
UNDERSTANDING YOUR BIBLE

A Survey of the Old



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Preface

The purpose of this short study is to help us to understand our Bible. God has given us all 66 books we have in our English translation. Many times, if we are not careful, we can wrongly interpret a passage of Scripture because we lack knowledge of where it fits in with God's total revelation. Cults today major on taking God's Word out of context. Admittedly there are difficult passage in God's Word, but some of that difficulty arises from a lack of understanding the entire Bible and its individual parts. As a student of God's Word (**II Timothy 2:15**), we should understand how each book relates to one another. At the end of this study we too should be able to say *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."* Please note that all of the information contained in this study is not original with me. Much has come from great Bible colleges like the Crown College of the Bible in Powell, TN and West Coast Baptist College in Lancaster, CA. Please take time to listen to the audio online as it will help greatly with the notes.

James Grandinetti, *Community Outreach Pastor, Sharon Baptist Church*

Genesis (Book of Beginnings)

Genesis is the book of beginnings and as such, we see the first occurrences of many things. The first murder occurs in Genesis. The first sacrifice is given in Genesis. The first family is shown in Genesis. The first mention of the Gospel is given in Genesis.

4 Major Events - Creation, Fall, Flood, Babel

4 Main Patriarchs - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph

Keys: Creation, Abrahamic Covenant, Proto-Evangelium

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Exodus (Book of Redemption)

When we think of the book of Exodus, we should see two things. First, God calling a people unto Himself. Second, God's redemption of those people.

Exodus is very typical of **redemption**. Some of the typical elements are: Bondage, Salvation, Passover, Passing through the Red Sea etc.

Key Features: Moses (3, 40-Year Periods; **Raised an Egyptian, Trained as Shepherd, Used as a Leader**), The Ten Commandments, The Tabernacle, Set Feasts.

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Leviticus (Book of Sacrifices)

Leviticus teaches us about the holiness of God. It shows us that God expects us to approach Him not haphazardly.

The theme in Leviticus is **holiness**- Notice these dynamic words mentioned in Leviticus: **Holiness**- 87 times, **Sacrifice**- 300 times. The Israelites needed to know how to approach God. God declares throughout this book that He is different from the false gods of Egypt.

Keys: The book is divided in two portions. The first half is written for the Priests ***Sacrifices 1-17*** (Levites). The second half written to the people ***Sanctification 18-27***.

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Numbers (Book of Journey)

Numbers is a book of Journeys. As such it is typical of the Christian life. Though it shows us the failures of the fledgling Israelite nation, it also reminds us that we must live by faith.

The theme for Numbers is Sanctification. There are dangers for disobedience and blessings for Obedience. Think about the 40 years of wandering (**Chapter 12**- Miriam and Aaron stand up to Moses, **Chapter 13**- 10 Bad spies 2 good... **Chapter 13**- is pivotal the 12 spies give report and we have a Kadesh-Barnea decision to make. **Chapter 14**- "Let's go back to Egypt." 1- Year per-day punishment, 20 Years old and up perish)

Genesis – People Called, **Exodus** – People Redeemed,
Leviticus – People Sanctified, **Numbers** – Judgement for
Disobedience

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Deuteronomy (Book of Remembrance)

The title literally means “Second Law.” The book itself is structured around 3 sermons (Remembrance of the Past **1-4**, Commandment for the Future **5-26**, and Options affecting the future **27-30**).

The theme for Deuteronomy is “Beware lest ye forget.” Also you have the Jewish “Shema” (The Shema is the oldest fixed daily prayer in Judaism). The title comes from two Greek words - Deutero means “Second”, Nomos means “Law.”
(Deuteronomy 1:3, 6:3-7)

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Pentateuch (First Five Books) – Bible in Miniature

Another way to see the first five books of the Bible is as a Bible in miniature. Notice these themes:

Genesis – **Dedication**

Exodus – **Deliverance**

Leviticus – **Dedication**

Numbers – **Discipline**

Deuteronomy – **Direction**

Joshua (Book of Conquest)

The theme for Joshua is success is only found in God. **Joshua 1:8**

Some of the key events include: Achan- “A Man with a divided heart.” After the children of Israel dealt with the sin of Achan we find this theme - “When we sin and repent it is behind us.”

Special features in Joshua: Chapters 2- Rahab and Spies, 3- Christo-phony, 7- Achan and the valley of trouble, 20 - Cities of refuge (Example Abner died outside of the city of refuge therefore was called a fool)

No follow-on leadership, Not completing the task.

