

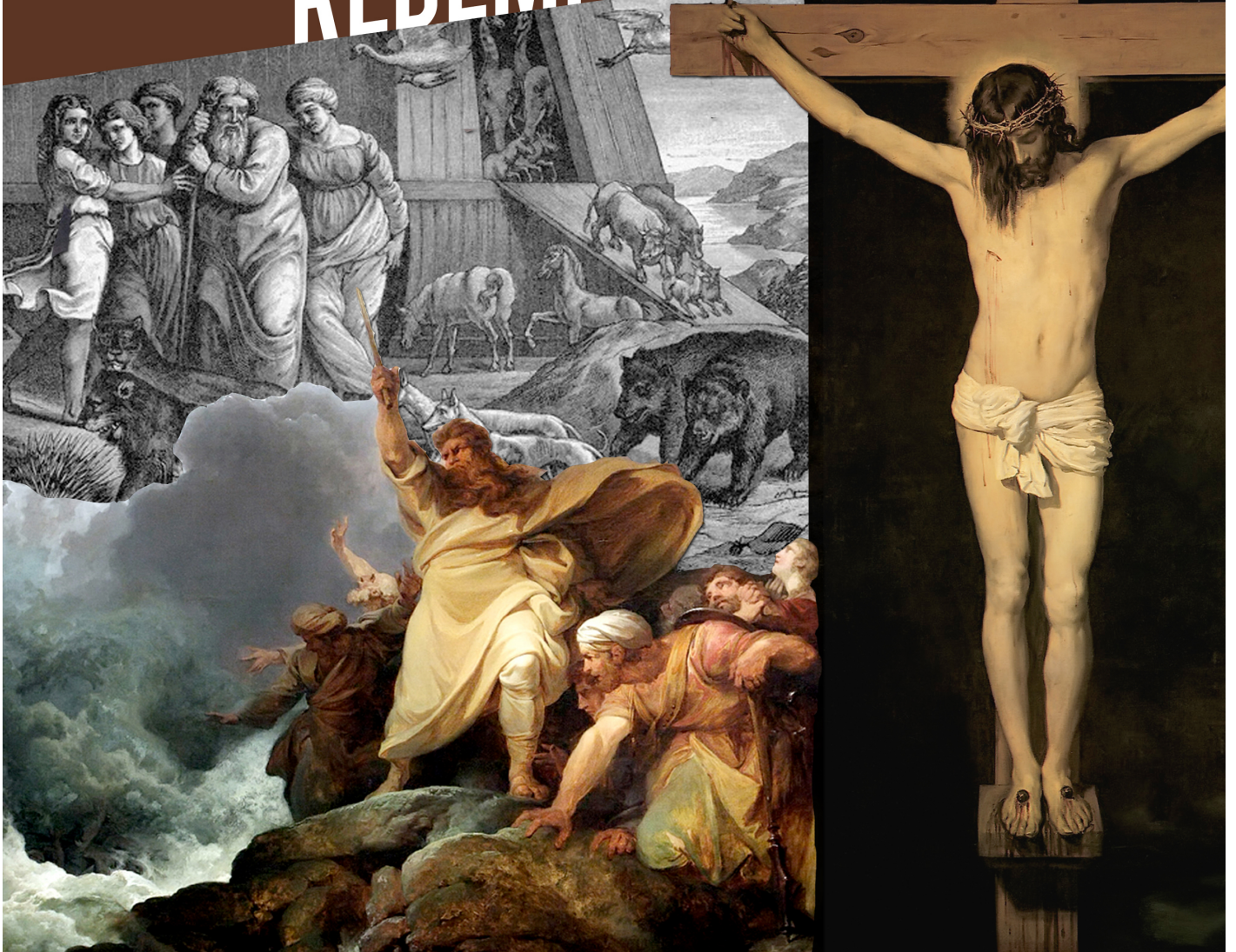


WEEK 6

IDENTITY

REDEMPITIVE HISTORY

ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΝΑΖΩΡΕΩ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΩΝ
ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΝΑΖΑΡΕΝΩΣ ΒΕΧ ΜΕΤΕΩΡΩΝ



LESSON 6 - REDEEMPTIVE HISTORY

The Unfolding Drama of God's Mission to Redeem All Things

You see, the best thing about this Story is - it's true. There are lots of stories in the Bible, but all the stories are telling one Big Story. The Story of how God loves his children and comes to rescue them.

