship, repentance, faithfulness and restoration, as God let his name be known internationally through them and others like Ezra and Nehemiah. Daniel's role in the fall of Babylon, Esther's role in freeing Jews from genocide, and Ezra and Nehemiah's role in bringing the returnee Hebrews back to Palestine and Jerusalem are known. God even raised up Persian king Cyrus who promoted the religions of all areas of his empire for political stability, which allowed God to give the Hebrew remnant God's chance to return to Jerusalem and Palestine +/-530BC. (21)

#### **2.4.5 The Return - Still falling Short**

READ Ezra 1.1-11, Nehemiah 2.1-9, Zechariah 7.1-14; 12.10-14, Haggai 2.1-9

Under Ezra & Nehemiah in +/-520-480 BC, the Hebrews rebuilt Jerusalem and the temple, and a new dynasty of priest-kings ruled. God had upheld his global name among the Hebrews. (22)

Yet the Hebrews never attained the influence they had under David and Solomon. The new rebuilt city and temple were inferior, they were continually under foreign domination, and their rulers soon proved as corrupt and oppressive as the earlier kings; they were not of David's line either. And God raised returnee prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi to call for justice and remind the people of God's messianic promise. The post-return shortcomings also indicated the passage into new Covenant development which lay ahead, which was fulfilled by the messianic arrival of God's kingdom in Jesus Christ. (23)

## **2.5 THE LAW, THE PROPHETS AND THE WRITINGS**

### **2.5.1 The Law/Torah**

The Hebrews knew of three divisions in the Old Testament. This chapter has already shown the Bible's message through the Law/Torah (Genesis to Deuteronomy) and given some insight into the academic study of the Law (See Appendix 1).

### **2.5.2 The Prophets/Neviim**

Hebrew scholars classify Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings as the Former/Historical Prophets, and Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Twelve Minor Prophets as the Latter/Writing prophets of the Hebrew Old Testament. (24)

The Former/Historical Prophets are accounts of the history of God's Covenant with his people from the entrance into the Promised land and his 'divorce' from the people in the Exile. Evidence about who authored the books is disputed. Jewish sources attribute them to various prophetic or linked persons of the Hebrews, all of whom were literate and spiritually capable of the task, but most modern scholars regard this as an anachronistic practice by earlier pre-scientific Hebrew scholars to give special authorship/canonical status to books with the Covenant message which are then anonymous. Of the Latter/Writing Prophets, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jonah and Joel are usually linked with the Divided Kingdom period. Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Obadiah, Nahum, Habbakuk and Zephaniah are from the Judah/Exile period. And Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi from the period of the Return from Exile. (See also Appendix 1)

### **2.5.3 The Writings/Kethuvim**

The Covenant message in greater or lesser depth also runs through the Writings which are:

- The Psalms, a collection of hymnbooks containing the songs of David's kingdom with their deep spirituality, some with messianic message [Read Psalms 23, 110, 121];
- Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, collections of wise, common sense sayings from the time of David's kingdom; [Read Prov 22.17-24.22 ;Eccl 3.1-15].
- Job, a drama about God's wisdom and sovereignty, and faith; [Read Job 1, 29-31,38-42];
- Song of Songs, Hebrew love poems between a man and woman [Song 2.1-3-5].
- Ruth, an account of David's great grandmother;
- Lamentations, Jeremiah's cry for fallen Jerusalem
- Esther, the account of a Jewish uncle and daughter who God uses to bring victory for the

- Hebrews through a genocidal pogrom; and
- Daniel, the account of this righteous man's God-given success in Babylon and Persia, also recording apocalyptic visions about a four sequence of 'beast kingdoms'. The visions contain eschatological end time messages. (25)
  - Ezra-Nehemiah, in the Hebrew tradition these are one book, giving the account of the return of the exiles to Palestine and Jerusalem, and of the rebuilding of the temple.
  - 1 & 2 Chronicles also regarded as one book, they give the genealogy of the Hebrews from Adam to David, the history according to the post-exilic priests of the rule of David and Solomon and priests' religious role, and finally the history of the divided kingdoms ending with the fall of Jerusalem and the record of the edict of king Cyrus allowing the Hebrews' return.
- (See also Appendix 1 on the Old Testament)

## **2.6 THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE AFRICAN RENAISSANCE**

God's greatest act to uphold his Covenant was worked in Africa, the Exodus from slavery in Egypt. It has inspired many modern African leaders and scholars, and global scholars. Albert Luthuli, ANC president of the late 50's and 60's and South Africa's first Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1961, made "Let my people go" the title of his autobiography. Subsequent scholars of African Theology, Black Theology and the more global Liberation Theology also powerfully used the Exodus motif for inspiration, upholding belief in the one God who acts in liberation to deliver his people from oppression and affirming the huge global message of the Exodus - God is not tolerant of oppression. (26)

The first phase of the African Renaissance, freedom from colonial oppression, is now complete. However, a Covenant caution is due. One does not call on the God of the Covenant in the spirit of Exodus, then quickly depart from Him. It is politically expedient to be 'globalist' in religious tolerance, for ancestralism in Africa in particular, and for other faiths too. Yet the God of Exodus subsequently had no tolerance of idolatry, or ancestor practice, or levels of corruption and entitlement described as "the fleshpots of Egypt." The high levels of idolatry, ancestralism and corruption associated with the second phase of the African Renaissance led, 3400 years ago, to 40 years wandering in the wilderness - longer than Nelson Mandela was in prison, longer than the Long March by far. So lest we forget, perhaps the second phase of the African Renaissance should take the other title "Long Walk to Freedom" as God's next message of inspiration. (27)

## **2.7. THE NEW COVENANT, THE MESSIAH, AND THE AGE OF THE SPIRIT**

*"The time is coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah."... "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time" declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people."  
(Jeremiah 31.31,33.)*

