

The Old Testament in 10 Minutes + The New Testament in 10 Minutes

By Jason Derouchie

The Old Testament in 10 Minutes. No small task. The Bible describes how God reigns, saves, and satisfies through covenant for His glory in Christ. The Old Testament provides foundation, the New Testament: fulfillment. Jesus' Bible was the Old Testament which highlights through both narrative and commentary how the old covenant – the old Mosaic covenant – is established in the law, enforced in the prophets, and enjoyed in the writings.

The Bible opens with five narrative books of Moses, which together are called the law. Here the old covenant is established.

Genesis introduces God's universal kingdom program by highlighting two things: one, the need for blessing and two, the provision of blessing. It also provides the context for Israel's mission. Sin had resulted in a worldwide curse and Abraham and his offspring climaxing in a single, male, royal descendant in the line of Judah would be the means for the curse to be overcome by blessing. Now the remaining four books of the law clarify how the promise of offspring and the hope of the promised land find initial fruition in the Mosaic old covenant, all in anticipation of the royal Redeemer.

We begin with Exodus. Exodus highlights King Yahweh's global purposes through Israel, stressing the centrality and the necessity of God's presence and detailing both Israel's salvation and their mission. Israel is to be a mediator and a displayer of God's greatness, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, all in the context of the world.

Now in Leviticus, holy Yahweh calls Israel to be a holy people, and clarifies how their pursuit of God will be empowered by His sanctifying presence and the promises of blessing and curse.

Numbers contrasts faithful Yahweh with unfaithful Israel and it describes an extended season of discipline in the wilderness where Israel was supposed to learn how to wait on and follow Yahweh.

Now Deuteronomy comes at the end of the law. Deuteronomy is the constitution of the united tribes of Israel. It calls for lasting covenant relationship, but what it also shows us is that God would not overcome Israel's stubborn rebellion, would not enable them to love Him with all until the latter days, after Israel had entered, lost, and then returned to the land. It's at that time that He would circumcise their hearts and empower them to love Him with all.

After the law comes the prophets. The prophets are to be read in light of the law of Moses and in the hope of the coming royal deliverer. Here the old covenant is enforced. And the material is divided into two parts. You've got the former prophets and the latter. The former prophets provide a narrative history of what happened in Israel from the conquest through the rise of the united and divided monarchies all the way to their exile from the land.

The grouping begins with Joshua, which highlights Yahweh's covenant faithfulness in giving the land and calls for Israel's covenant faithfulness. Will the people meditate on the Law day and night or will they turn and go their own way?

Well, Judges provides the answer. In Judges we see detailed Israel's covenant faithlessness and we see the highlighting of their chaotic sinful existence, which is it says partly due to the fact that there was no king in Israel.

First and Second Samuel overviews the rise of kingship, stresses the Davidic covenant and the Davidic kingdom hope, and it clarifies the importance of honoring Yahweh above all else.

Now the narrative portion of the former prophets ends with the book of Kings. First and Second Kings outlines Israel's covenant failure in the kingdom division and destruction, but it also retains hope in a Davidic king whose throne would be forever.

Now we see narrative from Genesis to Kings, but then the narrative pauses and the latter prophets offer prophetic commentary on why Israel's history resulted in exile. We learn what happened and then we learn why it happened.

Jeremiah stresses Israel's lack of covenant loyalty and the eschatological promise of covenant loyalty in the age of new covenant when the law would be written on the heart.

Ezekiel focuses on Israel's loss of God's presence from Jerusalem and the eschatological promise of His Spirit in the age of restoration, the age of resurrection.

Isaiah then unpacks Israel's rejection of God's kingship and the eschatological promise of His universal kingdom through the peace-establishing, justice-working servant king who would reign over transformed ethnic Israelites and Gentiles in the new creation.

Then we come to the 12 – the 12 minor prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. All of them in Jesus' Bible are

united into a single volume. Now through the themes of sin, judgment, and restoration they detail Israel's spiritual unfaithfulness and the eschatological promise of divine faithfulness.

Now at this, the prophets come to the close and the focus on Israel's sin takes a drastic shift to a focus on kingdom hope in the writings. In the writings the old covenant is enjoyed. The former writings, the first half, are principally poetic commentary on how the loyal remnant of Yahweh was to live in a context of darkness, in a context of exile, maintaining their belief that Yahweh was still on the throne and that there would be truly one day when He would right all wrongs through His royal deliverer.

Now in Jesus' Bible the commentary portion opens with the book of Ruth, a narrative prelude that affirms the kingdom hope of Yahweh's redeeming grace through the line of David. Just as God had used Boaz of Bethlehem to redeem David's ancestors, so too He would rise up a new kinsman redeemer from Bethlehem who would save David's descendants. Exile would not be the final word and this messianic hope provides the lens for reading Psalms and all the rest of the books that follow.

The rest of the former writings detail specifically the type of lifestyle by which one gains real kingdom hope. All these books are positive. Psalms stresses that there is hope for those delighting in and submitting to God's kingship by walking, waiting, and worshipping in the light of the Messiah. Through the five books of the Psalter, the messianic music moves from lament to praise, from kingdom crisis to kingdom consummation.

Job gives hope for those fearing God for who He is and not for what He gives or takes away.

Proverbs then provides kingdom hope for those acting wisely, for those who fear God, turn from evil, and live in light of the future, and in the process, Proverbs gives a picture of what that future royal deliverer would look like: a man of wisdom.

Ecclesiastes details hope for those fearing and following God in pleasure and in pain despite life's enigmas.

And Song of Songs gives hope for those celebrating human sexuality in the context of marriage. Only those who fan the flame of Yahweh in the proper context will enjoy the ultimate union of the groom of heaven with His bride.

Lamentations supplies hope for those remaining confident in God's reign and faithfulness to His own, with the promise of fresh mercies at dawn. The laments of Lamentations end the

commentary portion of the Old Testament and they provide a bridge for the reader back into the context of exile. That's where we left off in the narrative of Second Kings. Lamentations brings us back to it and it's in exile then that the final four narrative books take place. In the latter writings we gain tangible signs of kingdom hope, examples in story form.

Daniel reiterates the promise of God's universal kingdom. God reigns over every kingdom to the earth and He will establish His kingdom over all through one like a Son of Man.

Esther details the preservation of God's kingdom people through whom the Messiah would come. God would not let His kingdom promises die.

Ezra and Nehemiah stands as one book in Jesus' Bible, and together they foreshadow the restoration of God's people and land which was ultimately to come.

And then with a focus on the Davidic covenant, First and Second Chronicles, the final book of Jesus' Bible, recaps in positive terms the purpose of God from Adam to Cyrus' decree that the Jews could return to Jerusalem, thus affirming God's universal kingship and kingdom promises.

Now the Old Testament closes without all of the promises being fulfilled and therefore the Old Testament ends demanding a sequel, a sequel that comes in the New Testament. God's reign over God's people in God's land. God will see His kingdom purposes accomplished. The old covenant is established in the law, it's enforced in the prophets, and it is enjoyed in the writings. And while the old covenant bore a ministry of condemnation, the old covenant does not end in judgment. It ends with an eye toward hope. It provides foundation for a fulfillment that is found in Christ and in the New Testament. In the whole, God reigns, saves, and satisfies through covenant for His glory in Christ.

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