It takes the whole Bible to tell this Story. And at the center of the Story, there is a baby. Every Story in the Bible whispers his name. He is like the missing piece in a puzzle - the piece that makes all the other pieces fit together, and suddenly you can see a beautiful picture. - Sally Lloyd-Jones[†]

Fall 2012

Christianity is a dramatic story

Christianity is one of the few religions that stands or falls on the events of history, more specifically, the actions of God in history. Paul says if Jesus Christ has not been raised from the dead your faith is in vain and we are still in our sins. The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the climax of history. But there was a lot that God did prior to the incarnation of Jesus. The Bible seems to have two main parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The focus of the OT is the people of Israel and their obedience to God expressed through the law given to them. In the NT, the church is the focus and the gospel given to them. This brings up lots of questions concerning how the two are related and the consistency of God's plan and the unity of the Bible. In this section we try to outline the central message about Jesus throughout the Bible as God progressively revealed it through multiple acts in a story.

SCRIPTURE

Mark the following statements as true or false:

The Bible tells us how to live a good moral life so God will accept us. (True OR False)

The Bible is about God and what he has done to show his love for us. (True OR False)

The Bible is a bunch of stories about great things people did for God or others. (True OR False)

The Holy Spirit helps me understand what the Bible means. (True OR False)

The Bible gives us practical solutions to everyday problems about everything. (True OR False)

Read and Reflect on the following passage: Luke 24:13-35; (cf. Ex. 19:1-8; Deut. 7:6; Hosea 2:16-23; 1 Peter 2:9-10)

REFLECTIONS ON LUKE 24:13-35

What are the two men discussing on the road to Emmaus?

What does Jesus tell them the Bible is about?

If the Bible is basically about Jesus, what parts of God's big story do you think you have struggled to understand?

How has God's big story helped you make sense of your own story?

PRAYER

"All your commandments are sure; they persecute me with falsehood; help me! They have almost made an end of me on earth, but I have not forsaken your precepts. In your steadfast love give me life, that I may keep the testimonies of your mouth. Forever, O Lord, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you have established the earth, and it stands fast. By your appointment they stand this day, for all things are your servants. If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have given me life. I am yours; save me, for I have sought your precepts. The wicked lie in wait to destroy me, but I consider your testimonies. I have seen a limit to all perfection, but your commandment is exceedingly broad." (Psalm 119:86–96, ESV)

PRACTICE

The spiritual discipline to practice this week is *reading the Bible*. Do these four things: context, repetition, meditation, and application. 1) Read it in context before you meditate on isolated verses. Regularly read large parts of it, whole books if possible. Use a study Bible or commentary to get more detail. 2) Read it repeatedly. Use multiple translations to get better insight. 3) Meditate on it. Prayerfully reflect on the passages or journal about them. Write them on notecards, computer desktop, or frames in your house. 4) Lastly, put it into practice. You must live out the truths of scripture to truly grasp their significance. Often times the significance of a truth in scripture isn't fully understood until you practice it.

Immerse yourself in it, wrestle with it, pray through it, study it, get to know it well, and submit to it. For it is through scripture that one grows in knowledge of the Lord Jesus himself, and by learning about him we grow to be more like him.

Salvation in History

DWELL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Article III:F Regeneration

We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever.

The Bible is an immensely varied book. It has stories, poems, songs, history, prophecy, laws, letters, and proverbs. It is written by many different authors inspired by the Holy Spirit, in different time periods and cultures, and in several different languages. All of these features make it a difficult book to study and understand. Despite this it has one clear message, that God has, and will continue, to work in human history to bring salvation. Every last detail of the scriptures is part of the larger story of God bringing salvation.