### **2.7.1 The Messiah and the New Covenant**

READ Psalm 2/45/72/110; Isaiah 4.2-6/9.1-7; Jeremiah 23.1-8;33.14-16, Micah 5.2-4, Ezekiel 17.22-24; 34.22-24; 37.24-28; Amos 9.11-12; Daniel 7.13-14; Zechariah 3.8-9

The historical, universal and eschatological perspectives used in the unique work of the

prophets are linked to themes of the "New Covenant", the "Messiah", "redemptive suffering by God's servant", the "Age of the Spirit", and the "Day of the Lord". The 'ANOINTED ONE', or Messiah in Hebrew or Christ in Greek, was one who would truly be an upright leader and God's true representative and son. The people were to look for his coming in history which would be the lead part of the new Covenant God would make in the God-human link. The Covenant of the messiah would thus be the ground rule in the coming of the unending kingdom the messiah would establish for God's people - a global kingdom to lead and pastor the world which would never decline. (28)

READ Job; Psalm 22/69; Isaiah 42.1-4/ 49.1-6/ 50.4-11a/ 52.13-53.12; Numbers 11.11; Hosea 1-3; 1 Kings 19; Jeremiah 15.10-18/ 20.1-18.

The 'anointed one' was also linked to redemptive suffering and servanthood. The book of Job, the prophetic examples of Moses, Elijah, Hosea and Jeremiah point to a prophetic suffering on behalf of the Hebrews. Most particularly, the personal suffering servant passages of Isaiah and Psalms have been viewed as a personification of Israel or a remnant Israel suffering for the redemption of the Hebrews, or an actual person who is 'the Servant of Yahweh' anointed to suffer for the world's redemption. The Daniel 7 'son of man' leading the 'saints' and suffering with them (verses 21, 25-27) has also been linked to this theme. (29)

### **2.7.2 The Age of the Spirit**

READ Numbers 11.24-30; Isaiah 11.2; 42.1; 49.6; 61.1-2; Jeremiah 31.33-34; Ezekiel 36.25-27; 47.1-12; Joel 2.28-29

From Abraham God's Spirit specially empowered the leaders of the Hebrews for God's leadership tasks. But in the new "age of the Spirit" or the "Kingdom of God", God's Spirit would motivate the Messiah and God's people. The Messiah himself would be the first to be empowered by the Spirit. Then He would establish the "kingdom of God" by the baptism of the Holy Spirit - a kingdom not only for Jews but for all faithful peoples of the earth according to the new covenant. The Spirit would come upon each person to deliver them from sin and help them be obedient to God's Covenant purposes. (30)

### **2.7.3 Eschatology - the Day of the Lord**

READ Isaiah 24-27; 61-66; Amos 8.9-9.15;

The coming of the kingdom was also eschatological, linked to ending history, dimension and time as we know it, with the renewing of the universe physical and spiritual. (31)

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#### **Bibliographical References:**

1. See section "Science and Technology" in Bibliography.
2. See OT Appendix and sources used under the headings 'The patriarchs and the Exodus' and 'General' Also the following in "The Interpreter's One Volume Commentary.." Ed. Laymon, CM.  
May, HG. The Fertile Crescent and its Environment, p 999ff/  
The People of the Old Testament World, p 1005ff  
Pritchard, JB. Archeology p 1054ff; The New Bible Atlas, p 24-39
3. Terah and Abraham are linked to continuing migratory movements in the Fertile Crescent from South of the Euphrates in Southern Mesopotamia to Northern Mesopotamia and Palestine. The second migratory wave took place +/-2200-1800 BC. Harrison, RK, Introduction to the Old Testament. p 313;

- Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times. p 84f. Rooks, AG. Torah. P 52-62. Wilson, C. Crash Go the Chariots. p 62ff.
4. Genesis 25.19 - 37.1 and Genesis 37.2 - 50.26. The Joseph history is probably linked to what is known as the Hyksos Period in Egypt, +1720 -1570 BC. Migratory movements of Semitic invaders from Mesopotamia saw the establishment of a foreign dynasty of pharaohs with their capital city in the delta area of the Nile at Avaris (Tanis) and administrative capital near Memphis. The Hebrew settlements in the delta region of Goshen are archeologically linked to this. Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times p 94-97, 110-133, Rohl, D. A Test of Time. p 327ff; Rooks, AG. Torah p 64-69.
  5. Whether the Pharaoh of the Hebrew slavery and Exodus was Rameses II or Thutmose III/Dudimose with their immediate pharaoh ancestors, it is generally accepted that both fit the post-Hyksos period, both were of new dynasties which were of native Egyptian birth, and both were powerful pharaohs who took their dynasties to new heights of power, thus both fit the Biblical description. The following studies are typical of a ~1450-1440 BC date for Exodus, with either Thotmes/Thutmose/ Dudimose III as pharaoh:
    - Rohl, D. 1995. A Test of Time. London: Random House.
    - Wood, L.J. A Survey of Israel's History. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
 The following studies are typical of a ~1250 BC later date for Exodus, with Rameses II as pharaoh:
    - Bright, J. 1960. A History of Israel. London: SCM. Gray, J. Exodus p 33-67, and Beck, HF. History of Israel, p1018-1025 in Laymon, CM Ed. Interpreter's One Volume Commentary.
  6. Geographical and archeological work in the Sinai show that Moses' Sinai exile would have been geographically of great value in his leadership of the Hebrews through the Sinai. Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times p 135-148; Keller, W. The Bible as History. p 112.
  7. Keller, W. The Bible as History. Rohl, D. A Test of Time. p 275ff
  8. Konig, A. Here I am. . p 2, 38.
  9. Gottwald, NK. The Law Codes of Israel in Laymon, CM Ed. Interpreter's One Volume Commentary" p 1090ff; Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times p 149-155.10.
  11. Just as academics offer two dates for the Exodus, there are two dates for the Conquest of Palestine by the Hebrews. The same kind of generalised, agreed migratory trends are again used by both points of view. In the details of archeological research concerning different sites and incidents, divergent chronologies are again put forward. The fall of the walls of Jericho is an example of the two differing scholastic opinions. Initial archeological work by J. Garstang in 1948 identified in a 1400-1300 BC strata an outer and inner wall with associated rubble destroyed by fire. But subsequent research by Kenyon in 1951 seemed to indicate that no fallen walls could be linked to the Late Bronze dating when the Conquest took place according to the majority conventional chronology. Rohl's thesis in 1995 holds that the series of fallen walls may be the valid ones. His proposal that the problem may well be with the faulty chronology employed by Kenyon rather than any fault on the part of Garstang must still be tested. Opinion thus remains divided; unhelpfully so for the average Christian, happily so for liberal new age scholastics. Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times. p 173ff; Rohl, D. A Test of Time. p 299ff.
  12. Tribal Land Allotments: East of the Jordan, Reuben the south-east, Gad the east central, Manasseh (TransJordan) north-east across the Sea of Galilee; West of the Jordan, Judah -South highlands from Jerusalem to the south Dead Sea across to the Mediterranean; Ephraim and half of Manasseh (Palestine) the mid- central highlands north from Jericho and Bethel to Jezreel, with Mt. Gerizim dividing them; Benjamin from Jericho to Bethel to Jerusalem to the Dead Sea between Judah and Ephraim; Simeon within Judah from Beersheba to Judah south; and in the North Zebulun west of Mt. Tabor; Issachar south east of Mt. Tabor to the Jordan; Naphtali north from Mt Tabor and west of the Sea of Galilee, Asher the coastal strip west of Naphtali from Mt. Carmel to Syria; Dan west of Benjamin to the coast between Judah and Ephraim. New Age scholars tend not to follow Joshua and to present the Conquest more as a generalised Hebrew-West Semitic migratory process within their general geographic Nile Delta-Sinai-Palestine-Transjordan area with 3 phases of occupation of Palestine: South, the tribes linked with Judah; Centre, the Joseph and linked tribes; and North and East a mixture of earlier pre-Joshua Semites and later Hebrews who were part of the secondary expansion after Joshua. Beck, HF. History of Israel in Interpreter's One Volume Commentary p 1020. Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times p 175-179. Rooks, AG Torah p 84-90, using Bright, Noth etc. Archeological evidence from many sites in Palestine linked to the Conquest by name and geographic description do show evidence of violent seizure. Academics dispute the dating and role players, for Egypt, Moab, the Phoenicians with their Philistine brothers, and other nations were involved in the area. Finalisation of findings is still needed. The strong presence of the Hebrews in later periods must have roots, however, they can only be Palestinian and the best record of them remains the Biblical.
  13. See Barrette, MJ. 1986. That We May Be One. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman p 80.
  14. The repudiation of kingship inherent in the Exodus Theology, Conquest and Judges, and given explicitly

- in 1Samuel 8.1-22 / 10.17--19 / 12.12-25 will be pursued in other Chapters.
15. Based on archeology of the Tell-Dan inscription, and if Rohl's thesis on the origins of the Amarna letters holds, [see Appendix 1], then the rise of the united Davidic kingdom is externally verified, the OT records valid. See also Beck, HF. History of Israel in Interpreter's One Volume Commentary p 1018-1125; Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times p191-253; and Introduction to the OT p 291-346, 396-414; Hyatt, JP. The Compiling of Israel's Story. in Interpreter's One Volume Commentary p 1082-1089. New Bible Dictionary p587.
  16. Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times p 163-173 and Introduction to the OT p 118f; 362-380; New Bible Dictionary p 70 of 60-76. Rooks, AG. Neviim. p 1-15; See also Appendix 1.
  17. See Appendix 1, noting abundant archeological evidence for division of the Hebrews into their two kingdoms and subsequent interactions with nations around them. (also sources under 15 above).
  18. See sources used under heading "The Davidic Kingdom, the Prophets, the Exile and the Messiah", also Dyrness, W. Themes in Old Testament Theology p 211-219; Fritsch, CT. The Prophetic Literature. in Interpreter's One Volume Commentary p 1095ff; Harrison, RK. Introduction to the OT. p 741ff; Rooks AG. Neviim p 45ff; Von Rad, G. Message of the Prophets p 1-76; New Bible Dictionary, p1036ff .
  19. See Paragraph 2.7. Also Dyrness, W Themes in Old Testament Theology p 227-241; Enslin, MS. The Apocalyptic Literature. In Interpreter's One Volume Commentary p 1106ff; Rooks AG. Neviim p 76ff; Von Rad, G Message of the Prophets p 77-101; New Bible Dictionary, p387ff .
  20. See Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times p255-269; Hyatt, JP. The Compiling of Israel's Story. In Interpreters' One Volume Commentary p 1082-1089. New Bible Dictionary p587.
  21. Greenfield, JC. The History of Israel Part II. In Interpreter's One Volume Commentary p 1026-1031; Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times. p 271-289;
  - 22/23. The prophets had spoken of repentance and a new Covenant through redeeming servanthood, led by the Messiah by the power of the Holy Spirit. Into this debate over the need for repentance into a new Covenant, the possibility of redemption by suffering, the messiah leading by the Spirit, the Jews of Jesus began to operate. Hebrews like any other Jews, they began a unique global movement in which for the first time in unprecedented way Jews went beyond their narrow Zionist-Semitic agenda and took the Covenant of God among the nations. These not repeated Christian beginnings are still claimed to be the doing of the messiah Christ in fulfillment of setting up the New Covenant.
  24. Harrison, RK. Introduction to the OT; Rooks AG, Torah, Neviim, Kethuvim. and most others follow the Hebrew manner of recording the Old Testament books in the Bible.
  25. See comment in the Appendix 1 on the problems of authorship surrounding the Book of Daniel. Also Harrison, RK. Introduction to the OT p 1105-1134; Knight, GAF. The Book of Daniel. P 436-450, and Enslin, MS. The Apocalyptic Literature p1106ff, in Interpreter's One Volume Commentary; Von Rad, G. The Message of the Prophets. p 271-281; Whitcomb, JC. Darius the Mede. Presbyterian and Reformed; Young EJ. 1949 The Prophecy of Daniel. Eerdmans; New Bible Dictionary p 290ff.
  26. Alves, R. Theology of Human Hope. Boesak, AA. Farewell to Innocence p17-20; Cone, J. A Black Theology of Liberation. Gutierrez, G. A Theology of Liberation. p 155-159; 294-295; King, ML. Strength to Love. p 132; Luthuli, A.1962. Let My People Go. London: Collins; Tutu, DM. Hope and Suffering. 10, 13
  27. Mandela, N. 1994. Long Walk to Freedom. London: Abacus; Pobee, JS. Towards an African Theology. p 34-39, 141.
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  29. Dyrness, W. Themes in Old Testament Theology. p 231ff; Von Rad, G. Message of the Prophets. p207-228; Dictionary of New Testament Theology Vol 3. p 721. New Bible Dictionary, p1166f, 1221; .
  30. Berkhof, H. Doctrine of the Holy Spirit. p 104ff; Bruner, FD. A Theology of the Holy Spirit. P 165. Dyrness, W. Themes in Old Testament Theology. p 208f; Wood, LJ. The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. p27; Dictionary of New Testament Theology Vol 3. p 692.
  31. Dyrness, W Themes in Old Testament Theology p 227-241; Enslin, MS. The Apocalyptic Literature p1106ff, in Interpreter's One Volume Commentary; Rooks AG. Neviim p 76ff; Von Rad, G Message of the Prophets p 77-101; New Bible Dictionary, p387ff .