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Judges (Book of Apostasy)

The theme for Judges is God’s Mercy and Judgement. We find in Judges that God’s ways are always best. There is a pronounced cycle repeated by the nation of Israel. (Rest -*Sin*, Rebellion -*Servitude*, Retribution -*Supplication*, Repentance -*Salvation*, Restoration -*Silence*) The book of Judges illustrates the need for a **righteous King**. It also illustrates every judge as a deliverer and thus the need for a deliverer.

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

The Judges – Othniel (3:9-11), Ehud (3:12-30), Shamgar (3:31), Deborah (4:4-5:31), Gideon (6:11-8:35), Tola (10:1-2), Jai (10:3-5), Jephthah (11:1-12:7), Ibzan (12:8-10), Elon (12:11-12), Abdon (12:13-15), Samson (13:2-16:31)

Ruth (Book of the Kinsmen Redeemer)

The theme in the book of Ruth is God's redemption of us! We must note that there is no book of Ruth in the Hebrew Bible (Judges and Ruth combined). The book Ruth falls in the times of the Judges. A Redeemer: 1. Had to have the right to redeem, 2. Had to have to have the power to redeem, 3. Had to have the will to redeem, 4. Has to actually pay the price to redeem. Of course, we can see our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in this book. Here is a suggested outline: Testimony of Backslider 1, Testimony of the Blessed 2, Testimony of the Betrothed 3, Testimony of the Bought 4.

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

I Samuel (Book of the First King-Saul)

The theme of Judges is a transition from Judges to Kings. We find also the introduction to Samuel because of Eli's failure as a Priest and Eli's failure as a Parent. Samuel ushers in the prophetic office to us.

Chapters 1-7 deal with Eli and Samuel. Chapters 8-31 deal with Saul and David. I Samuel forms a link from Theocracy to Monarchy (King Saul, King David).

Samuel – Means "Heard of God"

Saul – Means "To be desired"

David – Means “Well-Beloved,” A Man after God’s own Heart.

Samuels Ministry: 1. He was a Prophet (2:27-35) 2. Intercessor (7:5-8), 3. Priest (2:35), Judge (7:15-17)

Key Verse: **I Sam 8:1-8, 5-7** “We want a King”; **Luke 19:14** “We will not have this man to be king over us”

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

King Saul

Good Point	Degenerated Into
Extremely Handsome 1 Sam 9:2	Pride 1 Sam 18:8
Great Initiative 1 Sam 11:6-7	Rebellion 1 Sam 20:31
Very Brave 1 Sam 13:3-5	Recklessness 1 Sam 14:24
Had Spirit Fullness 1 Sam 11:6	Troubled by Evil Spirit

II Samuel (Book of the Second King-David)

The theme in II Samuel is David’s Life. We find the following in the book: The Davidic Covenant **II Sam 7:4-17 (Luke 1:32-38)**, David’s Great Triumph **1-10**, David’s Great Transgression **11-12**, David’s Great Trouble **13-24**

Trouble plaques David from **Chapter 13 to the end of his life**. II Samuel tells of Israel’s greatest king and foreshadows the King of Kings and Lord of Lords as David is called a “man after God’s own heart” **I Sam 13:14**.

Key Verse: **II Sam 5:4-5, 7:12-13, 22:21-25**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

I Kings (Book of the Divided Kingdom)

The theme for I Kings is the 120 Years of Unified Kingdom. This unified kingdom is followed by a divided Kingdom. Why? One simple word - Apostasy. The book divides perfectly. 1-11 United Kingdom, 12-22 Divided Kingdom. "Spiritual Decay leads to spiritual and moral corruption and eventually defeat"

Solomon's life traced: Crowning **2:12**, Early Days of Wisdom **3-4**, Power and Glory **6-8**, Apostasy through Wisdom **10:5 – 11:41-43**; 3 Books Written by Solomon **Proverbs (Not all Solomon) 2nd, Song of Songs/Solomon 1st, Ecclesiastes 3rd**

Other accounts in I Kings: Rehoboam and Jeroboam **12-14**, Ahab and Jezebel **16-22**, **Jeroboam I** sets up false worship system in Northern Kingdom, two golden calves (1 in Bethel, 1 in Dan) **I Kings 12:25 – 33**, the Nameless Aimless Bowmen **22:34**