The major difference that strikes everyone is the two collections of the Old and New Testaments. What is the relationship between them? Did God change his plans as he went or are there consistent themes? Is the OT just a lot of rules and a wrathful God and the NT is all about grace, love, and Jesus? What we seek to point out in this section is the continuity and discontinuity of God's redemptive work. God's redemptive plan is revealed progressively in the Old Testament and then more fully revealed in the New Testament through Jesus Christ. There are consistent threads throughout the whole book that are successively built upon. We should avoid the extremes of over emphasizing the similarities or the differences between the OT and the NT. Rather, we should strive to see how God has intricately woven it all together into one beautiful and dramatic story, a true story.

THEMES IN SCRIPTURE

The unity of scripture is assumed but not easily understood. It is helpful to trace various themes throughout the different contexts of redemptive history. Some of the major themes are creation, sin, covenant, law, judgment, Messiah, kingdom, and salvation. Other important themes that are not as obvious are the land, the temple, God's people, slavery, idolatry, rest, repentance, faith, grace, family, and others. The desire here is to trace several of them throughout scripture as examples of how others may be woven together. Through tracing these themes hopefully we can alleviate some of the difficulty in the continuity and discontinuity between the OT and NT.

Lets trace the theme of the land. God gives the whole earth to Adam and Eve and tells them to multiply and fill it. After the tower of Babel, God promises the land of Canaan to Abraham. After a providential famine Abraham's descendants end up in Egypt. God calls Moses to deliver the people from Egypt and bring them back to the land of the inheritance, the Promised Land of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They wander in the wilderness for 40 years before Joshua leads Israel in battle to retake the land. From the period of the Judges through Israel's kings, Saul, David, Solomon and all those after them, the land is constantly fought over. Its reaches its peak size during David's reign. It is eventually lost due to Israel's sin and they are sent into exile. God promises to restore them to the land through the coming Messiah and God will reign over the whole earth. A close look at the boundaries of the land reveal Israel never actually occupied the amount of land promised to Abraham. The promise was always filled in parts. But the Messiah was supposed to restore the land. This is why the disciples ask in Acts 1:6 if now, after his resurrection is the time Jesus will restore the kingdom. Note Jesus' response, the disciples are sent to proclaim Jesus as Lord throughout Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. The kingdom of God is to be proclaimed beyond even the territories of Israel. The Bible ends in Revelation with the new heavens and the new earth filled with echoes of Jerusalem and the Garden of Eden. The kingdom of God fills the whole earth. God dwells with his people for eternity. The land has become what it was originally intended to be and more than God's people ever imagined.

We can follow a similar theme with respect to people. God's people are his spiritual children. The people of Israel are sons of the promise to Abraham. The Church are sons and daughters of adoption through Jesus Christ, who is the servant of Israel (Is. 40-53). Paul says those who believe by faith in Jesus Christ are the true sons and daughters of Abraham. The primary difference between Israel and the Church is essentially cultural and political. The theme to create a people for himself has expanded from a single nation to many nations and thus the cultural and political factors of Israel must be done away with so all people can worship God through Jesus. This is what the prophets always spoke to, that God will draw all people to himself through the Messiah (e.g. Dt. 4:7; Is. 11:10; 42:6). God has been on a mission from the beginning to fill the earth with his redeemed image-bearers and he begins with a few individuals, which become families, which become tribes, which become a nation, which become many nations, which will eventually fill the whole earth.

One of the biggest tensions everyone feels with the OT is the importance of obedience to the law. Often times people will criticize Christians who insist on taking the Bible literally by pointing out all the laws in the OT we don't practice.² Do we disregard all law in the OT? Do we consider it all binding? The answer is simple on the surface but difficult to implement. We must see how it is fulfilled in Jesus (Mt. 5:17-20) who provides us with the ultimate interpretation of the law (Matt. 5-7). This illustrates a key principle for Bible reading:

let scripture interpret scripture. Israel mistakenly saw obedience to the law as a means for salvation, instead of a tool for faith and a relationship with God (Rom. 2, 7, 8; Gal. 3; 2 Cor. 3). One helpful breakdown, though not without flaws, is the reformed traditions distinctions of OT law into three parts: moral, civil, and ceremonial.³ The moral law exemplified in the ten commandments (Ex. 20) is still binding as it summarized loving God and loving your neighbor. The civil law has some things relating to Israel as a nation and foreshadows the ethics of the kingdom to be embodied by the church. However, the church is not a political institution because of its multi-national nature but the civil law does provide a prophetic guide to critiquing unjust civil laws in our day. The ceremonial law is completely fulfilled in Christ and is no longer binding. This becomes clear later in prophets, especially Jeremiah, that the ritual sacrifices are not what God desires, but hearts consecrated to him which eventually the Holy Spirit accomplishes through faith in Jesus (Dt. 10:12-22; Ps. 51:16-17; Mic. 6:8; Jer. 4:3; 31:33).