## DISCUSSION/STUDY QUESTIONS - CHAPTER 2

1. READ Genesis 12.1-5, 17.1-27, 22.1-9  
What evidence is there that God's covenant with Abraham was successful?
2. READ Ex 20.1-2, 12.1-14 & 1 Cor 5.7
  - a. What do Jews celebrate when they hold the Passover?
  - b. Easter is the Christian development of Passover. What do Christians celebrate?
3. READ Gen 14.18-24; Ex 20.1-6; 1 Sam 28.3-19; 2 Sam 11 & 12; 1 Kings 11; Is 29.13-16; Hos 4.1-3; Dan 3.1-30, Mal 2.10-16
  - a. From Abraham to Malachi, what kind of worship did God want?
  - b. How did God respond when the Hebrews or any people followed other religions, and how do you think God will respond today when people follow other gods or religions?
  - c. From the readings above on the sins of Saul, David and Solomon, explain how each one violated the Covenant, and how God dealt with each one.
  - d. Explain why you think they were still politically successful over the Hebrews?
  - e. What were the two great sins that the Hebrews of Israel and Judah committed?
  - f. How did these two sins affect God's Covenant with his people?
4. READ 2 Kings 17.1-41, Amos 7.1-17, 2 Kings 23.31-25.30 and then Jeremiah 22.1-22.30.
  - a. How did the prophets do their forthtelling when calling the people away from idolatry and oppressing the poor, and back to God?
  - b. How did they also foretell future punishment and redemption?
  - c. Do you think God was fair to punish the Hebrews with defeat and exile? Why?
  - d. What do you think of God's prophets letting people know the future, good or bad?
5. READ 2 Samuel 7.12-17; Isaiah 9.6-7; Jeremiah 23.5-6; Daniel 7.13-14; and Zechariah 9.9-10
  - a. How do these passages really prophesy the coming of a messiah?
  - b. Why do you believe (or not) that the messiah came/is coming?
6. READ Jeremiah 31.33-34, Ezekiel 36.26, Joel 2.28-29
  - a. Why did God promise a new covenant?
  - b. What would be special about it?
7. READ Is 42.6-7 and 49. 6, 22-23
  - a. What does it mean for someone to be the 'light to the Gentiles'?

**ADVANCED QUESTIONS:**

8. Take a 5 to 10 verse reading from Genesis 1 - 11 and write a 4-5 page sermon moving a congregation to know God's love in creation and redemption.
9. Exodus 20.1-6 spells out God's Covenant attitude for worshippers. Write a 4-5 page sermon moving a congregation to know the God we worship through the liberation of the Exodus, his handling of other gods or spirits, and his call for us to join his covenant.
10. In Jeremiah 15.10-21 Jeremiah lets us see his inner turmoil with God as preacher and prophet. Use this passage, text verse 18, to write a 4-5 page sermon on our service in God's Covenant when facing widespread sin and opposition and our own personal fears, and God's abiding love.
11. Christians claim Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies given in questions 5,6,7. Write a 4-5 page topical sermon using these scriptures and moving a congregation to come to and follow Jesus as the Messiah who fulfils the Old Covenant prophecies.

## **APPENDIX 1 - OLD TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY AND ARCHEOLOGY**

### **1.1 CONCERNING OLD TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY:**

Old Testament scholars offer two dating chronologies for the earlier parts of the Old Testament, Genesis to Judges, influenced by prioritisation given to one of the number of dating factors used:

- a. **Archeological Findings** - ongoing archeological research from the ancient Middle East continues to give largely confirming evidence of the Bible. The science is exacting and conclusions like dates, places, actual event occurrences are often disputed until corroborating evidence gives validity to a conclusion. The Bible itself is just another tool of the archeological discipline, it is not given a 'casting vote' when conclusions are disputed, and its own evidence must also be given validation. While this may seem to put the Bible on trial, the majority of archeological research has already upheld its general historical validity, so scepticism about its historical credibility is not justified.
- b. **Egyptian Chronologies** - These are chronologies of the various pharaonic dynasties, of known important officials, and chronologies of known religious cult practices like that of burial of the royal apis bulls. These are not final, but largely settled; new archeological research does mean modifications are made accordingly.
- c. **Mesopotamian Chronologies** - Chronologies of the various Mesopotamian empires and dynasties are also known, are also not final, but largely settled; new archeological research does mean modifications are made accordingly.
- d. **Biblical Evidence** - As with Egyptian and Mesopotamian Chronologies, the internal evidence of the Bible is linked to corroborating evidence by extra-Biblical sources within the Hebrew history and contemporary periods and peoples outside it. So Biblical dynastic practices and dating are also not final but settled area of research.