Key Verse: **9:4-5, 11:11**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

II Kings (Book of the Kingdom Captivity)

The theme for II Kings continues with the Divided Kingdom until **captivity finally comes to Israel and ultimately Judah**. 19 Evil Kings ruled consecutively in Israel which led to Assyrian Captivity (17), Judah lasts 136 years longer than Israel is sacked separate times (605 BC, 597 BC, 586 BC). **The prophetic books fit into I and II Kings.**

Main Points – Northern Kingdom 1-10 (Elijah goes to Heaven 1-2, Elisha's Ministry 2-10), Both Kingdoms 11-17 (Elisha dies 13, Assyrian Captivity 17), Southern Kingdom 18-25 (Revival from Hezekiah 18-21, Reform from Josiah 22-23, Babylonian Captivity 24-25)

Memorable stories: Chariot of Fire 2, Bring Your Vessels Not a Few 4, Go Dip in the Jordan 7 Times 5, Borrowed Ax Head 6, They that be with us 6, I have found the book

Key Verse: **17:22-23, 23:27**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

I Chronicles (Book of the Highlights of David's Life)

The theme for I Chronicles is **God and His Grace, David and his greatness and Ezra and his goodness**. This book beginning with Adam and ending with the decree of Cyrus has a greater scope than any other book in the OT (**Covers almost 3,600 Years**). Written by Ezra (most believe compare **Ezra 1:1-3** and **2 Chron 36:22-23**) in the Post-exilic period to spiritually encourage the Jews.

2 Chronicles 36:22-23 *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.*

Ezra 1:1-3 *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there*

among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.

Main Points – OT History points to four major world powers: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia. Keep in mind also I and II Chronicles are really one book.

The tribe of Judah is placed first in the national genealogy in I Chronicles because of the monarchy, the temple, and the Messiah emanate from this tribe (**Gen 49:10**) since the book of Chronicles is last in the Hebrew Bible the genealogies of I Chronicles 1-9 are really a preamble to the genealogy of Christ in the first book of the NT.

Key Verse: **29:10-13, 17:14**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

II Chronicles (Book of the Highlights of Solomon and His Successors)

The theme for II Chronicles basically parallels 1 and 2 Kings but virtually ignores the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Focuses on godly kings who pattern their lives after David.

Main Points – Regardless of the short comings of man, God plan still triumphs. High points include:

6 – Dedication of the Temple

7 – Solomon's famous prayer

29-32 Hezekiah

32:21 185,000 (**Isa 37:36**) slew by an “*angel of the Lord*” ; given a 12 hour period that would be 15,407 every hour, 257 every minute, or 4 per second for 12 hours straight.

2 Chronicles 16:9 *For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars. [King Asa not relying upon God for deliverance]*

2 Chronicles 7:14 *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*

Key Verse: **15:1-4, 20:20, 30:18,20**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Introduction to Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther (these books setup the history of the children of Israel all the way till we close the Old testament period with Malachi).

We begin with during the exile in Babylon, two prophets, Daniel and Ezekiel. Daniel was taken during the first sack of Jerusalem in 605 BC, Ezekiel is taken in 597 BC. During this time Babylon falls to the Persians and Medes and we have

King Cyrus come on the scene his decree opens the book of Ezra and ends the book of II Chronicles.

Three returns to Jerusalem:

1st 535 BC with Zerubbabel as leader, Jeshua as the high priest. **Ezra 3:2**

There is a 60 Year interval between 6-7 of Ezra which is the book of Esther.

2nd is Ezra in 456 BC. **Ezra 7:6-7:7**

3rd is Nehemiah 444 BC.

Modern Day Persia (Iran), Modern Day Babylon (Iraq)

Ezra (Book of Return and Restoration)

The theme for Ezra is restoring the Temple and restoring the Temple worship.

Main Points – **1-6** Rebuilding of the Temple Walls, **7-10** Restoring the Temple worship, A nice church building does not equal a spiritual people. Ezra was used by God because *“For Ezra had prepared his heart to **seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.**”* **Ezra 7:10**

Key Verse: **1:3, 1:5, 7:6,10**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Nehemiah (Book of Rebuilding)

The theme for Nehemiah is the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem's Walls. This book also catalogs Nehemiah's leadership in directing this effort and God's answer to prayer. Many leadership principles can be derived from this book. Nehemiah also records foundational truths for the preaching of God's word. **(8:1-8)**

Nehemiah's name means – "Comfort of Jehovah"

Main Points – **1-7** Rebuilding of the Wall, **8-10** Consecration of the People (**Nehemiah 8:1** We see Ezra and Nehemiah working in together) **11-13** Dispersion of the people, Dedication of the city, Dealing with sin.