But what is the relationship between the law and the gospel? Again, John Calvin (as well as Martin Luther) is helpful on this point.⁴ The law serves various functions in scripture (Gal. 3:19-4:7). First, the law reveals the will of God and his holiness which thereby points us to our need for a savior and ultimately the gospel since we are unable to keep it perfectly. Second, the law restrains sin by telling people what they should and should not do. Thirdly, the law points us to righteous living. In all of these it should serve as a reminder of God's grace. The giving of the law is preceded by God's saving act (Ex. 20:1-2) and to not obey the law shows that one does not really trust the God who saved from bondage to Egypt (Jn. 15:14). We do not earn God's love with obedience, but our obedience flows out of faith in his acceptance of us through the sacrifice of Jesus. Righteousness therefore flows out of a relationship with God and the 10 commandments summarize that the law, guide us in how we should relate to him and to one another (Matt. 22:37-40).

One of the most important is the theme of covenant. The covenant is more than a contract. It is a binding agreement that cannot be severed by one party or the other violating the agreement. The language of covenant is related to ancient practices of a conquering nation establishing a treaty with the nation it conquered. It established the benefits of the relationship and the consequences of disobedience. God is one who has not just saved his people, but conquered them by his love (cf. Rom. 1:1; Rom. 6; Jam. 1:1; Tit. 1:1; 2 Cor. 2:14). This is a covenant God cannot and will not break. God cuts a covenant with Abraham to provide for him land, an heir, and blessing (which is also a mission). The covenant with Moses establishes how the people are to live in the land and what they must do to be a blessing. Jesus' sermon on the Mount builds on this as it applies to his disciples. The covenant with David is that a righteous king is essential for God's people to live in justice and fulfill the mission. As the people's leader goes, so go the people. The New Covenant combines all of these

through the person and work of Jesus. Jesus is obedient to the covenant and he creates the new covenant. He is God's provision for the people's unfaithfulness to the covenant. He is the perfect King for God's people. He is the Messiah who will restore the people to the land. He is the promised heir. He is the one who accomplishes the mission to be a blessing to all nations by drawing them all to himself. He is the very presence of God among us. The Son of God has demonstrated God's covenant faithfulness and thus we can trust and have faith, that God will finish what he started.

A careful reading of scripture will find more. The easier themes to track are those previously mentioned, creation, sin, covenant, law, judgment, Messiah, kingdom, temple, slavery, idolatry, rest, etc. Arguments for the differences between the covenants or various "dispensations" of God's dealings with humanity struggle to trace these various themes as they relate to God's plans of salvation through Jesus Christ. Arguments for the absolute similarity between the covenants neglect that it is not a one-to-one comparison but a development through time in various contexts. For example, Israel is not the church in the Old Testament. But the church and Israel are God's people. Israel is ethnically and culturally related in on sense, but only those circumcised in the heart (Dt. 10) are true Israel, where as the church is multi-ethnic and spiritually related having been transformed by the Spirit. Salvation for both is a spiritual matter not a hereditary matter. God has grafted Israel and the church together in the same olive tree (Rom. 11). God's dealing with people has always been the same. He has always called them to recognize their sin, repent from it, and have faith in him. Salvation has always been by his grace alone through faith alone wither for Israel or the church. The kingdom of God is his reign over his people which both the church and Israel reflected though in distinct ways.