Obviously from the above, differing conclusions are made for archeological and chronological findings, depending on the priority given to one form of evidence over another. In Old Testament Studies chronologies remain common back to the time of King David, so also Saul, and later Judges. Dating before then for the early Judges, the Conquest under Joshua, the Exodus and the Patriarchs then diverges during the Judges period. The chronologies in use have been labelled the Conventional Chronology and the New Chronology (Conservative).

#### **1.1.1 The Conventional Chronology:**

This dates (going backwards into history) the Conquest under Joshua beginning at +/- 1200 BC, the Exodus at +/- 1250 BC with Rameses II most likely pharaoh of the Exodus (alternatively Merenptah), and among the Patriarchs Joseph at +/- 1550 in the Late Bronze Age, and Abraham at +/-1900-1800 BC in the Middle Bronze Age. The majority new age Old Testament scholars hold this chronology. cf Duncan, GB in Chronology in 'Interpreter's One Volume Commentary. p 1271-1282.

#### **1.1.2 The New Chronology (Conservative):**

This dates the Conquest under Joshua beginning +/-1400 BC, the Exodus at +/- 1450 BC with Dudimose/Thutmose III as the pharaoh of the Exodus, among the Patriarchs Joseph

at +/-1660 BC, with Abraham in common still in the Middle Bronze Age but +/-1900-1800 BC. See the following scholars:

Harrison, RK. Introduction to the Old Testament and Old Testament Times. Rohl, D. A Test of Time.

Wood, LJ. A Survey of Israel's History. Thiele, ER. 1954, 1965. The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings: a Reconstruction of the Chronology of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

## **1.2 CONCERNING OLD TESTAMENT ARCHEOLOGY:**

Academic method requires that all historical claims must be verifiable according to accepted rules of historical evidence, including the historical claims of the Bible, before they can be accepted as history and not myth. This also requires that the Bible itself is just one strand of evidence in historical science along with others like Archeology and Language studies, and that the evidence given by the Bible must also be verifiable by reference to other valid strands of evidence. Archeology has been the main source of verification for the historical claims of the Bible. Here are some archeological findings which have served to verify Bible history:

### **1.2.1 Khirbet Qumran - The DEAD SEA SCROLLS confirm OT accuracy:**

Between 1947 and 1951, a series of eleven caves bordering the north-west Dead Sea area, and the ruins of a community settlement adjacent to them (Khirbet Qumran), were the site of the "greatest manuscript discovery of modern times". Twelve full scrolls, and manuscript fragments numbering in 'six figures' contain about 800 original documents. Copies of all Old Testament books except Esther make up about a quarter of the finds; even Daniel, a book held to be one of the latest authored books, is attested to by eight manuscripts. Manuscripts of Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha are also present, as are original writings from the community which inhabited the site. The date of most manuscripts, including the original writings, has been set before the Christian era, therefore casting no direct light on New Testament events.

The greatest value of the Dead Sea Scrolls has been their verification of the accuracy of the manuscript transmission of the Old Testament. Some manuscripts or fragments did show that the Qumran community used a full spectrum of the manuscript 'families' already known to Old Testament scholars, in particular the Masoretic, Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch textual families, and verified their transmission accuracy. Some variations only supply greater impetus to scholars of Old Testament textual criticism, but "none of these variations affects the scriptural message itself" (Vermes, G. The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English p 16.) The accurate transmission of the Old Testament verified their reliability as high quality documents of evidence themselves. The scrolls also gave valuable insight into the Inter-Testamental Period, on the practice of authoring and transmission of Hebrew writings, and also into the kind of religious thinking and forces at work in a time just prior to and even contemporaneous with the origins of Christianity.

Harrison, RK. Introduction to the OT. p134-143; Vermes, G. The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English p 1-90; Interpreter's One Volume Commentary p 1063-1071; New Bible Dictionary p 298-301.

### **1.2.2 Divided Monarchy to Inter-testamental Era: Plentiful Archeological Evidence:**

Inscription/written evidence like the **Moabite Stone**, the **Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III**, the **Sennacherib Prism**, the **Lachish Ostraca**, the **Cylinder of Cyrus**, the **Elephantine Papyri** and other finds are well known. Archeological digs in ancient Nineveh, Babylon and many other sites have also uncovered plentiful written and linked evidence which shows the accuracy of the Old Testament accounts from the Divided

Monarchy period to the Inter-Testamental Period. The writings of other non-Biblical historians also verify the period, like Herodotus who confirmed the magnificence of Babylon. With such well evidenced verification for this period, liberal and new age critics only have the personal dialogues and incidents of these periods of Hebrew history, in particular the 'prophetic' and the 'miraculous', to attack. This is readily done, for evidence from outside the Old Testament is unlikely for such parts of the body of the Old Testament.

### **1.2.3 Tell Dan Stelae – The House of David:**

Because no direct archeological evidence had been found for the Samuel-Solomon united monarchy era (Samuel-Saul-David-Solomon), many liberal/new age scholars easily assumed that 'legendary writing-up' in the sources and by the writer of 1,2 Samuel and 1,2 Kings had 'puffed up' four 'little more than tribal chief' Hebrew leaders into 'superhuman' status as of the surrounding nation kingships to give Hebrews such status. No real house and line of Saul or David had really existed. In 1993 and 1994 fragments of an original Aramaic monument inscription discovered in Tel Dan, Israel preserved the names of eight Biblical kings. Based on these names, the inscription dates about 841 BC, commissioned by Hazael king of Aram (842-800BC; name does not appear) upon his victory over Joram and Ahaziah (2 Kings 8.28-29). (Hazael is well attested in archeological records of the Assyrians, his name is on objects of booty taken by them.) The Tel Dan part-inscription in restored quote reads: "I killed Joram son of Ahab king of Israel..." followed by the the statement "and I killed Ahaziah son of Jehoram king of the House of David." Extra-biblical evidence has established that surrounding nations knew a David much like in the Bible.