*So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. **Nehemiah 8:8** "Interpret plainly, and apply clearly"*

"When the leaders have a hunger for God's word and when the people have a hunger for God's word, we are a candidate for revival."

Key Verse: **2:5, 6:15-16**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Esther (Book of Providential Care)

The theme for Esther is God's providence in a seemingly impossible situation. Time frame for the book of Esther is between chapters 6-7 of Ezra.

Main Points – **1-3** how the plot was formed, **4-5** How the plot was fought (This is the key chapters; Cry of Israel, Convictions of Mordecai, Courage of Esther, Confidence of Haman; Overriding all of this is the providence of God), **6-10** how the plot was foiled.

6 Lessons from the book of Esther:

1. Behind all human affairs is the unseen hand of God.
2. Both good and evil have their ultimate reward.
3. The wicked may prosper for a season, but their end is horrible.
4. The smallest and most insignificant are woven into the grand and eternal plan of God.
5. I can be anchored and not be bitter as a result of God working for me.

Providence is composed of two words – “Pro-Video” – Which means to see beforehand.

Key Verse: **4:13-14, 4:16, 8:16-17**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

The Center of the Bible

“If you open the Bible to its heart, there are five books that deal with the heart issues of life”

Wisdom Books/Poetic Books: **Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon**

The challenge was to take 613 commandments in the law and make it practical. Hebrew poetry does not rely upon rhyme, rhythm, or meter like western poetry but rather is based on parallelism, the rhyming of ideas through careful arrangement of thought. There are six styles: Synonymous – the second line reinforces the idea of the first by using similar words and concepts (ex: **Job 38:7, Ps 3:1, Pr 11:7, 112:28**) Synthetic – where the second line adds to or completes the first line (ex: **Ps 1:1-2, 23:1-5, Pr 4:23**) Antithetic – the thought of the first line is contrasted in the second line (ex: **Pr 10:1, 14:34, 15:1**) Emblematic – the first line uses figure of speech to illuminate the main point conveyed by the second line (ex: **Ps 42:1, Pr 11:22, 25:25, 27:17**) Climactic – the second line repeats the first line with the exception of the last term (ex: **Ps 29:1, Pr 31:4**) Formal – the lines are joined solely by metric consideration ; this is the least used type of Hebrew poetry (ex: **Ps 2:6**)

Main Points:

- 1. God is the creator of everything.**
 - a. God expects man to be a morale creature responsible to Him.
 - b. God is the God of all man, not just Israel.
- 2. God is the source of all wisdom.**
 - a. Nobody but God has all the answers.
- 3. Each individual has a responsibility to be a positive influence on society.**
 - a. i.e. Don't harm your neighbor or remove his stone.
- 4. Righteousness will ultimately be rewarded and wickedness punished.**

Job (Book of Suffering)

The theme for Job is suffering. Sometimes we do not understand why suffering happens, but all experience tough times. Ultimately God knows what he is doing better than we do.

Main Points –

Job didn't have **Romans 8:28** to look at. What happens to Job in one day says that Job was a strong believer. Job had a good testimony on earth and in Heaven.

1. God knows what we don't know (God asks Job 77 questions he cannot answer).
2. God limits our trials.
3. Seek growth not vindication (We always try to justify ourselves, change the question from ho am I going to get out of this, but what am I going to get out of this).
4. God is good all the time.

5. You may never know why.
6. Trust God even if the whole world is crashing down upon you.
7. Don't confuse the ultimate with the immediate.
8. You get to move to a new trial when you figure out what God had for you in this one.

Y/N questions to ask yourself in times of suffering or trials.

1. Does God sincerely love you?
2. Does God have your best interest in mind?
3. Is God developing you in such a way to bring glory and honor to Him?

Key Verse: **13:15, 23:10**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Psalms (Book of the Hymns of the Hebrews)

The theme of Psalms is a hymnbook and Hebrew poetry. The book spans 1000 years. (Psalm 90 written by Moses 1445-1405, some written post exilic 450-400). The name means songs of praise. It is the most quoted book of the old testament.