An Overview of Scripture

ACT 1: THE PENTATEUCH

The first five books of the Bible, Genesis to Deuteronomy, are also known as the Pentateuch. The events within them are foundational for the rest of the Bible and set up many of the themes previously mentioned. Most of the English names for the books of the Bible come from the Septuagint (LXX a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible before the time of Christ). Genesis in the Hebrew Bible is called "the beginnings" (the meaning of the first Hebrew word). Theologically, this is the more appropriate name for Genesis. God begins creating everything, then sin begins, and then God begins to prepare to bring the Messiah through Abraham's seed. Exodus is named after the primary event of God delivering Israel from Egypt. This event and the subsequent covenant established through Moses is a crucial stage in the drama for the rest of Scripture and especially the Old Testament. Exodus is the

cross of the Old Testament where God defeats the greatest power on earth and delivers his people from bondage. Moses is a fallen and broken leader whom God uses to free Israel despite Moses' shortcomings (Ex. 3; Num. 20:10-13). The provision of Jesus as the sacrificial lamb is foreshadowed by the sacrifice of perfect lambs to spare the sons of Israel (Ex. 12). Moses is a "Christ-type" who foreshadows the true and better priest and prophet who will perfectly intercede for his people and perfectly fulfill the law (Ex. 32-33; Dt. 18:15-22; Heb. 3:1-6). The future failures of Israel are due to not being faithful to the covenant. Leviticus is part two of the law given in Exodus. It is a manual on worship that covers the whole of an Israelite's life, just as our whole life is a living sacrifice to Christ (Rom. 12:1). Numbers is often avoided due to its boring name and lists. However, its Hebrew name translates to "wanderings." It chronicles the wandering of Israel in the desert and the various tests they faced to learn what it means to live by the word of God alone (Dt. 8:3). Deuteronomy is a final sermon by Moses giving a theological review of Israel's history, the law, and the covenant. Its Hebrew name is "these are the words," referring to Moses as an expositor of the law. Deuteronomy is extremely important throughout the rest of the Bible and the most frequently cited within scripture itself. The essential charge of Deuteronomy is a call to love the Lord by obeying his law. This is not a matter of religious preference but it is a life and death decision (Dt. 30:15). Ultimately, it is Jesus who fulfills the law and is superior to Moses. Hence, following Jesus is an eternal life or death decision.

ACT 2: THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

The historical books have straightforward names and begin with Joshua and run through Esther. A consistent theme throughout them all is the promise of a king with an enduring kingdom. It is essentially the drama of God continuing to show His everlasting covenantal faithfulness and the unfolding of His redemptive plan through Israel. God confirms and even extends the covenant through David. Despite David's failures God promises that the kingdom of David's descendants will never end (2 Sam. 7:12-13). This foreshadows Jesus' kingdom who is the true and better king, whose kingdom will never fall. David falls into adultery with Bathsheba but God by his grace brings good from it. David is confronted with his sin, repents, and God's mercy eventually triumphs. Shortly after the best days in Israel during Solomon's reign, the kingdom falls apart and divides into Israel to the north, and Judah to the south (1 Ki. 12). An important refrain throughout Kings and Chronicles is this or that king "did was right in the eyes of the Lord" or "he did was evil in the eyes of the Lord," always assuming the reader knows the law. They assume you will know what they did that was good or bad. The prophets begin to speak of the whole nation's unfaithfulness and God's everlasting covenant faithfulness. Eventually, the northern half of the kingdom is exiled when Assyrian king Sargon II in 722 BC captures Israel. Later the southern kingdom, Judah, is taken into exile by the successor the Assyrian Empire, Babylon, in 586 BC. Thus,

fulfilling the covenant curses for unfaithfulness (Deut. 28). What is interesting is that the Hebrew Bible ends not with Malachi, the last prophet who foretells of the promised Messiah, but 2 Chronicles which was written around the exile in Babylon. 2 Chronicles ends showing God's favor on the last living king of Judah in Babylon. The intent is to remind Israel of God's promises that David's throne would endure and God would restore his people.