Kaiser WC, Mockler CM. Ed. NIV Archeological Study Bible. Articles on p538/540 on 2 Kings 7,8.

### **1.2.4 Tell el-Amarna (Nile 400 km south of Cairo): Conquest or Saul and David?**

In 1887 some 378 letters in cuneiform tablets were unearthed at this site, the earliest known examples of international diplomatic correspondence relating to imperial issues of pharaohs Amenophis III and Amenophis IV (Amenhotep IV or 'Akhmaton, eccentric pharaoh famous for implementing a brief religious period honouring the god 'Aton' with a move of the Egyptian captial away from Thebes to Akhetaton, soon abandoned by his son Tutankhamun, at which point the letters remained buried until 1887.) Some 150 letters were from Canaanitic/Palestinian vassal kings having problems with invading semitic people called the "Habiru" who appealed to pharaoh because Egypt dominated the Palestinian land bridge but with declining power because of the Egyptian religious upheavals (references to Habiru/Apiru are widespread across 1500- 1000 BC archeology). In particular letters from governors/rulers of Jerusalem and a Habiru leader called Labayu to pharaoh are interesting in that scholars of both chronologies use them to show a general pattern of Hebrew movement into and competition for the Palestinian highlands. But the new age majority of scholars have not accepted that Old Testament Joshua to David figures are accurately reflected because they have found few and highly disputed matches in this major archeological find and other lesser finds; personal details are thus a 'grey area'.

Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times p 117-121. 128 and Introduction the the OT p318-321; 329; Rooks, AG. Torah p 91-97; Interpreter's One Volume Commentary p 34f; 1010a; New Bible Dictionary p67 of p60-76.

**[David Rohl's research** offers a re-assessment of this archeological 'grey area', intriguing in its implications for Egyptian chronology in his "new chronology" reconstruction, and because of support it gives for the lesser Conservative Chronology. His evidence links the Amarna letters to the rise of the Davidic kingdom, claiming new support to the Davidic period, perhaps rendering Amarna - Joshua Conquest debate obsolete. His conclusions

are quoted in full below:

**Conclusions of Rohl, D. in "A Test of Time" concerning the Amarna Letters:**

**From Chapter 9:**

**Conclusion 14:** *In the new chronology, the Habiru of Palestine mentioned in the Amarna Letters, are recognised as the Hebrews (Heb. 'Ibrim') of I and II Samuel. In particular, they are to be identified with the followers of David during the period of the latter's exile from the Israelite court in the reign of Saul, and David's first seven years as king of Hebron prior to the capture of Jerusalem.*

**Conclusion 15:** *The general political topography of the Levant in the Amarna period closely corresponds to that described in the second book of Samuel which deals with the beginning of the United Monarchy period in Israelite history.*

[Summarised detail of his theory - Amarna letters from minor kings to pharaoh, in particular Amarna 'Labayu' letters to Pharaoh, letter EA 252 which matches to 1 Sam 10.2-6, letter EA 254 which could coincide with 1 Sam 20.30-31, and non-Labayu letter EA 245 concerning Labayu's death at/near Mt Gilboa to 1 Sam 28,29, 31 and 2 Sam 1.19-27; and comparison of Ps 57.4 'great lions' with the unique Hebrew exactly linked by word derivation to 'Labayu', indicates that ...]

**Conclusion 16:** *Labayu, the 'Lion [of Yahweh]', ruler of the hill country in the Amarna period is the historical figure upon whom the writer of the books of Samuel based the life of Saul, first king of the Israelite nation.*

[The Amarna "Labayu" letters would thus be actual letters of Saul]

**From Chapter 10:**

**Conclusion 17:** *The situation described in several of the Amarna Letters from Palestine reflects the activities of David during his seven years as king of Hebron prior to the capture of Jerusalem. The stronghold of the Habiru enemy from the mountains mentioned in the late Amarna letters EA298, 284 and 306 - there named Tian-na - is to be identified with the 'fortress of Zion' (Hebrew 'Tsiyon') captured by David in his eighth regnal year - in other words Jerusalem.*

[Summarised detail of his theory - Amarna letter EA 256 written by Mutbaal (Ishbaal) mentions Ayab (Joab), Benenima (Baanah), Dadua (David) and Yishuya (Jesse). If language study holds up, Dadua is derived from Egyptian TwTw meaning 'favourite', rendered DaD in Septuagint 1Kings 2.33, and probably a hypocoristicon DuDiyYaH meaning 'beloved of Yahweh.'

**Conclusion 18:** *El-Amarna letter EA 256 contains the names of five of the leading players from the books of Samuel. The letter itself is written by Ishbaal, son of Saul, who in turn refers to Joab (David's military commander), Baanah (one of Israel's chieftains), David (ruler of Hebron and son-in-law of Saul), and finally Jesse (father of David).*

**Conclusion 19:** *King David, the dynastic founder of Israelite Jerusalem, was a contemporary of Akhenaten, Tutankhamun, Ay and Haremreb (early reign) in Egypt and the Hittite emperor, Suppiluliumas I. He forged his kingdom in the historical period when Egypt was politically and militarily weak and when the latter's northern ally, the kingdom of Mitanni, was disintegrating under the combined pressure of the Hittites to the west and the Assyrians to the north-east.*

**From Chapter 11:**

**Conclusion 20:** *Astronomical retrocalculation produces the only possible date for the near-sunset solar eclipse observed at Ugarit and recorded on Tablet KTU - 1.78. The eclipse occurred on the 9th of May in 1012 BC - just months after the death of Amenhotep III according to the internal chronology of the Amarna Letters. This entirely independent chronological determination confirms that the el-Amarna period fell in the late eleventh century BC and not in the mid-fourteenth century BC as previously believed.*

**Conclusion 21:** *The 18th Dynasty did not begin in circa 1570 BC, as the conventional chronology proposes, but rather some three hundred and seventy-seven years later in 1194 BC.*

**Rohl's conclusions** are so startlingly new and at variance with preceding scholarship that they are still to become either accepted or tolerated in mainstream new age Egyptology or Biblical Studies because of the huge modifications required to the main body of research at present.]

