

# Old Testament: Narrative, Wisdom & Psalms

## Leadership Institute - Sep 16, 2025

### Summary of Ancient Near Eastern history:

- Bronze to Iron Age: Big empires weakened, allowing smaller kingdoms like Israel to rise.
- Kingdom of Israel: David and Solomon reign; the kingdom splits in \_\_\_\_\_; Israel in the north and Judah in the south.
- Empires & Exile: Israel falls to Assyria in \_\_\_\_\_, Judah to Babylon in \_\_\_\_\_; Persia restores Jerusalem; Alexander begins the intertestamental time period

### OT Narrative Books

- Joshua - \_\_\_\_\_: God leads Israel in taking the Land
- Judges - \_\_\_\_\_: A cycle of sin and deliverance
- Ruth - \_\_\_\_\_: God rewards faithfulness
- 1 & 2 Samuel - \_\_\_\_\_: The rise of the Kingdom of Israel
- 1 & 2 Kings - \_\_\_\_\_: The kingdom divides and eventually falls
- 1 & 2 Chronicles - \_\_\_\_\_: Retelling Israel's history through Judah's kings
- Ezra & Nehemiah - \_\_\_\_\_: Exiles return to restore the temple, rebuild Jerusalem's walls, and renew the covenant
- Esther - \_\_\_\_\_: God's protects His people behind the scenes

### Joshua (Author: Joshua / Date: ~1400 or 1220 BC)

- Purpose: God's \_\_\_\_\_ in keeping his covenant promise to give Israel the land.
- Overview:
  - Ch 1-5: God brings them into the \_\_\_\_\_
  - Ch 6-12: God gives them victory in their conquest
  - Ch 13-22: Distribution of the land
  - Ch 23-24: Renewal of the \_\_\_\_\_
- Takeaways:
  - God's \_\_\_\_\_ gives us strength and courage
  - Obedience vs Disobedience
    - Rahab and her family were saved (ch 2)
    - Achan and his family were killed (ch 7)
  - Inheritance
    - Israelite: The Promised \_\_\_\_\_ (Physical)
    - Us: \_\_\_\_\_ Life in Christ (Spiritual)

### Judges (Author: Anonymous / Date: ~1375 or 1210 - 1050 BC)

- Purpose: To show the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Israelites to keep their part of the covenant.
- Overview:
  - Ch 1-2: Failure to complete the conquest or keep the covenant.
  - Ch 3-16: The Judges Narratives (downward spiral)

- Ch 17-21: *“In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”*
- Takeaways:
  - We cannot serve God and idols
  - \_\_\_\_\_ always brings consequences
  - Even when we are unfaithful, God remains \_\_\_\_\_

**Ruth** (Author: Anonymous / Date: ~1375 or 1210 - 1050 BC)

- Purpose: God is faithful when \_\_\_\_\_ are faithful
- Overview:
  - Ch 1: Tragedy strikes
  - Ch 2-3: Ruth stands out
  - Ch 4: Ruth’s \_\_\_\_\_
- Takeaways:
  - God \_\_\_\_\_ faithfulness and loyalty
  - Redemption in Christ

**1 & 2 Samuel** (Author: Anonymous / Date: 1110 - 971 BC)

- Purpose: The establishment of \_\_\_\_\_ and the Davidic \_\_\_\_\_
- Overview:
  - 1 Samuel 1-7: Samuel & Eli
  - 1 Samuel 8-15: King Saul
  - 1 Samuel 16-31: David
  - 2 Samuel: King David
    - The Davidic Covenant
- Takeaways:
  - \_\_\_\_\_: Hannah’s prayers (1 Sam 1) & David & Goliath (1 Sam 17)
  - \_\_\_\_\_: Saul’s failure as king (1 Sam 15) & David’s sin (2 Sam 11)
  - \_\_\_\_\_: (2 Sam 7)
    - God established David’s throne as part of His plan for an eternal dynasty
    - Fulfilled in King Jesus
- Covenant Summaries:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant (Genesis 9): God promises not to destroy the earth by flood again, giving the rainbow as a sign of His mercy and faithfulness to all of creation.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant (Genesis 12, **15**, 17): God promises Abraham descendants, land, and blessing, assuring that through his descendants all nations will be blessed.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant (Exodus 19–**24**): God gives Israel the Law and calls them to be His holy nation. (Blessing comes through obedience and curses through disobedience).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Covenant (2 Samuel 7): God promises David an eternal dynasty and a throne that will ultimately be fulfilled in Jesus, the Son of David.

**1 & 2 Kings** (Author: Anonymous / Date: 971 - 586 BC)

- Purpose: The kings \_\_\_\_\_ to live up to the ideals of the kingship covenant and were exiled.
- Overview:
  - 1 Kings 1-11: Reign of Solomon
  - 1 Kings 12: Divided Kingdom
  - 1 Kings 13-16: Reign of the kings

- 1 Kings 17-22: Elijah & Ahab
- 2 Kings 1-8: Elisha
- 2 Kings 8-17: Kings of Israel
- 2 Kings 18-25: Kings of Judah
- Takeaways:
  - God's \_\_\_\_\_
    - God remains in control, guiding nations and kings according to His purposes
  - Faithfulness vs disobedience
    - Obedience = blessing / disobedience = judgment
  - The \_\_\_\_\_ role
    - Prophets are God's messengers calling people to repent
  - \_\_\_\_\_ in God's promises

### **1 & 2 Chronicles** (Author: Anonymous / Date: 1010 - 539 BC)

- Purpose: To demonstrate how \_\_\_\_\_ has led to blessing and disobedience to judgement.
- Summary:
  - For \_\_\_\_\_ Israelite community
  - Judah's history, omits northern kingdom; Spiritual health over individual kings ; reforms of faithful kings
  - Ends with the return of the exiles under Cyrus in 539 BC
- Takeaways:
  - God's \_\_\_\_\_: Even after exile, His promises remain.
  - Spiritual health: The nation's well-being depends on covenant faithfulness, not kings. \_\_\_\_\_ matters.
  - Renewed \_\_\_\_\_: God brings His people back, giving hope for the future
  - Call to faithfulness: The past is meant to inspire obedience in the present.