THE INTERLUDE: THE WISDOM BOOKS

The wisdom books include Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes. The relationship of these more proverbial and poetic books to the rest of scripture is not often understood. Wisdom literature should be understood in light of the creation and the covenant. It is not about being obedient so that God will bless you. It is about how through fearing God, seeking his ways, Jesus can enable us to be righteous, wise, and live life well. It addresses the way the created order works and the highs and lows of life with God. Psalms is a book that is probably better understood when one examines their emotions. They are the prayers of God's people, a cry for the kingdom we all long for. The traditional view of Song of Songs is an allegory between Christ and His church but modern interpretations have wrestled with its message as a more straightforward talk about sex and intimacy between a husband and wife. Its refrain is "do not awaken love until it so desires." Job is a story that doesn't solve the problem of suffering but does address that what matters is how one responds to it. No one exemplified this better than Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. Proverbs and Ecclesiastes should be seen through the lens of generally this is the way the world works. One who does not live by God's ways will often find life frustrating and difficult. However, it is Jesus himself who says He is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn. 14:6). The role of Christ in creation provides one of the key links to connecting the Proverbs to Jesus (cf. Jn. 1:1-18; Col. 1:15-20; 1 Cor. 1:24, 30; Eph. 1:10; Jam. 3:13-18; Mt. 11:1-19; 12:42; Prov. 1:15; 2:8-9; 8:22-31). It is in Jesus we have all the treasures of wisdom (Col. 2:3).

ACT 3: THE PROPHETS

The Prophets are separated into two major divisions: the major and minor. Minor doesn't mean less important, just a lot shorter because Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah are some of the longest books in the Bible. The time period for many of them overlaps. Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah come before or are current with the fall of the northern kingdom (2 Ki. 17). Zephaniah, Nahum, and Habakkuk anticipate the fall of Assyria and the rise of Babylon prior to the southern kingdom falling. Jeremiah, Obadiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel follow the fall of Judah and the exile into the Babylon. Interesting, Daniel is placed within the writings of the Hebrew canon because of its narrative and proverbial style. The last of the prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and possibly Joel are around the time of Israel's return from exile but still under Persian rule.

The prophets essentially address two key points: the people's false concept of Yahweh and the ethical demands of following him. The prophets are heavy on theology and ethics, much like the writing of Paul. Most of the content is speaking the truth to the people with a little bit of telling the future. The law, especially Deuteronomy, becomes the background for the judgment of Israel and the nations around them. They are judged for their failure to worship God alone and for their mistreatment of people. Leaders are condemned frequently because judges, kings, priests, and prophets are intended to be God's mediators (Dt. 17-18). They are supposed to reflect Jesus who is the one mediator, prophet, priest, king, and judge between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5-6). Because of sin OT leaders often fail and abuse their power and the effects are catastrophic for the nation. Israel places a false trust in the sacrifices and does not recognize the heart change God desires. They need to be His image bearers and conduct their lives and society with mercy, justice, faith, and compassion (Mic. 6:8). They pursue idols which are functional false saviors (Jer. 2:28; Ez. 14:3). God confronts the national idols and individual idols but his judgment is his loving discipline (Dt. 8) which always has redemptive purposes. Every prophet ends looking forward to the day when the Lord will come, remove his people's sin, and establish his kingdom forever. A Messiah is promised who will rule over the whole earth and all nations will be placed under His feet (Is. 11; Dan. 7:13-14). This Messiah however will also suffer the sins of His people (Is. 53:5). He will give his people a new heart by placing his Spirit within them (Ezek. 36:26). He will write the law on their hearts and they will willingly choose to obey (Jer. 31:31-34). The nations will come to worship the one true God because of the Messiah, thus fulfilling Israel's call to be a light to the nations (Gen. 12:1-3; Dt. 4:6-8; Is. 42:6). The Old Testament ends looking forward to the Messiah coming and the kingdom of God being established.

ACT 4: THE GOSPELS AND ACTS

After Malachi, there is 400 years of silence for God did not send anymore prophets. The Gospels begin with the 400 years of silence ending. They are primarily narrative giving the facts about Jesus days on earth. John is the most overtly theological of the four and also the most unique. Matthew, Mark, and Luke cover much of the same material but structured differently for the benefit of their emphases and audiences. God speaks again through John the Baptist, "Prepare the way of the Lord!" (Mt. 3:3). A child is born of both honorable and dishonorable lineage. But while bearing all that it is to be human, the Holy Spirit conceives this child. The child is the Messiah who has arrived not on a great cloud, but humbly. Immediately, the powers of the world oppose Him, even many of His own people. Yet He is received by some of the least likely people; in fact, He sees them as His mission. Jesus' message begins where John left off, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The kingdom of God has been inaugurated. The kingdom is offered freely and is entered by repentance and faith in the Messiah. He comes to bear the sins of the world, to bring freedom for