Main Points – **Psalms is divided into 5 sections with each section paralleling the Pentateuch** – Genesis 1-41, Exodus 42-72, Leviticus 73-89, Numbers 90-106, Deuteronomy 107-150

Psalm 1 – The door that gets us in, sets the tone for the whole book. A man who is blessed and A man who is not.

Psalm 119 – Uses every Hebrew letter in their alphabet to talk about how good God’s word is, starts with aleph – 8 lines etc...

Psalm 120 – is a Song of Degrees (15 steps to Jerusalem, some believe).

Penman and the number of Psalms attributed to them:

David – 73

Moses – 1

Asaph – 12

Heman – 1

Sons of Korah – 10

Ethan – 1

Solomon – 2

Anonymous – 50

Messianic Psalms-

2,18,16,22,23,40,41,45,68,69,72,87,89,102,110,118. In these messianic Psalms, we see Christ in his: birth, betrayal, agony, passion, resurrection, ascension, glorious coming to reign.

Key Verse: **19:14, 29:2, 45:21**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Proverbs (Book of Wisdom)

The theme for Proverbs is wisdom. Proverbs is the only poetic book with clear description of the reason for its writings. These proverbs are the words of the wise. **Proverbs 1:23** The Hebrew word proverb means comparison or parallel. A proverb would use figure of speech to teach illustrations. It is a book of simple illustrations on the reality

of life. As the book of Psalms is to the devotional life so Proverbs is to the daily life.

Main Points – Primary method is that of contrast. Question, does God hate things? The answer is yes. An outline for Proverbs: **1-10** Counsel for Young Men, **11-20** Counsel for All Men, **21-31** Counsel for Kings and Rulers.

Key Verse: **1:7, 9:10. Stated Purpose 1:1-6**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Ecclesiastes (Book About Life)

The theme for the book of Ecclesiastes is life under the sun. The book of Ecclesiastes is written to show the vanity and futility of life without God. The word Ecclesiastes means preacher or one who addresses an assembly. The whole book is one sermon by Solomon who is preaching.

Main Points – **Vanity** – emptiness, vapor, something you cannot grasp, **Under the Sun** – on earth without God (occurs 29 times), **Vexation of Spirit** – eats at the heart constantly (occurs 9 times), **Man** (occurs 47 times), **Labor** (occurs 36 times).

We can see three Period is Solomon's Life in:

1. Song of Solomon
2. Proverbs
3. Ecclesiastes

The arguments presented are not God's arguments, they are His record of arguments. The book presents a clear message of futility of happiness and life apart from God. In this message, he postulates that possession, power, prestige, popularity, and pleasure apart from God will not only leave a man empty but also cause him to hate life.

Key Verse: **2:11, 12:13-14**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Song of Solomon (Book of Union and Communion)

The theme is Song of Solomon is Solomon's courtship and wooing of a woman who is identified as a Shulamite. It is a love story and goes through the ebbs and flows of the relationship. This book can also have lines drawn between the NT doctrine listed in **Ephesians 5:32 that speaks about the marriage relationship being a picture of "Christ and the church"** But the primary message is for the Bride and the Bridegrooms Union and Communion.

Main Points – **Two or three main speakers:** Shulamite – She is referred to as "My love" by the King (Solomon), Solomon (King) – He is referred to as "My beloved" by the Shulamite, True Shepherd **4:7-15** (Jesus Christ).

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

The Prophetic Books

Major and Minor Prophets have to do with length of the book, not importance. Important to note they are not in chronological order.

Three questions to ask about the Prophets:

When did they Prophesy? When did they prophesy? Pre-Exilic, Exilic, or Post Exilic?

What was there message? (Know the short names for the prophetical books)

Prophet – First occurrence of the word Prophet is found in **Genesis 20:7** in reference to Abraham. **Exodus 7:1** is in reference to Aaron, the second occurrence of the Bible. Aaron was to be Moses' prophet.

Deuteronomy 13:1-4 *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.*

A prophet sole job was to be the mouthpiece for God. In some cases, this resulted in an acting out of the message, in

some cases in involved miracles, in some cases it involved the telling of future events. The message of the prophets, was often times immediately relevant to the audience they were speaking to, but also oftentimes spoke of things to come as well. It is a mistake to think that prophets only told about future events.

The word prophet literally means in the Greek “Foreteller” – in other words telling forth God’s council.