### **Ezra & Nehemiah** (Authors: Ezra & Nehemiah / Date: 586 - 458 BC, 516-445 BC)

- Purpose: God's work to \_\_\_\_\_ the Israelites back to their land.
- Summary:
  - Decree of Cyrus: Exiles allowed to return
  - Ezra (458 BC): Covenant faithfulness & \_\_\_\_\_ rebuilt
  - Nehemiah (445 BC): Jerusalem's \_\_\_\_\_ rebuilt
- Takeaways:
  - Power of Prayer: Nehemiah's prayer
  - God's sovereignty: working through nations and kings for His purposes
  - Restoration: God's plan is always to restore relationship
  - Obedience: Essential in sustaining the community

### **Esther** (Author: Anonymous / Date: 478-473 BC)

- Purpose: God is at \_\_\_\_\_ even behind the scenes
- Summary:
  - Esther's \_\_\_\_\_ & initiative to save the God's people
  - God's plan is unpredictable and unstoppable
  - Protection: All Israelites under God's care
- Takeaways:

- God's Providence: God is always working
- Courage & Initiative: God calls his people to act boldly
- Divine \_\_\_\_\_: God protects His people wherever they are

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### Wisdom Literature:

- Themes: Search for meaning, order in the world, and human suffering.
- \_\_\_\_\_ was the pursuit of understanding and preserving order, and was rooted in the fear of the Lord.
- Purpose: To help us develop a \_\_\_\_\_ worldview.
- Israel's \_\_\_\_\_:
  - Retribution Principle: Obedience = blessing, disobedience = judgment.
  - Afterlife: Sheol was the realm of the dead; Blessing was seen in long life
  - Israelite Faith: Focused not on heaven, but on God's ongoing relationship with His people.

### Wisdom Books & Psalms

- Job - \_\_\_\_\_: Explores human suffering, faith, and why bad things happen to good people.
- Psalms - \_\_\_\_\_: A collection of songs and prayers of praise, worship, lament, and faith.
- Proverbs - \_\_\_\_\_: Wisdom and guidance for living a righteous and successful life.
- Ecclesiastes - \_\_\_\_\_: Life's futility, ultimate purpose is fearing God and keeping His commands.
- Song of Songs - \_\_\_\_\_: Celebrates love and desire, both God's and humanity's.

**Psalms** (Authors: David, Moses, Solomon, Asaph, Heman, Ethan, Sons of Korah, Asaph / Date: 1050/1010 - 586 BC)

- Purpose: To point people to \_\_\_\_\_ in every circumstance.
- Summary:
  - A collection of \_\_\_\_\_ expressions of worship, lament, praise, thanksgiving, and trust in God.
  - 150 Psalms in 5 sections (Bk 1: Ps 1-41; Bk 2: Ps 42-72; Bk 3: Ps 73-89; Bk 4: Ps 90-106; Bk 5: Ps 107-150) reflecting major themes of the OT
- Takeaway:
  - Worship God in every circumstance: Ps 95, 100, 150
  - Trust God and fully surrender: Ps 23, 34, 91
  - Look ahead to future promises: Ps 2, 89, 110

**Job** (Author: Anonymous / Date ~2000-1500 BC)

- Purpose: Explores how to think about God when \_\_\_\_\_.
- Summary:
  - Job is chosen to endure immense suffering
  - He and his friends wrestle with God's \_\_\_\_\_
  - God shifts the focus from "why" to "Who"
- Takeaways:
  - Suffering is not always a result of sin

- Don't be afraid to express anger or confusion to God
- God's wisdom is greater than our understanding

**Proverbs** (Author: Solomon, Agur, Lemuel / 970 - 686 BC)

- Purpose: Guidance on how to live a life of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Summary:
  - Shapes character and promote virtue through a lifestyle of fearing the Lord (Prov 1:7)
  - It shows how life works and calls readers to disciplined, \_\_\_\_\_
  - Proverbs are generalizations, not promises
- Takeaway:
  - Godly speech and character (3:27-28, 18:24, 10:19-21,18:22, 19:14, 22:6, 15:17, 17:1)
  - Diligence in work (6:6-11, 11:1)
  - \_\_\_\_\_-centered life

**Ecclesiastes** (Author: Solomon / Date: 1010 - 586 BC)

- Purpose: True satisfaction is found in a \_\_\_\_\_-centered life.
- Summary:
  - Wrestles with the of life and its \_\_\_\_\_
  - Fearing God and obeying his commands matters most (12:13-14)
- Takeaways:
  - Enjoy God's gifts
  - The \_\_\_\_\_ and the Fear of God

**Song of Songs** (Author: Solomon / 1010 - 931 BC)

- Purpose: To celebrate \_\_\_\_\_ and desire within covenant marriage.
- Summary:
  - Poetic expression of romantic love between a young man and woman
  - The power of love and sexual \_\_\_\_\_
  - Poetic analogy of God's love for us
- Takeaways:
  - God's law commands sexual \_\_\_\_\_
  - Practice self- control
  - Marriage is a gift

**Group Discussion Notes:**

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