the captives through His sacrifice like no other ruler on earth (Mt. 20:25-28). He brings victory in a way no one truly anticipated but through the most shameful, disgusting, and excruciating death ever conceived. He confronts individual sin and the national sin of Israel. Jesus now invites people from all nations to come to him, thus challenging many of the Jews idolatrous view of their land, laws, and culturally bound worship. Because of this, and his claims to be God, they crucify him. All his followers, convinced he was the Messiah, are distraught. It seemed the kingdom of God had finally arrived, and now that King was dead.

The debate in history is not whether Jesus really died, but whether or not he was resurrected. He was buried in a guarded tomb and was risen on the third day. The fact that Jesus Christ rose from the grave seems to be the only reasonable explanation for an empty tomb, the rise of the church, and the dramatic change by Jewish-Christians to worship from Saturdays to Sundays. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a historical event on a truly cosmic scale (Mt. 27:51-54). The King has risen, ensuring His kingdom will never pass away, having complete victory over sin, redeeming the image of God through His perfect humanity and atonement. However, again to the disciple's dismay, the kingdom still does not come in all its fullness (Acts 1:6-7). Instead, Christ commissions his disciples to carry on his work and make more disciples of Jesus from every nation, tribe, and tongue (Mt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). The grand mission of God to redeem humanity has finally expanded from one tiny little nation, to the church, made of disciples from every nation who are to embody the ethics of the kingdom, since Christ is their victorious King. Acts depicts the expansion of the church, which foreshadows the coming kingdom (Acts 2:42-47). The last days are here, and the consummation of all of creation is on the cusp of being complete. God is bringing total restoration of all things but in a way few of his own people ever expected.

ACT 5: THE EPISTLES AND REVELATION

The rest of the New Testament is an explanation of what God has done through Christ Jesus. Paul's letters are the bulk of the NT, with Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, and Jude rounding out the rest of the letters. With a few exceptions they are addressed to churches in specific areas or regions. Christ reigns in heaven as king over creation and all rulers, principalities, authorities and powers. He reigns as head of the church that is to reflect his lordship in their lives (Col. 3:1-17). Through Christ's victory over Satan, sin, and death, those who repent and place their faith and trust in him can put to death the desires of the flesh. The New Covenant has arrived through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who enables believers to live according to the fruits of the Spirit (Rom. 8:11; Gal. 5:16-26) and thus obey the law. A Christian has been forgiven because of Christ's perfect obedience and sacrifice. A Christian wages war against sin in the flesh and live to serve Christ (Rom. 6). Just as before, sin is the result of worshipping created things (Rom. 1:18ff). Idolatry still plagues us but our satisfaction, joy, and redemption is to be found in Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:18-31; Col. 3:1-5). Be-

lievers live a life of continual repentance and growing in a deeper faith in the gospel, which has been given by God's grace alone. The good news is that Jesus' life, death, and resurrection gives us new life with God and one another (Rom. 5:1-5).

Lastly, and the most difficult to understand, is Revelation. We will discuss the details of this more fully in week 9 when we discuss eschatology as a whole. The essentially point of Revelation is about the hope of the gospel. It is intended to encourage persecuted Christians that God will be victorious over evil and he will bring justice. The second coming of Christ will right all wrongs and God will establish his kingdom on earth for all eternity. Satan, death, and evil will not have the final say. There will be no more sin, death, mourning, famine, war, oppression, or sorrow. We will dwell with God forever when heaven finally comes down to earth by God's grace in the eternal city of peace, joy, and love; the city where Jesus reigns forever.

FURTHER RESOURCES

The Bible Jesus Read, by Philip Yancey

The Jesus Storybook Bible, by Sally Lloyd-Jones

Theological Interpretation of the Old Testament, Gen. Ed. Kevin Vanhoozer

¹ Sally Lloyd-Jones, *The Jesus Storybook Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 17.

² For example the autobiographical and somewhat satirical book by AJ Jacobs, *A Year of Living Biblically* (NY: Simon & Schuster 2007).

³ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, II:7:1, 2

⁴ Ibid., II:7:6-14.