Modern day - No office of Prophet, or Prophetess only the gift of Prophesying, which is nothing more than rightly dividing God’s truth to the people. It is forth telling the scriptures, and must be conducted within the bounds of scripture, i.e. “*Not subverting the authority*” of God’s divine order of things.

I Timothy 2:11-12 tells us *Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*

A woman could exercise in modern day the spiritual gift of prophesying (preaching, teaching) for lack of better term but under the prescription of the NT guidelines. The problem with “prophesying” is we associate that word with foretelling strictly. Also, the problem with preaching/teaching is that we associate those words with the office of the Pastor. Though related these are different. Under the loose definition of conveying God’s Word (prophesying, preaching, and teaching), we are all commanded to prophesy or preach the

Gospel. Prior to the completion of the Scriptures there was still a need of foretelling - “giving direction” until the Scriptures were complete.

Two examples in the NT:

Luke 2:36 *And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;*

Act 21:8-9 *And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.*

Old Testament Examples:

Exodus 15:20, Judges 4:4, 2 Kings 22:14, 2 Chronicles 34:22, Nehemiah 6:14, Isaiah 8:3

Isaiah (Book of Salvation)

The theme of Isaiah is Salvation. Isaiah’s very name means “Salvation is of the Lord” his ministry begins near the end of Uzziah’s reign and extends through Johtham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (**Isaiah 1:1**).

Main Points – Judgment for Judah, But Salvation from the Lord

Key Notes: Isaiah's microcosm of the Bible, How many Old Testament Books are there? 39. How many New Testament Books are there? 27. $27+39=66$ How many chapters are there in Isaiah? 66.

Other Prophecy's: **John the Baptist 40:3; Cyrus the King 44:28, 45:1 (200 years prior to his birth); Jesus Christ 53, Messianic Credentials (Compare 35:5-6 and Luke 7:22)**

O.T. Covers Sin and history of Israel

N.T Deals with the Person and ministry of Christ

N.T Begins with the work of John the Baptist

Isa 1-39 History of Sin and Israel

Isa 40-66 Deals with the Person and Ministry of Christ

Isa 40 Predicts the work of John the Baptist

Jeremiah (Book of Warning)

The theme of Jeremiah is a book of warning at the zero hour. Really this is Judah's last hours. God has always been in the business of warning His people, and today He is still warning His people, but is also warning those that are unsaved. Time frame is given in Jeremiah 1:2-3

Main Points – Two main thoughts: 1. Warning off the wrong path and 2. Judgment eventually comes.

Key Notes: Three stages to Jeremiah's message: 1.

Prophesied while Judah was threatened by Assyria and Egypt, 2. Proclaimed God's judgment while Judah was

besieged by Babylon (605-586 BC), 3. Ministered in Jerusalem and Egypt after Judah's downfall. Unique fact Jeremiah fits both as a Pre-Exilic and Exilic Prophet.

Pictures and Parables given by Jeremiah:

Broken Cisterns **2:13**, Linen Girdle **13:1-11**, Potter's House **18:1-8**, Shattered Vessel **19:10-13**

(Side Note: We often use stories as examples in our preaching or perhaps visual aides to understand the message being communicated)

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Lamentations (Book of Mourning)

Theme – Unfortunately the Prophet has a sequel, Lamentations, A mourning for the destruction of his people.
Read - **Psalm 137**

Main Points – Jeremiah writes this book in an acrostic fashion, beginning each chapter with the Hebrew letter (A – Aleph) and moves through each verse with the Hebrew alphabet (Note 22 verse sections per chapter) He is literally weeping A to Z.

Key Notes: In the middle of weeping he cries out one of the most famous statements about the Lords faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:18-26 *And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD: Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them*

still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.

1- 1-22 Provoking God

2- 1-22 Punishment
from God

3- 3-66 Prophet of God

4- 1-22 People of God

5- 1-22 Prayer to God

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Ezekiel (Book of Glory)

The theme of Ezekiel is the Visions and Glory of God.

Main Points – Exilic Prophet that assures Israel of the following 1. Dispel foolish hopes of speedy delivery, 2. To expose the backsliding of Judah and the resulting judgment of God, 3. To call individuals to repentance, 4. To call out a new Israel that would hear the Word of the Lord and inherit the promises.

Key notes: God gave Ezekiel direct revelation.