**1.2.5 Ugarit/Ras Shamra (NW Syria): Hebrew Language and Psalm forms:**

Discovered in 1929 through links to the Amarna Letters, the Ras Shamra site was found to be an ancient city on the Asia part of the Fertile Crescent. The site revealed its original name as Ugarit, (dating dependent on what chronology is used), and hundreds of tablets of a royal scribal library were uncovered. Ugarit language was of the 'Phoenician-Canaanite-Old Hebrew Script', its worship the "Baalism" of the Canaanites. It provides the best archeological insights into the language of the Canaanite peoples and their worship practices, therefore relating indirectly to the Hebrews, whose long-drawn battle with the

Canaanites and their 'Baals' makes up the major part of the religious problem of the Davidic Kingdom.

Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times p 163-173; Introduction to the OT p 118-120; 362-372.

Rooks, AG. Neviim p 1-15; New Bible Dictionary p70 of p60-76.

**1.2.6 Merneptah Stele:** This inscribed stone slab from the temple tomb of Pharaoh Merneptah/Merenptah gives the only reference yet to Israel in Egyptian records. Relating to his campaign in Palestine about 1210 BC, its claim that "Israel is wasted..." is regarded as ancient 'puffing up' by pharaoh. More important is that it shows Hebrew presence in Palestine was already given the national identity "Israel" when most other references to the Hebrews are as the 'apiru' – a less established, more nomadic semitic people movement.

Harrison, RK. Old Testament Times p178; Introduction to the OT p322f. Kaiser WC, Mockler CM. Ed. NIV Archeological Study Bible. Article on p360.

### **1.2.7 Tell ed-Daba (Nile Delta): Tanis/Avaris & Cities of the Egypt Oppression:**

A possible link, as yet not acknowledged by the majority of scholars, between this and related sites and Pithom and Rameses, the cities of the oppression in Goshen (Ex 1.11) has been made. The death pits uncovered at this site may indicate a link to the 10th plague against the firstborn. Rohl, D. A Test of Time p251-297.

### **1.2.8 Bab edh-Dhra (Dead Sea Area): "Cities of the Plain", Gen 14.1-24/18.16-19-29:**

This site found by WF Albright and M Kyle in 1924 was wrongly identified as another Palestinian 'high place'. 1965-67 research by the American Schools of Oriental Research uncovered heavy fortifications, early Bronze Age household utensils and an extensive graveyard indicating the site was more than a 'high place'. More research found four contemporary and linked sites - Feifa, Numeira, Safi and Khanazir, all with similar fortifications, tombs and utensils. All five were located near springs which fed the irrigation of the 'ghor' or vale of Siddim, now under the water of the south Dead Sea, all are sited on the eastern fault line of the Dead Sea rift valley, and two sites showed extensive burning. Zoar, the city not destroyed by God, was linguistically tied to the name of the wadi linked with Safi. The Bible indicates the other four cities in pairs, Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim (Deut 29.23/ Hos 11.8) with Gen 10.19 identifying the sites in South to North order as Kahazir-Sodom and Feifa-Gomorrah, Safi-Zoar in the middle; then Numeira-Admah and Bab edh-Dhra-Zeboim. Occupation and use of sites was shown to have ended around 1900 BC. Research leader RT Schaub concluded **"These are the only candidates we have"** as sites for the five cities of the Plain or explanation of the identity of the cities.

Duncan, GB in Chronology in 'Interpreter's One Volume Commentary' p 1276. Harrison, RK. Introduction to the OT p 313, and OT Times p 85. Wilson, C. Crash go the Chariots p 61-71

The above brief look at chronological issues and some archeological finds is enough to indicate that the high levels of academic scepticism about the historical reliability of the Old Testament that prevail among many new age scholars is unwarranted. The same point is made in Appendix 2 "Concerning New Testament Chronology and Archeology". The effects of such scepticism from people supposedly of the family of faith is usually very negative for lay Christians, encouraging a deliberate trend not to read the Bible too seriously. Consequently, a swing away from the 'inspiration of scripture' back to the 'inspiration of the church' or sometimes even the 'inspiration of the family of humanity' as establisher of the supreme standard of the faith is the result, something dealt with in later Chapters.

## A PROBABLE CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

No archeological verification or complementation exists before Abraham, so dating can't be assigned to Genesis 1 – 11.25.

### **Prehistory**

<--6000 BC	Stone Age Inhabitants in Palestine
5500	Invention of Pottery
4500	Beginning of use of metals copper and gold
3500	Sumerian civilisation in south Mesopotamia
3300	Use of bronze emerges
3200	Sumerians adapt pictographs to cuneiform for clay tablet use
3000	Egyptian first dynasty – adapt pictographs to hieroglyphics, papyrus invented
2000	Sumerian redominance in Mesopotamia (Ur-Nammu Law Code)

### **The Patriarchs 2000-1800BC**

<b>2000- 1900 BC</b>	- <b>Abraham</b> migrates to south Palestine Cities of the Plain destroyed
<b>1850-1750</b>	- <b>Isaac and Jacob</b>
1750	Code of Hammurabi (1 <sup>st</sup> Babylonian empire); Hyksos
<b>1700</b>	- <b>Joseph</b>
1570	Hyksos expelled as rulers of Egypt