Visions in Ezekiel:

The Cherubim **1:3-28**

The Roll (Scroll) **2 – 3:3**

Jerusalem **8-11**

Dry Bones **12:1-16**

New Temple **40-48**

Symbolic Actions:

Lying for 390 days on left side **4:4-5**

Lying on 40 days on right
side **4:6**
Eating a wretched meal
6:11

Stamping his feet **12:1-16**
Boiling a pot of water **24:1-14**
Tearless at death **24:14-18**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Daniel (Book of World Kingdoms)

Daniel's theme is that of World Kingdoms and God's sovereignty over them. Daniel covers the entire exilic period, up through the Persians and the Medes, but Daniel's prophecy covers all the way till end time events.

Main Points –

1 – Personal History of the Jewish Deportation

2-7 – Prophetic Plan for the Gentiles

8-12 Prophetic Plan for the Israelites

Key Notes:

Nebuchadnezzar's' image – **2** (Babylon [Head of Gold], Medo-Persia [Chest and Arms of Silver], Greece [Stomach and Thighs of brass], Rome [Legs and Feet of Iron and Clay], The seventy weeks of Daniel **9:24-27**, Tribulation Period – “*a time of trouble*” time of Jacobs trouble **12:1** (End of the tribulation)

Daniel 1:8 *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.*

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Hosea (Book of Returning)

The theme for Hosea is a threefold message: 1. God abhors sin in his people., 2. Judgement is certain because of sin., 3. God's judgement will be in love. God is loyal and stands sure. Hosea is used to illustrate the heart of God.

Key Word – Return (occurs 15 times in Chapter 14)

Key Notes – 1-3 Tragedy in Hosea's home life (1 Signs reflected in the children, 2 Sins reflected in the wife, 3 Salvation reflected in the husband); 4-14 Tragedy in Hosea's homeland (The polluted people 4-7, The punished people 8-10, The pardoned people 11-14)

Hosea 4:1-2, 4-5, 7-8 *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...”* Three sets of people were to blame: The people as a whole, The priests, and The prophets. Israel compared to a backsliding cow **Hosea 4:16**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Joel (Book of the Day of the Lord)

The theme of Joel is the Day of the Lord. It was written as a warning to the people of Judah of their need to humbly turn to God with repentant hearts so He could bless and not judge them. **Joel 2:17**

Key Notes – The Day of the Lord **1:15, 2:1-2, 10-11, 30-31, 3:14-16**

Judah and her early enemies: Philistines, Phoenicians, Egypt, and Edom. Note the “Day of the Lord” is not a 24hr period, but rather of program of judgement events. Reference **II Peter 3**

As no mention of Assyria and Babylon an early date is often ascribed to the book of Joel.

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Amos (Book of the Plumbline)

The theme of Amos is God’s plumb line. It was written toward the end of the reign of Jeroboam II which is around 760 B.C. Israel is at the height of her power.

Key Notes – Message would not be received; however, Amos starts to gather a crowd by pronouncing judgments on seven hated nations to include Judah. Everyone is for judgment except when it is in relation to themselves.

Judgment of Nations **1-2** Syria, Philistia, Phoenicia, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Judah, finally Israel.

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Obadiah (Book of Doom for Edom)

The theme for Obadiah is destruction for Edom. Obadiah's name means "Servant of the Lord" and His message from God is judgment for Edom. Edom's judgment was severe because it had transgressed God and laughed when Jerusalem had been plundered.

Obadiah 1:3 *"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?"*

Key Notes – **11-14** Edom plunders Jerusalem and stands by and rejoiced at their downfall, they even *"stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldst thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress"*. Edom is not offered hope or restoration due to her point of no return spiritually. **Petra** – was the fortified city in the rocks and therefore "thought" they were safe.

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Jonah (Book of the Unwilling Prophet)

The theme for Jonah is that of an unwilling servant. It tells us a threefold message: 1. To teach God's people their responsibility to deliver the message of Salvation to all people – Jew and Gentile 2. To demonstrate that God honors repentance from sin 3. To show the people that Christ's burial and resurrection were in the divine plan before Christ ever came to the earth. **Matthew 12:39-41**

Key Notes – Jonah was the only prophet in the Old Testament that Jesus likened to himself. The commission of Jonah brings disobedience and repentance. Then secondly, bring obedience and then anger? 1:1-17 Running from God, 2:1-9 Running to God, 2:10-3:9 Running with God, 3:10-4:8 Running ahead of God.

Are we displeased with God's judgment?

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Micah (Book of the Great Question)

The theme is summed up in the NT verse **Romans 9:22** *"Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."*

Key Notes – Chapters 1-3 A prediction of Judgment, Chapters 4-5 A prediction of Restoration, Chapters 6-7 A pleas for Repentance

What is the great question? It is this, What doth the Lord require of thee?

*“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but **to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?**” Micah 6:8* – Three steps to walking with the Lord

The severity and Mercy of God

“Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.” Micah 7:8-9 - Ultimately the child of God can rest on the fact that they are part of the family, though punishment for sin may befall us, the Lord will not leave us nor forsake us!

Nahum (Book of the Doom of Nineveh)

Theme – This is the sequel to Jonah. 100 Years has passed since Jonah brought about reform and Nineveh is finally, woefully judged. “If the heart problem is not fixed, the sin problem will continue.”

Key Notes – Verse 1 gives the indication of bearing God’s word V1 *“The burden of Nineveh...”*. **Nahum 1:3**, describes the Lord’s patience and mercy but also his Justice.

Nineveh really gives us a picture of the sinner’s rejection of Jesus Christ. **Nahum 1:6-7** *“Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him. The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.*

God does not always judge the wicked immediately, but He does ultimately.

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Habakkuk (Book of Faith)

The theme of Habakkuk has to do with having faith in God. Contemporary with Jeremiah right before the destruction of Judah. Josiah’s reforms had not taken root, as we saw in Nineveh.

Key Notes – Chapter 1 gives us an indication of the heart of the prophet. As we see from Jonah disagreeing with God, Elijah running from God, here Habakkuk asks why? This tells us, even the most “spiritual” of us, have questions

Habakkuk's Question 1:1-4

God's Answer: 1:5-11

Habakkuk's Question 1:12-17, 2:1

God's Answer 2:2-5 going into the vision

Habakkuk's Prayer 3

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Zephaniah (Book of the Remnant)

The theme of Zephaniah deals with the remnant left of Judah. Contemporary with Jeremiah right before the destruction of Judah. His ministry was during Josiah's reign.

Key Notes – Chapter 1 deals with the Determination of the Lord. Chapter 2 deals with the Day of the Lord. Chapter 3 deals with the Deliverance of the Lord. The prophet Zephaniah gives Judah an outline of what will take place after the captivity.

From this we can gather that even during times of difficulty, there is another day coming.

Key Verse: ***Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.***

Romans 8:18-22 *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.*

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Haggai (Book of Building)

The theme of Haggai is one of putting our priorities right. Haggai is referred to as the successful prophet, as he gets to see the fruits of his labor.

Key Notes – **1:1-5** Issues a call to build, **2:1-9** Issues a call to courage, **2:10-19** Issues a call to consider, **2:20-23** Issues a call to endure

Haggai speaks to our common malady of getting our priorities out of balance and not putting God first. We tend to focus more on the physical than the spiritual.

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Zechariah (Book of Jealousy)

Zechariah's book is a book of jealousy. Four purposes of the book: 1. To bring spiritual revival. 2. To inspire the people to build the Temple. 3. To comfort and console the people. 4. To register unmistakable prophecies about the Messiah.

Key Notes –

The Branch – Our Servant **3:8, 6:12, Mark 10:45**

The King Priest – Our Intercessor **6:13, Hebrews 7:25**

Just and Lowly – Our Salvation **9:9, John 14:6**

Spirit of Grace – Our Gift **12:10, Ephesians 2: 8-9**

The Fountain – Our Cleanser **13:1, John 15:3**

The Shepherd – Our Guide **13:7, Psalm 23:1**

King of the Earth – Our Ruler **14:9, Romans 14:9**

Lord of Hosts – Our Lord to Worship **14:16**

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?

Malachi (Book of Robbery)

Malachi is a book of robbery. We find it is wrong to give our leftovers to God. Malachi also closes the Old Testament and is the doorway into the New Testament as it ends with prophecies concerning John the Baptist and the coming of Christ.

Key Notes – Malachi lets us know that our form of worship must be from the heart and not just going through the motions. This book also points us toward the coming

Messiah. Because of a 400-year gap between the old and New Testament, you and I can take hope that what God says will come to pass, always comes to pass. Malachi's name means "Messenger of Jehovah", and his message is one of both correction and hope for the future.

*Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. **Malachi 3:1***

*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: **Malachi 4:5***

How does this fit in with the rest of the Bible?