### **The Exodus and Conquest of Canaan**

<b>Evangelical</b>		<b>Liberal</b>
<b>1450 BC</b>	- <b>Moses in Egypt &amp; Sinai, Exodus</b> (Thutmose III) <i>Oldest OT sources written by, collated and identified with Moses</i>	1250 BC (Rameses II)
<b>1400</b>	- <b>Conquest and Joshua</b> <i>Joshua sources written</i>	1225
1360	Tell el-Amarna cuneiform letters to Akhetaton	
<b>1350 →</b>	- <b>Judges Period</b>	1200
1220	Merneptah stele, with Israel in Palestine	
1200	Iron comes into use	
1188	Philistines settle Gaza coast	
<b>1120</b>	- <b>N Hebrew tribes join to defeat Sisera</b>	
<b>1100</b>	- <b>Abimelech destroys Shechem</b>	
<b>1075-1035</b>	- <b>Samuel</b> <i>Judges sources collated, Samuel sources compiled</i>	
1050-1010	- <b>Saul</b> [unites Hebrew tribes]	
<b>1010-970</b>	- <b>David</b> [king in Hebron] <i>1,2 Samuel sources collated</i>	

### **The Line of David**

<b>1001 BC</b>	- <b>David</b> [makes Jerusalem capital, reunites tribes] <i>Psalms collating begins</i>
970	- Solomon anointed king, David dies.
970.930	- Solomon <b>Temple building begins Apr/May 965 BC, completed Oct/Nov 959 BC</b> <b>Collation of Pentateuchal sources; Proverbs/Wisdom collation begins</b>

### **Judah**

930-913	- Rehoboam [Shishak raids Jerusalem 926/5 ]	<b>Israel</b>	930-910	Jeroboam
913-910	- Abijam		910-909	Nadab
910-870	- Asa		909-886	Baasha Elah
			885-884	Zimri
			884-874	Omri
870-848	-Jehosaphat <b>[Elijah 865-850]</b>		874-853	Ahab
			853-852	Ahaziah
				<b>[Elisha 850-835]</b>
848-841	-Jehoram		852-841	Joram
841-841	-Ahaziah		841-814	Jehu
841.835	- <i>Athaliah</i>			
835-796 BC	-Joash		814-798	Jehoahaz

796-767	-Amaziah		798-782	Jehoash
			782-753	Jerobaom II
767-740	-Azariah (Uzziah)	<b>[Amos 755 in Israel]</b>	753-752	Zachariah
		<b>[Hosea 755 in Israel]</b>	752- 752	Shallum
		<b>[Isaiah 745 in Judah]</b>	752-741	Menahem
740-731	-Jotham	<b>[Micah 735 in Judah]</b>	741-739	Pekahiah
			739-731	Pekah
731-715	-Ahaz	<b>[Samaria falls 722 BC]</b>	731-722	Hoshea
715-686	-Hezekiah	<b>[Isaiah/Micah still ministering]</b>		
686-641	-Manasseh	<b>[Is 37-55; Is 55-66 written; tradition of Isaiah's death]</b>		
641-639	-Amon			
639-609	-Josiah	<b>[Jeremiah 627 in Judah;</b>		
623		<b>[Law Scroll found, top-down Covenant renewal instituted]</b>		
609	-Jehoahaz			
609-597	-Jehoiakim	<b>[Daniel exiled to Babylon 605 BC]</b>		
597	-Jehoiachin	<b>[Exiled to Babylon, dies there c560 to end Davidic kings]</b>		
597-586	-Zedekiah	<b>[Jeremiah dies in Egypt; Ezekiel 593 in exile]</b>		
		<b>-Zedekiah appeals to Egypt, Babylon responds by razing Jerusalem</b>		
		<b>Solomon's Temple Destroyed 586 BC</b>		

### **Exile through to Messiah**

*Babylonian kings* - 605-562 Nebuchadnezzar; 562-560 Evil-Merodach; 560-556 Neriglissar;

**[Ezekiel's last vision 573 BC; Daniel prophecies 600-537 BC]**

**1,2 Kings written c550 BC**

*Babylonian kings* - 556-549 Nabonidus; 549-539 Belshazzar.

539 BC Cyrus II the Persian takes Babylon without a battle.

539.525 'Darius the Mede' is Gubaru, Regent of Babylon and beyond the river

538 BC "Cyrus cylinder" religious edict. Daniel's prophesying ends.

Sheshbazzar leads 1<sup>st</sup> wave of returnees.

Second Temple foundation and altar laid.

**[Haggai & Zechariah in Jerusalem 520]**

*Persian kings* – Cyrus II 550-530; Cambyses 530-522; Darius 522-486;

**520 BC** - Zerubabel begins rebuilding of temple. Samaritan opposition arises

515 Second Temple completed March 12

*Persian kings* – Xerxes I 486-464; Artaxerxes 464-423;

458 -Ezra sent to Jerusalem – rabbinic era said to have begun.

445 - Nehemiah made governor, walls rebuilt. Ezra reads law 444BC

433 -Nehemiah returns to Persia, then makes his second visit.

**Ezra-Nehemiah, 1,2 Chronicles written**

**[Malachi in Jerusalem 450 BC]**

### **Intertestamental Period**

334-323 Alexander the Great – Hellenistic empire superpower

323-190 Ptolemaic (Egypt) and Seleucid empires vie for control of Palestine

250 Septuagint translated in Alexandria, Egypt.

190 Rome controls Asia Minor, Roman empire becomes dominant superpower

169 Antiochus IV 'Epiphanes' seizes Palestine and Syria (Seleucid Helleniser)

167 6 Dec Antiochus IV sets up Daniel's 'abomination of desolation'

164 Maccabean revolt frees Jerusalem, rededicates Second Temple

150 Qumran Essene Community formed, resisting Sadducees and Pharisees

63 Roman Pompey captures Jerusalem; Julius Caesar 48-44 BC

40-04 BC Herod the Great sponsored by Roman Senate, is king at birth of Jesus

27BC – 14 AD Augustus Caesar is Roman emperor at birth of Jesus.